

Lane County Food and Beverage Collaborative

Strategic Plan

June 2016

What We Heard from You	What are we doing?	What can you do now?
<p>Lack of Resources</p> <p>Lane County’s Food and Beverage Sector is growing, yet we struggle to help businesses start, keep and grow existing businesses, and attract new businesses. There is a general lack of awareness around existing resources for companies, as well as a lack of resources overall as compared to other communities.</p>	<p>Building Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Hiring a coordinator – “Food and Beverage Sector Liaison” ○ Assembling technical resources and identifying gaps ○ Advocating for infrastructure ○ Building new programs as needed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Join the Growing the Food and Beverage Sector Working Group ✓ Sign up for food and beverage updates
<p>Awareness and Recognition</p> <p>Lane County has a vibrant local food and beverage scene, but we have struggled to effectively promote ourselves. <i>Consumers</i> don’t always recognize our region as the origin of products they regularly consume. <i>Food and beverage companies</i> don’t always recognize Lane County as a great place to do business.</p>	<p>Raising Awareness (Promotion & Branding)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Create and cultivate a regional brand – “Willamette Valley Grown & Crafted” ○ Promote culinary tourism in Lane County in partnership with Travel Lane County ○ Highlight the sector in in-flight magazines, such as Alaska Air ○ Share industry success stories through a Public Relations Campaign 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Become a member of the Willamette Valley Grown & Crafted brand ✓ Share your success stories to promote the region
<p>Inadequate Workforce</p> <p>Food and beverage employers struggle to find reliable and adequately trained employees. Potential workers sometime perceive the food and beverage work as undesirable and gravitate towards other professions.</p>	<p>Building a Stronger Workforce</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Discussing food and beverage curriculum with high schools and colleges ○ Developing a mechanism for sharing employees ○ Demystifying employee rules and regulations through BOLI workshops ○ Raising awareness of food and beverage careers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Attend a WorkSource Lane BOLI Employment Law Update Seminar ✓ Join Lane Education Service District Food and Beverage Advisory Committee ✓ Attend staffing agency/talent hub conversations

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<p>High Cost of Utilities</p> <p>The food and beverage industry requires high inputs of water and power. Utility fees in Lane County can be cost-prohibitive for start-ups and discourage established businesses from expanding.</p>	<p>Smoothing Utility Costs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Increasing awareness of utility costs ○ Alleviating high cost of utilities through utility assistance programs ○ Rethinking wastewater calculations through inline metering ○ Use the Food and Beverage Sector Liaison to help businesses navigate utility process. 	<p>✓ Attend the upcoming panel and feedback session on utilities</p>
<p>Complex, Convoluted Regulations</p> <p>Food and beverage businesses find it incredibly difficult to navigate permitting processes and comply with health and safety regulations. <i>Staff at regulatory agencies</i> often provide confusing, even contradictory information.</p>	<p>Streamlining Regulations and Permitting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Creating a clear point of entry into the regulation/permitting system and questionnaire to expedite process ○ Training agency staff on how to take a food/beverage project from concept to completion. ○ Identifying inconsistencies between agencies ○ Use the Food and Beverage Sector Liaison to help businesses navigate permitting and regulation process. 	<p>✓ Attend the upcoming panel and feedback session on navigating the regulatory process</p>
<p>Lack of Collaboration within the Industry</p> <p>Business representatives understand development of the industry is not the sole responsibility of economic development agencies. Business members identified a disconnect within the industry in relation to specific shared resources and services, sharing of best practices, and mentoring opportunities.</p>	<p>Increasing Collaboration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Exploring distribution challenges to work toward possible solutions ○ Exploring an online forum to increase collaboration ○ Creating a mentorship program ○ Creating a networking structure for companies to share best practices, solve problems, pool resources, and identify additional areas for collaboration 	<p>✓ Attend discussion focused on distribution challenges and solutions</p>

