

## GOAL 9: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BACKGROUND REPORT

**PURPOSE:** To diversify and improve the economy of the state and Clatsop County

### HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

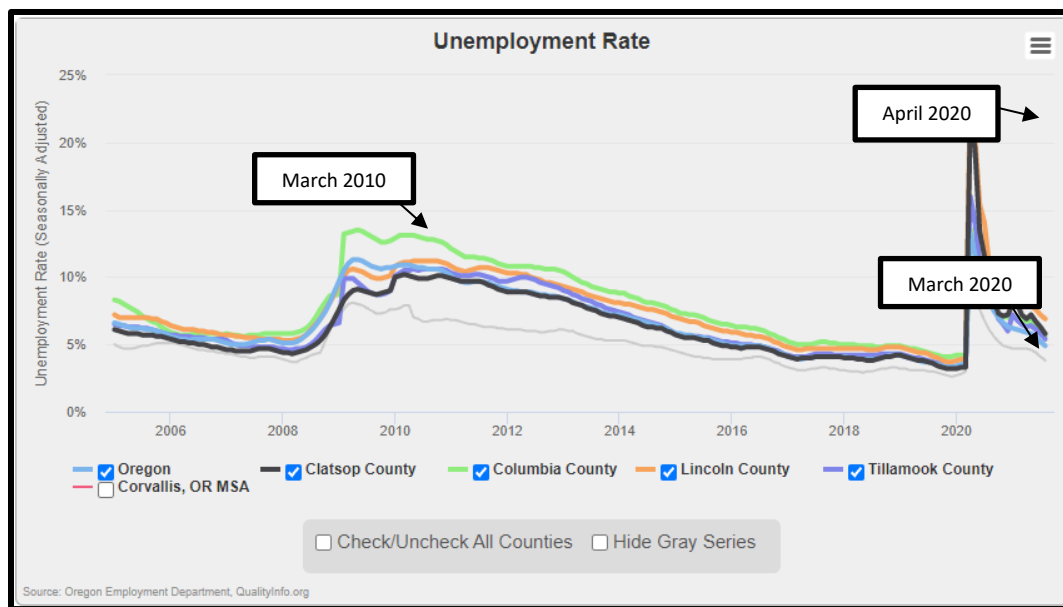
It is impossible to write about the economy of Clatsop County in 2021 without addressing the historic public health challenge that has devastated the economy both nationally and locally since February of 2020. That challenge has revealed the continued weaknesses in the county's economic foundations, but it also helps provide insight into strategies for prosperity and equity moving forward.

As this update of Goal 9 and its accompanying background information are being prepared, the United States, along with the rest of the world, is has been gripped by a major novel coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2, referred to as COVID-19), a pandemic that upset every aspect of daily life, from work and education to food and commodity supply chains. More than one million Americans have died, as have more than 6.4 million people worldwide, according the World Health Organization (WHO), as of July 12, 2022 <https://covid19.who.int/>.

Locally, Clatsop County has weathered the pandemic with 52 deaths and 5,435 positive cases of the total population of 41,072, as July 13, 2022, (<https://coronavirus-response-clatsopcounty.hub.arcgis.com/>). Nearly 75% (29,439) of the county's population is vaccinated.

In addition to the grave statistics accompanying the cost of the pandemic in human lives, every US economic sector has shown disruption, and Clatsop County is no exception: Even those who have not been ill or who have not lost loved ones have found turmoil, extra expense, or hardship in some of the most mundane and unexpected ways: Shortages of supplies, including lumber and building materials, meaning a loss of construction jobs; labor shortages of frontline, essential workers, especially in grocery, leisure and hospitality, and in food manufacturing, creating empty grocery shelves; dwindling travel and recreation alternatives, including local visitor and cruise ship industries; limited access to non-emergency medical care; and slowdowns in postal and package delivery services. As businesses, government agencies, and schools urged or required employees and students to stay away and work remotely, inadequate communications infrastructure, especially in rural areas, throttled the Internet.

## CLATSOP COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



Source: US Census: [Clatsop County Profile](#)

Mirroring the onset of COVID-19, Clatsop County's peak unemployment rate in April of 2020 was 21.8%, a straight up explosion from March 2020's 3.3% rate. Previously the highest rate since January of 2005 was in March 2010, when a 10.2% unemployment rate followed 2008's financial crisis. Since the 2008 crisis, the county's unemployment rate had been steadily declining until COVID-19. The current rate as of August 2021 is 4.6%. The seasonally adjusted rate is 5.8%. (<https://www.qualityinfo.org/FastFacts>)

The 2020 Decennial Census, performed in 2019, revealed the largest racial/ethnic groups in Clatsop County are white (81.6%) and Hispanic (9.3%). Those identifying as being of two or more ethnic or racial heritages accounted for 5.4%. The median age of residents is 44.2 years.

Median household income in Clatsop County in 2019, before the pandemic hijacked the county's economy in April of 2020, was \$54,886; however, 5.3% of Clatsop County families live in poverty. ([https://www.oregon-demographics.com/Clatsop\\_County\\_Demographics](https://www.oregon-demographics.com/Clatsop_County_Demographics)) Total households number 15,800, and 8.1% of the population reports not having health care coverage. Total number of employer establishments is 1,532, and 24.4% of the population reports educational attainment of a bachelor's degree or higher. Employees of private companies accounted for 64.3% of the county's labor force, and about 4.5% reported being self-employed. Local, state and federal government workers were about 14.3% of the population. ([US Census - Clatsop County](#))

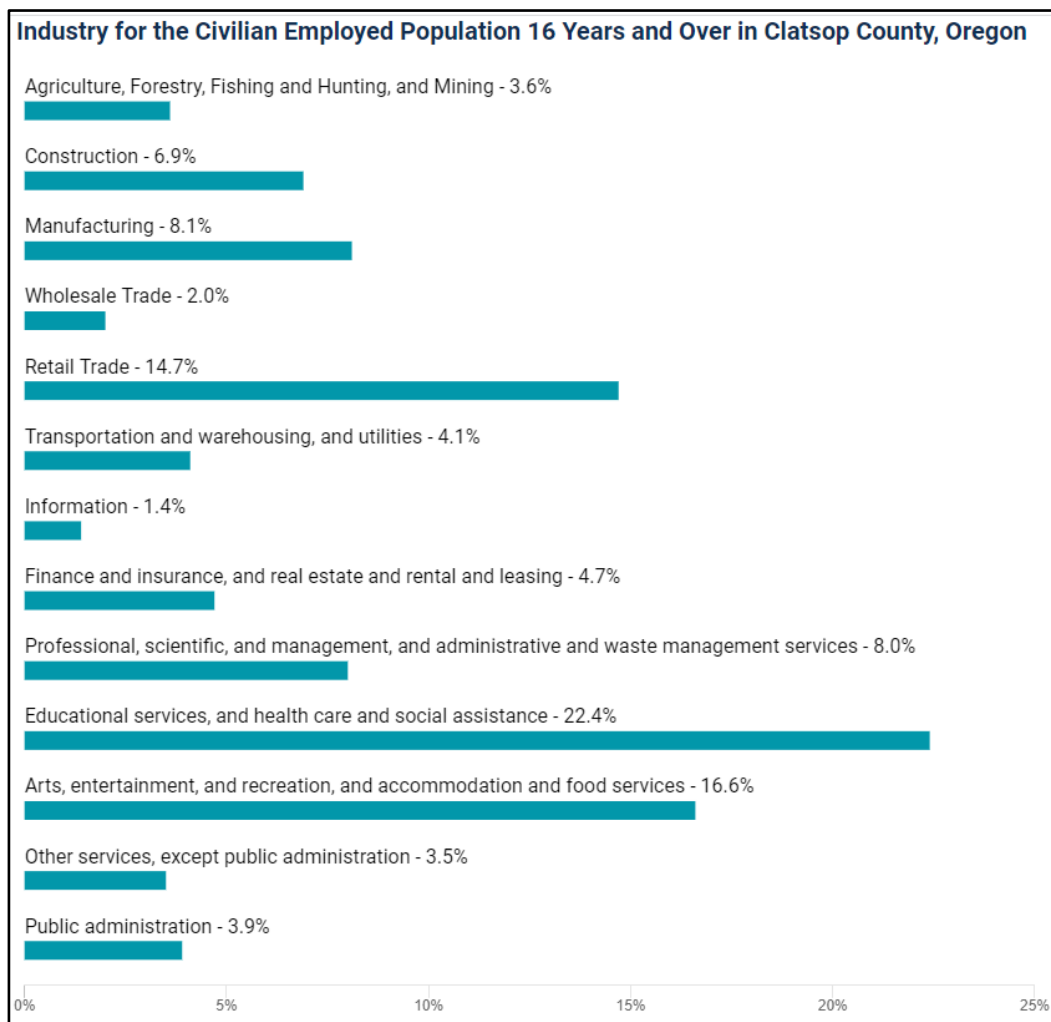
As seen in the table on the previous page, the county's traditional economic base, historically fishing and timber and wood products, with the more recent addition of tourism, has shifted. The major employers now are educational services, health care, and social assistance, leading all other sectors by employing more than 22% of the civilian population. Arts, entertainment, recreation, and accommodation and food services follows, at 16.6%, followed closely by retail

## CLATSOP COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

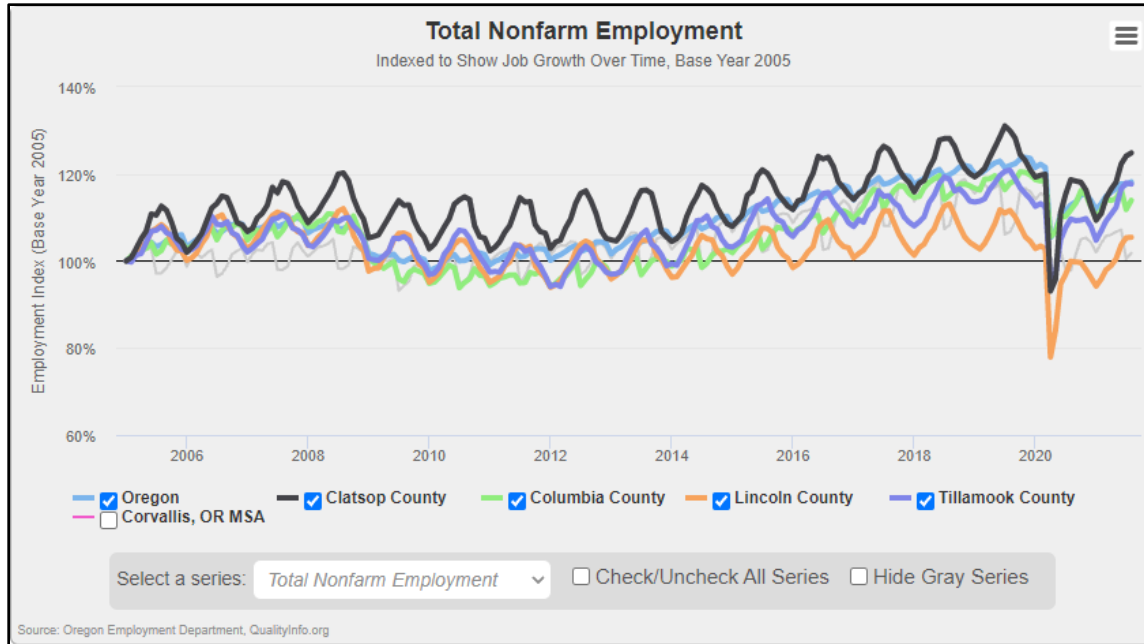
trade, with 14.7%. These three together account for more than 50% of the jobs in Clatsop County.

Clatsop County's civilian labor force is about 20,524 people in August of 2021, up from 19,646 the previous August, including both the employed and the unemployed. The term "employed" includes payroll employment, self-employed, unpaid family workers, domestics, agriculture, and labor disputants.

Employment in the county varies based on the fluctuations of the visitor industry, annually peaking in August and bottoming out in January, as seen in the table below. Stability comes from employment outside tourism, but those sectors employ a smaller percentage as the years pass.



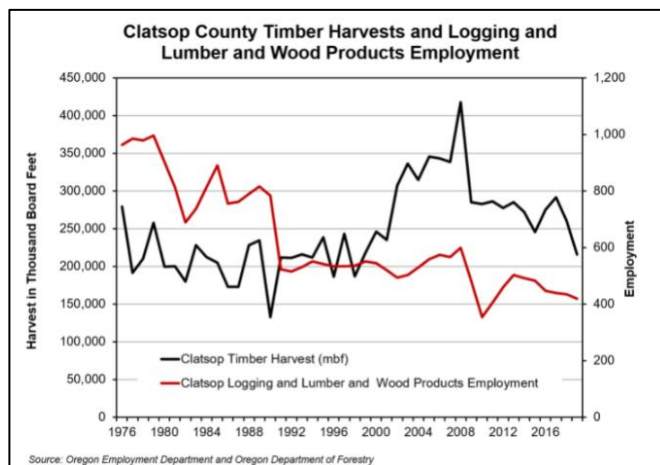
## CLATSOP COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



### FORESTRY & WOOD PRODUCTS

The timber harvest and employment information below, from the Oregon Employment Department, is for 2019, the most recent year for which data is available.

The timber harvest was down 17% in Clatsop County in 2019. The harvest in 2019 was 215,784,000 board feet, which was the lowest since 1998. This also was 20% below the average of the previous 10 years. Clatsop County is 827 square miles, putting it squarely in the middle of the pack by size of Northwest Oregon counties. About 85% of the county is forest land, and it includes most of the Clatsop State Forest.



Logging, forestry, and lumber and wood product manufacturing employment in Clatsop County fell slightly with the loss of 15 jobs. Somewhat smaller harvests in the 1990s supported more than 500 jobs. The number of jobs in the industry now hovers around 400.

There were four wood product mills in the county in 2019 and 16 forestry and logging firms. Clatsop County ranks 15th of Oregon's 36 counties in terms of the

percentage of the county's workforce employed in wood products manufacturing, 249 people, with an average annual wage of \$62,521 in 2020. ([Oregon Employment Dept Wood Product Manufacturing](#))

## CLATSOP COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Logging and mining are lumped together by the Oregon Employment Department for reporting purposes. In Clatsop County, the number employed reflects logging to a far greater degree than mining. Jobs in that sector in July and August of 2021 totaled 150, down 20 from the previous summer. Private

forestry and logging in 2018 accounted for an average annual income of \$54,875 per person.

### **2019 Forest Management Plan and Habitat Conservation Plan**

In 2019, the ODF began a process to update the Western Oregon State Forest Management Plan (FMP). A draft of the revised plan was released in 2020. In conjunction with the updates to the FMP, a draft companion Western Oregon State Forest Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) was also prepared. In October 2020, the Oregon Board of Forestry voted to move the HCP forward into the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) review process.

In the fall of 2022, the Clatsop County Board of Commissioners reviewed a draft of the implementation plan and formally opposed the draft at the Board's October 12, 2022, meeting. The Board found the draft plan's anticipated fiscal impact to Clatsop County taxing districts would negatively affect service levels of the county's cities, schools and special service districts. The Board requested the ODF and other agencies reengage in a collaborative process to create a plan that would protect the environment and allow the local community to remain financially sustainable and able to provide essential services.

### **MARINE RESOURCES**

Estimating employment in fishing is more difficult than measuring the harvests. Legislation in 1999 allowed most fishers to be exempt from unemployment insurance coverage – the primary source of employment data. Five coastal counties – Clatsop, Lincoln, Coos, Curry, and Tillamook – had 96% of the total employment, based on where landings occur. In 2020, the estimated number of fishers varied from a high of 1,520 in March to a low of 367 in December, according to the Oregon Employment Department. Clatsop County's average employment in commercial fishing for the year was about 290 people. Fishing employment usually peaks in the summer but COVID-19 restrictions led to a subdued summer season. The most important fisheries for employment are crab, pink shrimp, and salmon. The estimates of employment by species represent the minimum number of people in that fishery. In addition to direct employment, commercial fishing provides the resource for seafood processors.

Climate change, including ocean acidification and hypoxia, is negatively impacting these industries and will worsen over time.

Although the number of fishing vessels has declined from historic highs, fishing has become more stable over the past decade. Fishing began generating more revenue per boat in Oregon after the turn of the century, albeit with plenty of fluctuations. There were 984 vessels with at least one landing in 2020, up from 960 in 2019. They averaged about \$154,000 each in landed value in Oregon, down 9% from the previous year. Each vessel supported about 1.2 workers on

## CLATSOP COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

an annual average basis; many vessels have landings only part of the year. According to a 2018 interview by Sean Meyers in the Portland Business Journal of John Corbin, Warrenton, at that time chairman of the Oregon Crab Commission, an experienced deckhand can make \$50,000 to \$150,000 per year, working year-round. Crab season alone can yield \$50,000 to \$70,000, but many factors – seasons, weather, harvest yields, consumer demand – affect how much money can be made in a particular year. During the interview, Mr. Corbin stated labor shortages affect the fishing industry, especially the processing side, as well, with many employees coming to work from the Metro area.

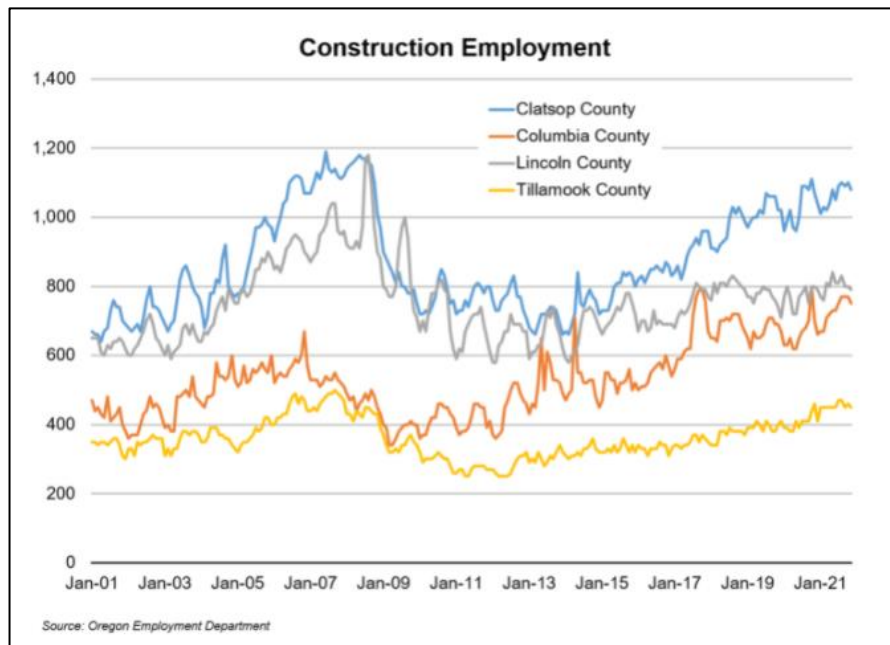
According to the Oregon Employment Department, the skill requirements are modest for many seafood processing jobs. Line jobs generally are entry level. Applicants often must pass a drug screening test and a criminal background check. The work is often 12-hour shifts, seven days per week during the busy seasons. The demand for workers in tight labor and housing markets recently led one Astoria processor to purchase an apartment complex to help provide housing for its workers. Overtime is a part of the job and the base pay is usually minimum wage. Other jobs, such as truck drivers and quality inspectors, require more skill and pay more.

### **CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY**

Employment in construction labor in 2020 was much larger than most occupations across the state. Overall, Oregon's construction employment trends indicate that the state currently is experiencing high-demand in the industry. Statewide, the total number of job openings is projected to be much larger than most occupations in Oregon through 2030.

Statistics for the Northwest Oregon region, which includes Benton, Clatsop, Columbia, Lincoln, and Tillamook counties, estimates in 2020 an average hourly wage of \$22.58 per hour and an average annual salary of \$46,965. The category includes general construction laborer, skilled laborer, equipment operator/laborer, and construction worker.

## CLATSOP COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



*Left: Oregon Employment Department, January 2001 through January 2021, construction employment in four northwest counties.*

Construction activity includes more than just building homes and apartments. There are road construction and commercial construction, as well as remodeling and other forms of construction employment. Types of work include tasks

involving physical labor at construction sites.

Laborers may operate hand and power tools of all types: air hammers, earth tampers, cement mixers, small mechanical hoists, surveying and measuring equipment, and a variety of other equipment and instruments. Work may include cleaning and preparing sites, digging trenches, setting braces to support the sides of excavations, erecting scaffolding, and cleaning up rubble, debris and other waste materials. In March of 2020, OED estimated 990 people in Clatsop County were employed in construction.

### ARTS, ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION AND FOOD SERVICES (VISITOR INDUSTRY)

The visitor industry Clatsop County and the cities of Astoria, Warrenton, Seaside, and Cannon Beach have cultivated for several decades suffered greatly at the beginning of the pandemic. Restaurants, hotels, campgrounds and other venues saw steep declines but appeared to rebound; however, as this goal is being updated, the full impact and duration of the pandemic remain unknown. In 2020, Leisure and hospitality, a broad category that includes arts, entertainment, recreation, performing arts, museums, parks and historical sites, employed 4,001 people with an average annual wage of \$25,510, according to the Oregon Employment Department.

Accommodation and food services, including hotels and eating and drinking establishments, employed another 3,754, with an average annual wage of \$25,380. Together, these two categories which form the backbone of the visitor industry employed 7,755 of the county's workforce of 20,524, or nearly 38%, in 2020; but that employment was for wages that are half or less of those of traditional, natural resource-based fishing and wood products/timber industries.



## **CLATSOP COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

Straddling the entertainment, recreation and food service industries is a growing enterprise in Clatsop County: The Fermentation Industry. Breweries, distilleries, cideries and their taprooms have grown over 400% since 2007 and now are considered a prime attraction for North Coast visitors. Employment numbers are spread over several sectors – warehousing, food services, trucking, and distillers all made up the more than 700 employees in the fermentation industry, pre-pandemic.

The “fermentation cluster”, as it is known includes new breweries and like businesses have been created and expanded particularly in Astoria, Cannon Beach and Seaside. Post-pandemic, they still account for 520 employees, averaging \$18 million in annual local wages. During the past five years, this sector has been responsible for over \$30 million spent on land development and equipment. It is a sector which drives local visitor spending, payroll taxes and property tax and is related to the success of 115 local businesses through spending and purchasing.” (Draft Report on the Fermentation Cluster, CEDR August 2022)

### **EDUCATION, HEALTH CARE AND SOCIAL ASSISTANCE**

As the county’s population has aged, a new industry has steadily shown growth: Education and health care employed 1,641 in 2001 and 2,436 in 2020. Education and health services jobs paid an average annual salary of \$54,941. Health care and social assistance (hospitals, social assistance, nursing and residential care facilities, and ambulatory health care services) averaged \$55,388 annually.

Lumping education and healthcare together, as state and federal agencies do for reporting purposes, risks losing sight of why Clatsop County has seen an increase in this employment area, and why much of the employment pays well. In fact, over the past decade and a half, both Columbia Memorial Hospital, located in Astoria, and Providence Seaside Hospital, Seaside, have significantly increased their facilities, adding clinics and services.

Columbia Memorial Hospital has added the Health and Wellness Pavilion; the CMH-OHSU Knight Cancer Collaborative, and Park Medical facilities, as well as urgent care and other specialty clinics. Providence Seaside has added facilities for oncology and hematology care, urgent care, and other specialties. In addition, Fresenius Kidney Care had added a kidney dialysis center in Astoria. Specialized care for those undergoing oncology treatments and a host of other therapies that residents once traveled out-of-county to obtain are available locally. With the increase in these facilities, a corresponding increase in employment opportunities followed.

### **RETAIL TRADE**

Retail trade has shown significant growth in the past two decades, due in large part because the City of Warrenton has pursued commercial retailers, many of whom located at the county’s North Coast Business Park. Although partially dependent on the visitor industry, increased



## CLATSOP COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

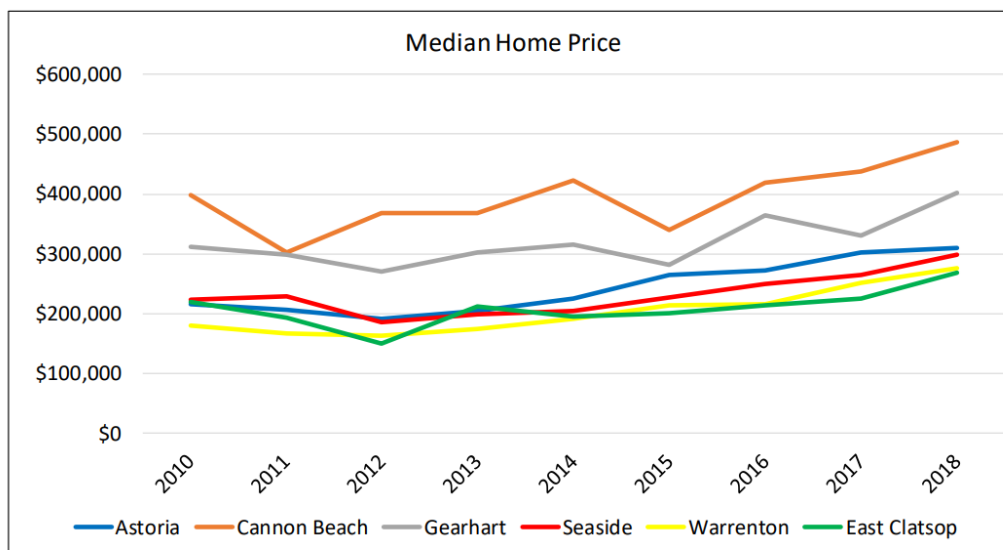
access to large retailers serves the local population as well and may reduce trips to the Metro region by local residents.

For example, the “big box” retailers such as Walmart, Home Depot, Fred Meyer, and Costco may decrease the “sales leakage” identified by Williams-Kuebelbeck & Associates, the consulting firm that developed the county’s initial North Coast Business Park strategy in the late 1990s. “Leakage” was defined in the 1998 study as sales that are lost or leak from the local market area to occur in other places such as the Metro region. Store types were determined to show surplus sales, meaning they likely were capturing visitor spending; or leakage, in which case they offered potential for recapture of retail sales. Primary (five miles round the primary market area) and secondary (a 25-mile radius) market areas demonstrated losing sales in four retail categories: car dealers; furniture/home furnishings; hardware/garden/lumber outlets; and miscellaneous retail stores.

Retail trade employed 2,925 people in 2020 and paid an average (mean) of \$33,055.

### ATTRACTING WORKERS

Potential factors creating worker shortage include lack of workforce housing, as opposed to second home and short term rental housing, and lack of childcare: The Oregon Employment Department ranks Clatsop County as having a severe shortage of regulated childcare, and the median sales price in April 2021 of housing in Clatsop County was \$415,000 (Oregon Regional Multiple Listing Service), with 22.5% of the county’s housing unavailable to residents because it is being used for seasonal, recreational, or occasional use (US Census).



Source: RMLS, Johnson Economics

**Above: Median Home Price Table, as reported in Appendix A, Clatsop County Housing Trends and Needs, January 2019.**

## CLATSOP COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Clatsop County's Housing Trends and Needs Report, Appendix A, January 2019, reported the median price in 2019 was 15% higher than its previous 2018 peak, and 50% higher than its 2012 low. Median price, according to the appendix, has risen at an average annual rate of 7% since then, well exceeding income growth or inflation. This pattern is in keeping with housing prices in most Oregon markets during this recovery.

The [Clatsop County Housing Strategies Report](#), January 2019, found that while there seems to be a sufficient number of housing units to meet current and future needs, much of the supply serves second home and short term rental markets. The report recommends strategies focusing on the county's current and future workforce, at all income levels. Clatsop County, in partnership with the cities of Astoria, Cannon Beach, Gearhart, Seaside and Warrenton, has begun a project aimed at finding potential solutions to the region's housing crisis.

## CURRENT CONDITIONS

### CURRENT STRATEGIES AND CURRENT PARTNERS

Over the years, Clatsop County as a local government has used a number of economic development strategies and partnerships to diversify and strengthen the county's economy. Currently, Clatsop County supports and partners with Clatsop Economic Development Resources (CEDR) and Columbia Pacific Economic Development District (Col-Pac EDD). Clatsop County currently delegates economic development to these two agencies.

**CEDR:** CEDR, [Clatsop Economic Development Resources](#), collaborates with local, state, and federal partners, including the cities of Astoria, Cannon Beach, Gearhart, Seaside, Warrenton, Clatsop County, and is aligned with Clatsop Community College. CEDR also works closely with Business Oregon, the economic development agency of the state of Oregon, and Col-Pac EDD.

In cooperation with the Clatsop Community College Small Business Development Center, CEDR offers counseling in business strategy, marketing, operations and planning, as well as workforce recruiting, training and management assistance. CEDR is also a source for information on resources for new and existing businesses, regulations, taxes and other data. CEDR is a paid membership organization, with many private sector members and a Board of Directors from both the Public and Private Sector. CEDR Executive Director is also the Clatsop County Enterprise Zone Manager.

**Col-Pac EDD:** The [Columbia-Pacific Economic Development District](#), also known as Col-Pac, is a private non-profit organization established to assist in diversifying and strengthening the economy and livability of Northwest Oregon. The District covers all of Clatsop, Columbia, and Tillamook counties and the western part of Washington County. Col-Pac offers regional economic development, strategic planning, grants and grant administration, and flexible gap

## CLATSOP COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

financing for expansion of existing businesses, start-up of new businesses, creation of employment opportunities and/or saving existing jobs in Northwest Oregon.

Governed by a 24-member volunteer Board of Directors, Col-Pac convenes local public and private leaders including representatives from county commissions, cities, ports, local business and business organizations and workforce development and community colleges. Col-Pac also has a seven member Loan Administration Board that oversees the District's Revolving Loan Fund. Certified by the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) as a designated Economic Development District, Col-Pac offers a range of economic and community development services, technical assistance and financing in carrying out its mission.

### **Other Partnerships:**

**Port of Astoria:** Established in 1910, the [Port of Astoria](#) is a governmental Special District organized under ORS 777, operating as a competitive business enterprise as well as a public service agency. An elected Board of Commissioners sets policy for management by the Executive Director. Its boundaries are the same as Clatsop County's.

**Port Mission:** The Port of Astoria seeks to generate economic growth and prosperity in a safe and environmentally responsible manner for its citizens through creation of family wage jobs and prudent management of its assets.

The Port manages a combination of marine, marina, industrial, and aviation facilities, primarily located in the City of Astoria (waterfront properties and infrastructure) and the City of Warrenton (airport and industrial properties).

The Port offers services to commercial and recreational boaters at its two marinas and boatyard, and to commercial and cargo vessels; an emergency pier for passing ships; piers for fish processing, cruise ships and research vessels; and operates the Port of Astoria Regional Airport. The Port leases industrial and commercial sites at the airport, Skipanon Peninsula, and waterfront locations. For the period July 1, 2014, through June 30, 2019, the Port generated an average of \$8.378 million per fiscal year in revenue. At this time, the Port has 127 active tenants. Among users of the Astoria Regional Airport are the US Coast Guard, UPS, Home Depot, Costco, Georgia Pacific Wauna Mill, and Lektro. There are 269 marina occupants, and 180 boats were hauled out in the 2020 fiscal year. The Port sold 206,677 gallons of fuel in 2020 and paid \$8.5 million to local vendors over the past five years.

The Port has recently updated its [Strategic Business Plan, 2019-2024](#) and is pursuing opportunities to maximize the potential of all the properties it manages. For example, the five-year capital plan seeks to increase airport revenues to offset operating expenses fully and provide funding for long-term capital improvements. Within that plan, the Port is exploring development of a temporary container storage, a food pod court on Port property between King Street and Harbor Avenue; as well as development of a watersports camp/village on the east Skipanon Peninsula.

## CLATSOP COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

**The Arts Council of Clatsop County:** The mission of the [Arts Council of Clatsop County](#) is to support, promote, and advocate for the arts and cultural enrichment in the county.

The council has up to nine members who are appointed to three-year terms by the Board of Commissioners. In the 2015 fiscal year, the council participated in an economic impact study of non-profit arts and cultural organizations and their audiences, called Arts & Economic Prosperity 5. The study reviewed direct economic activity, total economic impact of expenditures, and event-related spending by audiences. In 2015, non-profit arts and cultural audiences spent \$10.8 million, excluding cost of admission, in Clatsop County. This was an average of \$67.49 per person, spent on meals and refreshments, souvenirs and gifts, ground transportation, overnight lodging, and other miscellaneous expenses. More than 73,000 nonresident (visitor industry) attendees joined more than 87,000 (local) resident attendees in cultural events that generated more than \$700,000 to local governments and more that \$560,000 to the state. These events supported 359 full time jobs in an industry that is rising. [In 2021, the Arts Council of Clatsop County became a non-profit with 501\(c\)\(3\) status.](#)

**Clatsop Community College:** [Clatsop Community College](#) (CCC) is an accredited community college that offers a variety of degrees, certificates, continuing education and enrichment opportunities. CCC has multiple campuses in Clatsop County, including the Lexington Campus in Astoria, the MERTS (Marine and Environmental Research and Training Station) Campus at Tongue Point, and the South County Campus in Seaside, which is home to the Small Business Development Center. Workforce training courses are provided for students and community members at all stages of their careers. Areas of instruction include everything from healthcare, to fire science. Options exist to transfer credits to or from other schools, colleges, and universities outside the area for work toward degrees. Online learning programs are designed to fit around students' schedules.

In 2018, the Board of Directors adopted strategic initiatives through fiscal year 2023 designed to strengthen the academic environment for students, cultivate connections within the community, and promote equity and inclusiveness.

**Chambers of Commerce:** Clatsop County is home to three chambers of commerce: [Astoria-Warrenton Chamber](#), [Seaside Chamber](#), and [Cannon Beach Chamber](#). All chambers serve and promote their respective areas, fielding inquiries about business and residential relocation, events, visitor accommodations and activities, and business assistance.

**Clatsop County Fair & Expo:** The [Clatsop County Fair & Expo](#) is located on 109 acres overlooking the Wallooski River, three miles from Astoria. The facilities include the 15,000-square-foot exhibit hall, a 40,000-square-foot indoor arena that seats 1,800 spectators; hard-surface parking for 1,000 cars; ample close-in parking for exhibitors; horse barns for 100; spacious outdoor entertainment and carnival areas; and other facilities. Facilities are available for rent for a wide variety of events – from horse clinics and car shows to rodeos, weddings and concerts. Besides the annual Clatsop County Fair, the fairgrounds and expo center hosts the

## CLATSOP COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Astoria-Warrenton Crab and Seafood Festival, the Scandinavian Midsummer Festival, trade shows, music festivals, and family movie nights.

The Clatsop County Fair Board, a citizen committee appointed by the Clatsop County Board of Commissioners, is charged by Oregon law with the management of the fairgrounds and county fair.

### City Partners

**City of Astoria:** The 2020 US Census documented the City of Astoria's population as 10,181. It remains the county's largest city. The Community Development Department assists with business development within the City limits. The Department maintains a [Buildable Lands Inventory](#) for commercial/industrial development property in Astoria. Facade renovation loans are available for certain areas of the City including the Downtown area and the Uniontown area.

The Department works closely with the [Astoria Downtown Historic District Association \(ADHDA\)](#) concerning development within the Downtown area including issues such as street amenities, facade renovations, transportation, parking, etc.

The Community Development Department also maintains a [Buildable Lands Inventory](#) for residential development. The City encourages location of residential uses within commercial buildings especially in the Downtown area.

Astoria's housing stock is one of the oldest in Oregon, with over 70% of the housing built prior to 1950. The City has worked with property owners to assist with repairs and upgrades using Community Development Block Grants. The program has provided hundreds of thousands of dollars to improve the housing stock in Astoria.

Workforce housing is a major issue in Clatsop County. The City of Astoria has added 36 units through working with a developer at the Merwyn Apartments next to City Hall. The Merwyn was completed in the spring of 2021. The City of Astoria also is exploring opportunities for redevelopment of [Heritage Square](#), the site of the former Safeway grocery store, potentially for workforce housing. The City continues to work with a developer on possible options.

The city works closely with various agencies and groups to facilitate economic development in Astoria:

[Clatsop Economic Development Resources \(CEDR\)](#)  
[Small Business Development Center](#)  
[Astoria-Warrenton Chamber of Commerce](#)  
[Astoria Downtown Historic District Association](#)

**City of Cannon Beach:** The 2020 Census estimated Cannon Beach's population at 1,489. This small city is a major visitor destination that is, in the words of its [2017-2021 Strategic Plan](#), dependent on employees who are invested in the community. The plan identifies the lack of

## CLATSOP COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

affordable housing as a concern to 86% of the city's population. Only a small percentage of the city's workforce can afford to live in the community they serve. Also called out in the plan are emergency management and infrastructure.

The city's plan identifies a long-term commitment to address the affordable housing shortage with several strategies:

- By July 1, 2018, Cannon Beach will make available 25 units of affordable housing that will accommodate a variety of household sizes and will be consistent with the City's architectural guidelines.
- By December 31, 2018, Cannon Beach will experience a 10% increase in long-term rentals.
- By July 1, 2020, Cannon Beach will make available an additional 25 units of affordable housing that will accommodate a variety of household sizes and will be consistent with the City's architectural guidelines.

Emergency management concerns center on the city's proximity to the Cascadia Subduction Zone and Pacific storms. The city's infrastructure challenges include parking to residents, and businesses and the city's approximately 7,500 daily tourists. The city currently is updating its [Transportation System Plan](#) with the Oregon Department of Transportation. [Other major projects](#) include the Cannon Beach Elementary School Rejuvenation Project and the City Hall / Police Station Project.

**City of Gearhart:** The largest of the county's two cities with a population under 5,000, Gearhart's population is 1,793, according the 2020 US Census. The city's [Comprehensive Plan](#), most recently updated in September 2019, guides the city's efforts to maintain its quiet, residential setting along the Pacific Ocean. Key goals in the city's Goal 9 focus on the quality of life and residents' concerns for the health of the environment: These goals include ensuring a stable and healthy economy through human and natural resources; promoting conservation, developing alternative sources and efficient use of energy; guiding land use decisions so as to make a more efficient use of energy resources, and promoting activities that reduce the use of non-renewable energy resources.

**City of Seaside:** Seaside encompasses approximately 3.9 square miles of land and 0.2 square miles of surface water, with a population of 7,115, according to the 2020 US Census. The city's visitor industry contributes to the quality of life enjoyed by residents: There are several community businesses including the Seaside Aquarium, founded in 1937, one of the oldest aquariums on the West Coast, the City of Seaside Library (newly built in 2008), the Seaside Historical Society Museum, and the Sunset Empire Parks and Recreation, with a pool and indoor youth center. The Seaside Civic & Convention Center is City owned and operated. Other amenities include the Bob Chisholm community Center, a variety of parks, and the city's oceanfront promenade.

## CLATSOP COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The city has adopted various master planning strategies, including the [2018 Seaside Parks Master Plan](#). In 2014, the Seaside City Council adopted “[Visioning for Seaside 2034, Building a Bridge to the Future](#),” to create a community vision for the city’s future. Major themes emerging from the visioning process were safety, jobs, eco-tourism/clean air/environment, infrastructure, schools and youth, innovative leadership, hometown pride, and diverse community.

In 2017, the city completed an urban growth boundary expansion that allowed the Seaside School District to begin a major infrastructure project to move its campuses out of the tsunami inundation and flood hazard areas and on to the hillside to the east of the city’s core.

The city’s [2021 Goal Setting](#) identified projects to evaluate its urban growth boundary for the purpose of housing, identifying a long-term downtown parking solution, updating the city’s plan for Disaster Evacuation and Survival Infrastructure, and developing a resiliency master plan, among other notable goals.

**City of Warrenton:** The City of Warrenton’s Fiscal Year 2019-2020 projects include a now-completed Housing Needs Assessment & Development Code Update, an urban renewal amendment, a downtown redevelopment program, an update of the city’s parks master plan, and an economic development strategy and economic opportunities analysis, currently underway. A link to the [discussion draft of the analysis](#) is found on the county’s website. Among the draft’s key findings are:

- Warrenton is a small, growing community that has grown, and is expected to continue growing, faster than the broader Clatsop County and Northwest Oregon rates. The 2020 US Census placed the city’s population at 6,277.
- Retail is the largest industry sector in Warrenton and is expected to grow faster than most industry sectors based on project population growth (which drives consumer spending and retail demand). Warrenton’s Urban Renewable District covers its downtown area and its Urban Renewal Agency is active in business and economic development.
- Extractive and resource-related industries, including forestry, commercial fishing, seafood processing and boat building, are legacy industries that, while not expected to grow rapidly, are culturally significant for Warrenton and the region and may offer opportunities for innovation.
- Warrenton’s supply of land is heavily impacted by wetlands, making development challenging in certain locations. Nonetheless, the available land to meet the needs of growing employment is sufficient; the City has significantly more industrial, commercial and mixed-use land than is likely to be needed based on forecasted employment growth.

Like Clatsop County, Warrenton’s Comprehensive Plan identifies in Goal 9 the forest products, marine resources, and travel industries as its major economic base and calls out workforce development in partnerships with Clatsop Community College and industrial development in



## **CLATSOP COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

partnership with the Port of Astoria. The city, like the county, is undergoing a full update of its Comprehensive Plan.