



# **Moving at the Speed of Business**

**Idaho Department of Commerce**

**FY2017-2020 Strategic Plan**

**July 1, 2016**

## MISSION AND VISION

### **Mission:**

As the lead economic development agency for the State of Idaho, the mission of the Idaho Department of Commerce is to foster a business-friendly environment to aid in job creation, support existing companies, strengthen communities, and market Idaho to:

- Grow and expand the economy by supporting the expansion and retention of Idaho businesses and attraction of new businesses to the state;
- Cultivate the development of new businesses and job opportunities across targeted industry sectors;
- Expand Idaho's tourism and recreation industries;
- Guide Idaho businesses in exports of goods and services to the world and encourage foreign direct investment in Idaho;
- Encourage communities to be prepared for business growth through infrastructure development and site readiness;
- Promote the development of innovative research through public-private partnerships.

### **Vision:**

The vision of Idaho Commerce is to support the growth of the state's economy with a thriving business environment. We strive to *Accelerate Idaho* through resources and talent to create unmatched opportunity for our citizens, communities, and industries. Our standard is to **"Move at the Speed of Business"** in order to accelerate the growth of the state's economy and ensure we are proactively anticipating the needs of businesses. This standard drives every goal, strategy, and activity on a daily basis through each of Idaho Commerce's teams: Business Attraction, Tourism, Economic Development, Industry & Community Services, Community Development, and International Trade.

## COMMERCE'S CORE VALUES AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

### **Be a Partner to Business**

Business is our top priority. As we strive to understand the needs of Idaho's core and emerging industries, we also commit to doing our utmost to provide timely, effective, and flexible solutions in anticipation of the needs and demands of businesses. The success of the private sector in Idaho is our overriding benchmark. We want businesses both inside and outside the state to know that the Idaho Commerce is their partner in state government as well an advocate and a resource for their success.

### **Our Top Priority: Support Idaho's Existing Businesses**

The strongest economic foundation Idaho can create will be built on strategies that support existing Idaho industries. Existing Idaho businesses are the foundation of economic success

for the state. Idaho's historical philosophy has been that any policy or resource intended to attract new industry must also benefit existing companies and communities. Idaho Commerce's strategies carefully respect and incorporate that tradition in all of its priorities and we strive to assist existing businesses through support, grants, and partnerships.

### **Promote Results-Driven Government**

Transparency, accountability, and measurable results are critical for any government agency. Idaho Commerce respects the importance of all three and incorporates these guiding principles in all of our processes, particularly with regard to measuring outcomes. Whether it is gaging the success of our services to businesses, or deploying and evaluating the success of our grant programs, we consistently and carefully measure our efforts.

### **Community Success Means Idaho Success**

Our Idaho communities are the backbone of our great state. Imbedded in each community are strong values and ethics that are based on our Western, rural heritage. In order for our state to move forward, we must ensure our communities retain a vibrant future of growth. Idaho Commerce is committed to building and assisting communities across the state in their efforts to reach their respective goals, including the planning and development of economic assets. We will provide assistance to communities of all sizes – including those in the most rural areas of our state – to ensure that each community has equal opportunity for job creation and economic growth.

### **Idaho's Greatest Strength: Team Idaho**

Our state's greatest strength is the ability to bring people together at all levels of leadership to create solutions for the entire state. In short, we are "one big small town." We value teamwork and collaboration and we have the ability to create proactive solutions to the challenges that businesses face. Harnessing that strength in a systematic way is paramount for Idaho to be competitive. Idaho Commerce will work at every level to facilitate and encourage Idahoans working together.

## **IDAHO COMMERCE'S ASSETS**

### **Assets:**

Idaho Commerce is committed to ensuring access to comprehensive, high-quality programs, services, information, training, and outreach on behalf of its many customers, and in cooperation with its partners. Idaho Commerce's programs and services are delivered through several highly-effective teams:

**Business Attraction** advises and assists companies and site selection consultants seeking information about potential locations in Idaho for expansion and relocation purposes; disseminates leads to local and regional economic development partners; distributes Requests for Information (RFIs) to local and regional economic development

organizations (EDOs) and coordinates their responses; works with the Economic Advisory Council to manage the award implementation of the Idaho Tax Reimbursement Incentive (TRI) and the Idaho Opportunity Fund; provides advice and technical information to local and regional EDOs; contributes to the effectiveness of mock site visits; manages the Gem State Prospector tool; participates in domestic industry trade shows; provides valuable expertise and conducts essential research and outreach, among a myriad other services.

**Business Development and Marketing** manages Idaho Commerce's business and tourism websites and social media activities; oversees and coordinates branding continuity; writes, edits, and publishes agency publications and other collateral materials; and provides valuable advice and assistance throughout the agency.

**Idaho Global Entrepreneurial Mission (IGEM) Program** is comprised of three primary funding elements. The IGEM Commercialization Grant is managed by Idaho Commerce, which partners private industry endeavors with the talent and expertise of Idaho's research universities to commercialize innovative and viable technologies to strengthen Idaho's economy. IGEM secures intellectual property originating from these endeavors and assists in Technology Transfer by processing scientific findings from development to commercialization. The other funding components fall within the purview of the Idaho State Board of Education: Higher Education Research Council (HERC); and the Center of Advanced Energy Studies (CAES).

**Tourism Development** has the lead role within Commerce to expand Idaho's tourism and recreation industries by: marketing the state's travel opportunities at home and abroad; distributing grants to communities to promote local destinations, attractions, and events, and encourage visitors; developing, soliciting, and promoting tourism events and attractions; managing a nationally-recognized Idaho Conference on Recreation and Tourism (ICORT); organizing and conducting familiarization tours for travel writers, photographers, tour companies, and others; supporting the Idaho Travel Council; disseminating information and publications about tourism and recreation opportunities to travelers, visitors, and others; supervising the annual publication of the Idaho Travel Guide; and providing valuable advice and expertise and a wide range of services.

**Industry & Community Services** provides direct assistance to existing Idaho businesses; supports, advises, and assists rural economic development organizations (EDOs); advises and supports efforts of cities, counties, special taxing districts, and other organizations to improve economic assets and create opportunities for economic development; provides valuable expertise, ongoing outreach, and training; coordinates mock site visits; provides valuable leadership in the planning and conducting of community reviews; manages the longstanding Northwest Community Development Institute (NWCDI) – a nationally recognized professional development program; and manages Idaho Commerce's Main Street Program and Gem Grant Program, among a myriad of resources and trainings to assist and advise local and regional EDOs and communities, among others.

**Community Development** manages the federal Idaho Community Development Block Grant Program and the State of Idaho Rural Community Block Grant Program, which provide millions of dollars annually for the improvement of public infrastructure and economic development assets; provides valuable advice and technical assistance to Idaho's cities and counties for the construction and rehabilitation of public facilities to support economic diversification, job creation, business expansion, and a sense of community; provides valuable expertise, coaching, and outreach to cities, counties, regional economic development planning districts, special taxing districts, grant writers, and grant administrators; coordinates annual training and certification of grant administrators; supports the Idaho Economic Advisory Council; and continuously monitors the status and performance of grant-funded projects.

**International Trade** provides advice and assistance to Idaho companies seeking to export or source services and products; cooperates with the Idaho State Department of Agriculture in the oversight of Idaho's Trade Offices in Mexico, Taiwan, and China; plans and conducts overseas and inbound trade missions; represents Idaho at international trade shows; manages market access grants subject to the availability of funding; serves on the Idaho District Export Council and helps plan and implement World Trade Day; develops new markets; increases foreign awareness and acceptance of Idaho's products and services; attracts international investment; coordinates the state's protocol efforts; and provides a wide range of valuable expertise on international trade and export matters.

**Administration** coordinates public relations, public inquiries and media requests for information; manages legislative and budget development activities; handles all fiscal activities, including state and federal grant reporting requirements; coordinates with Division of Human Resources on all human resource related issues; manages IT functions to support functionality throughout the department; manages all department resources and assets.

## GOAL ONE: ADVANCE IDAHOANS

### **Facilitate Sustainable Talent Pipelines for the State of Idaho**

Partnering with state agencies, educational institutions and the private sector, is critical to ensure talent demands are met for Idaho's existing and new businesses.

**Objective:** Idaho Commerce seeks to improve its understanding of the immediate and long-term employment needs of Idaho's existing and new businesses and will partner with state agencies, universities and colleges, and the private sector to help define skilled labor needs.

**Strategies:** Idaho is developing industry-specific task forces to guide the development of talent pipelines. The Idaho Department of Labor's Workforce Development Training Fund Grants have been refocused to provide advanced skills and capabilities for Idaho's leading industries, and industry sector grants are being targeted to specific industry training and education needs. Idaho Commerce will continue to be a partner with the Idaho Department of Labor in aiding the workforce needs in existing and new businesses.

**Desired Outcome:** Idaho businesses having the sustainable talent pool they need to succeed.

**Performance Measures:** Jobs created or retained<sup>1</sup>

**Benchmarks:** 2,000 jobs per year

### **Support K-Through-Career**

Governor Otter has declared education a top priority for Idaho, specifically supporting education and training that spans "K-through-Career." By developing a continuum of opportunities, we will foster a lifetime of learning and expanded skill sets for all Idahoans.

**Objective:** Idaho Commerce will support a continuum of education starting in elementary school and continuing through career preparedness that will ensure Idaho students have the necessary skillsets that are required by industries.

**Strategies:**

- The Governor has declared education to be his highest priority and is implementing the recommendations from his Task Force for Improving Education. Those commitments include: enhancing the use of technology in the classroom; greater focus on science, technology, and math education; and more aggressive facilitation of dual-credit programs that allow high school students to earn college credits.
- While Idaho Commerce is not directly responsible for the implementation of the Task Force recommendations, the department will support its key agency partners in ensuring key policymakers understand the need for a well-educated and prepared workforce.

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<sup>1</sup>New jobs are created through the expansion of existing Idaho businesses or the recruitment of new businesses to the state. Jobs included in this calculation encompass those resulting from the Department of Commerce's business development efforts, and/or through support the department provides to local economic development organizations throughout the state. One of the department's other priorities is to protect and retain existing jobs within the state. Idaho companies are not immune from aggressive recruitment efforts undertaken by other states and communities; thus, the department is continually engaged with local businesses to ensure they maintain their presence in the state. Job creation and retention numbers are monitored and tracked through the department's internal Salesforce database system.

- Idaho Commerce will remain vigilant to escalate the training and education of talent in the key industry sectors facing current workforce shortages – such as software and advanced manufacturing – to ensure these high-growth industries have the skilled talent they need to grow.

Desired Outcome: Skilled talent to meet Idaho business needs

Performance Measures: Jobs created or retained<sup>2</sup>

Benchmarks: 2,000 jobs per year

### **Expand High-Quality Jobs**

For Idaho to remain competitive, we must increase the number of high-paying jobs that provide a livable wage. Two clear objectives will create this result. First, advancing Idaho citizens as outlined above, will provide Idaho workers the skills necessary to qualify for higher paying jobs. Second, Idaho Commerce will strengthen its focus on growing the industries that generate those higher-wage jobs.

Objective: To identify and pursue opportunities for businesses to create and add well-paying jobs for Idaho's economy. Commerce will seek additional opportunities to expand Idaho's economy and expand the diversity and quality of jobs for Idahoans.

#### Strategies:

- In 2014, Governor Otter signed the Idaho Tax Reimbursement Incentive (TRI) which encourages new businesses to the state and existing Idaho businesses expanding to create jobs with wages above the average county wage, increasing access to high-paying jobs throughout the state. Two years after the inception of TRI, 29 expansion and attraction projects have been approved with a total of 4,737 new jobs and \$2.1 billion in new payroll committed. Of these projects, 15 are new to Idaho businesses and 14 are existing Idaho businesses.
- Proactively identify and recruit industries and companies with a focus on those that have the capacity to transform Idaho's economy.
- Network with nationally recognized site selection consultants to proactively identify business recruitment opportunities.

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<sup>2</sup> New jobs are created through the expansion of existing Idaho businesses or the recruitment of new businesses to the state. Jobs included in this calculation encompass those resulting from the Department of Commerce's business development efforts, and/or through support the department provides to local economic development organizations throughout the state. One of the department's other priorities is to protect and retain existing jobs within the state. Idaho companies are not immune from aggressive recruitment efforts undertaken by other states and communities; thus, the department is continually engaged with local businesses to ensure they maintain their presence in the state. Job creation and retention numbers are monitored and tracked through the department's internal Salesforce database system.

- Continue to focus on existing companies and play a critical role in coordinating business expansion efforts for both Idaho companies and local communities.

Desired Outcome: An increase in the number and quality of high-paying jobs across Idaho, specifically in key industries. TRI has been successfully integrated into a vast array of business incentives in Idaho and have made a tangible difference in Idaho Commerce's efforts to foster corporate expansion from both within and outside of the state. As a result of our efforts and those of EDOs throughout the state, we will continue to leverage available incentives to enhance the availability of high-quality jobs.

Advance Individuals Performance Measures:

- Monitoring of talent pipelines for key industry sectors that provide and create high-paying jobs (software, advance manufacturing).
- Create partnerships and feedback loops with existing Idaho industry leaders to identify the talent needs of key industry sectors.
- Work with business and labor partners to map out the talent needs over the next four years and coordinate with education stakeholders to ensure the state is prepared to meet that demand.
- Leverage the Tax Reimbursement Incentive tool – along with other key performance-based economic development incentives – to support the creation of higher paying jobs throughout the state.
- With the Department of Labor, monitor overall job growth for the state and its industries along with corresponding wages.

## GOAL TWO: PROMOTE IDAHO BUSINESS

### Energize Existing Industries

Idaho companies and industries are the drivers of the state's economy. Idaho Commerce makes it a priority to help them succeed by supporting their growth, reducing their costs, and advancing their technological capabilities.

Objective: Idaho Commerce is focused on strengthening a deeper understanding of Idaho's industry needs. Together with other state agency partners, we will focus on facilitating the steps we can take to support the overall growth of Idaho companies.

Strategies:

- Encourage collaboration between Idaho companies to source products and services locally and supporting locally-driven growth of emerging industry sectors throughout the state.
- Continue to work with economic development organizations (EDOs), chambers of commerce, and others to identify and meet the needs of Idaho companies.
- Commerce staff will regularly visit existing Idaho companies in top economic sectors to discern needs, actual and prospective expansion opportunities, and offer assistance.

- Continue to expand opportunities for Idaho companies to export their products and services throughout the world as a strategy for business growth. Leveraging the state's trade office in China, Mexico, and Taiwan, Idaho Commerce will work with individual companies and key industry sectors to facilitate export opportunities.
- Grow tourism products and infrastructure by supporting resort, hotel, and attraction developers and will continue to promote Idaho as a destination for tourists and visitors.
- Proactively communicate success stories of Idaho's businesses and new expansions in Idaho. Monitor success stories from across the state and elsewhere. Leverage Commerce resources in order to broadcast those stories nationally and internationally.

**Desired Outcome:** Be the lead state agency for responsive business development assistance and for promoting Idaho to the world. Business customers working with Idaho Commerce value each interaction as a positive, productive experience.

**Performance Measures:** Conversion Rate: Leads to Site Visits; 2% Lodging Tax; Cap Ex<sup>3</sup>; International trade outreach activities - Services provided to our client companies such as export counseling, sourcing, seminars, trade manager visit meetings.

**Benchmarks:** Conversion Rate: Leads to Site Visits 60%; International: Complete 550 activities or more per year; Increase Collection of 2% Lodging Tax by 14%; CAPEX: \$250 million.

### **Empower Business Opportunities**

To succeed, companies must be able to focus on their core business. Idaho offers a hassle-free business environment: streamlined and responsive government services, and fair and consistent regulatory requirements. As a small state, Idaho can be nimble, allowing us to respond quickly to the needs of the nation's industries.

**Objective:** Take the lead in coordinating the state's response when we become aware of companies seeking to expand in Idaho, relocate, or close.

#### **Strategies:**

- Encourage collaboration between key industry partners.
- Maintain vigilance to ensure the state offers efficient and transparent regulatory processes.
- Expand its customized digital business resources and tools to enhance the capabilities of communities and economic development partners who in turn support local businesses.

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<sup>3</sup> Capital expenditure represents the private-sector investment in land, property, and/or equipment in a business expansion or relocation project. Cap Ex is tracked through the department's internal Salesforce database system.

- Proactively manage and support the Governor's Rapid Response Teams of key state government officials designed to respond quickly to companies' needs.
- Partner with business and state leaders to develop strategies and forecasts pertaining to Idaho's leading and emerging industries, summarize recommendations and forecasts, and develop milestones with relevant industry leaders.
- Commerce staff will continue to visit Idaho companies regularly to discern needs, actual and prospective expansion opportunities, and offer assistance.
- For entrepreneurs seeking to start or expand nascent businesses, Idaho Commerce will continue to provide or facilitate technical support, refer clients to relevant sources of assistance, and provide introductions to sources of financial or technical assistance.
- In partnership with local and regional officials, Commerce will seek to identify and attempt to resolve: impediments to a company's success that may be the result of federal, state, and local laws, regulations, or actions; local conditions that inhibit business retention and expansion.

Desired Outcome: Valuable state resource by business clients, EDOs, regional economic development districts, and others, especially in making the connection between community assets or needs, and the needs of existing and expanding businesses.

Performance Measure: Jobs created and retained; Idaho GDP<sup>4</sup>

Benchmark: 2,000 jobs per year; 2.5% GDP increase

### **Invigorate Innovation & Research**

Technology and innovation advances existing industries and continually creates new ones. With three research universities and the Idaho National Laboratory—along with leading industry innovators—Idaho is able to harness new technologies and embrace new innovations.

Objective: Assist the expansion, enhancement, and coordination of the state's technical and innovation resources to augment existing Idaho industry and help invigorate Idaho's research capabilities to solidify Idaho's position as a worldwide leader in innovation and research.

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<sup>4</sup> Idaho Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is a primary measurement to track the progress of the Governor's Project 60 goals. GDP is reported by the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis.

Strategies:

- Proactively support Governor Otter's initiatives to regionally expand the Center for Advance Energy Studies (CAES).
- Continue our role overseeing IGEM research grants and advance the Idaho Global Entrepreneurial Mission (IGEM) Program.
- Continue its support and work on the Leadership in Nuclear Energy (LINE) Commission.
- Foster private industry endeavors with the talent and expertise of Idaho's research universities with the goal of commercializing innovative, viable technologies to strengthen Idaho's economy.
- Assist in technology transfer by processing scientific findings through development and up to commercialization.

Desired Outcome: Strengthen the existing partnerships with universities, the private sector, INL, HERC, and CAES to enhance spinoff business activity and commercialization of university research. Help support and facilitate the development of industry enhancing technologies and the creation of new, emerging sectors to ensure Idaho's reputation is a state where innovation occurs and successful businesses are nurtured.

Elevate Industry Overall Performance Measures:

- Monitor GDP for the state and the corresponding measures for each industry.
- Development of industry-based economic analysis and research (cluster strategies).
- Identify Idaho industry-specific key supply chains or other partners that have a business reason to expand in Idaho.
- Track impact of TRI on enhancing revenues to the state general fund and creating new, higher wage jobs throughout the state.
- Track and monitor the number of companies participating in annual trade missions and the corresponding revenues resulting from the missions.
- Track growth of Idaho exports to the world.
- Track number of private sector/university research collaborations.
- Track commercialization of new technologies that result in viable business opportunities.
- Track 2% lodging tax receipts to monitor growth of tourism in the state.

## GOAL THREE: STRENGTHEN IDAHO COMMUNITIES

Inspire Community Vitality

Each Idaho community, whether urban or rural, has its own unique potential. Idaho Commerce and other state partners are helping communities leverage the strengths of each community in order to attract businesses and increase tourism while retaining their individual character.

Objective: Idaho Commerce helps communities participate in programs that revitalize downtowns and provide community training curriculum to encourage and prepare for growth. Commerce provides a wide range of programs and services, such as grants, technical assistance, and other resources to improve the overall economic health of Idaho's communities and help them become "destinations" for commerce.

Strategies:

- Complete and implement a training curriculum for communities with information on a range of subjects online, in person, or via webinars.
- Sponsor the Northwest Community Development Institute (NWCDI), held annually in the Boise area. Community development officials, elected and appointed county and municipal leaders, and others have an opportunity to update the tools of their trade from experts via this professional development program.
- Community reviews and mock site visits provide the means by which community leaders gain firsthand insights into the strengths, assets, opportunities, weaknesses, and threats from a range of experts. Mock site visits focus on preparation for visits by company representatives and site selection consultants as well as local business expansion or retention. Community reviews are broader in scope.

Desired Outcome: Provide direct assistance to communities for public infrastructure projects as well as a valuable source of advice in planning for, financing, and developing economic development and community development projects.

Performance Measure: Public and private dollars leveraged by grants; Number of grants deployed<sup>5</sup>.

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<sup>5</sup> The department administers the Community Development, Rural Community, Gem, Idaho Opportunity Fund, STEP, and Idaho Travel Council grant programs. The department monitors and tracks the number of grants awarded to entities throughout the state as a measure of the department's widespread impact in stimulating economic development.

### **Advance Infrastructure**

Infrastructure is critical to an expanding economy. Our roads, bridges, and airports, and our water, sewer, and power sources must have the capacity to serve future growth. Idaho must also accelerate our technical infrastructure—like broadband and high-speed wireless—to be more competitive to industry.

**Objective:** Idaho Commerce will continue to maximize its investments in public infrastructure for economic development. We will prudently steward grant programs for effective impact.

#### **Strategies:**

- Idaho will proactively examine our infrastructure needs to ensure the state is poised for economic development opportunities.
- Support the analysis and exploration of a long-term funding strategy for transportation.
- Strategically deploy Idaho Opportunity Fund in projects focused on creating new jobs for Idaho communities.
- Continue to impact the safety, livability, and economic vitality of Idaho communities by leveraging Community Development Block Grants to assist in bringing their public infrastructure or facilities into compliance with environmental laws and regulations, building codes, revitalizing downtown districts, and/or creating jobs.
- Through its Rural Community Block Grant and Gem Grant programs, Idaho Commerce will continue to support community efforts to repair, improve, or expand their public infrastructure or facilities for the benefit of their residents and businesses, to create or enhance developable assets, such as industrial parks, for job creation and job retention.
- Continue to review all infrastructure projects being contemplated within the state. Commerce will maintain such a list and incorporate a review of potential projects as part of the process used to recommend grants to the Economic Advisory Council.

**Desired Outcome:** Aid communities to improve public infrastructure for economic development purposes and improve their ability to be vibrant and competitive.

**Performance Measure:** Public and private dollars leveraged by grants; Number of grants deployed<sup>6</sup>.

**Benchmark:** \$30 million leveraged by grants; 120 grants deployed statewide (both rural and urban)

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### **Coordinate Regional Collaboration**

The spirit of collaboration can elevate communities, industries, and the entire state. Drawing Idaho's communities and industries together with competitive regional strategies creates momentum that will continue for generations. When one wins, we all win.

**Objective:** Idaho Commerce will lead "Team Idaho" meetings and sharing information on how Idaho can Move at the Speed of Business, among key state, federal, local, economic development, and business partners.

#### **Strategies:**

- Continue rallying the whole state with the mantra of "Team Idaho," encouraging us to work together for the benefit of the state and building a foundation to lead the nation.
- Through regional "Team Idaho" meetings, state and local partners can continue to develop industry cluster-based strategies that ensure we are moving forward toward a common goal.

**Desired Outcome:** Moving at the speed of business. Partners at all levels cooperate to implement the respective components of moving at the speed of business.

#### **Strengthen Communities Performance Measures:**

- Track other state and private funds leveraged with each Idaho Commerce grant award.
- Track the number of jobs created.
- Track the average job multiplier of created jobs.
- Track the number of sub-standard infrastructure systems that were improved.
- Develop a curriculum for a continuum of community training.
- Track number of community trainings and mock site visits.
- Track number of communities that embrace the Main Street program.

## EXTERNAL FACTORS

Various local, national, and international factors can affect Idaho Commerce's goals. These factors sometimes have unintended consequences that are unforeseeable.

### **Economic and Financial Factors**

- Minimum wage in bordering states
- Federal funding levels
- Value of the dollar
- Political stability of trading partners

### **Natural Resources, Environment, Public Lands Policy, Energy and Agriculture**

- Water
- Electricity
- Federal Policies

### **Education**

- Availability of skilled talent
- Education costs and accessibility

### **Transportation and Public Infrastructure Factors**

- Broadband accessibility
- Funding for infrastructure projects
- Port of Portland

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