

CEDS Frequently Asked Questions

Contact Jennifer Noveck, Ph.D. with additional questions: ceds@edcislandcounty.org



What is a CEDS?

CEDS stands for a [Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy](#). A CEDS is a long-term, consensus-driven, local planning document that intends to guide economic development throughout a region or county. The Economic Development Administration (EDA), which is the federal bureau for economic development in the United States, manages the [content guidelines and requirements for the CEDS](#) process and document and grants final approval of all CEDS plans.

What are the benefits of having a CEDS?

The CEDS is a requirement to be eligible to compete for [EDA and other federal funding opportunities](#). It is also a requirement to be eligible for many Washington State funding opportunities. The CEDS also provides a long-term vision and plan for economic development in Island County, making development more programmatic and efficient.

Why is the EDC overseeing the effort to develop an Island County CEDS?

The [Economic Development Council \(EDC\) for Island County](#) is the [associate development organization \(ADO\)](#) for Island County, which is a Washington State Department of Commerce designation, and is the only countywide economic development agency.

Who is funding the Island County CEDS?

Island County, the Cities of Langley and Oak Harbor, and the Town of Coupeville are cost sharing the funding of the planning and writing of the CEDS document.

Who is managing the planning, development, and writing of the CEDS?

The EDC for Island County has contracted with Island County, and other jurisdictions sharing the cost of the project, to manage and oversee the CEDS planning and development process. The EDC for Island County has contracted with consultant [Jennifer Noveck](#) to manage and complete all aspects of the project. Jennifer holds a Ph.D. from the University of Washington where her focus of study was the politics of economic development and research methodology. She was the project manager and primary author for the [Whatcom County CEDS 2022-2026](#). The document was unanimously approved by Whatcom County Council and approved without any requested edits by the EDA in April 2022.

Who will carry out the Island County CEDS Action Plan?

The EDC for Island County will be responsible for carrying out and evaluating the progress of the CEDS goals, sub-goals, and action plan. However, it is important to note that the EDC does not have jurisdiction or authority over every economic development issue or objective in Island County. For example, the county and incorporated cities are responsible for administration and compliance with all issues related to the Growth Management Act, such as planning and permitting. Therefore, multiple actors and jurisdictions involved in the development of the CEDS will be responsible for carrying out and incorporating the CEDS goals, as relevant and appropriate, into their Comprehensive Plan updates, Park Plan updates, as well as any other strategy documents, work plans, capital improvement project plans, and so on.

How can I provide feedback?

There will be multiple opportunities for various types of stakeholders to participate in the CEDS planning process. The External Review Committee, which will be the primary advisory group for CEDS development, will tentatively meet seven times over the course of the 18-month process and will give direct feedback and input to multiple sections of the document. This includes but is not limited to the SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) analyses; the resulting priorities, goals, sub-goals and action plan; as well as the sections that detail the evaluation framework and resiliency plans. The committee will also review multiple drafts of the document at various stages throughout the process.

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How can the public provide feedback?

Public, private, and nonprofit stakeholders will be solicited for feedback and input from approximately May 1 – July 1, 2023, with a focus on providing input for industry and jurisdiction level SWOT surveys.

A draft of the CEDS document will also be posted for a 30-day public comment period sometime during the period between January 15, 2024 – March 15, 2024.

Additional comments or inputs related to the CEDS or economic development in Island County can be submitted at any time directly to Jennifer Noveck (ceds@edcislandcounty.org).

How will feedback be evaluated and incorporated?

The consultant managing edits for the document will review each comment and piece of feedback with the External Review Committee and assess what changes, if any, should be made to the document. The most important factors in the decision to incorporate or not will be if the feedback complies with the CEDS purpose and guidelines per the EDA and if it fits within the vision, priorities, goals, and objectives broadly established in the document by stakeholders.