



For Immediate Release
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2022 Cascadia Innovation Corridor Conference Spotlights Sustainability and Climate Action

Officials and Indigenous leaders from British Columbia, Washington state, Oregon, and California discuss climate action in the Cascadia region

BLAINE, Wash. – Sept. 12th, 2022 – Today, US and Canadian leaders in business, government, education, non-profits, academia, and industry will convene at the 6th annual Cascadia Innovation Corridor (CIC) Conference to discuss a shared vision for sustainability and climate action.

In 2020, the CIC outlined a vision to become the world's first sustainable mega-region. As the region increasingly experiences wildfires, flooding, record heat, drought, and water shortages, this year's event will spotlight strategies to accelerate action towards a net-zero future.

Speakers will specifically discuss new and unprecedented investments at the local, state, provincial, and federal levels; solutions to address our most pressing climate challenges; and methods to leverage our region's unique resources and drive climate action.

During the conference, government and business leaders will announce new research and key partnerships that will accelerate our region's ability to pursue climate action.

- **Cascadia airports collaborate on aviation decarbonization:** The largest three commercial airports in the Cascadia Corridor – Seattle-Tacoma International Airport (SEA), Portland International Airport (PDX), and Vancouver International Airport (YVR) – are working together in one of North America's most ambitious transborder efforts to accelerate the decarbonization of aviation. At the Cascadia conference, leaders from all three organizations will [announce an agreement on four key climate action strategies](#). This cross-border effort breaks down regional and sector silos, increases collaboration on key infrastructure and policy decisions, and provides a critical layer of planning and development not currently addressed through federal or state specific strategies.
- **New report outlines key strategies to drive climate action:** Partners from the Boston Consulting Group will present new research about creating innovative public-private partnerships that can quickly address climate change in the region. With new federal funding opportunities in motion, this research will allow businesses, governments, non-profit organizations, academic institutions, and residents to focus their actions around

specific, local solutions that leverage the Cascadia region's unique resources. The report will also highlight innovative local projects that can be launched and implemented under the new Inflation Reduction Act. Click here for the full report: <https://bit.ly/3B25dyL>

In addition to these new announcements, **speakers will discuss ongoing progress towards establishing ultra-high-speed ground transportation in the Cascadia region.** This year, the Washington state legislature [allocated \\$154 million for development of a high-speed rail line](#) in the future. While this funding is contingent on receiving federal matching grants, it represents a major step forward in the effort to link the Cascadia region through fast, efficient, and sustainable high-speed rail. This momentum stems from several years of promising research and analysis, such as a [2020 report from the Washington State Department of Transportation](#) that found that a high-speed rail system linking Vancouver, Seattle, and Portland would spark up to \$355 billion in economic growth in Cascadia while reducing harmful emissions.

This year's conference features speakers and panelists who will focus on guiding the Cascadia region towards achieving environmental sustainability, economic competitiveness, and equitable outcomes for communities that are disproportionately impacted by climate change. Select conversations include:

- Microsoft President and Vice Chair **Brad Smith** will join **Bill Gates** for a fireside chat about the future of sustainability and climate tech.
- **Gov. Inslee** of Washington state, **Gov. Brown** of Oregon, **Gov. Newsom** of California, and **Premier Horgan** of British Columbia will convene for a virtual keynote panel about cross-border sustainability.
- **Chief Ian Campbell** of the Squamish Nation will discuss the impact of climate change on indigenous communities, including partnerships that can support these communities and advance reconciliation going forward.
- Other nationally-recognized leaders who will discuss the economic costs of climate change, the national security implications of our changing environment, and the creation of a reliable, clean electric grid.

The 2022 event is sponsored by seventeen organizations from across the Cascadia region.

- **Founding sponsor:** Microsoft.
- **Platinum sponsors:** Alaska Airlines, Amazon, Boeing, Deloitte, University of Washington, and WSP.
- **Gold sponsors:** Costco, Government of British Columbia, Hudson Pacific Properties, Port of Seattle, T-Mobile, and Washington State Department of Commerce.
- **Silver sponsors:** Chateau Ste. Michelle, HDR, HNTB, and Puget Sound Energy.

Since 2016, the Cascadia Innovation Corridor has advanced critical issues that impact millions of people across the Cascadia region, such as climate action, transportation, life sciences,

agricultural technology, higher education research, and more. This year's conference is another step towards building a sustainable and thriving mega-region.

SPEAKER QUOTES

Jay Inslee, Governor of Washington state: "Washington state has long been a champion for cross-border initiatives that address the climate crisis on the state, national, and global levels. By sharing research, resources, and innovative ideas across borders, the Cascadia Innovation Corridor captures our shared belief that addressing our climate crisis requires regional solutions. Together, we are providing commuters and travelers the transportation options they want while working to take bold climate action with an urgency that matches the unparalleled scale of this challenge."

Kate Brown, Governor of Oregon: "The Cascadia Innovation Corridor forges partnerships across borders to bolster our economy and help the entire Pacific Northwest thrive. One of our most urgent actions: addressing climate change and responding to the needs of our most vulnerable communities. Our state is excited to continue partnering and collaborating with leaders from across the region in shared research, transportation infrastructure, and other crucial systems to achieve this vision."

Gavin Newsom, Governor of California: "The Cascadia Innovation Corridor is a shining example of what we can achieve through partnerships in shared research, economic development, transportation, and other crucial sectors that unite us. California is proud to work with our neighbors in both the U.S. and Canada to drive this important work forward and pursue a sustainable, climate-friendly future."

Greg D'Avignon, President and CEO of the Business Council of British Columbia (BCBC): "Six years ago, we convened the first Cascadia Innovation Corridor Conference with a shared vision of how our communities could build on our shared strengths and accomplish more by working together. Today, that vision is driving us to take collaborative action regionally on global challenges like climate change. Partnering across borders to leverage new research, technology, infrastructure, and low-carbon advantages – like our electricity grid – will allow us to build a more prosperous, sustainable future for our region."

Brad Smith, President and Vice Chair of Microsoft: "The impact of climate change doesn't stop at borders. That's why leaders across the Cascadia Corridor are focused on advancing transportation, energy, agriculture, and more to not only create a sustainable future for the region, but build a hub of innovation to address climate change."

Chris Gregoire, CEO of Challenge Seattle and former Washington Governor: "From flooding to smoke filled summers to deadly heat, the Cascadia region has faced immense climate challenges in recent years. By working together, we can accelerate our climate progress, leveraging our shared resources and expertise to become the first sustainable mega-region in the world."

SPONSOR QUOTES

Deloitte

"The Cascadia Innovation Corridor is a unique cross-border initiative that will have a long-lasting impact that connects both regions and supports Vancouver's thriving ecosystem," says Andrew Pau, Deloitte Canada's Transportation Leader. "We believe this year's focus on Moving to Climate Action, including the decarbonization of transport in both the movement of people and goods, is timely to say the least. This is where ideas come to life, and we are proud to be a part of the solution to the benefit of us all, now and for generations to come."

UW

"Cascadia has always been home to innovators, big thinkers and entrepreneurs, and we at the University of Washington are excited to take part in the next steps toward building a sustainable, innovation-driven future for the benefit of the people, communities and businesses throughout our unique region." Ana Mari Cauce, President, University of Washington

WSP

"WSP is proud to sponsor CICC, as we are committed to climate action, sustainability and the value of a thoughtfully integrated region with an eye toward the future."

About the Cascadia Innovation Corridor Initiative: The Cascadia Innovation Corridor Initiative, led by the [Business Council of British Columbia](#) and [Challenge Seattle](#) links Vancouver, BC, Seattle, and Portland, holding the promise of increasing economic opportunity beyond what the cities and their surrounding regions could expect to achieve independently. With a focus on areas including sustainable agriculture, life sciences, higher education, research excellence, transformative technologies, the efficient movement of people and goods across border, best and diverse talent, transportation, housing and connectivity, the Cascadia Innovation Corridor is committed to enhancing the lives of people living in the region, and beyond. Read more about the Cascadia Innovation Corridor [here](#).