

DISPARITIES BY THE NUMBERS: UNDERSTANDING INEQUITIES IN OREGON'S ECONOMY

Date: 5/18/26
Department: GAPD
Meeting Date: 6/9/26

Prepared by: Anneliese Koehler, she/her,
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Presenter(s), (if applicable): Anneliese
Koehler, she/her, Legislative Affairs
Manager; ECONW, presenters TBD
Length: 60 minutes

ISSUE STATEMENT

This work session will establish a baseline understanding of the region's and Oregon's current economic landscape, workforce conditions, outcome disparities, and general dynamics relevant to upcoming policy discussions. The presentation will focus on information about disparities by race/ethnicity, gender, and other characteristics (e.g., age).

ACTION REQUESTED

This is the first in a series of work sessions to prepare Council for legislative and regional conversations about economic development and land use. Additional sessions are planned for July (Business Recruitment and Retention in Oregon and the Region; Traded Sector Industrial Land Supply); September (Agriculture in the Tri-County Region); and October (Data Centers; Historical Lookback on Industrial Land inside Metro's UGB).

IDENTIFIED POLICY OUTCOMES

The Metro Council provides direction and guidance regarding possible future legislative and regional policy and funding solutions.

POLICY QUESTION(S)

Are there key takeaways that Council wants to see reflected in policy and funding solutions?

POLICY OPTIONS FOR COUNCIL TO CONSIDER

Topic is informational. No policy decisions are required at this time.

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

Not applicable.

STRATEGIC CONTEXT & FRAMING COUNCIL DISCUSSION

Over the past few years, there have been growing concerns that Oregon lacks certain types and sizes of development-ready industrial land for current employers to expand to and new employers to come to Oregon. Most recently, both the Oregon Semiconductor Competitiveness Task Force and the Oregon Clean Technology Task Force both identified the lack of shovel ready sites as a key barrier to success for these critical industries in Oregon. In response, the Oregon Legislature considered changes to Oregon's land use

process to better position our state. That included time-limited gubernatorial super siting, bringing land directly into Metro’s urban growth boundary, flipping rural reserves to urban reserves in Washington County, and additional funding for industrial site readiness and brownfields.

Staff anticipates that industrial land and Oregon’s land use system will be a focus during the 2027 legislative session. In preparation for the session, staff is proposing a series of work sessions over the summer and into the fall to prepare Council for the likely regional and legislative conversations. These include topics like understanding the current racial and other inequities that exist in Oregon’s economy; doing a deep dive into the region’s business recruitment strategies and the connection between successful recruitment and land supply; examining how industrial land has been utilized within Metro’s urban growth boundary; and exploring certain specific industries such as data centers and agriculture.

The intention of these work sessions are two-fold: to ensure Council is grounded with the latest information about the industrial land issues facing our state and our region and for Council to share perspectives and priorities to guide legislative solutions.

BACKGROUND

This is the first work session in a series. Staff anticipates bringing future informational presentations to Council through October.

ATTACHMENTS

[For work session:]

- Is legislation required for Council action? Yes No
- If yes, is draft legislation attached? Yes No
- What other materials are you presenting today? None.