

CHANGING LANDSCAPES CHANGING CAMPUS



Left: A map of the Beaver Creek Employment Area shows the college between two development sites.

Top Right: Trees come down outside DeJardin on Monday.
Bottom Right: Donald Wallis removes the trunk of a felled tree.

BY COLLIN BEREND

A growing economy is a benefit to everyone in Oregon City and students at Clackamas Community College.

CCC is partnering up with the city of Oregon City and the Oregon City Chamber of Commerce in promoting the Beaver Creek Employment Area, which is more than 80 acres of available industrial property. The property includes the sea of trees that divides Oregon City High School and CCC, as well as the farm land to the northeast across Beaver Creek Road. This area will eventually be occupied by buildings.

There are currently two development sites. Once finished, if both are sold and built upon, the small forest that surrounds the college including the main one between the high school and the college, will be removed.

To this effect, Oregon City's economy will increase with the potential for jobs to open near the college. This will impact the college and students because of a stark close location to these businesses.

"There's no way to absolutely predict the future economic impact," said the Director of the Small Business Development Center Robert Campbell, regarding the economic impact of the BEA. "But I do have an opinion regarding how this project will create value to industry, our career and technical education students, the region and the college."

He added, "The goal of the BEA is to create a vertically integrated system that delivers skilled workers to local businesses and create family wage jobs as an end result. The BEA project will help CCC educate students on demand."

For over 50 years, the college has provided job training and education to students who have made differences in this region's workforce, according to Public Information Officer Lori Hall.

"The purpose of the initiative is to encourage and attract targeted industry by leveraging education and training resources at CCC," said Hall. "As large businesses move into the BEA, we can not only provide them educated employees who are job-ready at the time of hire, but we can also offer customized training specific to a business and help grow their existing workforce."

A new transit project is included in the BEA. This new transit center removes the existing bus turn around at the flag pole by Roger Rook and, instead, provides a new entrance at the south end of campus behind DeJardin Hall and connects to the main CCC entrance off of Molalla Ave. and Trails End Highway.

The transit project is paid by a grant the college had previously requested and got awarded to improve access to CCC and support job development in the Clackamas County area.

The grant provides \$1.76 million from the Oregon Department of Transportation's ConnectOregon VI Program to pay for the improved transit center on campus.

The grant will also pay for a shared-use path, wayfinding signage and a secure bicycle parking, granting better access to the adjacent Oregon City High School, since the existing one is a rocky path, shrouded by trees, that is often used by the community and students from both schools. In addition, this improves access to the planned BEA.

"Our goal is to make it easier for employees to reach the employment area," said Luke Norman, the transportation systems analyst. "Whether they walk, ride a bike or take the bus."

According to the 2016 transportation survey, 21 percent of students cited the lack of access to a car as the main issue for completing one or more classes.

"We are excited by the opportunity the transit center provides to expand transportation options for students," said Norman.

The new transit center project is part of the DeJardin expansion. It is currently in preliminary design, and if the schedule followed is the same as Harmony West and ITC, then it should be constructed around spring 2018 with completion in latest of summer 2019.