

**2008 Clackamas County Business Summit –  
Our Economy...Our Opportunities**  
November 7, 2008  
Marylhurst University  
**Summary Report**

**Overview**

The 2008 Clackamas County Business Summit “Our Economy...Our Opportunities,” was held on Friday, November 7<sup>th</sup> at Marylhurst University. Approximately 180 business leaders, educators, administrators, elected officials and others attended the event. The previous year’s Summit focused on understanding the economic landscape of Clackamas County. This year’s event identified the county’s target economic clusters and competitive advantages to help guide policy direction and action.

Business and Community Services Deputy Director Gary Barth gave an overview of the County’s approach to economic development, and associated goals:

- ✓ Foster innovation, increase economic output
- ✓ Improve jobs/housing imbalance
- ✓ Raise per capita income levels
- ✓ Capitalize on urban/rural composition
- ✓ Optimize and enhance physical assets
- ✓ Plan for population growth

**Clusters**

As part of identifying where Clackamas County is particularly strong economically, economists from ECONorthwest identified Clackamas County’s top ten cluster areas. These ten clusters represent 40% of the economic output of Clackamas County and where Clackamas County has a regional comparative advantage.

**Clackamas County Key Industry Clusters**

Industry Name	Value Added (\$ millions)	
	Clackamas Co.	Region
1. Warehousing	\$102	\$321
2. Fabricated metal manufacturing	346	1,184
3. Nurseries and greenhouses	198	761
4. Primary metal manufacturing	188	922
5. Truck transport	236	1,175
6. Wood product manufacturing	135	761
7. Professional consulting services	678	3,890
8. Finance and insurance	1,680	10,713
9. Wholesale trade	1,453	9,639
10. Machinery manufacturing	132	906

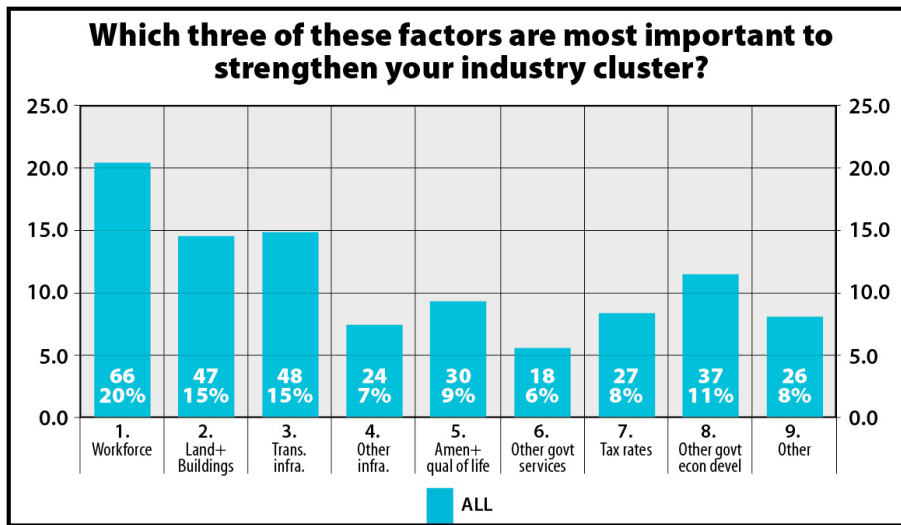
Source: ECONorthwest

Economist Bob Whelan discussed some emerging trends that are likely to affect the County's long term growth:

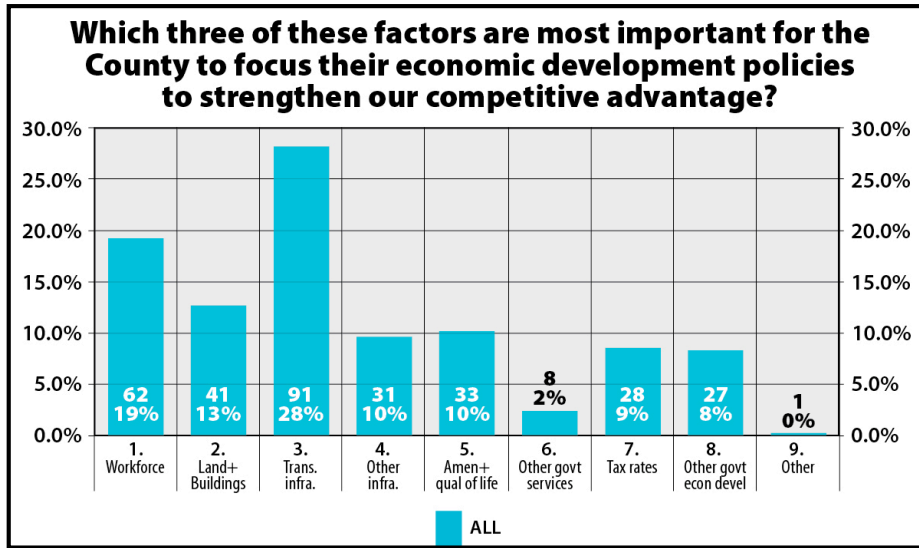
- ✓ Exports to Asia
- ✓ Changes in the energy mix
- ✓ Portland-metro area population growth
- ✓ Aging population
- ✓ Cost of living in dense urban areas
- ✓ Decreasing urban dependency
- ✓ Demand for outdoor recreation/tourism

He recommended focusing on strengthening the County's competitive advantages and addressing deficiencies and ineffective barriers that may inhibit clusters ability to develop and expand.

After the presentation by ECONorthwest, summit respondents were asked to identify factors essential for cluster development and identified workforce, transportation infrastructure and the price and availability of land and buildings as the most critical factors needed to strengthen these clusters in Clackamas County. Responses are shown in the chart below.



In the short term, participants prioritized working on transportation infrastructure, retaining existing businesses and implementing workforce initiatives as shown in the chart below. These are similar to those received through feedback forms.



### Emerging Strategies/Board Comments

Commissioner Martha Schrader provided an overview of an emerging policy framework on the region’s urban and rural reserve program and answered questions about the region’s approach.

To highlight some of the County’s emerging economic initiatives, staff gave overviews of the County’s Main Street program and draft Economic Development Plan. Jamie Johnk, Clackamas County’s Rural Economic Development Coordinator, introduced the County’s new Main Street program, in partnership with the state. She reviewed why downtowns are critical to local and regional economies. Among other reasons, they:

- ✓ Support independent businesses that keep dollars circulating in the local economy
- ✓ Provide incubation space for entrepreneurs
- ✓ Revitalize the local economy
- ✓ Provide a symbol of economic health and community pride
- ✓ Serve as the historic center of a community
- ✓ Provide destinations for tourists

Jamie reviewed the national Main Street Approach™ based on four points: organization, promotion, design and economic restructuring. She highlighted Clackamas County’s first “Performing” Main Street: Oregon City, and the County’s first “Transforming” Main Street: Sandy. Nine other communities are exploring establishing a Main street program. They include Estacada, Damascus, Happy Valley, Lake Grove, Lake Oswego, Milwaukie, Molalla, Villages of Mt. Hood, and West Linn. Three-quarters of the respondents to a keypad polling question said they feel their downtown could benefit from a Main Street program. All who are interested are encouraged to contact Jamie.

Renate Mengelberg, Business and Economic Development Coordinator, Clackamas County reviewed the updated draft Economic Development Plan out for public comment. She reviewed the vision and mission – to “create prosperity by fostering balanced economic development in

Clackamas County through a close partnership with government and the private sector.” She described the principles the plan is based on, and associated actions. Specific actions on the range of strategies had been developed with extensive input from business and community leaders, and are expected to be implemented through a collaborative effort. The plan also includes new recommended measures of success in five key focus areas:

- ✓ Business growth and retention
- ✓ Business recruitment
- ✓ Infrastructure (transportation, water and wastewater)
- ✓ Workforce and education
- ✓ Regional collaboration

Of the strategies identified in the plan, participants thought the County should focus on retaining existing businesses, on workforce initiatives and planning for future employment lands. Renate encouraged participants to submit additional comments that day, or by the end of November. The plan is expected to be finalized in December.

In response to a question from the Board of County Commissioners, 45% of respondents said that a County green building program should be a balance between regulatory and voluntary means. In addition, participants said that the most meaningful incentives for participating in such a program would be a combination of faster application processes and monetary incentives.

To conclude the summit, Commission Chair Lynn Petersen and Commissioner Schrader fielded questions from the audience on a range of topics, including climate change, fees and sustainability.

### **Feedback Forms**

Via their feedback forms, participants indicated that the event was satisfying, with the majority rating the event useful to very useful. They provided a range of comments on the County’s draft Economic Development Plan, which staff is considering in the revised version.

Participants noted the following topics, issues or speakers they would be interested in learning more about at an upcoming event:

- ✓ Mega-trends/futures
- ✓ Ideas to develop Clackamas County workforce including a presentation on local education efforts to prepare the next workforce, e.g. Sabin/Schellenberg, Clackamas Community College, Oregon Institute of Technology
- ✓ A highlight map of County investments with the following items shown:
  - Urban renewal areas
  - Targeted industries
  - Brownfields
  - Enterprise zones
- ✓ Strategies to capitalize on the county’s economic strengths
- ✓ Inter-regional collaboration and private – public economic development partnership approaches

- ✓ Regional plans

### **Next Steps**

The findings in this report will contribute to the Economic Development Commission retreat discussion in the spring. In addition, the newly expanded Board of County Commissioners will utilize this information to help focus their economic development efforts in the coming year.

### **Appendices**

1. Key-pad polling results
  - a. Aggregate
  - b. Cross-tabulations
2. PowerPoint presentations:
  - a. Introduction (Gary Barth) and Our Economy, Our Opportunities (ECONorthwest)
  - b. Clackamas County Main Street Program (Jamie Johnk)
  - c. Economic Development Plan (Renate Mengelberg)
3. Comments from table discussions
4. Feedback form responses

G:\Current Projects\0850 - EDC\Summit Report\Summit Report Clean 12\_10\_08tc.doc