



March 13, 2018

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **State supplemental budget includes \$140,000 for Our Valley Our Future**

OLYMPIA — A final supplemental operations budget agreed to by the state House and Senate includes \$140,000 for the *Our Valley Our Future / Nuestro Valle Nuestro Futuro* community development initiative.

The budget awaits Gov. Jay Inslee's signature.

The Wenatchee Valley Chamber of Commerce's newly formed Advocacy Committee and the Port of Douglas County led the efforts to secure the funding in the 2018-19 Supplemental Operating Budget.

State Rep. Mike Steele, R-Chelan, successfully hung a floor amendment to include funding for the project in the House budget. And state Rep. Cary Condotta, R-East Wenatchee, worked with budget negotiators to keep the funding in the final budget. Together they championed the grassroots initiative and its value to building community resiliency after the curtailment of Alcoa and devastating wildfires in the region.

Our Valley Our Future will leverage the state funds virtually dollar-for-dollar with contributions from local public agencies, businesses and nonprofits.

Our Valley arose in 2015 out of a desire to develop an overall vision and strategic action plan for the Wenatchee Valley region, and to tackle big challenges facing the region — the curtailment at Alcoa, threats from catastrophic wildfires, a restructuring economy, lagging wages, rising poverty rates, and a growing housing crisis.

During 2017, the first full year of implementation phase, more than 75 percent of the Action Plan's projects and programs got underway, led by partnering organizations. About 7 percent were completed last year. Several of the big 'game-changer' projects — such as the Regional Housing Approach, Research & Innovation District, and the new Wenatchee Valley TREAD organization — have shown good movement.

"We had a big surge in work by lead partner organizations in 2017 after our first Action Plan was released and we haven't had the capacity to keep up," said Steve Maher, Our Valley coordinator. "The funding will allow us to do that and put additional resources into the game-changer projects."

Gov. Jay Inslee's office and the state Department of Commerce also supported the Our Valley funding request.

"They see Our Valley serving as a model for other communities around the state," said Shiloh Schauer, executive director of the Wenatchee Valley Chamber of Commerce and an Our Valley Core Team member. "They have studied how the community here has come together and is collaborating to make this a better place to live for generations to come, and believe it can be replicated elsewhere."

To date, Our Valley Our Future has completed three phases: Community Outreach (2015-16), Visioning (2015-16), and Planning (2016). Our Valley's guiding document is its Action Plan, released in November 2016. The Action Plan features 149 projects and programs, seven major 'game-changer' projects, and 81 lead partner organizations. In January 2017, Our Valley began its five-year Implementation Phase. In mid-2017, it kicked off a Capacity Building Phase.

Since its start, Our Valley has adhered to the collective impact model — the commitment from different sectors and interests coming together around a common goal to solve specific problems. The projects and programs in the Action Plan are led by lead partners — a combination of public agencies, businesses, nonprofit organizations and community groups. The lead partners have committed to championing and implementing the actions, which gives the overall plan teeth.

Our Valley Our Future is set up organizationally to help lead partners facilitate, organize, plan, communicate, connect, market, trouble-shoot, and track progress. Our Valley, with assistance from the Community Foundation of NCW, also administers a small grants program for lead partners. Our Valley is overseen by a Core Team, made up of representatives from the public, private and nonprofit sectors.

Projected outcomes from the state and local funding for Our Valley include:

- Implementation, facilitation and coordination of the 'game-changer' projects for which Our Valley, Our Future is either the lead partner or a supporting partner.
- Implementation of 10 action items for which Our Valley is the lead partner
- Facilitation and coordination of more than 100 other action items in conjunction with lead partners
- Monitoring and updating of the overall Action Plan annually; issuing year-end reports to the community
- Conducting community outreach through additional surveys, presentations and events; communicating regularly to the overall community; translating all communication into Spanish
- Activating the Community Indicators/Metrics System, training of lead partners on data collection, and creating an online dashboard to share findings
- Administering small grants program for lead partner organizations
- Building organizational capacity and transitioning to a nonprofit organization in 2019

For more information on Our Valley: [www.ourvalleyourfuture.org](http://www.ourvalleyourfuture.org).

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