

Cascadia Innovation Corridor Pursues Bold Vision for the Future

Business, academic and government leaders from British Columbia, Washington state and Oregon discuss 2035 vision for the Cascadia region

NEWS PROVIDED BY

Cascadia Innovation Corridor Initiative →

03 Oct, 2019, 10:00 ET

SEATTLE, Oct. 3, 2019 /PRNewswire/ -- Business, academic, non-profit, and government leaders from British Columbia, Washington state and Oregon will convene today at the fourth annual Cascadia Innovation Corridor Conference to discuss a 2035 vision for life in the Cascadia region. This year's conference will both highlight and solicit feedback on the new strategies underway for the region to come together, maximize shared competitive advantages, and elevate its global economic position.

Propelled by the Cascadia Innovation Corridor Steering Committee, the partnership is actively working to position Cascadia as a global innovation hub by actively addressing issues important to the region and the world. This includes helping to facilitate cross-border knowledge exchange, supporting strategies that accelerate the Pacific Northwest economy, jointly advancing and integrating common infrastructure needs, and building a network of connected people, companies, capital, universities, colleges and researchers.

Since 2016 the Cascadia Innovation Corridor is advancing a broad array of projects in the region in areas such as transportation, life sciences, higher education research excellence, and transformative technologies. These projects are aimed at creating an innovative ecosystem that improves both the Pacific Northwest economy and the lives of people in the region.

- **High Speed Rail:** In February, the Province of British Columbia and the State of Oregon committed funds to advance the next phase of study needed to bring high-speed rail to the region. In April, the Washington State Legislature approved an equal amount and today Microsoft announced an equivalent contribution, providing the last portion of funding to get the study underway. These four entities will be equal funding partners to begin the study of both governance structures and financing options for this transformative and unique project. The report will be completed by the end of 2020. High-speed rail linking Portland, Seattle and Vancouver is a critical piece of infrastructure for the Cascadia Innovation Corridor that will open the door for stronger working relationships and collaboration throughout the region. Microsoft will also host a conference to further explore implementation possibilities in November on its campus in Redmond.
- **Cascadia Data Discovery Initiative:** The Cascadia Data Discovery Initiative (CDDI) brings together key partners to accelerate cancer research, including BC Cancer, University of British Columbia, University of Washington eScience Institute, Knight Cancer Institute at Oregon Health & Science University, and Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center. The CDDI collaboration will build off the work Microsoft is doing with Harvard's Institute for Quantitative Social Sciences to build a data sharing platform that uses differential privacy to ensure research data is kept private.
- **Northwest Quantum Nexus:** The Northwest Quantum Nexus aims to develop a quantum-fluent workforce and economy in the Pacific Northwest by accelerating research, technological development, education and training. The program was created by the University of Washington, the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory and Microsoft Quantum.
- **Seaplane Service:** Connecting Seattle and Vancouver in just under an hour, Seattle-based Kenmore Air and Vancouver-based Harbour Air now offer seaplane service between the cities, having transported more than 8,500 passengers since the service began in April 2018.

This year's conference will feature speakers and panels focused on setting up the Cascadia region as a global center of innovation by 2035, by achieving economic competitiveness, empowering thriving communities, and tackling the most persistent societal problems in our region.

- An opening keynote by Brad Smith, President of Microsoft, focused on the 2035 vision.
- A panel of federal legislative representatives, including U.S. Congresswoman Suzan DelBene and U.S. Congressman Peter DeFazio, moderated by Lisa Brown, Director of WA State Department of Commerce.
- Brad Tilden, Chairman & CEO of Alaska Airlines and Chairman, Airlines for America to discuss the future of mobility.
- Kevin McAllister, CEO of Boeing Commercial Airplanes alongside Susan Mullaney President of Kaiser Permanente Washington and Dr. Ali Tehrani of Zymeworks, discussing leadership in the global community, moderated by Sue Paish, CEO of Canada's Digital Technology Supercluster.

QUOTES

John Horgan, Premier of British Columbia: "Working with the Cascadia Innovation Corridor is about diversifying and expanding the Pacific Northwest economy, creating more opportunities for people as we build a bright future. British Columbia has one of the fastest growing tech sectors in Canada, and we're excited by the potential of becoming a global hub of innovation, technology and connectivity. By working together with our partners in Washington state and Oregon, we're mapping the future and strengthening our economic outlook for years to come."

Jay Inslee, Washington Governor: "The Cascadia Corridor Conference is a recognition that we are better when we work together. This regional approach that includes a growing coalition of businesses, elected leaders, academic and research institutions, is helping to spur economic growth and innovation," Gov. Jay Inslee said. "Ideas and entrepreneurship fostered in Washington can inspire and create opportunities in British Columbia – and vice versa."

Greg D'Avignon, President and CEO of the Business Council of British Columbia: "We have a vision for the Cascadia Innovation Corridor that stretches beyond the next few years. Yes, we're risk takers, entrepreneurs, innovators – but we also have a social impact conscience on how we can make a difference here and globally. Through Cascadia we're building a sustainable innovation zone that will act as a magnet for the world's top talent and capital resources. By working together, we will equip the corridor for the long-term economic opportunities that will help create solutions for some of the world's toughest challenges."

Chris Gregoire, President, Challenge Seattle, former Washington Governor: "At this year's Cascadia 2035 Conference, we will develop a vision for the future of the Cascadia Corridor as a region known globally for innovation in which we do well economically while also doing social good."

Brad Smith, President of Microsoft: "The Cascadia Innovation Corridor Initiative has proven to be a shining example of what we can achieve when private industry and communities come together to advance opportunities for people and address shared challenges," said Brad Smith, president of Microsoft. "Microsoft continues to be a proud supporter of the initiative and its ability to realize its ambitious 2035 vision for the region."

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, retail innovations, life sciences, higher education research excellence research, 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](#).

For more information, contact:

Kiley Winsnes, Challenge Seattle: kiley@challengeseattle.com

Kristine St-Laurent, Business Council of British Columbia: kristine.stlaurent@bcbc.com

SOURCE Cascadia Innovation Corridor Initiative

Related Links

<https://connectcascadia.com>



PRN Top Stories Newsletters

Sign up to get PRN's top stories and curated news delivered to your inbox weekly!

Enter Your Email

Select Country

Submit

By signing up you agree to receive content from us.

Our newsletters contain tracking pixels to help us deliver unique content based on each subscriber's engagement and interests. For more information on how we will use your data to ensure we send you relevant content please visit our [PRN Consumer Newsletter Privacy Notice](#). You can withdraw your consent at any time in the footer of every email you'll receive.

