

MEMO

To: Avery Pickard
Executive Director
Oregon Economic Development Association

From: Jeff Raker
Senior Economic Development Planner
Metro

CC: Brittany Bagent
Vice President of Strategy
Greater Portland Inc

Date: June 3, 2021

Re: 2021 Excellence in Economic Development: Outstanding Collaborative Partnership

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this nomination for the **2021 Excellence in Economic Development: Outstanding Collaborative Partnership**. I am writing to nominate the Greater Portland Economic Recovery Plan due to the significant public and private sector partnerships, direct economic benefits generated, subsequent strategic work, and creative problem solving.

In April 2020, the Greater Portland Economic Development District (GPEDD) began to see the unprecedented impacts of COVID-19 on our region's economy:

- The Portland-Vancouver-Hillsboro Metro area lost over 144,000 jobs in one month.
- An estimated 30% of the region's small businesses were closed.
- Existing disparities worsened for persons of color and businesses they own, and
- Other groups of the region's most vulnerable workers were severely impacted, including workers in lower-paying occupational groups, female workers, and workers with lower educational levels.

At this unprecedented time, we aspired to help our region recover.

GPEDD is the federally-designated Economic Development District for Clackamas, Multnomah, and Washington counties in Oregon and Clark County in Washington. GPEDD oversees the development and implementation of our region's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). It is staffed by Greater Portland Inc (GPI) and managed by its own Board of Directors representing economic interests across the region. GPEDD's role in our region's economic development planning provided an opportunity to pivot our existing work to focus on urgently needed economic recovery.

GPEDD approved an accelerated process to create this action-focused, outcome-oriented Regional Economic Recovery Plan that responds to small businesses' challenges and the unemployment crisis created by COVID. This is a short-term, adaptable plan of 3 to 24 months focused on immediate action.

The Regional Economic Recovery Plan process was governed by GPEDD's Board of Directors and more than 40 additional advisors from across the region. The plan was developed and is currently being implemented in direct partnership with Metro. The regional approach allowed us to leverage resources, provide a strong unified voice in aligning efforts, and provide accountability during implementation.

Before the pandemic, Greater Portland was one of our country's multistate regional economic success stories, with its distinct combination of thriving traded sectors, high connectivity to the global market, active and accessible ports, diverse small businesses, high quality of life, and a highly-skilled workforce.

Together with our partners, we've begun implementation recognizing that these fundamentals remain and will help guide efforts forward.

Public and private sector partnerships

The GPEDD Board of Directors is comprised of 31 public and private sector leaders from across the bi-state region representing distinct economic development expertise including workforce development, higher education, government, private industry, chambers of commerce, port districts, transportation and industry associations. Over forty additional advisors were distinctly engaged in the planning process to develop content, advise on recommendations, and provide critiques and feedback. The advisors included leaders working in philanthropy, disaster preparedness, culturally specific chambers of commerce, community based organizations, elected office, and additional private industry.

Economic benefit to the community

The Economic Recovery Plan is actively being implemented by lead organizations that volunteered to advance specific recommendations, as well as by a public and private sector implementation task force. The task force acted swiftly in response to Governor Brown's recent request for projects and programs that align with her 10-point economic recovery plan. The task force submitted \$25M in combined proposals to help small businesses recovery and grow, to advance economic mobility for individuals, and to support families and children.

Beyond requests to provide resources to specific recommendations, the task force has collaborated and connected on projects that they wouldn't have otherwise. At a time when resources are scarce and organizations are stretched, these partnerships and collaborations elevating shared priorities are crucial.

Spin-off impacts

After adopting the Greater Portland Economic Recovery Plan, the GPEDD board and its advisors immediately returned to completing the regional CEDS. The Economic Recovery Plan directly informed and improved the collaborative work on the CEDS. The vision statements align, the values are coordinated, and the actions reflect each project's work. For example, recommendations in the Economic Recovery Plan are included in the CEDS action matrix.

Creativity

Early in the process, our public and private sector stakeholders expressed concern that the project team did not reflect the diversity, race and ethnicity of individuals and business owners most impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. In order to expand on community outreach and engagement, the project team hired a strategic communications consultant to provide additional support. Our consultant is incredibly

skilled at facilitating large groups, advancing to consensus, and raising issues that must be addressed more deeply. She also convened a series of deep listening sessions with our BIPOC leaders in a caucused, confidential space to collect new ideas, feedback on the process, and recommendations for evolving implementation. The deep listening sessions have continued through the CEDS planning process as a consistent opportunity for BIPOC leadership to engage in a trusted space. This approach has enriched the region's work and enhanced collaborations and relationships.

Greater Portland Economic Recovery Plan Materials

Website landing page ([linked here](#))

Full Plan document ([linked here](#))

Two-page summary ([linked here](#))

Spanish translation ([linked here](#))



GREATER PORTLAND ECONOMIC RECOVERY PLAN

The Greater Portland Economic Development District (GPEDD) has created an action-focused, outcome-oriented Regional Economic Recovery Plan framework to help our region recover from the unprecedented impacts COVID-19 is having on our region's businesses, workers, and families, especially in communities of color.

GPEDD's Board of Directors, more than 40 additional advisors from across the region, a team of consultants, as well as staff from Greater Portland Inc and Metro worked to develop this plan from July to October 2020. This is a short-term, adaptable plan of 3 to 24 months focused on immediate action that will help to leverage resources, establish a strong unified voice in aligning efforts, and provide accountability during implementation.

OUR VISION

As a community, the Greater Portland region will recover from the COVID-19 pandemic stronger, more resilient, and more equitable with an urgent focus on building opportunities for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) and their businesses, as they have been hit hardest.

GREATER PORTLAND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT



The Greater Portland Economic Development District (GPEDD), staffed by Greater Portland Inc, is a not-for-profit organization working in Clackamas, Multnomah, and Washington counties in Oregon and Clark County in Washington. GPEDD is funded in part through grants awarded by the U.S. Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration (EDA).

GUIDING VALUES

The following five values guided the development of plan priorities and its implementation:



REMOVE BARRIERS AND BUILD TRUST

To advance racial equity for underserved and under-resourced populations



WORK TOGETHER

Through regional collaboration and communication to strengthen all of our communities



TAKE URGENT ACTION

For businesses and people in need



LEAD WITH HEALTH

Prioritize public health



INVEST STRATEGICALLY

Data will inform priorities for action

TARGET IMPACT AREAS

1 HELP SMALL
BUSINESSES
RECOVER &
GROW



2 ADVANCE
ECONOMIC
MOBILITY FOR
INDIVIDUALS



3 SUPPORT
FAMILIES &
CHILDREN



PROJECT PRINCIPLES



Leading
with
equity



Prioritizing
public
health



Engaging
the private
sector

IMPLEMENTING THE PLAN

Regional stakeholders understand that a plan document itself will not help the small businesses and individuals impacted by COVID-19; it is the implementations of actions that will provide the needed support. The scale of the challenge for our regional economy requires coordinated, cross-sector action to provide meaningful and sustained support for individuals and small businesses. Over the next two years, an Implementation Task Force will work with GPEDD staff to lead implementation of the Recovery Plan.

HOW CAN YOU HELP?

Before the pandemic, Greater Portland was one of our country's multistate regional economic success stories, with its distinct combination of thriving traded sectors, high connectivity to the global market, active and accessible ports, diverse small businesses, high quality of life, and a highly-skilled workforce. These fundamentals remain and will help guide our efforts forward.

To make the impact that is needed, we need support from stakeholders across the region in the private, public and philanthropic sectors.

We need regional champions of the plan. We need advocates to federal and state elected officials. We need volunteers who can provide expertise and services to struggling businesses. And yes – we need financial resources to help implement the plan. Please let us know if you or your organization can help in any way.

CONTACT US

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