



# WASCO COUNTY & QLIFE BROADBAND STRATEGIC PLAN

## CONCEPT DRAFT – **FOR DISCUSSION**

### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE

**TO LEVERAGE CURRENT TECHNOLOGY PLANNING EFFORTS IN OUR REGION, THE REGION’S BROADBAND INFRASTRUCTURE AND OUR INVESTMENT IN MIDDLE-MILE FIBER PLANT TO ENHANCE OUR REGION’S ECONOMIC VITALITY AND QUALITY OF LIFE.**

### STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

**Economic Development**

**Community Development**

**Education and Health**

**Utilization of Resources**

### GOALS

*1. The number of new businesses entering the county and existing business retention and expansion increased due to the County’s broadband capacity and technically fluent workforce.*

*2. Affordable broadband is accessible to everyone residing in Wasco County.*

*3. Broadband adoption and utilization rates exceed state and national averages.*

*4. Healthcare and education providers are able to serve county residents’ needs via broadband, improving health and education outcomes.*

*5. Availability of high capacity broadband service in ALL Wasco County communities – urban AND rural.*

### Strategies & Tactics

*(note that some strategies and tactics support multiple goals)*

- a. Market the business and quality-of-life benefits of The Dalles and Wasco County as a “connected community” to large employers with a telecommuting workforce.
- b. Recruit and support local entrepreneurs in technology fields to start or expand businesses in the county.
- c. Assist fruit growers and other local businesses to adopt broadband-enabled strategies to compete in global markets.
- d. Provider collaboration on increasing adoption rates.
- e. Establish a business incubator modeled after Gorge Innoventure.
- f. Expand bi-state collaboration within Mid-Columbia Region on broadband training, adoption and rural access initiatives.

- a. Develop and promote a “zero tolerance” policy for access inequity in the County.
- b. Deploy an effective public awareness and outreach campaign that articulates broadband benefits and value proposition.
- c. Establish partnerships to provide digital literacy training. Develop a community-based Technology Users Group with the mission of helping others, “neighbor-to-neighbor”, with broadband/technology utilization skills.
- d. Establish means of increasing service and device affordability, e.g. neighborhood hot-spots, equipment recycle program and grants or subsidies.

- a. Establish a public/private consortium for collaboration and sharing best practices across the education and healthcare sectors.
- b. Establish a policy to get broadband access to every address to support healthcare and education service delivery.
- c. Initiate a pilot program to test assumptions and develop best practices for using broadband to improve healthcare and/or educational outcomes.

- a. Advocate for state or federal level policies or programs which extend rural broadband service. Participate in policy reform efforts focused on incentivizing rural accessibility.
- b. Explore partnerships to focus on last mile accessibility.
- c. Explore all possibilities for leveraging existing public and private infrastructure to bridge rural last mile gaps.
- d. Establish rural broadband pilot projects.
- e. Partnership or pilot project with OPB, OBAC and OBDD to demonstrate a rural broadband project.