



Redwood Region
RISE

**PARTNERSHIP
MAPPING REPORT**

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES
FOR PARTNERS BUILDING AN EQUITABLE
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ROADMAP
FOR THE CALIFORNIA REDWOOD COAST

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Executive Summary

This study describes the number, types, purpose and capacity of partners participating in Redwood Region RISE (RR RISE), the CA Jobs First regional planning initiative for the Redwood Coast Region. While data presented is drawn from multiple sources and formats, methodological limitations limit the ability to generalize findings across the region. Findings may not accurately describe the experience of all people in the region or diverse experiences within named communities of people and the 32+ sovereign Tribal governments, communities and citizens whose ancestral homelands encompass this region.

This report offers a baseline snapshot of perspectives contributed by partners participating in RR RISE engagement activities on the planning process between February and November 2023, and shared priorities for achieving widespread economic well-being in the region. It suggests opportunities to strengthen collaborations and relationships as partners move into the next phase of planning focused on crafting a vision, goals, strategies and projects that will guide regional economic development into the future. It is intended to establish a foundation to guide ongoing inquiry, outreach and community dialogue.

A. Historically Active Partners

More than 970 community members and organizations across all counties and required partner groups, including Tribes, have signed up for the mailing list and are tracking RR RISE activities. Partners who responded to two surveys are eager to participate to ensure the planning process fairly identifies projects for funding and the regional plan is aligned with existing plans and strategies. Partners are also eager to meet locally, spread word about local meetings and engage communities who don't typically participate in economic development planning in the process.

The RR RISE governance structure is comprised of the Regional Collaborative, Equity Council, Tribal Planning Table, four Sector Tables and Local Planning Tables to ensure multiple opportunities for participation by all required partners and priority communities. Attendance at monthly Collaborative meetings has increased over time and is strong and steady.

B. Disinvested Communities and Economic Barriers

The entire Redwood Coast Region meets the state's definition of a "disinvested community." The burdens of this disinvestment are shouldered unequally and are not concentrated in certain geographic areas. For this reason, the RR RISE Collaborative defines disinvested communities as people in communities falling within the state's definition *and* belonging to groups united by ancestry, ethnicity, belief, affinity, and experience who are negatively impacted by social, political and economic exclusion.

Residents of the Redwood Coast Region, particularly members of priority communities, are among the poorest in the state according to traditional measures of economic well-being, are at risk of disproportionately poor health outcomes related to substance use, behavioral health, disability and delayed or lack of access to health and behavioral health care and are vulnerable to

climate impacts related to their age, disability, health and income statuses. Their annual income is largely consumed by essential expenses like healthcare, housing, transportation and childcare, which exceed state averages.

Experiences relayed through listening sessions with members of priority communities and in-depth interviews with job seekers, workers and business owners representing priority communities confirm and elaborate on these economic barriers. Direct feedback from priority communities calls attention to their struggles in obtaining stable jobs that pay enough to cover expenses, relevant skill development opportunities, resources in their communities that meet basic needs for housing, transportation, child/family care and healthcare, and meaningful work structured in ways that fulfill the reasons they choose to live and work in this region – at times, despite enduring and significant challenges. People in priority communities spoke about the impacts of trauma, violence, discrimination and exclusion, and the importance of connection, social safety, the experience of being valued and the desire to simply meet basic needs while being able to choose their career path, where they live and how to honor the many reasons they call this region home.

The RR RISE Equity Council identified specific ways in which economic barriers are compounded by social and political barriers that prevent the participation of priority populations in economic development planning and have historically prevented them from benefiting from local investment. The Council cites a need for social infrastructure to support participation of priority communities in the RR RISE process. Ensuring communication is accessible and understandable by using plain language, providing physical and emotional safety in community forums, and creating opportunities for members of priority populations and organizations they lead to be embedded in planning and project processes as full partners are necessary to the success of regional work.

Data show Native Americans are among the people most severely impacted by economic barriers. The RR RISE Tribal Planning Table met for the first time in December 2023 and is providing a forum for Tribal government leaders to determine how they would like to engage in RR RISE to further their economic development plans and projects. The outreach team will continue to engage leaders in the 32 federally and non-federally recognized governments in this region to ensure the Tribal Planning Table is directed by and meets the purposes established by Tribal government leaders.

Existing Plans and Synergies Supporting Regional Partnership

The Redwood Coast Region is a new state-designated planning area, with RR RISE and the K-16 Collaborative awarded in 2022 the first efforts to coordinate economic development and education pathways across the region. Counties have not and do not yet routinely work together on plans or projects although Mendocino County has joined with Sonoma County to form an Economic Development District. While there are no Redwood Coast regional plans available for analysis in this report, an analysis of existing plans documents a shared focus on industry sectors and aligned goals and strategies. Moreover, the RR RISE proposal development and planning

process has already generated synergies advancing regional cooperation and coordination toward economic development planning.

Regional relationships formed as a result of proposal development, and Collaborative and other RR RISE meetings confirm partners and communities across the region are exploring, developing, and implementing similar/related economic development goals and strategies. The focus and composition of Sector Tables launching in January reflects these shared areas of focus and purpose and provides a forum to build partnerships and identify opportunities that make economic sense for the region. Organizations representing industry leaders from each county will partner to craft shared strategies backed by regional data and informed by input from other Collaborative planning tables and priority communities.

C. Strengthening the Network of Existing Partners

Partnership development is complex work. Feedback from partners and communities across the region suggests this work needs to be approached from a systemic perspective and supported at many levels.

Strengthening relationships between diverse partners, and between partners and communities. Most organizations participating in RR RISE are small and work at county levels. They reach all priority (disinvested) communities identified by the RR RISE Collaborative, and most often serve people living in remote areas, youth, communities of color, ethnic and racial minorities and LGBTQIA+ communities. Few organizations reported serving non-federally recognized Tribes, unions/union members and monolingual Hmong speakers. Survey results suggest additional outreach and research can help clarify how RR RISE priority communities are identified and engaged by organizations participating in economic development planning and implementation processes.

Research for this study showed, on average, the strongest planning and project partnerships exist between traditional economic development actors: education, government, economic development and workforce development agencies and businesses. Government and economic development partners also reported they have strong relationships with Tribes and community development organizations.

On average, workforce development agencies and businesses in this region don't partner with environmental justice organizations. Grassroots, business, and philanthropy organizations don't partner with labor organizations. Environmental justice and labor organizations can offer important contributions toward the larger goals of the RR RISE initiative. Additional outreach to engage their participation in RR RISE planning tables can help forge stronger relationships.

Existing partnerships with the potential to shift from exchanging information to collaborating on projects include education organizations with Tribes and with community development organizations; government and workforce development organizations with grassroots organizations; and business organizations with economic development organizations. Outreach

and additional focus on these groups to learn how they are working together, clarify their roles in local and regional economic development work, and identify how they might be resourced to collaborate on developing plans and projects may open additional opportunities to accelerate regional work.

From the perspective of ensuring an equitable, inclusive process, organizations and community members in the Redwood Coast Region express a high level of commitment to building on community strengths and addressing community problems. They are willing to form partnerships and relationships around economic development plans and projects that meet the needs of priority populations. Yet many partners experience capacity gaps in skills, expertise, organizational infrastructure, training, staffing, and funding. Transportation and time also pose barriers for most partners to achieve broader participation in the planning process, followed by digital inequities related to lack of access to broadband or devices.

A primary obstacle to forming partnerships in the region is the lack of capacity among nonprofits, especially those located within and/or serving key segments of priority communities and geographic areas. Tribal governments, communities, and tribal-serving organizations are among the least capacitated and simultaneously recognized as among the most innovative and integral partners to engage in economic development projects. Tribes and workforce development organizations reported community distrust is a challenge that prevents them from achieving broader participation in economic development planning.

Community members participating in listening sessions and Local Planning Table meetings also reported a lack of trust in government and economic development agency planning processes due to the history of extractive boom and bust cycles of development and failure of governments and business to deliver on previously planned projects or to include community feedback in planning processes. Listening sessions, interviews with members of priority communities and meetings of the Equity Council surfaced concerns about indigenous erasure, violence, exclusion and structural inequities that pose real barriers to priority populations' participation in economic development planning and project development.

The willingness expressed by partner organizations and community members to focus on strengths, form partnerships, and access training that presents new models of community investment and building community power signal opportunities that can help address challenges to engaging priority communities in the process of developing equitable economic development partnerships, plans and projects. Delving more deeply into imbalanced power dynamics and capacity constraints in dialog facilitated by skilled intermediaries, additional research to lift up the experience of priority communities, and ongoing outreach to include priority communities in decision-making processes can help uncover, name and address these challenges.

Strengthening regional partnerships within and across industry sectors

The Redwood Coast Region is a new state-designated planning area. Economic development partners in counties across the region do not routinely work together on plans or projects. RR

RISE and the K-16 Education Collaborative represent the first efforts of counties across the region to organize and collaborate on plans and projects. Strong regional alignment across industry sectors, goals and strategies present abundant opportunities for partners to design projects with regional relevance. RR RISE Sector Tables create a space to catalyze partnerships, develop regional strategies and propose regional projects.

Convening groups around shared interest in growing research and development, education, business entrepreneurship and communications/marketing strategies can help incubate partnerships and build support networks across industry sectors. Participants in listening sessions and local planning table meetings acknowledged NIMBY-ism or community resistance to change and planned projects often presents a major challenge to progress. Responding to requests from county residents and priority communities to form and/or fund intermediary organizations with the capacity to train, coach and build leadership skills in diverse communities, facilitate respectful dialogue and build social networks focused on specific goals can help ensure local voices contribute to plans, project designs and formation of local and regional partnerships within and across industry sectors.

From the perspective of ensuring an equitable and inclusive planning process, partners across the region will need to address the tension between planning for strategies that build toward regional growth industries and strategies to meet critical infrastructure, talent and funding gaps that currently limit economic growth within their own communities. Partners from across the region have repeatedly voiced concern about the process of fairly identifying projects for funding. To ensure an inclusive planning process, partners must address power differentials that have created barriers to the participation of RR RISE priority communities in planning and decision-making, including building the capacity of organizations to achieve broader participation in RR RISE and of communities to organize in self-determined, sustainable ways.

Sector Tables create a structure and forum for this work. The investment of Catalyst Funds will help support partners in working together across sectors and counties to develop a shared vision, strategies and criteria for developing and selecting projects. Tools will present opportunities for partners to clarify their roles, strengths and limitations so that efforts can be coordinated and partners can contribute from their position of strength. This work presents an opportunity for partners to join in identifying resources needed to support cross-sector work on an ongoing basis and collaborate to build an inclusive social and planning infrastructure.

Regional and State Partnerships

RR RISE partners, including members of priority communities, point to federal and state policies and grant programs that are not designed to support rural regions' ability to compete or develop projects that meet their needs. They specifically call out shifting and unrealistic timelines, performance criteria, and disbursement schedules that do not account for the time and resources required to form partnerships, ensure community participation, design responsive and complex regional projects, and deliver results.

Partners are burdened by competing demands to produce and implement local/county plans in divergent planning jurisdictions simply to access ongoing, much needed local funding, and the lack of coordinated or enabling policy to support local or regional implementation of plans and projects. The number, nature and timelines of federal and state implementation opportunities are overwhelming strained systems, and grant funding programs are not designed with the realities that structure rural economies in mind.

Many local governments, businesses and community-based organizations do not have the expertise, experience, or capacity needed to capture and/or use grant funded resources without assistance. That the state agencies leading the CA Jobs First grant program have not been able to hire regional staff to provide guidance to northern California and the Redwood Coast Region for this grant program is an indicator of the difficulties partners in this region experience when searching for talent. Partners expressed needs to build the awareness, knowledge, and experience in economic development planning and implementation processes to meet persistent and urgent local needs and begin to work at the scale contemplated by CA Jobs First and other grant programs.

Summary

Data gathered from RR RISE partners and community members across the region tracks closely with research conducted by nationally renowned rural scholar Anthony Pipa at Brookings¹ and by the Little Hoover Commission² documenting the historical policy impacts of federal and state underinvestment in rural regions. This work points to the need to prioritize stable, flexible funding specifically for rural regions that builds local leadership capacity, improves policy and funding coherence at federal and state levels, and invests in substantial, flexible grants to enable regions to capitalize on and preserve the beauty, quality of life and pride of place that are also critical to catalyzing economic growth.

While state policy focuses on building traded sectors, this region lacks a coordinated approach to industries holding that potential and capacity to build markets is critically and negatively impacted by the lack of physical infrastructure - transportation routes, water, housing, broadband – and services – healthcare, education – to effectively build markets that will engage and meet existing needs of the residents of this region, especially priority communities.

¹ (Pipa, A, 2003) A recipe for a rural policy renaissance [Podcast Transcript]. <https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Reimagine-Rural-Ep-8-policy-recipe.pdf>

² Little Hoover Commission (2022). *Equitable economic development across California*. <https://lhc.ca.gov/report/equitable-economic-development-across-california-0>

Introduction

The California Jobs First Grant Program (previously Community Economic Resilience Fund) seeks to build an equitable and sustainable economy across California's diverse regions and foster long-term economic resilience in the overall transition to a carbon-neutral economy. Jobs First is designed to maximize the participation of diverse stakeholders in regional economic development planning processes. Through this program, the state has funded thirteen regions to convene a Collaborative that accounts for diversity across sectors, subject matter expertise, lived experience, and inter-generational perspectives to develop a Regional Roadmap toward quality jobs, economic resilience and carbon neutral future.

Jobs First emphasizes inclusive planning to ensure equitable outcomes for disinvested communities, which face many challenges resulting from inequitable land use and zoning policies, exclusionary economic development processes, underinvestment, and a lack of meaningful engagement in planning and policy decisions. It acknowledges residents and community leaders in disinvested communities are actively engaged in local planning, economic development processes, campaigns, and other activities to improve their communities' quality of life, and the grant program is structured to ensure these communities enjoy the benefits of future investments.³

Regional plans must be supported by data, including a report providing a snapshot of the historically active stakeholders (hereafter partners⁴) that can influence creating an equitable, High Road economy⁵ and/or benefit from it; describing the region's disinvested communities; and mapping a network of partners that can identify opportunities, challenges and potential investments on the path to achieving economic and climate resilience. The report must also include a capacity and power analysis, to surface and document how challenges like economic barriers and the capacity to engage in economic development partnerships impact priority populations, community partner organizations and economic development planning processes in the region.

This report identifies partners, describes disinvested communities and the challenges to economic well-being they experience, and surfaces opportunities to expand partnerships in the Redwood Coast Region (Del Norte, Humboldt, Lake and Mendocino Counties) that can help

³ Notice of Availability of Funds, Community Economic Resilience Fund Program, Program Year 2022-24 Solicitation for Proposals. https://edd.ca.gov/siteassets/files/jobs_and_training/notices/docs/wssfp21-06.pdf

⁴ Stakeholder is a term communities may find offensive, particularly Indigenous communities. RR RISE chooses instead to refer to all those who have an interest in and/or may wish to join us in this work as partners. <https://sph.uth.edu/research/centers/dell/blog/posting.htm?id=reflecting-on-our-language-stakeholder>

⁵ The CA Workforce Development Board High Road Framework is focused on opportunity and mobility, a stronger economy for employers who deliver quality jobs and design skills solutions to shared needs, and a more sustainable and resilient environment and community. https://cwdb.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/43/2019/09/High-Road-ECJ-Brief_UPDATED-BRANDING.pdf. https://cwdb.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/43/2020/08/OneSheet_HRTP_ACCESSIBLE.pdf.

inform and support the Redwood Region RISE Collaborative to craft a Regional Roadmap by June 2024.

Methods

Data for this report were gathered using the following methods:

- Two surveys fielded to everyone who signed up for the Redwood Region RISE mailing list and promoted through outreach activities and at a regional economic summit: one between March-June 2023, and a second between September-November 2023;
- Outreach and engagement activities, including listening sessions, semi-structured interviews with individuals representing required project partners and disinvested communities, conducted between April and November 2023;
- Semi-structured interviews with business owners, job seekers and workers in disinvested communities conducted in November 2023;
- Documentation of Redwood Region RISE Collaborative activities:
 - Collaborative member registration, email list, attendance records,
 - Local planning table meetings conducted in September 2023,
 - A Collaborative kickoff meeting conducted in September 2023.

Limitations

The results in this section are limited by the brief data collection window in which to canvass a geographically large, remote and diverse region composed of 4-counties and Tribal lands; the methods used to gather data; the lack of high quality and relevant existing data/research available for rural counties and Tribal lands that comprise this region; researcher bias; and participant bias.

Community members who completed surveys, participated in listening sessions and individual interviews and attended local planning table and Collaborative meetings volunteered to participate, responded to an invitation, and/or were nominated to participate, and their responses may differ from others in their communities in systematic ways. Most Collaborative meetings are held online and Spanish language translation for online meetings is provided only during monthly Collaborative meetings. Limited English language proficiency, digital literacy skills, and broadband access are barriers to participation experienced throughout the region by all required partner and priority communities⁶. Accessibility of online and written materials, online meeting platforms and physical meeting locations for those with disabilities, lack of transportation, family care and other obligations also limited responses from members of priority communities.

Finally, the Convening team's challenges in bridging historical cultural, geographical, political, governance and other barriers to working effectively with the region's 32 federally recognized sovereign nations and non-federally recognized Tribal communities constrained its ability to capture primary data from these communities during the data collection period.

⁶ See discussion of Priority Communities on page 17.

For these reasons, results presented in this report may not accurately or completely represent circumstances or conditions as they are experienced by or affect all Tribes, communities and partners throughout the Redwood Coast Region. To balance these limitations, data in this report has been reviewed with members of the Redwood Region RISE Collaborative. The report was also reviewed by members of the Collaborative prior to submission.

This report offers a baseline snapshot of partners' perspectives on the RR RISE planning process and priorities for achieving widespread economic well-being in the region. It is intended to establish a foundation to guide ongoing inquiry, outreach and community dialogue. It suggests opportunities to strengthen collaborations and relationships as partners move into the next phase of planning focused on crafting a vision, goals, strategies and projects that will guide regional economic development into the future.

A. Historically Active Partners

i. List of organizations and entities

Organizations across the Redwood Coast Region with a role in economic development began meeting in late 2021-early 2022 in anticipation of submitting a proposal for CERF Planning Phase funding. A core group of community partners leading the proposal effort conducted outreach to Business, Government agencies, Grassroots/Community based organizations, Labor, Philanthropy, Workforce Development partners, Education/ training centers, Economic Development Agencies, Federally and non-Federally recognized Tribal Governments and citizens, Community members, and Environmental Justice Organizations to secure their participation in proposal planning.

These community leaders and partners selected Arcata Economic Development Corporation (AEDC) as the fiscal agent, the California Center for Rural Policy (CCRP) as the Regional Convener and North Coast Opportunities, Inc. (NCO) as the outreach lead. Collectively these organizations are the region's Convening Team tasked to help prepare the proposal. CCRP created an email list for Redwood Region RISE (Resilient, Inclusive, Sustainable Economy), as the project was named, in June 2022. At the time the region was awarded funding in early 2023, approximately 75 organizations representing required partners had signed up to receive email updates.

Redwood Region RISE (RR RISE) officially launched on February 23, 2023. Monthly meetings are held on Zoom. The RR RISE Collaborative is open to all interested partners/members of the public, who can register online to participate in the Collaborative and join the RR RISE mailing list.

The Convening Team initiated outreach and actively engaged people representing a broad range of required partners to join the RR RISE mailing list to help ensure balanced representation across the region. The Convening Team then recruited a volunteer Task Force from organizations

on the email list to form the Collaborative’s governance structure. Between March 1 and August 15, 2023, while the governance structure was under development and nominations to seat representatives to the Collaborative’s sub-committees, or planning tables, was underway, 747 non-affiliated community members and people in organizations representing required partner groups and priority populations in every county across the region joined the RR RISE mailing list (Table 1).

Table 1. RR RISE Mailing List 8/15/23

RR RISE Mailing List 8/15/23	Del Norte	Humboldt	Lake	Mendocino	Regional	Total by Category
Priority Community	0	0	1	1	0	2
Economic Development	3	13	8	11	2	37
Education/Training	7	19	8	9	8	51
Employer/Business Association	8	38	9	26	1	82
Environmental Justice	8	14	6	16	0	44
Government	18	68	24	45	8	163
Grassroots/Community-based Organization	13	39	19	32	1	104
Labor	6	10	5	4	1	26
Philanthropy	7	11	3	2	1	24
Tribal	20	30	21	22	4	97
Worker Centers	1	3	6	7	0	17
Workforce Entities	5	7	5	5	0	22
Community Member/No Affiliation	8	37	14	19	0	78
Total by County/Tribal Lands	104	289	129	199	26	

There are some individuals who may be counted in more than one county/service region and/or partner category. Example: If someone serves Del Norte and Humboldt counties, they would be counted in each of these counties.

Organizations that are listed as disinvested communities support our community members who have historically been under-represented when approaching opportunities for growth, and whose voices may be heard less than our other partner categories. This includes, but is not limited to seniors, opportunity youth, farmworkers, and members of the BIPOC community.

The majority represent individuals and organizations located in/serving Humboldt and Mendocino counties. However, as a share of county population⁷, Del Norte has the greatest proportionate representation (.38%), followed by Mendocino (.22%), Humboldt (.21%) and Lake (.19%). Government and grassroots/community-based organizations and Tribal citizens and Tribal governments are represented in the greatest numbers. Multiple people from the same organization can register for the mailing list.

The RR RISE Collaborative seated members at its planning tables in late August and September 2023. On November 21, 2023, the RR RISE Collaborative email contact list included 971 non-affiliated community members and people in organizations representing required partner groups and priority populations in every county across the region (Table 2). As a share of county population, Del Norte has the greatest proportionate representation (.54%), followed by Mendocino (.28%), Humboldt (.28%) and Lake (.24%).

⁷ Population estimates based on US Census Data July 1, 2022 available at <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/>.

Table 2. RR RISE Mailing List 11/21/23

RR RISE Mailing List 11/21/23	Del Norte	Humboldt	Lake	Mendocino	Regional	Total by Category
Priority Community	4	4	2	2	0	12
Economic Development	5	14	9	11	2	41
Education/Training	9	25	9	11	8	62
Employer/Business Association	11	46	9	35	1	102
Environmental Justice	8	17	6	16	0	47
Government	22	72	27	49	8	178
Grassroots/Community-based Organization	20	61	28	39	7	155
Labor	8	12	10	12	1	43
Philanthropy	8	11	4	2	2	27
Tribal	20	32	23	22	4	101
Worker Centers	1	4	7	7	0	19
Workforce Entities	6	7	5	5	0	23
Community Member/No Affiliation	24	71	23	41	2	161
Total by County/Tribal Lands	146	376	162	252	35	

There are some individuals who may be counted in more than one county/service region and/or partner category. Example: If someone serves Del Norte and Humboldt counties, they would be counted in each of these counties.

Organizations that are listed as disinvested communities support our community members who have historically been under-represented when approaching opportunities for growth, and whose voices may be heard less than our other partner categories. This includes, but is not limited to seniors, opportunity youth, farmworkers, and members of the BIPOC community.

The Convening Team periodically analyzes the mailing list to identify opportunities to engage new partners, inform outreach, and direct data collection in counties and Tribal lands. It is building a searchable online tool so those who have registered with the Collaborative and indicated they would like to be included in a directory will be able to search for organizations to partner with on projects and funding opportunities.

ii. Partners’ potential role in developing the plan and engaging in the implementation phase

CCRP fielded two surveys to explore partners’ potential roles in helping to develop the regional plan and participate in the grant program implementation phase. Survey questions appear in Appendix A.

Survey 1: March – August 2023

Following the project launch on February 23, 2023, the RR RISE Convening Team fielded a survey to identify partners and recruit a volunteer Task Force to help form the Collaborative governance structure. The purpose of the initial survey, which ran from March – August 2023, was to assess partners’ interests and availability to participate in the RR RISE planning process. It captured information about partners’ location, relationship to economic development work, and preferred ways to participate in RR RISE.

Of 90 responses, 83% (75) were received in March 2023 and 10% (9) were received in April 2023. Results represent a snapshot of partners’ perspectives at the time the Collaborative was first forming. Forty-five percent (45%) of all respondents identified as a community member as opposed to representing an organization.

Motivation to Participate

When asked why they were interested in participating in RR RISE, most respondents (71%) answered they are “concerned about economic development, business opportunities, and the future of the region.” Sixty-eight percent (68%) indicated their work is directly related to economic development. A majority (60%) responded “I am concerned about equity” and 52% reported they are “concerned about the environment.”

Preferred Roles

About half of all respondents reported they were interested in an active role in the Collaborative, either on the Formation Task Force or a work group. Another 30% offered to provide input if asked or provide specific types of support as the Collaborative launched (Table 3).

Table 3 Initial Role

Type of Participation	Percentage
Volunteer to join Formation Task Force	24%
Prefer a work group appointment	24%
Happy to respond to questions when asked for input	13%
Just attend the monthly meetings	11%
Interested in participating in local tables, not at regional level	9%
Other (offers to volunteer specific services)	19%

N=90

When asked to think about the future, respondents indicated they would like to participate in fairly identifying projects for funding, ensuring the process is aligned with existing plans, and reaching out to communities often overlooked in planning processes (Table 4).

Table 4 Future Role

Type of Participation	Percentage
Help the group fairly identify projects/initiatives for funding	57%
Help make sure the process is aligned with existing plans/initiatives	47%
Help reach out to communities and groups often overlooked in planning	47%
Help make sure plans/projects are beneficial to the environment	36%
Help make sure plans/projects are beneficial to workers	35%
Help the Collaborative function as a group	30%
Help with data	23%

N=88 for all percentages

The Convening Team worked with the Collaborative Formation Task Force from March through August 2023 to develop the [RR RISE Governance Structure](#) and conduct a comprehensive community-led nomination process to seat representatives on the Collaborative’s Voting Block, Equity Council, Tribal Planning Table, and Sector Tables. CCRP closed the initial survey at the conclusion of this phase of work in August 2023.

Survey 2: September - November 2023

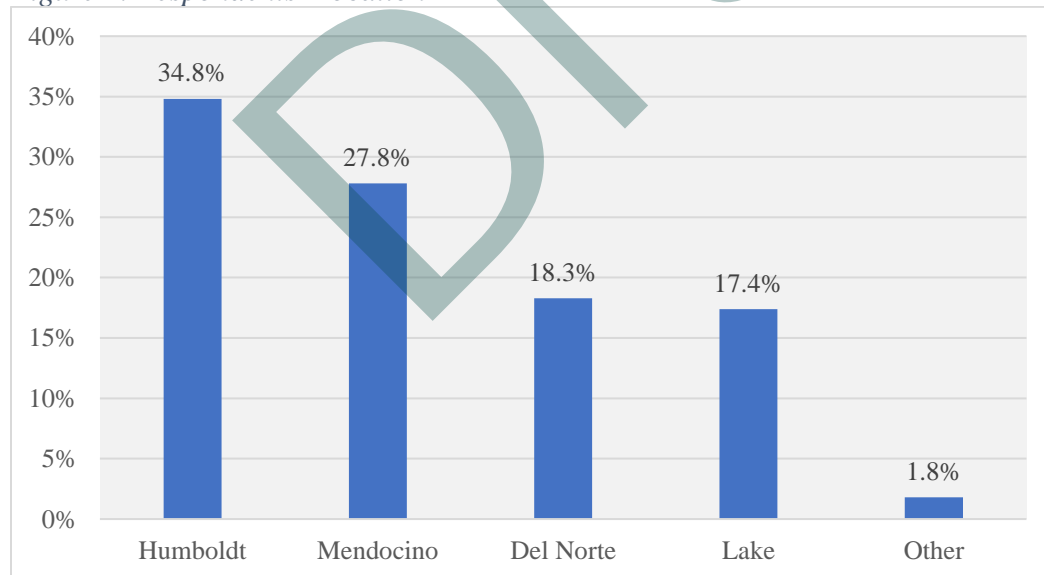
CCRP fielded a second survey after the Collaborative governance structure was in place to learn more about those participating in RR RISE, their existing partnerships, and their perceived capacity and power to affect economic development planning processes. An initial set of survey questions was designed as a tool to support outreach to priority communities not already registered with RR RISE. While data for this report was pulled from survey responses received on November 6, 2023, the survey is still active to support ongoing outreach and engagement.

Partner Demographics

About a third (32.8%) of those who responded to the second survey identified as community members; two-thirds (67.2%) represented an organization.

Survey respondents’ location (residence or primary office address) approximates the distribution of the general population in counties across the region, with Del Norte respondents over-represented and Lake County slightly under-represented (Figure 1). People and organizations physically located on Tribal lands did not respond to this survey. Organizations that self-identified as representing Tribes did respond to the survey.⁸

Figure 1. Respondents' Location



N = 115. Other = ‘Del Norte, Humboldt’ (n = 1); ‘Lake, Tribal Lands’ (n = 1).

⁸ See Section C, p. 31, below. The Convening Team is meeting with Tribes to explore ways to effectively engage Tribal governments in RR RISE through the Tribal Planning Table.

Preferred Roles

Almost all respondents (98%) reported they would like to participate in economic development meetings and discussions in their own community. Respondents want to engage in RR RISE in multiple ways (Table 5, below). About 75% would like to attend monthly Collaborative Zoom meetings, and 60% would like to participate in Local Planning Table meetings.

Half (50%) would like to help encourage people to join Local Planning Table meetings, about a third (33%) would like to share information and help distribute surveys for community feedback and nearly a third (28%) expressed interest in receiving a mini-grant to help gather feedback from priority communities.

The low number of respondents who indicated interest in participating in the Tribal Planning Table or on a Sector Table suggests areas for further communications, outreach and engagement.

Table 5 Preferred Roles

Roles	<i>n</i>	Percent
Attend monthly meetings of the RR RISE Collaborative	87	74
Participate on a Local Planning Table	70	60
Help us spread the word to encourage people to join the Local Table Meetings	58	50
Receive/attend update meetings a few times a year (in addition to or instead of monthly Collaborative meetings)	50	43
Flyering/Promoting/Social media/Giving out surveys for community feedback	39	33
Receive the semi-monthly newsletter	36	31
Receive a mini grant to help Redwood Region RISE recruit community feedback from priority populations/members for Local Planning Tables (more information on this opportunity will be provided upon request)	33	28
Participate on a Tribal Planning Table	10	9
Participate on a Sector Table	9	8

N=117 for all percentages

Collaborative Meeting Attendance

As noted above, when RR RISE first launched, approximately 75 organizations had registered for the mailing list and began to attend meetings of the nascent Collaborative. Between February and June, 2023 the Convening team worked with a volunteer task force to develop the governance structure, which includes representation from all required partners and members of “disinvested” communities.

Participation in monthly Collaborative meetings increased in July, when the Convening Team presented the governance structure and launched the process to nominate community

representatives to the Collaborative’s planning tables. Attendance has remained strong and steady since representatives were formally seated in August (Table 6).

Table 6. Monthly Attendance

Meeting Date	Number in Attendance
02/23/2023	79
03/30/2023	73
04/27/2023	56
05/24/2023	57
06/29/2023	112
07/27/2023	87
8/31/2023	107
9/20/2023	In-Person: 50, Zoom: 67
10/26/2023	123
11/30/2023	111

Summary

Analysis of the mailing list shows there is robust interest in tracking RR RISE activities across all counties and partner groups, including Tribes. Partners who responded to the surveys are focused on ensuring the planning process fairly identifies projects for funding and ensuring the regional plan is aligned with existing plans and strategies. They are also eager to meet locally, spread word about local meetings and engage communities who don’t typically participate in economic development planning in the process. Attendance at monthly Collaborative meetings has increased and is strong and steady.

B. Overview: Disinvested Communities in the Region.

i. Defining disinvested communities in the Redwood Coast Region

The CA Jobs First (formerly CERF) grant program defines ‘disinvested communities’ as any of the following:

- Census tracts identified as ‘disadvantaged’ by the California Environmental Protection Agency.
- Census tracts with median household incomes at or below 80 percent of the statewide median income or with the median household incomes at or below the threshold designated as low income by the Department of Housing and Community Development’s list of state income limits adopted pursuant to Section 50093 of the California Health and Safety Code.

- ‘High poverty area’ and ‘High unemployment area’ as designated by the California Governor’s Office of Business and Economic Development California Competes Tax Credit Program
- California Native American Tribes as defined by the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) Tribal Consultation Policy.

According to this definition, the entire Redwood Coast Region is a ‘disinvested’ community.

On April 27, 2023, fifty organizations and individuals involved in the Redwood Region RISE Collaborative met to discuss disinvestment in the region, and critically examined working definitions of the term and affected populations. During the meeting, this group provided input that helped the Convening Team and Collaborative Formation Task Force craft a more meaningful, accurate, and shared understanding of “disinvested communities” to drive work forward.

The RR RISE Collaborative submitted a memo to the state on May 22, 2023, clarifying the definition of disinvested communities in the region. The memo cites the experiences of deeply rural, remote, and unincorporated communities who feel marginalized by political representation; must travel great distances to services; are underserved by public investment in infrastructure; and struggle to access educational opportunities, healthcare, internet, utilities, transportation, affordable and healthy food, and other community resources present in the region’s town centers. These communities have been disproportionately affected by boom-and-bust cycles of extractive industries and are at heightened risk for impacts of climate change such as the erosion of cultural practices and lifeways, drought, wildfires, severe weather events and sea level rise.

RR RISE thinks of “disinvested communities” as people who face a confluence of relatively severe and often interconnected hardships including, but not limited to, poverty, disability, lack of access to household or community resources, or lack of economic or educational opportunities. The Redwood Coast Region recognizes the experiences of BIPOC communities, of Indian Country including non-federally recognized Tribes, New American communities, of youth and the elderly, and the profound and difficult consequences trauma and disability play in the workforce.

“While the entire region is ‘disinvested’, this burden is shouldered unevenly by groups in our region that need to be the focus of our plans, strategies and projects.”

RR RISE Collaborative, May 2023

Based on its collective understanding of lived experience and demographic data for the region, the RR RISE Collaborative names these as Priority Communities in its definition of “disinvested communities:”

- Advocates for People of Color (e.g. Black Lives Matter, Asian Americans Advancing Justice, New Hmong Rising Association, etc.)
- Communities of Color
- Individuals that live in extremely remote/rural areas of the Redwood Coast Region (Redwood Region RISE)
- Individuals who were Formerly Incarcerated
- Individuals with Hearing Impairment
- Individuals with Intellectual Developmental Disabilities
- Individuals with Learning Disabilities
- Individuals with Physical Disabilities
- Individuals with Vision Impairment
- Individuals without Broadband Access
- Immigrants with Documentation (e.g. work visas)
- Individuals without Documentation
- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Asexual, Intersex + (LGBTQAI+)
- Members of religions and ethnic minority communities
- Monolingual Hmong-Speakers
- Monolingual Spanish Speakers
- New Citizens
- Non-federally Recognized Tribal Nations
- Seniors
- Tribal Citizens
- Tribal Governments
- Unions
- Workers
- Youth

The Outreach and Engagement Team brought a proposal to the Convening Team in mid-December 2023 to consider updating the definition of priority communities based on feedback from participants in listening sessions, local table meetings.⁹ The proposal will be presented to the Equity Council for advice and then to the Collaborative for approval in January 2024.

ii. How and in which areas these communities face economic barriers.

The RR RISE priority populations experiencing economic barriers are not necessarily concentrated in specific geographic areas. Data presented in this section depicts the severity of challenges presenting barriers to economic sufficiency, mobility, and resilience for priority communities in the region.

Poverty, Employment and Economic Mobility

At the April 27, 2023, Collaborative meeting, CCRP presented data that describe inequities in economic well-being for various age, gender, and racial and ethnic groups throughout the region.¹⁰

⁹ The proposal is to include veterans and refine language used to describe other priority communities to clarify inclusion and respect communities' self-determined preferences for language usage.

¹⁰ Figures 2-7 taken from (Kirsch, S 2023). *Understanding our Region* [PowerPoint Slides]. <https://ccrp.humboldt.edu/redwood-region-rise-meeting-materials>. The full presentation documents data sources.

Poverty rates in all counties in the region fall above the state average (Figure 2). This is true for every population group except adults in Del Norte over the age of 65 and adults in Lake County who worked full-time year-round. Poverty rates are highest among all non-white populations, people with any disability and children and youth under age 18. Poverty rates drop significantly among adults who worked full-time, year-round.

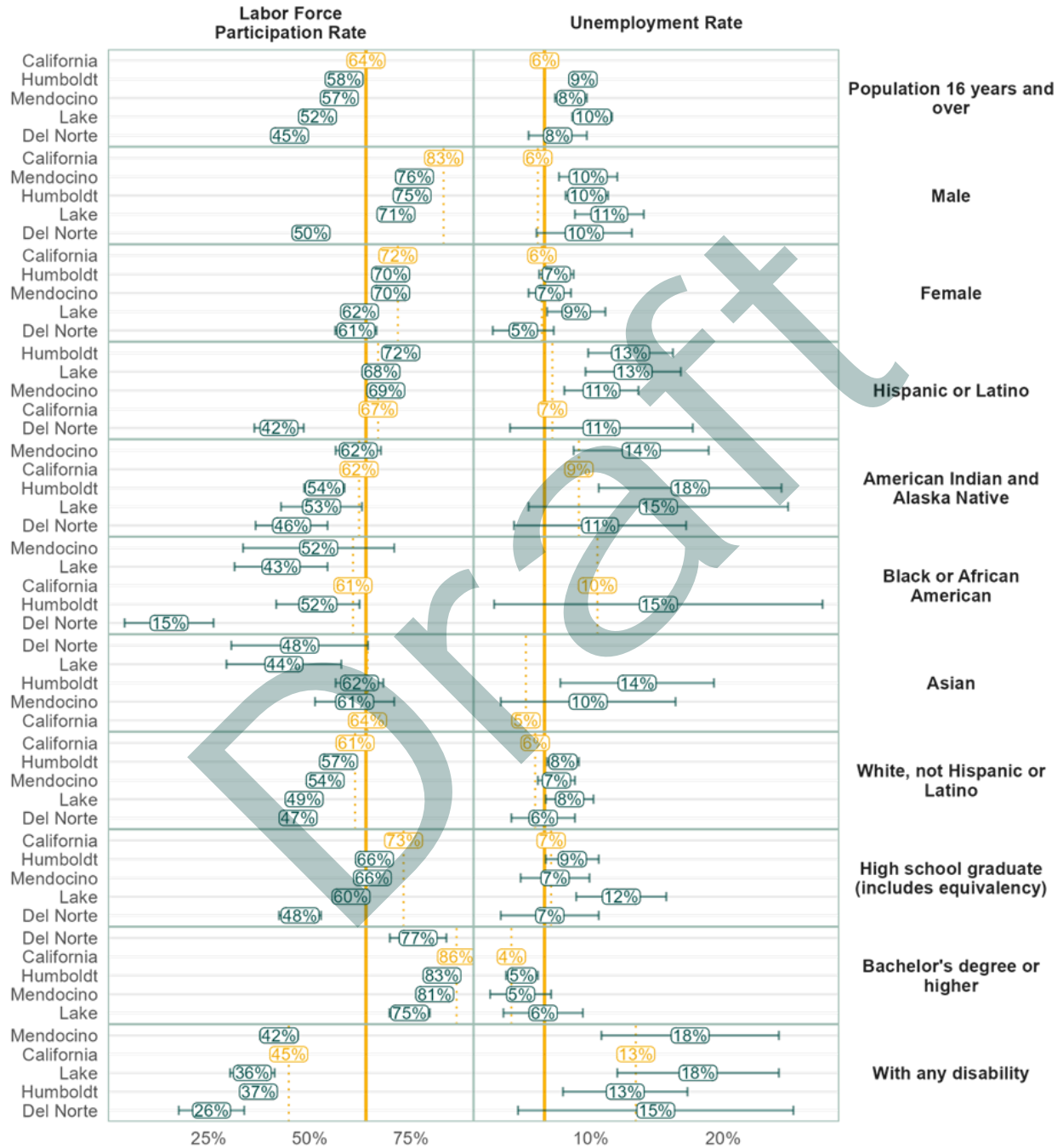
Figure 2. Poverty Rates



Note: Yellow oval and bar=State Average. Green oval=county average; green bar=95% confidence interval.

Unemployment rates in all counties in the region also fall above the state average and are highest for non-white populations and people with any disability. Labor force participation rates for all populations in each county are lower than state averages (Figure 3).

Figure 3. Labor Force and Unemployment Rates



Note: Yellow oval and bar=State Average. Green oval=county average; green bar=95% confidence interval.

Figure 4 shows labor market participation in the region among youth aged 16-19 years old is higher than the state average and higher or equivalent to the state average for youth aged 20-24

years except in Del Norte County. Labor market participation then drops below the state average for all prime age working age adults (ages 25 – 64 years) and seniors up to age 75 years old.

Figure 4. Labor Market Participation



Median earnings in each county fall significantly below the state averages for all population groups (Figure 5). As shown in Figure 6, educational attainment does not translate to earnings on par with state averages.

Figure 5. Median Earnings

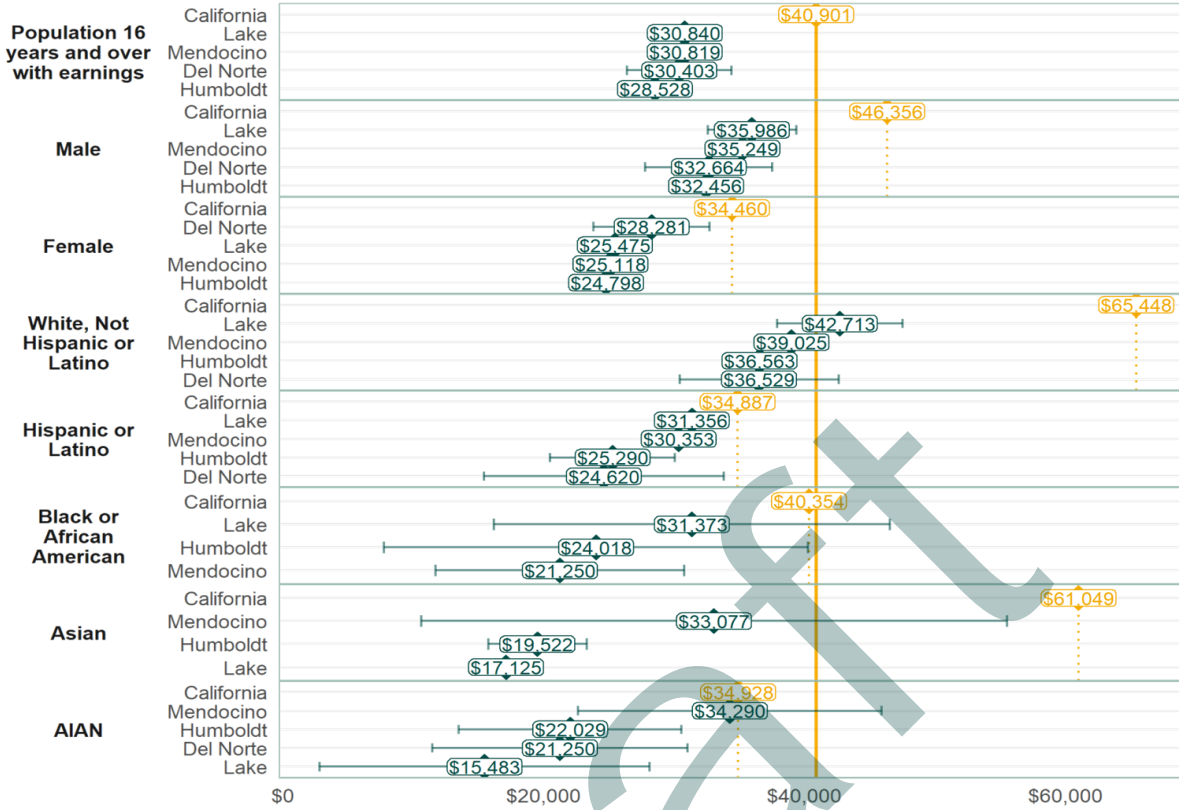


Figure 6. Median Earnings and Educational Attainment

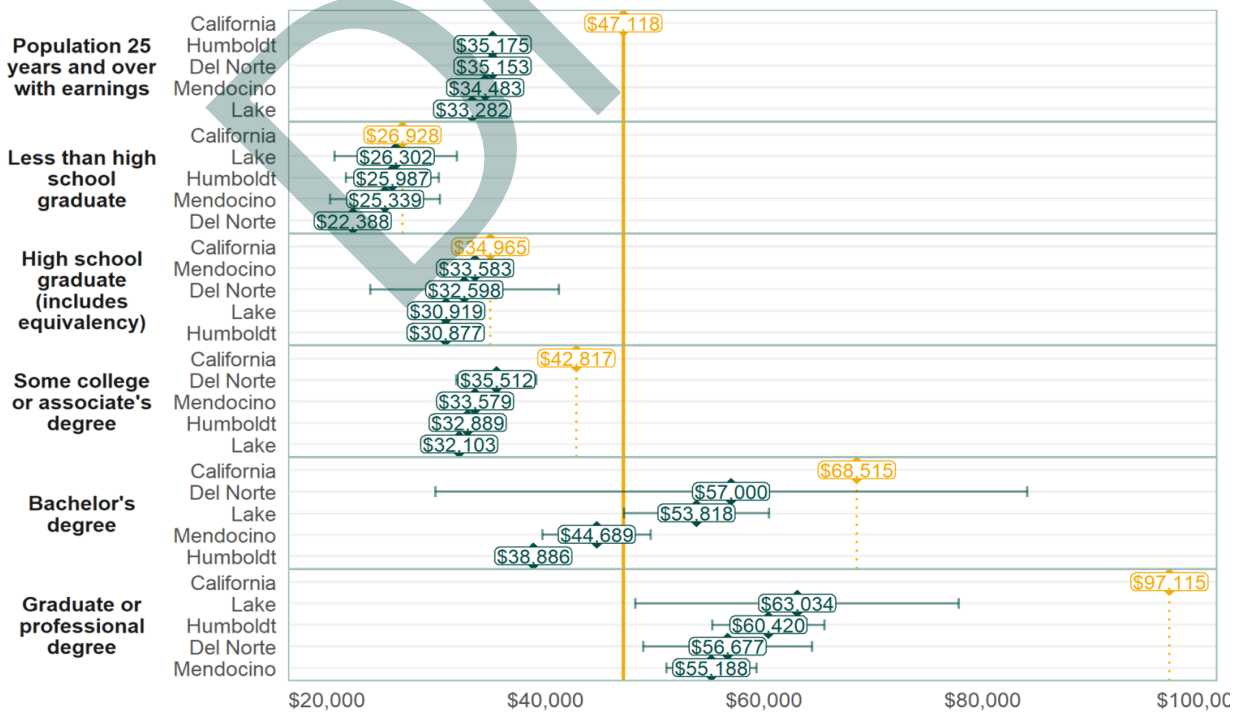
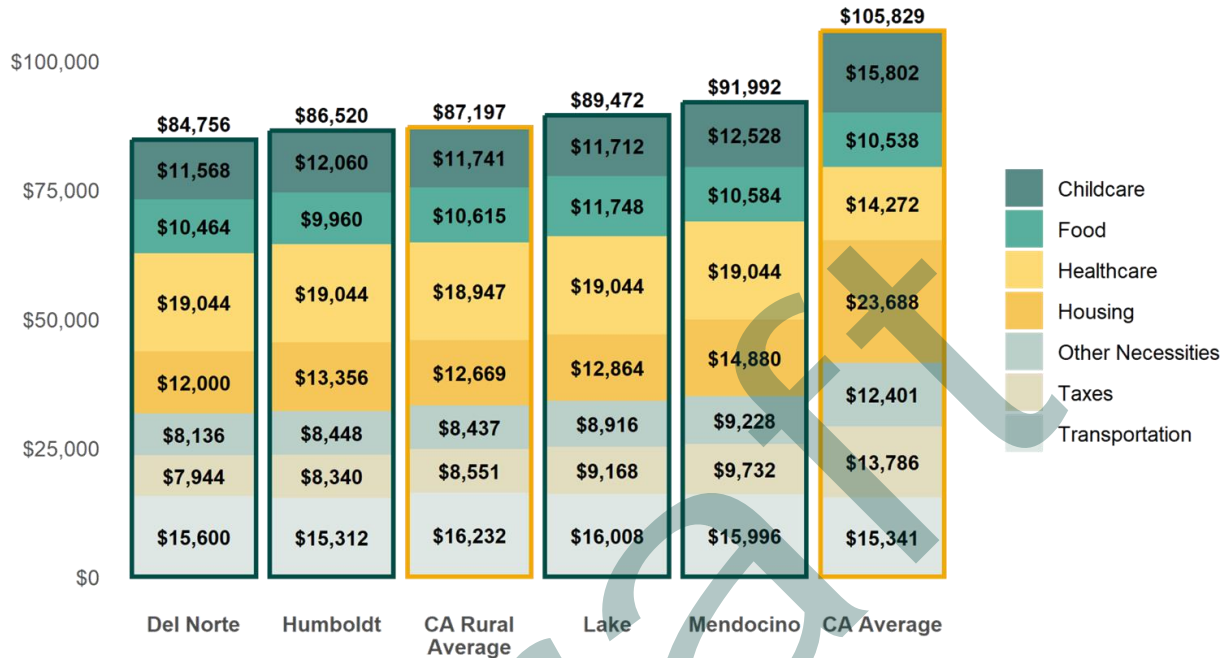


Figure 7 shows while average total cost of living estimates for counties in this region are lower than the state estimate, the cost associated with essential expenses like healthcare, housing, transportation and childcare as a proportion of total cost exceeds the state average. The cost of living in Lake and Mendocino Counties is higher than the CA rural county average.

Figure 7. Cost of Living



Workforce Health and Well-being

At the May 24 and June 29, 2023 Collaborative meetings, CCRP presented preliminary data on health disparities across the region and a preliminary analysis showing disparities may be related to disability, substance use, behavioral health, economic inequalities, climate impacts, and other environmental factors. The public health report informing Regional Plan Part 1¹¹ refines these analyses and demonstrates people in the Redwood Coast Region, particularly members of priority communities, face striking health disparities and barriers to accessing care when compared to state averages.

Key findings from this report include:

- The region has a higher proportion of populations at risk for tobacco use, substance use and mental health challenges, including those living in poverty, homeless individuals, people with lower levels of educational attainment, people living alone, and those who have experienced multiple adverse childhood experiences (ACEs).

¹¹ Kirsch, S. (2023). *Roots of Disparity: Public Health Challenges on California's Redwood Coast*. California Center for Rural Policy at Cal Poly Humboldt.

- While these challenges are experienced broadly in the region, people of color, disabled groups, and lesbian, gay, and bisexual individuals face particularly pronounced health and socioeconomic challenges.
- The region also experiences adverse disparities in access to healthcare, which appears to disproportionately impact those with lower incomes and people with mental health challenges. Adults who have mental health challenges are at far higher risk of experiencing delayed care.¹²

Climate Impacts

At the August 31, 2023, Collaborative meeting, The Sierra Business Council presented preliminary data on indicators of climate change impacts on the region. Figures 8 and 9 show how vulnerable populations could be affected by climate impacts.¹³

Figure 8. Populations Vulnerable to Climate Change Impacts

Population	Number of People	Percent of Total Population	Critical Risks
Under 5	117,421	5.4%	Extreme heat, air quality
Over 65	165,563	32.9%	Extreme heat, air quality, reduced evacuation ability
People of Color	179,956	64.6%	Extreme heat, air quality
People in poverty	156,819	17.8%	Extreme heat, air quality, reduced evacuation ability, water shortages (i.e., dry wells), extreme precipitation events
People that did not work (aged 16-64)	158,611	29.4%	Extreme heat, air quality, reduced evacuation ability, water shortages (i.e., dry wells)
Households with no car	18,104	6.6%	Extreme heat, air quality, reduced evacuation ability, water shortages (i.e., dry wells), extreme precipitation events
People with disabilities	158,697	18.4%	Extreme heat, air quality, reduced evacuation ability, power outages
People without health insurance	125,042	7.9%	Extreme heat, air quality

Various Total Population values were used based on population type. For example, the percent of households with no car is based on the total number of households in the Redwood Coast region, and not total population.

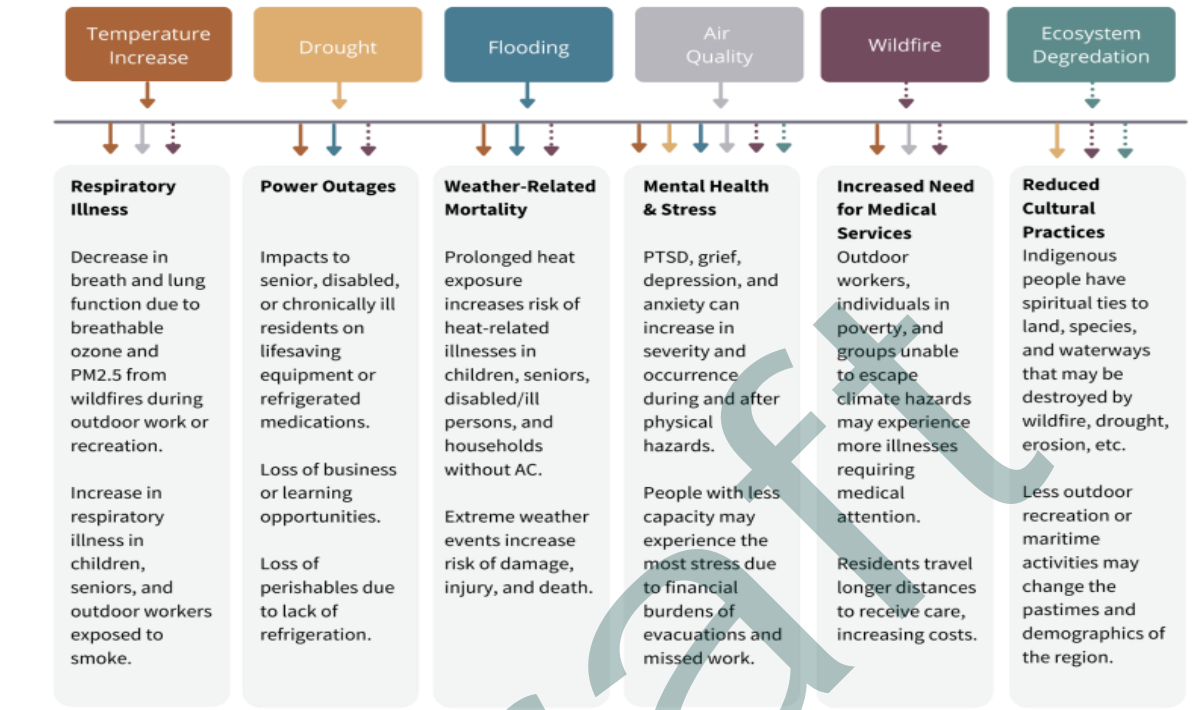
Table: Sierra Business Council • Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, 2022. Census Bureau, American Community Survey Office, Washington, D.C. • Created with Datawrapper

¹² Ibid, p.4. These findings are elaborated by direct feedback from priority communities in findings presented in the Insights Report discussed below and linked in Appendix C.

¹³ (Reynolds, K 2023). CERF Climate Data [PowerPoint Slides]. <https://ccrp.humboldt.edu/redwood-region-rise-meeting-materials>

Figure 9. Climate Impacts on Vulnerable Populations

Climate Impacts on Populations



Slide Credit: Sierra Business Council

These populations are considered vulnerable to climate impacts due to physical conditions associated with their age, gender, race, ethnicity, disability, health, employment and economic statuses. They frequently lack access to social and other resources that can facilitate adaptations to climate change and/or successfully navigate and manage climate hazards.¹⁴

Centering Community Voice: Barriers Elevated in Listening Sessions

To elevate and center voices and the lived experience of priority communities in this region, NCO, True North Organizing and RR RISE facilitation partner, ThinkPlace West, conducted deep listening sessions with members of priority communities in late October and early November 2023. These semi-structured interviews used a Human-Centered Design approach, posing general questions to guide the discussion toward selected topics while allowing the focus to shift to follow the stories interview participants told.

Interviewers recruited young people between the ages of 16-30 who are business owners, workers and job seekers. They asked questions about:

- How people came to the job or career they have now.
- Their work history, including best and worst job experiences.
- Challenges they face (or faced) in getting a job, working, or running a business.

¹⁴ Ibid.

- What they know about available jobs in their community or what it would take to grow their business or create jobs in the community.

Priority communities represented by interview participants include young people, communities of color, Tribes, people living in extremely remote/rural areas of the region, people without broadband access, formerly incarcerated individuals, individuals with learning disabilities and physical disabilities, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Asexual, Intersex + (LGBTQAI+) Individuals, second-language English speakers, Hmong community leaders, entrepreneurs, small business owners and workers. The NCO and ThinkPlace West teams collaborated to gather insights supported by direct quotes from the interviews. Insights were then grouped into themes as presented in the text box below (needs updating) to describe how priority communities experience economic barriers. (The full Insights Report appears in Appendix C.).

Regional themes are illuminated by insights

The worker experience: I just want stability.

- 1 I need a job that lasts, and supports me
- 2 Employment is inflexible to my personal and family needs
- 3 If I am connected, I succeed

Skills: How can I grow and qualify and pursue my dreams?

- 4 I live remote, where is the support to work remote?
- 5 Generic support doesn't translate into useful help for me
- 6 I really need flexible education so I can get ahead

Basic Needs: I need things in my community so I can work.

- 7 Walking isn't cutting it... I spend half my day getting places
- 8 My lack of child and family care is paralyzing
- 9 My health is my wealth
- 10 By the time I pay my rent, there's no paycheck left

Purpose: What work means to me.

- 11 I'm here because...
- 12 I left because...
- 13 I know what I'd really love to do but I'm buried in the day-to-day
- 14 My work meets community needs, but is unrecognized

Theme 1: Job and Income Stability

Interview participants reported juggling multiple part-time jobs, school and other obligations while looking for stable full-time employment and pointed to the need for jobs across a wider range of skills, not just entry or professional levels of experience. People hold multiple part-time, dead-end/temporary jobs and/or attend school and/or hold internships while looking for full-time, stable employment. Job seekers see their choice as between low-wage, low skill jobs or better-paying jobs requiring lots of experience, limiting their earnings and career advancement opportunities. Full-time jobs with benefits are few and far between for people without advanced skills. People are looking for jobs in the middle that can support the cost of living here.

Employment conditions present challenges for many people, ranging from not “fitting in” due to neurodivergence or needing a flexible schedule due to caregiving responsibilities. Employment systems and structures are not designed for the people who live here and want to work.

Opportunities for priority populations don't exist because jobs aren't designed for their abilities, comfort or needs.

People who feel connected and supported have more positive experiences with being seen and valued on their path to work, within work settings, and as part of the communities in which they strive to succeed as entrepreneurs. Connections occur on multiple levels - by identity group (LGBTQAI+), shared lived experience (formerly incarcerated, Spanish speaker), community group (church, cultural group), geographic community, as clients, and as mentors and advocates within and outside of work settings. People rely on these connections to find jobs, as well as to start and grow their business. They stay in jobs longer and have more success and positive employment experiences overall.

Theme 2: Skills: Growth and Development toward Goals

Participants highlighted the kinds of support they need to succeed in starting or growing a business, finding a job and/or advancing in a career they would like to pursue. Barriers to success include unreliable information about existing job opportunities, high costs, distance, scheduling and lack of access to programs/services with content tailored to meet their needs.

Remote work seems tailor-made for our remote region, but barriers make it difficult to sustain. Work labeled as "remote" is often really "work from home," still requiring residency in or near a city. Many learning and support opportunities are clustered in larger communities and inaccessible to those in remote corners, requiring lots of time and money to attend in person. Content in training isn't geared toward those in very remote areas. Entrepreneurs can have difficulty getting supplies or selling their product in limited local markets. People who want to pursue a degree, credential, or certificate to enter the workforce or achieve their goals have different backgrounds, needs, and strengths.

Positive work experiences and school/community programs provide valuable opportunities for gaining technical and people skills, receiving mentorship and support, developing a sense of purpose, growing as a person, and learning to navigate systems, especially when tailored to fit their circumstances. When people have help overcoming obstacles as they transition to new life experiences and identify and make headway on a career path, many of them are optimistic and energized to move forward.

Young people and most adults in this region are constrained in their college/education choices by cost and local availability. Many local jobs offering a career path require a four-year degree, which can feel unattainable due to distance and/or cost. Students end up choosing careers for which there is either training or education available locally or drifting between jobs without a clear career path. Jobs in the "middle" that pay well without requiring a degree are few and far between.

Theme 3: Basic needs: I need things in my community so I can work.

Interview participants cited a range of conditions like access to healthcare, child care, the high cost of housing and transportation that present barriers to economic sufficiency and mobility. Long distances between communities and a lack of affordable, reliable transportation create barriers to opportunities. Jobs, education, training, shopping, day care may all be out of reach for people without personal vehicles or money for gas. Limited public transit options don't serve the most remote parts of the region at all and often run infrequently everywhere else.

It's not possible to work if you do not have care for children and loved ones. People leave the workforce or do not pursue opportunities for advancement because of limited affordable care. Even when children are school age, drop-off and pick-up times impact employability. There is also a physical, emotional, and time impact of caregiving that is often under-recognized in economic development. Care disproportionately impacts women, including low pay for care jobs. When employers do provide flexibility, it improves people's lives.

Mental and physical health are a foundation for being able to work and earn a living. Healthy foods aren't accessible in remote parts of the region. Health services are often distant. It can be difficult to afford traveling for health services, especially if employers won't make accommodations for time off. Many people feel a deep connection to our region's natural beauty and find it healing but have concrete needs for resources to support their health in their communities.

Expensive, hard-to-find housing causes people to move out of the area, take a job they don't like, or live with family. Young people trying to move away for education find the cost of housing makes a four-year degree impossible. Even for businesses, the cost of renting space can be prohibitive. Many employers have struggled filling positions due to unavailability of housing. This not only speaks to the high cost of housing, but the fact that wages do not match the cost of living in the area. High housing cost and low pay means people are constantly struggling and financially stressed.

Theme 4: Purpose: What work means to me

Interview participants shared diverse reasons they choose to live and work in this region - and why it's sometimes not possible for them to stay. Work is connected to complex motivations and meaning in their lives and helps them meet important needs, not all of which are motivated by economics. People spoke of many challenges to living in this region, from a shortage of jobs, opportunities, and childcare to facing prejudice and trauma. Yet they are all still here. Why? Some people spoke of this region as a healing place, about their connection to land and water. Others spoke about wanting to stay close to family or a network of support. For Indigenous people, this region has been their home since time immemorial.

Even people who love this place sometimes leave. They leave to find better-paying jobs. Or to chase educational opportunities that aren't available in the region. Or to find more affordable housing and cost of living somewhere else. Others leave to get away from something. Racism,

homophobia, and other prejudices can make life difficult and cause trauma. These issues came up in interviews, even though everyone interviewed currently lives in the region. Some have left and come back. Some moved away and made comparisons. Others simply talked about things that have made them think about leaving.

People are juggling work, school, caregiving, and wearing many other hats. How can folks so buried in day-to-day challenges and survival dream about what will make a better future, build their capacity to develop their purpose and find and access quality jobs? People described making hard choices to forgo their dreams simply to earn enough to cover basic needs for themselves and their families. Many have a “side hustle” or passion projects that feed creative outlets but don’t bring in enough money to pay the bills. Some can’t find teachers or mentors to help them take their creative talent to the next level and know others who have left the area for this reason.

Some jobs are important to building community and are sources of rewards beyond monetary compensation. Some uncompensated work should be. When people provide services like transportation, translation, family care and emotional support to help others that ultimately benefit employers and institutions, can their services be compensated? What parts of community work are essential elements to building social networks and creative outlets outside the cash economy.

Elevating Diversity, Equity and Inclusion: Equity Council

Redwood Region RISE strives to center the voices of and support participation from community members representing or advocating for priority communities through its Equity Council. Equity Council members were nominated to serve as the result of a county-wide outreach effort and are both acknowledged by their communities as representing and also self-identify as representing one or more priority communities in the four-county region. Membership on the Equity Council will be reviewed on a regular basis, and at least annually, to ensure inclusive and equitable participation by all priority groups is achieved.

The Equity Council began meeting in August 2023. It provides oversight on community outreach and engagement activities to ensure diverse voices and perspectives are included in the planning process and that decision-making processes are equitable. It ensures the voices of priority communities are being heard and included in all RR RISE planning tables and decision-making processes, and provides recommendations on best practices, strategies, and implementation for community outreach and engagement and decision-making.

Equity Council members identified the following economic barriers experienced by the priority communities they represent.

- Regardless of disability and other factors, nationally most people are assessed as reading at an eighth-grade level or below, with many of us most comfortable at a fourth or fifth-grade reading level even regardless of marginalized factors -- plain language is crucial for democratic access.

- People in priority communities often do not feel safe contributing in communities outside their own.
- There is a lack of infrastructure [social, policy, physical] that promotes participation of priority communities as full partners.

Members of the Equity Council confirmed barriers included in the Empathy Interview Insights report are among the highest priority issues for business owners and people in their communities. The Equity Council advised that priority communities and community organizations need to be embedded in projects selected for regional development through RR RISE and benefit from them, not just voice support for these projects. The Council wants to see projects that will have a direct impact on priority communities and project selection criteria that are structural and can help achieve regional goals.

Voicing Interests of Sovereign Nations: Tribal Planning Table

Tribal government leaders attended the first meeting of the Tribal Planning Table on December 8, 2023.¹⁵ The Tribal Planning Table is a forum for leaders of Tribal governments. It is critical to acknowledge Tribal sovereignty and the unique needs of each of the 32 governments that exist within the Redwood Region. As data presented above show, Native Americans are among those in the Redwood Coast Region most severely impacted by economic, health and climate challenges posing economic barriers.

In this initial meeting, government leaders and Tribally-designated staff of federally and non-federally recognized Tribes discussed how they wish to participate in the RR RISE initiative, the economic development priorities and challenges in their respective governments and communities, their perspectives on the CA JobsFirst and other state grant programs, and how they would like to be resourced by the Tribal Planning Table.

Leaders of Tribes in attendance were receptive to continuing to participate in the forum and to defining the Table as a space for Tribes to engage with one another and non-Native partners across the region. They recommended continuing to approach and engage all Tribes who might want to participate and direct the design of the Table. The RR RISE Outreach Team is continuing to communicate and engage with each Tribe in the region; is requesting Tribes' feedback on the design of a mini-grant program to support their participation; and exploring the next steps for convening the Tribal Table to ensure this forum is directed by and meets the purposes established by Tribal government leaders.

Summary

The entire Redwood Coast Region meets the state's definition of a "disinvested community." Burdens of this disinvestment are shouldered unequally by residents who are among the poorest in the state and acutely so by Native Americans, people of color, people with disabilities and LGBTQAI+ members of priority communities. These barriers include stark income inequality as

¹⁵ These Tribes were represented at the initial Tribal Planning Table meeting: Elk Valley Rancheria, Hoopa Valley Tribe, Resighini Rancheria, Tolowa Dee-ni' Nation Wailaki Tribe Band of White Lily Clan, Yurok Tribe.

measured by wages, labor force participation, unemployment and poverty and lower levels of educational attainment, which does not necessarily offer a pathway to living wages. Priority communities are disproportionately affected by disparities on health outcomes impacting quality of life and ability to work, including substance use, behavioral health, disability, and access to healthcare. Moreover, these communities are more likely to be vulnerable to climate impacts due to health and income statuses. Finally, while the average cost of living in this region is lower than the state average, healthcare and housing costs as a share of household budget exceed both CA rural county and state averages.

Experiences and insights relayed by job seekers, workers and business owners representing priority communities across the region elaborates on economic barriers suggested by quantitative data and calls attention to the importance of job stability, relevant skills development opportunities, local resources that meet workers' basic needs and structuring work in ways that people find meaningful. They spoke about connection, social safety, the experience of being valued and the desire to simply meet basic needs while being able to choose their career path, the community in which they live and honor the reasons they call this region home.

The RR RISE Equity Council identified specific ways in which economic barriers are compounded by social and political barriers to prevent the participation of priority populations in economic development planning and have prevented them from benefiting from it in the past. Ensuring communication is accessible and understandable in plain language, physical and emotional safety in community forums, and opportunities for members of priority populations and organizations they lead to be embedded in planning and project processes as full partners are necessary to the success of regional work. The leaders of Tribal governments and designated staff who participated in the first RR RISE Tribal Planning Table outlined ways the forum can provide opportunities to further their economic development plans and projects. The outreach team will continue to engage leaders in the 32 federally and non-federally recognized governments in this region to ensure the Tribal Planning Table is directed by and meets the purposes established by Tribal government leaders.

iii. Snapshot of the outreach plan

The CA Jobs First grant program prioritizes outreach to organizations that represent disinvested communities – RR RISE priority communities. This section of the report offers a snapshot of the outreach and engagement plan describing how the RR RISE Collaborative intends to ensure their active participation.

North Coast Opportunities, coordinating the RR RISE Community Outreach & Engagement Team with support from True North Organizing Network for work in Del Norte County, infuses the following guiding principles throughout all outreach strategies and all phases of the planning process:

1. Honor the wisdom of individuals who have been marginalized in economic development planning;

2. Create and allow space for individuals with lived experience to drive the prioritization of projects that will be funded;
3. Encourage and accept non-traditional approaches within the economic development planning sphere.

Phase 1: Educate Priority Populations and Grassroots Organizations on California Jobs First

Phase 1 of the NCO Community Outreach & Engagement Plan, from January to August 2023, focused on educating members of RR RISE priority communities and grassroots and community-based organizations representing them on CA Jobs First and RR RISE. Activities included online meetings and presentations, conducting listening sessions, tabling at community events, radio presentations, phone calls, and distributing flyers in priority communities. Staff contacted Tribal government leaders and their staff, including Tribal administrators and retaining a Tribal economic development consultant with existing tribal contacts in Humboldt, Del Norte and Lake Counties to deliver presentations and/or physically visit Tribal offices in twenty-six Tribal communities.

Staff developed a contact list and approached community-based organizations with a request to support outreach by hosting focus groups and distributing surveys and/or other communication materials regarding the Planning Phase through their networks. This was done to lay the groundwork for connecting members of RR RISE priority communities to the Collaborative launched in February 2023 and Equity Council launched in August 2023. The Equity Council is a body composed of individuals who are self-identified as possessing life experience that is reflective of “disinvested communities.”

During this phase, outreach focused on preparations to launch the RR RISE Local Planning Tables, which are community meetings in each county, in September 2023.

Phase 2: Center DEI in the Planning Phase

Phase 2 of the NCO Community Outreach & Engagement Plan (September 2023 to June 2024) focuses on centering Diversity, Equity & Inclusion in the Planning Process. Local Planning Tables launched in Del Norte, Humboldt, Lake and Mendocino Counties. The purpose of Local Planning Tables is to identify the needs and priorities of individuals within each county and “sub-region” within each county. For example, the needs of individuals in Lake County will likely be distinct from their neighboring coastal counties. Then within Lake County the needs of those in the City of Lakeport are likely to be distinct from the needs of individuals in Clearlake Oaks, an unincorporated community. Needs identified at the Local Planning Tables will be brought forward to the four Sector Tables to be considered as regional solutions to economic development are designed.

In September 2023, NCO contracted facilitators skilled in Human-Centered Design through an inclusive Request for Proposals process overseen by the Equity Council. ThinkPlace West facilitators will support Redwood Region RISE and North Coast Opportunities Outreach & Engagement efforts to:

- Create platforms for meaningful engagement for priority populations to be heard;
- Ensure the wisdom of priority populations is honored;
- Inform economic development stakeholders what adjustments are needed in language, approach, and communications to accommodate differences in understanding about the economic development sphere among participants; and
- Provide the tools needed so that all participants can confidently navigate participation in this Planning Phase.

North Coast Opportunities and ThinkPlace West are jointly facilitating the Equity Council, Tribal Planning Table and Local Planning Tables. NCO and ThinkPlace have identified Empathy Interviews as a strategy to center the voices of job seekers, workers and business owners from priority populations. From October through December 2023, NCO Coordinators were trained on Empathy Interview techniques and coached on the process. Staff have completed interviews and analysis to identify insights from community voices that will be shared at Local Planning Tables in all four counties in January 2024. During these deep conversations, community members have brought forward how the lack of affordable housing, transportation, healthcare, and education directly impacts finding thriving wage opportunities. Results are presented in the ThinkPlace West Empathy Interview Insights Report included in this report (Appendix C).

C. Network of Existing Partners and Plans

i. Network map of existing partners

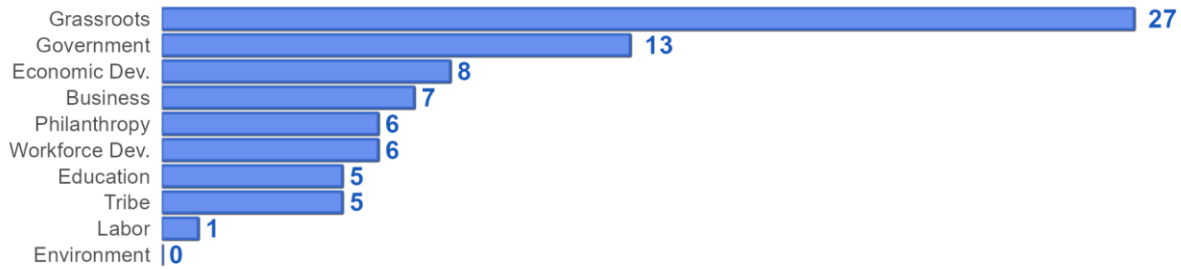
As indicated by the analysis of the RR RISE Collaborative mailing list and robust participation in monthly Collaborative meetings, the RR RISE Collaborative has engaged active representation of existing partners and priority communities in each required partner category across the region. This section of the report focuses on organizations representing required partners and priority communities to highlight how partner organizations are engaging in economic development planning and the supports they need to build stronger partnerships and community engagement.

Organizations Responding to the Survey

As figure 10 shows, the largest number of survey respondents (34%) represented grassroots/community-based organizations, followed by government agencies (~17%). Labor (1%), Tribes (6.4%) and education and training centers (6.4%) were represented by the fewest number of survey responses. No respondents indicated they represented an environmental justice organization.¹⁶

¹⁶ The survey question asked for a response that best described the organization. On reviewing data, organizations with an environmental justice focus may have identified as grassroots/community-based organizations.

Figure 10 Organizations

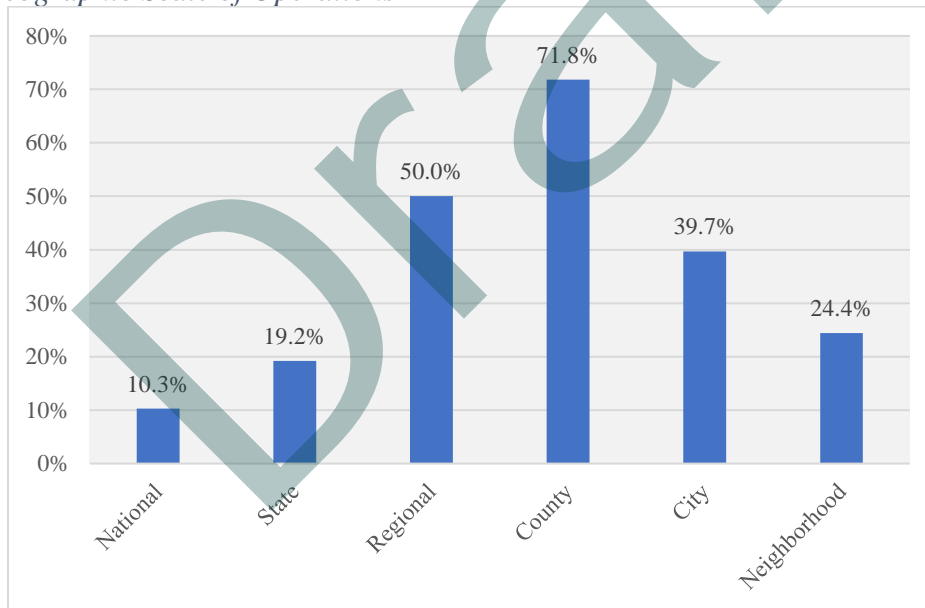


N = 78

Partner Organizations: Scale and Scope of Services

Organizations typically work at multiple levels. Most partners reported working in organizations that operate at the county (72%) level. Half reported working across the Redwood Coast Region (not necessarily providing services in every county in the region). About 40% operate at a city level and nearly one quarter (24%) report working at a local neighborhood level. The fewest reported working at state and national levels (Figure 11).

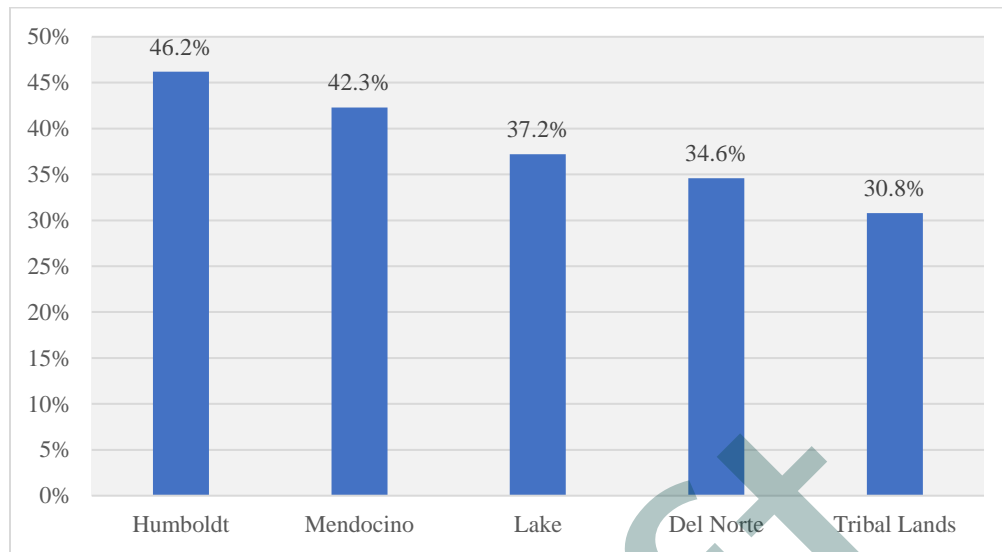
Figure 11 Geographic Scale of Operations



N = 78 for all percentages.

Organizations reported offering services in multiple locations, in every county across the region and in Tribal lands (Figure 12).

Figure 12 Location of Services



N = 78 for all percentages.

Populations Served

RR RISE partners provide services to people who represent/identify as members of more than one priority population, and most serve more than one priority population. Partners most frequently reported serving remote communities, youth, communities of color and members of ethnic minority communities, followed closely by LGBTQIA+ and Tribes (Table 7, below).

Overall, grassroots organizations reported providing services to the most diverse range of priority communities. Government and workforce development organizations most frequently indicated they provide services to remote communities, youth, and communities of color. Governments also reported serving people without broadband and people with developmental disabilities, while workforce development organizations reported serving LGBTQIA+ and formerly incarcerated communities. Philanthropy and education organizations most often reported serving members of ethnic minority communities.

Fewer partner organizations provide services to new citizens, people without documentation, religious communities, non-federally recognized Tribal Nations, unions and monolingual Hmong speakers, suggesting groups that may benefit from further outreach to determine appropriate RR RISE engagement strategies.¹⁷ Less than half of the organizations who responded to the survey reported serving members of these specific priority communities, suggesting a possible need for education and further research to discern whether organizations capture data on the priority communities defined by RR RISE and/or how priority communities are being served across the region.

¹⁷ The Outreach and Engagement Team and Convening Team members track survey results on an ongoing basis and work to initiate outreach to under-represented groups is already underway.

Table 7. Organizations Serving Priority Communities

	Percentage (%)
Remote communities	65
Youth	59
Communities of color	49
Members of ethnic minority communities	49
LGBTQIA+	45
Tribal citizens	45
Senior citizens	42
Individuals without broadband access	40
Workers	40
Immigrants with documentation	34
Formerly incarcerated	32
Individuals with:	
<i>Physical disabilities</i>	32
<i>Learning disabilities</i>	31
<i>Developmental disabilities</i>	28
<i>Visual impairment</i>	25
<i>Hearing impairment</i>	22
Monolingual Spanish speakers	32
Advocates for people of color	31
Tribal governments	31
Individuals without documentation	25
New citizens	23
Members of religions	22
Non-federally recognized Tribal Nations	22
Unions	14
Monolingual Hmong speakers	12

N = 65 for all percentages.

Summary

Community-based and grassroots organizations representing priority populations are the largest group of survey respondents. Few partner organizations reported working at the state or national level; most work at regional/subregional, county and city levels. Partner organizations serve all priority communities in the region, with most offering services in multiple locations across the county in which they work.

Organizations most frequently reported serving people living in remote areas, youth, communities of color, ethnic and racial minorities and LGBTQIA+ communities. Few organizations reported serving non-federally recognized Tribes, unions/union members and monolingual Hmong speakers. Survey results suggest additional outreach, education and research are needed to clarify how RR RISE priority communities are identified and engaged.

- ii. Their existing regional and subregional plans, strategies, and related reports

The Redwood Coast Region was designated as such by the state in 2022. The CA Jobs First Grant Program and the Regional K-16 Educational Collaboratives Grant Program are the two state-funded initiatives convening the four counties in the Redwood Coast Region. The two grant programs are part of a state approach to guide community-driven planning and implementation for education, workforce and economic development projects.¹⁸

Existing Plans

Although some partner organizations work across the RR RISE region, there are no existing regional plans for the Redwood Coast Region available for analysis in this report. The Convening Team is conducting an ongoing analysis of plans submitted by RR RISE partners during the proposal development phase and in connection with listening sessions (a partial list appears in Appendix D). These plans cover different time periods, a variety of political jurisdictions, diverse geographic areas and a wide range of economic development goals, strategies and projects in varying levels of detail.¹⁹

To assess opportunities existing plans may present to help catalyze regional partnerships, this report outlines areas of alignment across the counties' most current Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) documents. All counties are in the process of updating (Del Norte, Mendocino) or preparing new (Humboldt, Lake) CEDS documents. In place of the Lake County CEDS, which expired, the County produced an interim Economic Development Strategy document, used for this comparison.

RR RISE convened the first meeting of the Tribal Planning Table on December 8, 2023, to learn from Tribal leaders in federally and non-federally recognized communities how Tribes can be supported to participate in the RR RISE planning process. While Tribes prepare a variety of economic development plans, they were not included in the analysis in this paper to respect the process of engaging their participation through the Tribal Planning Table. As Tribal governments continue to meet, the Convening Team will seek their guidance on appropriate ways to include

¹⁸ The Regional K-16 Education Collaboratives Grant Program announced \$108m in funds awarded to the Redwood Coast K16 Education Collaborative (convened by CalPoly Humboldt) in May 2022. This program is part of a statewide strategy cultivating regional economies, strengthening education-to-career pathways, and ensuring that education, vocational, and workforce programs work in partnership to provide broader access for all to education and employment opportunities in their own communities. The Redwood Coast Collaborative seeks to develop a robust college-going culture in the region by building career pathways for education and health care, increasing participation in and completion of A-G courses and improving retention rates in higher education, especially for Native American and socioeconomically disadvantaged students. <https://www.gov.ca.gov/2022/05/26/california-distributes-108-6-million-to-create-regional-education-to-career-pipelines/>

¹⁹ For example, related workforce development planning regions intersecting the Redwood Coast Region include: Del Norte County is part of the Northern Rural Training and Employment Consortium (NoRTEC) representing 10 additional counties outside the RR RISE region; Humboldt County is a standalone workforce development region; Lake, Mendocino, Napa and Marin Counties are represented by The Workforce Alliance of the North Bay; and, Mendocino and Sonoma Counties have formed the Sonoma Mendocino Economic Development District, which prepares a CEDS document for the two-county district.

information on their economic development plans and priorities in regional analyses and the RR RISE planning process.²⁰

To further inform the analysis of existing plans, the RR RISE Convening Team invited economic development planners to participate in listening sessions. Listening sessions surfaced challenges the planners experienced with respect to completing, updating and implementing CEDS and other plans. Many precipitated and/or exacerbated by the pandemic continue to negatively impact progress. These challenges include:

- A historical lack of planning infrastructure and/or impacted resources (staff, time, financial resources) characteristic of rural, remote areas.
- Reallocation of personnel and funds during and following natural disasters and the pandemic, contributing to the lack of continuity and inability to carry out long-term planning (always in recovery mode).
- Staff and committee/board member turnover, leaving key positions vacant, stalling progress and limiting outreach and community engagement.
- Lack of funding.
- Lack of data.
- The need to prioritize mandates to complete plans covering different topics and jurisdictional boundaries to maintain funding.
- Community resistance to planned strategies and projects resulting in project challenges, delays and cancellations.
- Rapid shifts in the economic development landscape due to policy changes, climate impacts, and emerging new opportunities (e.g., legalization of cannabis, wildfire, storm and flooding devastation, and offshore wind).

County CEDS documents reviewed for this study offer a snapshot of current economic development priorities. Table 8 shows RR RISE counties share a focus on industries with historical, deep roots across the region, including arts and culture, tourism, agriculture, forestry, fishing and manufacturing. Recently updated plans sharpen the focus on these traditional industry areas under the banners of Blue, Green and Creative Economies. Counties also share a focus on education, research and development, and small business innovation and entrepreneurship.

²⁰ During the first Tribal Planning Table meeting on December 8, Tribes expressed interest Green enterprises in forestry, land management and restoration, and renewable energy through hydrogen, wind and solar projects. They are also interested in support for economic development initiatives unique to tribes; for example, those focusing on indigenous arts culture and experience as well as building traditional ecological knowledge.

Table 8. Focus Industries

Industries in County Plans			
Del Norte CEDS 2019-2024	Humboldt CEDS 2018-2023	Lake EDS 2019-2025	Mendocino CEDS 2022-2025
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transportation, Technology, Tourism • Agriculture, including Forestry and Fishing • Manufacturing, Medicine • Education, Environment • Small Business and Sovereign Nation (DNATL) Success 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism/Arts, Culture • Alternative Agriculture / Forest Products • Specialty Food, Flowers & Beverages • Niche Manufacturing • Diversified Health Care • Construction • Investment Support Services • Management & Innovation Services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism • Agricultural Supply Chain • University & Research Institution Science • Advanced Entrepreneurs: Engineering, Aerospace, Graphic Design/Arts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism, Arts • Creatives (tech) • Green Economy: specialty food and beverage, biomass, water storage • Blue Economy: ocean-related fisheries and food production

Aligned Goals and Strategies

Counties’ goals speak to expanding and growing business opportunities, jobs and development projects in the Blue Economy, Green Economy, Tourism, and Renewable Energy sectors. All plans emphasized support for small businesses and entrepreneurs. Plans recently completed in Del Norte and Mendocino Counties also focused on building the capacity and resilience of rural and Tribal communities, in particular through investments in broadband and transportation.

Specific strategies included in the county plans generally fall within three categories: Industries, Infrastructure and Skills. This summary offers a high-level overview of strategies appearing in two or more of the plans.

Industry Strategies: Diversify local industries and grow industries that offer living wage jobs.

Specific examples include:

- Develop culinary, cultural, eco-, experiential and other niche brands of tourism.
- Expand specialty foods cultivation, processing, distribution and sales.
- Support sustainable agricultural, forestry and fishery products.
- Develop new forest industry/biomass/timber products.
- Expand programs applying Traditional Ecological Knowledge, including those preserving aquatic resources, traditional diets, and wildfire management.
- Invest in fire mitigation and safety practices.

- Grow technology-based firms across industries.
- Increase/support light manufacturing.
- Grow health care enterprise.
- Invest in developing renewable energy.

Infrastructure Strategies: Ensure suppliers, residents and visitors can easily access resources and opportunities throughout the region. Common strategies include:

- Invest in Harbor/Port Infrastructure.
- Develop and preserve water resources – storage, management, wastewater.
- Invest in airports.
- Expand and construct emergency routes.
- Expand highways and roads to accommodate supply chain routes, commuters, and visitors.
- Develop regional multi-modal and active transit options.
- Enhance public transportation options.
- Deliver broadband to rural communities.
- Establish Community Hubs for community benefits (e.g., education, work, recreation) and disaster preparedness.
- Increase ADUs, workforce housing, affordable housing – address permitting, zoning.

Skills Strategies: Ensure businesses and residents are prepared and resourced to participate in the local economy.

- Upskill workforce in skills needed in the Blue, Green and Creative economies.
- Invest in ocean education, other high-demand career paths.
- Train on cooperative development/ownership.
- Support business entrepreneurship and a thriving small business environment.
- Develop research and lab space to grow emerging industries.
- Increase childcare affordability and availability.
- Develop quality messaging, outreach and marketing.

Recognizing the importance of quickly seeding partnerships to pursue collaborative regional economic development strategies and elevating candidate projects for regional implementation, the RR RISE Convening Team and Collaborative Formation Task force designed Sector Tables as part of the RR RISE Governance Structure. Sector Tables are an innovative economic development strategy the Region has already launched through the planning grant. Sector Tables will begin meeting in January 2024.

RR RISE Sector Tables reflect traditional and emerging industry and economic development priorities shared by all counties across the region: Arts, Culture and Tourism, Health and Caregiving, Renewable and Resilient Energy and Working Lands and Blue Economy. Industry leaders nominated by community members across the region participate on the tables. Sector

Coordinators for each table will work closely with the Convening Team and others to facilitate working sessions to:

- Identify missing partners for outreach,
- Review data,
- Develop regional strategies,
- Shortlist high-alignment projects,
- Assist the Collaborative with participatory decision for project selection, and
- Identify priorities for ongoing collaboration on sector development.

Projects

Some projects in the CEDS and other plans are no longer current or described in sufficient detail to support meaningful comparisons/analysis. The RR RISE Convening Team invited partners to share important and promising projects during the proposal development phase (July 2022) and through the first partner survey (March-April 2023). Projects have also been discussed in listening sessions and at Local Planning Table meetings. Partial project lists are included in Appendix E.

Recognizing that an analysis of existing plans would be unlikely to generate actionable information and in response to RR RISE partners' eagerness to learn about projects across the region, CCRP recently launched an online form to create an inventory of projects – from early-stage ideas to projects that are close to or ready for implementation. The intent is to capture and share information that can help seed partnerships and begin to categorize projects for regional consideration. CCRP gathered input from the RR RISE Collaborative during the November 28, 2023 meeting to improve the online form and will begin to share information in the project inventory in January 2024.

Summary

The Redwood Coast Region is a new state-designated planning area. Counties do not routinely work together on plans or projects. There are no Redwood Coast regional plans available for analysis in this report.

A comparison of counties' CEDS shows strong alignment across goals and strategies. Plans embrace new and emerging industry areas. Some counties are collaborating on trails and recreation projects, and all four are currently participating in the recently awarded K-16 Education Collaborative focused on education and health career pathways. Plans cite critical infrastructure and talent needs as areas for economic development. Proposed projects are scaled and tailored to local areas and budgets and significant policy and funding challenges hamper implementation of plans and projects.

RR RISE Sector Tables are in place to catalyze partnerships, develop regional strategies and propose regional projects. The Regional Convener has launched an online tool to create an inventory of projects to seed partnerships and identify projects that can be scaled for regional implementation.

- iii. Analysis to demonstrate synergies, potentials, and challenges.

Synergies

The RR RISE planning process has already generated synergies advancing regional cooperation and coordination toward economic development planning. County plans document a shared focus on industry sectors, and aligned goals and strategies. Relationships formed as a result of proposal development and Collaborative monthly meetings confirm partners and communities across the region are exploring, developing, and implementing similar/related economic development goals and strategies.

Capitalizing on this knowledge, the Redwood Region RISE governance structure was designed to maximize synergies and potentials to build and enhance partnerships, and identify local innovations, ideas and investments that can be scaled to regional approaches. The focus and composition of Sector Tables launching in January reflects these shared areas of focus and purpose and provides a forum to build partnerships and identify opportunities that make economic sense for the region. Organizations representing industry leaders from each county will partner to craft shared strategies backed by regional data and informed by input from other Collaborative planning tables and priority communities.

The next section of this report outlines preliminary findings about the nature of existing partnerships, potential to strengthen and build partnerships, and challenges to doing so.

Existing and Future Economic Development Partnerships

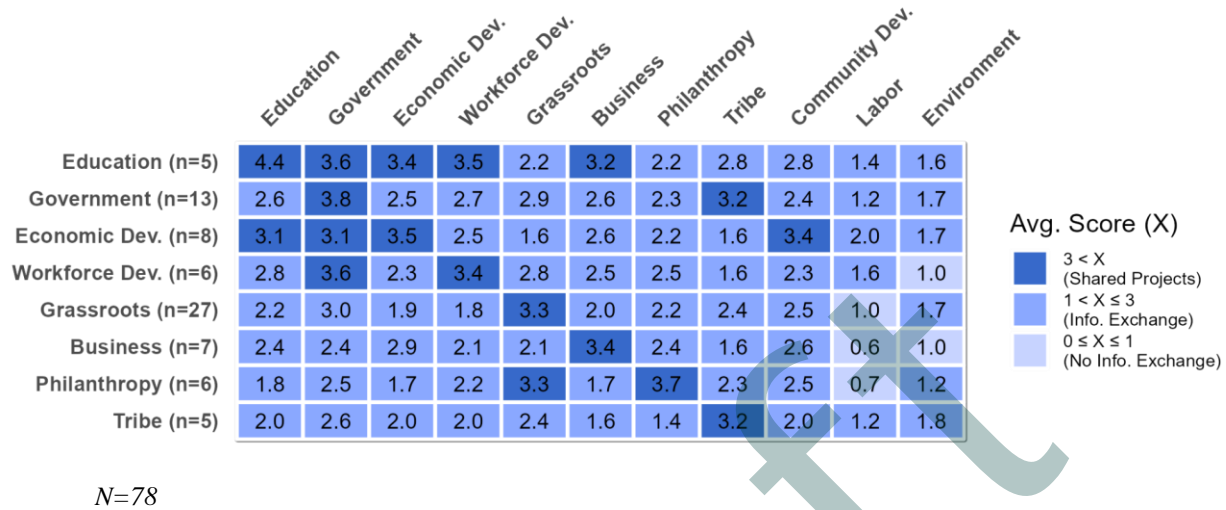
The second RR RISE survey (September to November 2023) asked respondents to describe how they interact with other organizations on economic development issues. Respondents were asked to rate the strength of their connection with other organizations along a continuum of sharing information and engaging in projects. Their ratings were assigned a score as follows:

0 points:	I do not know anyone at this type of organization.
1 point:	I know someone at this type of organization but do not regularly exchange information with them and have never worked with them.
2 points:	I regularly exchange useful information with a person in this type of organization but have not/do not work with them on a project.
3 points:	I regularly exchange useful information with a person in this type of organization and have worked with them on one or more projects.
4 points:	I am in regular contact with people in this type of organization, have participated in a planning process with them before, and have worked with them on projects.
5 points:	I depend on a person in this type of organization for important information and we collaborate closely on plans and/or on one or more projects.

RR RISE partners who responded to the survey rated the strength of their connection to other organizations as represented in Figure []. The average strength of connections between

organizations is represented by a numerical score in each box and boxes are also color-coded as indicated in the text box above, with darker colors indicating stronger relationships.²¹

Figure 13. Strength of Connections Among Organizations



Results show how the organizations in each row rated their economic development relationships with organizations listed in each column. The dark blue line of boxes running from the upper left square diagonally down and across the figure to the right shows that organizations have the strongest connections with other organizations of the same type (for example, education organizations reported they have the strongest connections to other education organizations). This is, perhaps, an expected result.

The other dark blue boxes indicate, on average, the strongest economic development planning and project connections exist among these types of partners:

- Education with government, with economic development, with workforce development and with business organizations
- Government agencies with Tribes
- Economic development organizations with community development organizations
- Philanthropy with grass roots organizations

The largest number of responses indicate organizations regularly exchange useful information but do not work on projects with other organizations. On average, grassroots, business and Tribal organizations reported they exchange information but do not work on projects with any organizations representing required RR RISE partners.

²¹ Note. Community development and environmental justice organizations are not represented by survey respondents. Only one labor organization responded to the survey and is excluded from this visualization. However, the organizations that responded did indicate relationships to these types of organizations, which are illustrated in the last three columns above. Scoring is based on the average strength of relationships in survey responses.

As an indicator of potential to shift relationships based on sharing economic development information to relationships that involve collaboration on projects, the list below highlights connections that received the strongest scores (values of 2.8 and above).

- Education organizations with Tribes and with community development organizations
- Government with grassroots organizations
- Workforce development organizations with grassroots organizations
- Business organizations with economic development organizations

The lightest blue boxes indicate, on average, organizations don't have a relationship or don't work on projects with other organizations of these types:

- Workforce development with environmental justice organizations
- Grassroots organizations with labor organizations
- Business with labor, or with environmental justice organizations
- Philanthropy with labor organizations

Challenges

Members of the RR RISE Collaborative and tables in its governance structure have identified multiple challenges to developing and sustaining partnerships for economic development planning and projects; many have surfaced during listening sessions as well. These include:

- The need to create forums for people with shared interests to develop projects.
- A lack of coordinated information about public and private funding sources available for different types of projects at different phases of project development, and for project implementation.
- The acute need to resource project predevelopment work.
- Aggressive timelines required by most funding programs, including CA Jobs First, to expend funds and deliver project results.
- Significant state delays in funding disbursements coupled with complex, shifting and inflexible performance criteria.
- Including voices of priority populations in project design when existing economic development plans and projects don't reflect strategies to meet their needs and planning processes have not/do not provide time and opportunities for their input.
- Lack of coordinated or enabling policy at state and local levels (e.g., CEQA, permitting).
- Recognizing and addressing the reality/features of rural economies is vastly different from other areas in the state. Small and nonprofit businesses are the lifeblood of the region's economy, there is limited or no government infrastructure to support planning and implementation, most governments and businesses are still struggling to rebound from the impacts of the pandemic, it is incredibly difficult to incentivize developers to invest in projects, and most projects need to be scaled to meet local or hyperlocal needs across large remote geographic regions lacking basic infrastructure.
- There are few large employers or government agencies positioned to lead economic development and infrastructure projects, and projects at regional scale will take years to plan and develop, including talent pipelines and business supply chains.

- National and state policies are insensitive to and lack of knowledge about rural needs and capacities and funding programs are not designed with rural areas in mind, which prevents partnerships from forming because most program criteria are impossible for rural communities to meet.

Summary

On average, the strongest relationships exist between traditional economic development actors. The weakest economic development connections between required partners exist for workforce development and businesses with environmental justice organizations, and for grassroots, business, and philanthropy with labor organizations. On average, grassroots, business and Tribal organizations reported they exchange information but do not work on projects with any organizations representing required RR RISE partners. On average, economic development partnerships with potential to shift from exchanging information to collaborating on projects may exist for education organizations with Tribes and community development organizations, government or workforce development organizations with grassroots organizations, and business organizations with economic development organizations.

Challenges experienced by partners point to federal and state grant programs that are not designed to support rural regions' ability to compete or successfully deliver project results that meet their needs, specifically calling out timelines, performance criteria, and disbursement schedules that do not account for the time and resources required to form partnerships, include community participation, design responsive and often complex regional projects, and deliver results.

Challenges also include competing demands to produce and implement local/county plans in divergent planning jurisdictions to access ongoing, much needed local funding, and the lack of coordinated or enabling policy to support local or regional implementation of plans and projects.

iv. Community capacity and power

A discussion of the federal, state and local policies fueling genocide, violence and discrimination experienced by the Indigenous peoples inhabiting this region from time immemorial, a succession of extractive boom-and-bust industries in gold mining and timber that decimated communities and irreplaceable natural resources in the environment, and criminal prosecution and stringent regulatory enforcement that has all but eviscerated the region's now-legal cannabis industry are beyond the scope of this paper. Yet the ongoing effects of these historically and violently imbalanced power dynamics are alive in the social, political and economic culture. They are also apparent in the quantitative and qualitative data presented in previous sections of this paper.

This section presents results from the RR RISE partner survey fielded between September – November 2023 which explored how partner organizations rate their capacity to participate in economic development planning and implementation processes and, as a proxy for community power to participate, barriers to their capacity to engage broader community participation in

these processes. Data on community capacity and power was also gathered from Collaborative planning table meetings and listening sessions.

Organizations' Capacity to Participate

Tables 9 and 10 show survey respondents represent small organizations. While one quarter of survey respondents did not know their organization's annual operating budget, nearly a third (31.6 %) reported their organization's annual budget falls below \$500,000. More than half (57%) of respondents work in an organization with 10 or fewer staff, and nearly three-quarters (73%) work in an organization with 25 or fewer staff.

Table 9. Annual Budget

	Percentage (%)	Frequency (n)
\$0 - \$100,000	14	10
\$100,000 - \$500,000	18	14
\$500,000 - \$2 million	18	14
\$2 million - \$5 million	9	7
\$5 million - \$10 million	4	3
Over \$10 million	12	9
Respondent unsure	25	19

N=76

Table 10. Employed Full-time Staff

	Percentage (%)	Frequency (n)
0 - 5 staff members	42	32
6 - 10 staff members	16	12
11 - 25 staff members	16	12
26 - 100 staff members	13	10
More than 100 staff members	13	11

N=77

Respondents were asked to rate their organization's capacity to participate in economic planning and implementation processes along several indicators of organizational performance and operations.

Economic development, government, and education organizations reported the strongest overall organizational capacity (the greatest number of high and moderate ratings) to participate in economic development planning and implementation processes. Commitment to build on community strengths and address community problems, partnerships and relationships, leadership represent partners' strongest capacities generally (Figure 14).

Figure 14. Capacity of Partner Organizations

	Economic Dev.	Government	Education	Business	Grassroots	Philanthropy	Tribe	Workforce Dev.
Commitment to build on community strengths and opportunities	1.8	1.7	1.8	1.2	1.4	1.2	1.0	1.6
Commitment to address community problems	1.4	1.6	1.6	1.0	1.4	1.3	1.4	1.4
Partners/relationships	1.5	1.6	1.4	1.5	1.2	1.0	1.0	1.3
Organizational leadership	1.5	1.5	1.2	1.2	1.0	1.4	1.0	1.2
Knowledge/awareness of relevant plans or funding opportunities	1.5	1.4	1.0	1.3	1.1	1.0	1.2	1.2
Skills (in-house)	1.2	1.6	1.2	1.5	1.1	0.8	0.8	0.5
Specialized Expertise (in-house or access to consultants)	1.6	1.5	1.2	1.3	0.8	1.0	1.0	0.8
Tools/Infrastructure (broadband, office space, equipment, etc.)	1.2	1.1	1.2	0.8	1.0	0.8	0.8	0.4
Training/professional development	1.4	1.0	1.2	0.8	0.8	1.0	0.8	1.0
Staff	1.1	1.3	0.8	0.6	0.8	0.7	0.8	0.8
Funding	1.2	1.0	0.2	0.0	0.5	0.4	0.8	0.2

Avg. Score (X)

- 1.5 < X ≤ 2
(Adequate or High Capacity)
- 1 < X ≤ 1.5
(Some Capacity)
- 0 ≤ X ≤ 1
(Little or No Capacity)

N=78. Scoring is based on the average score based on the following point system: "No/Limited Capacity"; 0 points, "Some Capacity"; 1 point, "Adequate/High Capacity"; 2 points.

Many partners experience capacity gaps in skills, expertise, infrastructure, training, staffing, and funding. Of note, workforce development organizations reported the lowest average levels of capacity in skills and tools of any organization type. Business organizations responding to this question reported they have no funded capacity to participate in economic development planning and implementation processes. Workforce and education partners reported the next lowest levels of funded capacity to participate in economic development planning and implementation processes.

Barriers to Achieving Community Participation

The survey asked respondents to evaluate barriers that may prevent their organization's ability to achieve broader participation in economic development planning and in reaching their constituents/those they serve.

On average, Tribes, government and business organizations reported experiencing the greatest overall level of barriers preventing them from achieving broader community participation in economic development planning. Transportation, time, staffing, and resources pose barriers for most partners, followed by digital inequities related to lack of access to broadband or devices. On average, Tribal and workforce development organizations reported community distrust as a

challenge. Business organizations reported lack of time as a significant challenge to achieving broader participation.

Figure 15. Barriers Experienced by Partner Organizations

	Tribe	Government	Business	Workforce Dev.	Philanthropy	Grassroots	Economic Dev.	Education
Geographic/transportation	1.4	1.0	0.8	1.2	1.3	1.2	0.9	1.0
Lack of time to participate	1.2	1.1	1.8	0.8	1.0	1.2	0.8	0.6
Other organizational capacity constraints (staffing, resources)	1.4	1.1	1.2	0.5	1.3	1.2	0.9	0.3
Difficulties increasing awareness/understanding	1.2	1.1	1.0	0.8	0.8	0.8	1.0	0.8
Lack of cultural connectivity	0.8	1.2	1.0	1.0	0.8	0.7	1.0	1.0
Digital inequity (lack of access to broadband or devices)	1.2	0.8	0.6	1.2	1.3	0.7	0.5	1.0
General disinterest	0.8	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.7	0.7	0.8	0.2
Language barriers	0.4	0.7	1.0	0.8	0.8	0.6	0.6	0.6
Community Distrust	1.2	0.8	0.4	1.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.6

Avg. Score (X)

- 1.5 < X ≤ 2
(Significant and Difficult)
- 1 < X ≤ 1.5
(A Challenge)
- 0 ≤ X ≤ 1
(Insignificant or Manageable)

N=78. Scoring based on the average score based on the following point system: "Not a barrier at all"; 0 points, "A challenge, but manageable"; 1 point, "A significant and difficult challenge"; 2 points.

Capacity-Building Training

Survey respondents indicated their organization could benefit from training on a range of topics (Table 11, below). Many are interested in training on community investment models (67%) and RR RISE Basics (63%). These interests are closely followed by training on building community power (57%), Economic Development Basics (56%), Project Development (56%) and Public Funding Basics (54%). About half (51%) of all survey respondents would like training on climate resilience followed by training on working with Tribes (47%). Training on Employer-Worker Collaboratives received the fewest responses.

RR RISE co-sponsored the third State of the Redwood Coast Region Conference, an economic development summit for counties in the Redwood Coast Region, held in person for the first time in Ukiah in September 2023. The summit featured many sessions offering information and a labor market analysis on the regions’ key industry sectors. Plenary sessions also covered

community investment models like solidarity economics and capital investment models.²² Survey results indicate an interest in training on similar subjects.

Table 11. Training Needs

	Percentage
Community Investment Models	67
Redwood Region RISE Basics	63
Building Community Power	57
Economic Development Basics	56
Project Development	56
Public Funding Basics	54
Climate Resilience	51
Working with Tribes	47
Equitable, Collaborative, Participatory Decision-making	44
Carbon Neutrality	41
Apprenticeship and Career Pathways Programs	40
Cultural History of our Region	40
Board and Committee Leadership Responsibilities	33
Immigration in our Region	30
Employer-Worker Collaboratives	28

N = 107 for all percentages.

Listening Sessions and Local Tables

Listening sessions conducted with required partners and members of priority communities across the region highlighted a lack of trust in government and economic development planning agencies stemming from boom and bust cycles of extractive industry, failures to deliver on projects proposed in the past, and policies that present barriers to community and economic development processes, such as permitting, fees and taxes that create insurmountable hurdles for small businesses and grassroots organizations to navigate and satisfy.

Community members cited multiple barriers to participating in economic development planning processes including overwhelming and confusing information, lack of time, lack of access to/inability to access online and in-person events, lack of awareness or knowledge of events, and a lack of follow-up and action on their feedback. They are overwhelmingly concerned about developing solutions to meet existing needs, including access to health and behavioral health care; broadband; transportation; disaster readiness; fire and forest management, reliable energy; local, cultural and healthy foods; housing; and jobs in their communities. They report predatory lending, rising rents and costs of living, and a general absence of jobs and relevant training for jobs that do exist in their communities.

²² Videos of plenary presentations are available at https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCXGptoz3DIBZp60-IQD_Ukg.

Community members see a need for local intermediary organizations to convene partners to build trust and develop community led solutions; policies friendlier to businesses, developers and community organizations; funding terms and processes that enable local businesses and agencies to implement needed projects; as well as coaching and training for local and emerging leaders that can build capacity for long-term progress. People who participated in Local Table meetings voiced a need for an inclusive community process built on norms that promote working together, using strong and clear communication techniques, including needs of all diverse residents and not only businesses, and conducting processes based on respect and compassion. Participants at every local table meeting expressed interest in working with Tribal communities and respect for traditional ecological knowledge.

These findings, based on direct feedback from community members, echo survey results suggesting there is a high level of commitment and willingness to partner to build on community strengths and solve community problems. They indicate community members express distrust of organizations leading economic development processes and point to a need for intermediaries with skills to convene diverse groups through difficult conversations to arrive at shared values, approaches and solutions to economic challenges. As with survey results, they indicate a primary obstacle to forming partnerships is the lack of capacity among nonprofits, especially those located within and/or serving key segments of priority communities and geographic areas.

Summary

Most RR RISE partner organizations are small, with few staff and low budgets. Commitment to build on community strengths and address community problems, partnerships and relationships, leadership represent partners' and communities' strongest capacities. Many partners experience capacity gaps in skills, expertise, infrastructure, training, staffing, and funding.

Tribes, government and business organizations reported experiencing the greatest overall level of barriers preventing them from achieving broader community participation in economic development planning. Transportation, time, staffing, and resources pose barriers for most partners, followed by digital inequities related to lack of access to broadband or devices. These barriers were independently confirmed by direct feedback provided in local planning table meetings.

Community members identified community distrust and a lack of trust in government/economic development agencies due to extractive boom and bust cycles of development and failure of governments and business to deliver on previously planned projects or to include community feedback in planning processes as challenges to progress. The number, nature and timelines of federal and state implementation opportunities are overwhelming and grant funding programs are not designed with the realities that structure rural economies in mind. Many local governments and community-based organizations do not have the expertise, experience, or capacity needed to capture, manage and/or use these resources without technical assistance and support.

Community members see a need for local intermediary organizations to convene partners to build trust and develop community led solutions; policies friendlier to businesses, developers and community organizations; funding terms and processes that enable local businesses and agencies to implement needed projects; as well as coaching and training for local and emerging leaders that can build capacity for long-term progress. People who participated in Local Table meetings voiced a need for an inclusive community process built on norms that promote working together, using strong and clear communication techniques, including needs of all diverse residents and not only businesses, and conducting processes based on respect and compassion. Participants at every local table meeting expressed interest in working with Tribal communities and respect for traditional ecological knowledge.

v. Clarify opportunities for collaborations and partnerships.

This study describes the number, types, purpose and capacity of partners participating in RR RISE. This section suggests opportunities for collaborations and partnerships that might facilitate progress as partners move into the next of planning to develop a vision, goals, strategies and projects that will guide regional economic development into the future.

Strengthening relationships between diverse partners, and between partners and communities.

Most organizations participating in RR RISE are small and work at county levels. They reach all priority (disinvested) communities identified by the RR RISE Collaborative, and most often serve people living in remote areas, youth, communities of color, ethnic and racial minorities and LGBTQIA+ communities. Few organizations reported serving non-federally recognized Tribes, unions/union members and monolingual Hmong speakers. Survey results suggest additional outreach and research can help clarify how RR RISE priority communities are identified and engaged by organizations participating in economic development planning and implementation processes.

Research for this study showed, on average, the strongest planning and project partnerships exist between traditional economic development actors: education, government, economic development and workforce development agencies and businesses. Government and economic development partners also reported they have strong relationships with Tribes and community development organizations.

On average, workforce development agencies and businesses in this region don't partner with environmental justice organizations. Grassroots, business, and philanthropy organizations don't partner with labor organizations. Environmental justice and labor organizations can offer important contributions toward the larger goals of the RR RISE initiative. Additional outreach to engage their participation in RR RISE planning tables can help forge stronger relationships.

Existing partnerships with the potential to shift from exchanging information to collaborating on projects include education organizations with Tribes and with community development organizations; government and workforce development organizations with grassroots

organizations; and business organizations with economic development organizations. Outreach and additional focus on these groups to learn how they are working together, clarify their roles in local and regional economic development work, and identify how they might be resourced to collaborate on developing plans and projects may open additional opportunities to accelerate regional work.

From the perspective of ensuring an equitable, inclusive process, organizations and community members in the Redwood Coast Region express a high level of commitment to building on community strengths and addressing community problems. They are willing to form partnerships and relationships around economic development plans and projects that meet the needs of priority populations. Yet many partners experience capacity gaps in skills, expertise, organizational infrastructure, training, staffing, and funding. Transportation and time also pose barriers for most partners to achieve broader participation in the planning process, followed by digital inequities related to lack of access to broadband or devices.

A primary obstacle to forming partnerships in the region is the lack of capacity among nonprofits, especially those located within and/or serving key segments of priority communities and geographic areas. Tribal governments, communities, and tribal-serving organizations are among the least capacitated and simultaneously recognized as among the most innovative and integral partners to engage in economic development projects. Tribes and workforce development organizations reported community distrust is a challenge that prevents them from achieving broader participation in economic development planning.

Community members participating in listening sessions and Local Planning Table meetings also reported a lack of trust in government and economic development agency planning processes due to the history of extractive boom and bust cycles of development and failure of governments and business to deliver on previously planned projects or to include community feedback in planning processes. Listening sessions, interviews with members of priority communities and meetings of the Equity Council surfaced concerns about indigenous erasure, violence, exclusion and structural inequities that pose real barriers to priority populations' participation in economic development planning and project development.

The willingness expressed by partner organizations and community members to focus on strengths, form partnerships, and access training that presents new models of community investment and building community power signal opportunities that can help address challenges to engaging priority communities in the process of developing equitable economic development partnerships, plans and projects. Delving more deeply into imbalanced power dynamics and capacity constraints in dialog facilitated by skilled intermediaries, additional research to lift up the experience of priority communities, and ongoing outreach to include priority communities in decision-making processes can help uncover, name and address these challenges.

Strengthening regional partnerships within and across industry sectors

The Redwood Coast Region is a new state-designated planning area. Economic development partners in counties across the region do not routinely work together on plans or projects. RR RISE and the K-16 Education Collaborative represent the first efforts of counties across the region to organize and collaborate on plans and projects. Strong regional alignment across industry sectors, goals and strategies present abundant opportunities for partners to design projects with regional relevance. RR RISE Sector Tables create a space to catalyze partnerships, develop regional strategies and propose regional projects.

Convening groups around shared interest in growing research and development, education, business entrepreneurship and communications/marketing strategies can help incubate partnerships and build support networks across industry sectors. Participants in listening sessions and local planning table meetings acknowledged NIMBY-ism or community resistance to change and planned projects often presents a major challenge to progress. Responding to requests from county residents and priority communities to form and/or fund intermediary organizations with the capacity to train, coach and build leadership skills in diverse communities, facilitate respectful dialogue and build social networks focused on specific goals can help ensure local voices contribute to plans, project designs and formation of local and regional partnerships within and across industry sectors.

From the perspective of ensuring an equitable and inclusive planning process, partners across the region will need to address the tension between planning for strategies that build toward regional growth industries and strategies to meet critical infrastructure, talent and funding gaps that currently limit economic growth within their own communities. Partners from across the region have repeatedly voiced concern about the process of fairly identifying projects for funding. To ensure an inclusive planning process, partners must address power differentials that have created barriers to the participation of RR RISE priority communities in planning and decision-making, including building the capacity of organizations to achieve broader participation in RR RISE and of communities to organize in self-determined, sustainable ways.

Sector Tables create a structure and forum for this work. The investment of Catalyst Funds will help support partners in working together across sectors and counties to develop a shared vision, strategies and criteria for developing and selecting projects. Tools will present opportunities for partners to clarify their roles, strengths and limitations so that efforts can be coordinated and partners can contribute from their position of strength. This work presents an opportunity for partners to join in identifying resources needed to support cross-sector work on an ongoing basis and collaborate to build an inclusive social and planning infrastructure.

Regional and State Partnerships

RR RISE partners, including members of priority communities, point to federal and state policies and grant programs that are not designed to support rural regions' ability to compete or develop projects that meet their needs. They specifically call out shifting and unrealistic timelines, performance criteria, and disbursement schedules that do not account for the time and resources

required to form partnerships, ensure community participation, design responsive and complex regional projects, and deliver results.

Partners are burdened by competing demands to produce and implement local/county plans in divergent planning jurisdictions simply to access ongoing, much needed local funding, and the lack of coordinated or enabling policy to support local or regional implementation of plans and projects. The number, nature and timelines of federal and state implementation opportunities are overwhelming strained systems, and grant funding programs are not designed with the realities that structure rural economies in mind.

Many local governments, businesses and community-based organizations do not have the expertise, experience, or capacity needed to capture and/or use grant funded resources without assistance. That the state agencies leading the CA Jobs First grant program have not been able to hire regional staff to provide guidance to northern California and the Redwood Coast Region for this grant program is an indicator of the difficulties partners in this region experience when searching for talent. Partners expressed needs to build the awareness, knowledge, and experience in economic development planning and implementation processes to meet persistent and urgent local needs and begin to work at the scale contemplated by CA Jobs First and other grant programs.

Summary

Data gathered from RR RISE partners and community members across the region tracks closely with research conducted by nationally renowned rural scholar Anthony Pipa at Brookings²³ and by the Little Hoover Commission²⁴ documenting the historical policy impacts of federal and state underinvestment in rural regions. This work points to the need to prioritize stable, flexible funding specifically for rural regions that builds local leadership capacity, improves policy and funding coherence at federal and state levels, and invests in substantial, flexible grants to enable regions to capitalize on and preserve the beauty, quality of life and pride of place that are also critical to catalyzing economic growth.

While state policy focuses on building traded sectors, this region lacks a coordinated approach to industries holding that potential and capacity to build markets is critically and negatively impacted by the lack of physical infrastructure - transportation routes, water, housing, broadband – and services – healthcare, education – to effectively build markets that will engage and meet existing needs of the residents of this region, especially priority communities.

²³ (Pipa, A, 2003) A recipe for a rural policy renaissance [Podcast Transcript]. <https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Reimagine-Rural-Ep-8-policy-recipe.pdf>

²⁴ Little Hoover Commission (2022). *Equitable economic development across California*. <https://lhc.ca.gov/report/equitable-economic-development-across-california-0>

Appendix A: Partnership Survey Questions

1. Email *

SECTION 1: Your Information

2. Welcome to the Redwood Region RISE Survey!

Your survey responses will help us learn about community members and organizations interested and/or available to participate in economic development planning and decision making in Redwood Region RISE (Resilient Inclusive Sustainable Economy): Del Norte, Humboldt, Lake, Mendocino Counties and Tribal Lands. This information is a required part of our region's plan, and your responses are very important! If you're not representing an organization/affiliation, this survey will take about five minutes to complete. For those representing an organization/affiliation it will take about twelve minutes to complete this survey.

We will use the survey results to prepare these parts of our regional plan:

- A searchable directory of people and organizations interested and available to participate in the Redwood Region RISE planning process.
- Graphics and charts that illustrate all combined survey responses.
- A written analysis of the take-aways.

You can choose not to include your name in the directory and still participate in this survey. Even if you choose to be listed in the directory, all responses in Sections 2 and 3 will be kept confidential.

If you have any questions about this survey, please contact: ccrp@humboldt.edu

Thank you for your time!

Please click NEXT to begin.

* Indicates required question

What is your name? (Required Question) *

3. Which County or area do you live in? Check all that apply.

Del Norte
Humboldt
Lake
Mendocino
Tribal Lands

4. If desired, please provide additional information about the area or Tribal Land that you live in. (For example, the name of the city, town or neighborhood in which you live.)

5. If applicable, what is your occupation or title?

6. Would you like to participate in economic development meetings and discussions in your community?

7. How would you like to contribute to the Redwood Region RISE planning process?

Check all that apply.

Attend Zoom meetings of the High Road Transition Collaborative (HRTC) on every last Thursday of the month

Participate on a Tribal Planning Table (Tribal members only)

Participate on a Local Planning Table

Receive the newsletter

Receive a mini grant to help Redwood Region RISE recruit community feedback from priority populations/members for Local Planning Tables (more information on this opportunity will be provided upon request)

Help us spread the word to encourage people to join the Local Table Meetings

Flyering/Promoting/social media/Giving out surveys for community feedback

Receive/attend update meetings a few times a year (in addition to or instead of HRTC meetings)

8. Do you represent an organization? Examples may include educational institutions, business associations, economic development, community organizations, and others.

Please note: If you select NO you will skip directly to Section 4, as Sections 2 and 3 pertain only to organizations.

Yes

No - Skip to question 22

SECTION 2: Organizations

You are answering these questions because in a previous question you indicated that you represent an organization.

9. What is the name of the organization that you represent?

10. What is your organization's primary physical address?

11. Which areas does your organization serve? Select all that apply:

Check all that apply.

Del Norte

Humboldt

Lake

Mendocino

Tribal Lands

12. At what geographic scale does your organization operate? Select all that apply: Check all that apply.

National

State

Regional (Del Norte, Humboldt, Lake and Mendocino Counties)

County

City

Neighborhood/Census Designated Place

13. If desired, please provide additional information about the areas or Tribal Lands your organization serves.

14. Please choose one response that best describes your organization:

Mark only one oval.

- Business/Business Association
- Economic Development Agency
- Education or Training Center
- Environmental Justice Organization
- Federally/non-Federally Recognized Tribe
- Government Agency
- Grassroots/Community-Based Organization
- Labor
- Philanthropy
- Workforce Development

15. Which of these priority communities does your organization primarily serve (if any)? Select all that apply:

- Advocates for People of Color (e.g. Black Lives Matter, Asian Americans Advancing Justice, New Hmong Rising Association etc.)
- Communities of Color
- Immigrants with Documentation (e.g. work visas)
- Individuals that live in extremely remote/rural areas of the Redwood Coast Region
- Individuals who were Formerly Incarcerated
- Individuals with Hearing Impairment
- Individuals with Intellectual Developmental Disabilities
- Individuals with Learning Disabilities
- Individuals with Physical Disabilities
- Individuals with Vision Impairment
- Individuals without Broadband Access
- Individuals without Documentation
- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Asexual, Intersex + (LGBTQAI+)
- Member of ethnic minority communities
- Members of religions
- Monolingual Hmong-Speakers
- Monolingual Spanish Speakers
- New Citizens
- Non-federally recognized Tribal Nations
- Seniors
- Tribal Citizens
- Tribal Governments
- Unions
- Workers

Youth

16. If not listed above, please describe the community your organization serves.

17. What is your organization's annual operating budget?

Mark only one oval.

\$0 to \$100,000

\$100,000 to \$500,000

\$500,000 to \$2 million

\$2 million to \$5 million

\$5 million to \$10 million

Over \$10 million

I'm not sure.

18. How many full-time staff does your organization employ? Please provide approximate full-time equivalencies (FTEs).

Mark only one oval.

0 to 5

6 to 10

11 to 25

26 to 100

More than 100

19. I would like to be included in a directory of organizations available to partner on economic, community and environmental planning initiatives.

Mark only one oval.

Yes

No

SECTION 3: Partnerships

This section of the survey asks about your partnerships with other organizations in our region.

Important Instructions

As you answer the survey questions, please keep these instructions in mind:

- Please answer from the perspective of the type of partner that best describes your organization.
- Answer from the perspective of the primary address you use when doing economic development work within our region. If your organization has more than one office in our region, please use the main office address.
- Answer from the perspective that best describes the usual type and quality of relationship you have with other partners in one category.

20.

Mark only one oval per row.

The following questions are meant to gauge your or your organization's level of connection with the following organization types. Please evaluate your/your organization's level of involvement with the following organizations.

I/my organization interacts with partners on economic development issues as follows:

- I don't know anyone at this type of organization.

- I know someone at this type of organization but don't regularly exchange information with them and have never worked with them.
- I regularly exchange useful information with a person in this type of organization but have not/do not work with them on a project.
- I regularly exchange useful information with a person in this type of organization and have worked with them on one or more projects.
- I'm in regular contact with people in this type of organization, have participated in a planning process with them before, and have worked with them on projects.

Economic Development Organizations
 Community Development Organizations
 Business/Business Associations
 Education or Training Centers
 Environmental Justice Organizations
 Federally or nonFederally Recognized Tribes
 Government Agencies
 Grassroots or Community-Based Organization
 Labor Organizations
 Philanthropic Organizations

21. If desired, please provide further comment on the types of projects and plans that you have worked on with these partners (Optional).

SECTION 4: Capacity and Support

These questions ask you to describe your or your organization's capacity to participate in economic development planning and implementation processes and support that could help encourage broader community participation.

Mark only one oval per row.

Please evaluate your/your organization's capacities to participate in economic development planning and implementation processes:

- No/Limited Capacity
- Some Capacity
- Adequate/High Capacity

Knowledge/awareness of relevant plans or funding opportunities

Commitment to build on community strengths and opportunities

Commitment to address community problems

Staff

Partners/relationships

Skills (in-house)

Specialized Expertise (in-house or access to consultants)

Training/professional development

Funding

Organizational leadership

Tools/Infrastructure (broadband, office space, equipment, etc.)

23. If desired, please provide further explanation of your or your organization's capacities.

24. This question seeks to help us understand barriers that may prevent you or your organization's ability to achieve broader participation in economic development planning. Please evaluate the barriers, if any, that you or your organization face in reaching the people you serve/your constituents.

- Not a barrier at all
- A challenge, but manageable
- A significant and difficult challenge

Community Distrust

Difficulties increasing awareness/understanding

Digital inequity (lack of access to broadband or devices)

General disinterest

Geographic/transportation

Lack of cultural connectivity

Lack of time to participate

Language barriers

Other organizational capacity constraints (staffing, resources)

None of the above

25. If desired, please describe any other barriers not listed above or specific populations affected.

26. I/ my organization could benefit from access to the following types of training (choose all that apply)

- Redwood Region RISE Basics – what is required in this planning process and what types of projects can be promoted for funding.
- Economic Development Basics – the who, what, where, why and how economic development can create wealth.
- Public Funding Basics – how governments fund economic development projects
- Community Investment Models - how community members can drive change and attract resources
- Project Development - phases of major projects from conceptualization to implementation and opportunities for community input
- Apprenticeship and Career Pathways Programs – what they are and what is available in our region
- Cultural History of our Region
- Immigration in our Region
- Working with Tribes

- Building Community Power – what does community power look like and what does it mean to shift power to communities.
- Board and Committee Leadership Responsibilities – how to participate on a leadership board
- Equitable, collaborative, participatory decision-making
- Employer-Worker Collaboratives – what they are and how they work
- Carbon neutrality – what it means, what are CA’s goals and how these goals affect our region.
- Climate resilience – strategies to achieve this goal.

27. If desired, please describe any other training opportunities that you or your organization may benefit from.

28. Please provide your best contact email if you would like to receive more information about Redwood Region RISE, and/or want to be included in our directory:

Draft

Appendices B – D

Appendix B. [Memo Disinvested Communities RR RISE](#)

Appendix C. ThinkPlace (2023). *Redwood Region RISE: Insights from listening session empathy interviews*. https://ccrp.humboldt.edu/sites/default/files/rr_rise_insights_report_-_12-15-23.pdf

Appendix D: Example Plans

An inventory of plans provided by RR RISE partners appears below. Many are in the process of annual or full updates.

RR RISE Plans Under Analysis

Area and Plan	Effective Dates	County, jurisdiction or organization
Del Norte County CEDS Plan	2019	Del Norte County
Crescent City Economic Development Strategic Action Plan	2021	City of Crescent City
Prosperity 2018: Humboldt CEDS	2018 - 2023	Humboldt County
Humboldt Rising: Community Outreach Report (CEDS update)	2022	Humboldt County
RCAA: Community Needs Assessment & Action Plan	2023	Humboldt County
City of Eureka Economic Development Strategic Plan	2021	City of Eureka
Lake CEDS	2016- expired, update in progress	County of Lake, Lake EDC
Mendocino/Sonoma CEDS	2022-2025	Mendocino and Sonoma Counties
County of Mendocino Economic Development Analysis	2007	Mendocino County
MOVE2030: Community Plan	March 2021	Mendocino County
MOVE2030: Economic Resiliency plan	March 2021	Mendocino County
Ta'm Resilience Campus		Blue Lake Rancheria
Hoopa Valley Tribe CEDS	2016-2020	Hoopa Valley Tribe
Hoopa Valley Tribe Strategic Energy Plan	2016	Hoopa Valley Tribe
Humboldt Regional Climate Action Plan	2021 (draft)	County of Humboldt
Karuk Climate Adaptation Plan	2019	Karuk Tribe
Karuk Tribe Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy	2021	Karuk Tribe
Wiyot Tribe Strategic Plan 2020-2024	2019	Wiyot Tribe

Yurok Tribe Climate Change Adaptation Plan	2014	Yurok Tribe
Yurok CEDS	2017	Yurok Tribe
Redwood Coast P-16 collaborative	2022	Cal Poly Humboldt lead; Mirrors RR RISE Region
California State Lands Commission	2021-2025	State of CA
2020 Regional Transportation Plan	2020	Del Norte County
2022 Lake County Regional Transportation plan/Active Transportation Plan	2022	Lake County
2022 Regional Transportation Plan & Active Transportation Plan	2022	Mendocino County
2008 Humboldt County Regional Transportation Plan (amended Jan. 2013)		Humboldt County
5-year transit development plan 2023-2028	2023-2028	Humboldt County

Appendix E: Example Projects

Projects Listed in the RR RISE Proposal https://www.westcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/CERF_Proposal_Narrative_Redwood_Region_7.25.22.pdf

Important local and Regional projects and partnerships include:

Blue Economy: Major investments to diversify traditional maritime activity towards climate resilience and adaptation, including restoring fisheries, are occurring in Fort Bragg, Mendocino County. The Noyo Harbor Ocean Science Center and Multi-modal project includes an aquaculture demonstration project, world-class marine science and education facility, research laboratories, and other assets to support a transition to a restorative blue economy. Other investments include a Seawater Intake Project with potential to support desalination, Community Sustainability Plan addressing zoning, investment and infrastructure for commercial and recreational fishing, and marina redevelopment. The Georgia Pacific Mill Site is in planning to be redeveloped into a mixed-use site with opportunities for blue economy projects. Another major investment in the Region redevelops a coastal mill site: Nordic Aquafarms, an aquaculture firm, has been approved to redevelop a pulp mill in Humboldt Bay into a land-based finfish recirculating aquaculture system (RAS), the first of its kind permitted in the Region. The Klamath Dam removal and habitat restoration project in Del Norte is the world's largest.

Green/Regenerative Economy: The award-winning Blue Lake Rancheria microgrid allows the Rancheria campus to operate in tandem with or islanded from the main utility grid. It generates renewable energy and provides approximately \$150,000 in annual electricity savings and has served as the inspiration for similar microgrid projects now launching in the Region. The California Energy Commission recently announced a 10.5-million-dollar grant to prepare Humboldt Bay for off-shore wind development. The Humboldt Wind Energy Area environmental assessment (federal approval by Bureau of Ocean Energy Management) was found to have no significant impact, moving the Region closer to launching investments in this area. The CORE

Hub was incubated by the Humboldt Area + Wild Rivers Foundation in partnership with Schatz Energy Lab at Cal Poly Humboldt, Redwood Coast Energy Authority, and Blue Lake Rancheria with a goal of making the Region “the first proven carbon sequestering rural area by 2030.”

Projects and Initiatives Listed in Responses to CCRP March-April Partner Survey.

https://ccrp.humboldt.edu/sites/default/files/hrtc_meeting_03.30.2023_presentation.pdf

<p>Harvest Hub, Dockside Market, the huge need for a distribution center/shared export opportunities Cameo Network Local Entrepreneurship Toolkit Blue Economy/green hydrogen Agtech innovation Ukiah Climate Action Plan Arcata Gateway Plan Powers Creek District Revitalization Baduwa't Community mixed-use affordable housing project. We Are Up and the need for inclusive housing and opportunities for people with disabilities The Mattole Resilience, Education, and Research Center project CORE Hub Upstatecreativecorps.org The update to the Lake County CEDS Cradle-to-Career Collaborative on the North Coast City of Crescent City Beach Front Park The newly initiated Mendocino County, City of Fort Bragg and City of Point Arena Climate Change & Sea Level Rise Local Coastal Program Updates Mendocino County Net Zero Carbon Emissions program Noyo Ocean Collective</p>	<p>Blue Economy Symposium and Learning Festival. Noyo Harbor Blue Economy Visioning, Resiliency, and Implementation Plan, Formation of the community land trust, Housing Mendocino Coast Fort Bragg Municipal Broadband Fort Bragg Oneka Seawater Desalination Buoy Design Pilot Study Tribal EcoRestoration Alliance (TERA) Offshore wind leases A fire suppression/fire hydrant system in the Covelo, Mendo County Toma Resilience Campus at Blue Lake Rancheria Eureka Cultural Arts District Cal Forest WRX Alliance work on a forestry workforce development and wood products innovation campus Disaster preparedness, relief efforts-COAD, LTRG State funding for fuel reduction in regional forests. Regional online Rotary Club with a Cause dedicated to developing community sustainability and natural systems stewardship New Transportation Hub</p>	<p>Alexandre Family Regenerative Farm, NEW Redwood Experience Center (joint visitor center with Redwood Parks Conservancy, City of Crescent City, and Chamber of Commerce Municipal Citywide Broadband Network & Blue Launch of the Redwood Coast Chamber Foundation, Humboldt/Eel River Valley Long Term Recovery Group Care Response Unit (CRU) City of Clearlake: Homesteading Program, College Fees Paid Program North Coast Food Hub, Humboldt Bay and Noyo Harbour Fisherman's Dockside Market projects, Crescent City and Crescent City Harbour Revitalization Aquaculture innovation hub Current and upcoming funding for schools (LEAs and county offices of education) that support higher education and workforce development opportunities.</p>
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