

About Brian Cole



Ever since a fateful August 1985 evening when Brian Cole attended a Kelso, Washington City Council meeting, Brian has had a fascination with how communities work—and don't work.

This interest has lead Brian into the field of community and economic development. Beginning in 1987, Brian served as the first-ever economic development director for Baker County Oregon.

After 6½ years of serving the rural eastern Oregon county, Cole served five eastern Oregon counties as Regional Development Officer for the Oregon Economic Development Department. It was during that period that Cole witnessed the varying capacities of communities to envision and enact their future and wrote the *Four Stages of Community Development Capacity* model.

Yearning to delve back into community and economic development from a first-hand/implementation standpoint, Cole was elected chairman of the county board of commissioners where he led county government operations and set the tone and direction for the county at-large.

Cole founded a consulting company in January 2003 to *Help Communities, Businesses, and Organizations to Succeed*. He assists with many community and economic development practices and strategies.

Cole founded *Building Communities, Inc.* and wrote *Building Communities: 25 Strategies to Advance America* in 2010 in order to provide a new, objective, comprehensive, and expeditious approach for communities to envision and enact their future. Cole's vision is to transform the way that economic development strategic planning is done in America.