



# REGIONAL SOLUTIONS

## Guidance for Identifying Regional Priorities for Community & Economic Development

A key statutory charge of Regional Solutions Advisory Committees is to identify Regional Priorities for Community and Economic Development. As the eleven newly appointed Regional Solutions Advisory Committees (RSACs) embark on this exercise, the aim will be to produce a streamlined list of priorities that the RSAC will then identify strategies to advance.

Each RSAC is asked to identify five to six Priority Areas, two to three of which are arising statewide (governor identified), and two to three that are locally specific (committee identified). This will build programmatic alignment to address statewide issues while continuing the Regional Solutions focus on elevating regional individuality, supporting unique needs and overcoming difficulties, and leveraging the committee's local influence toward making progress on a distinct set of goals.

Within each Priority Area, the RSAC should define the local challenges and opportunities related to that topic, asking:

- *Are there ways this issue presents differently in our region?*
- *What are the unique considerations we face here, and the unique resources we can utilize to meet this challenge?*
- *What can we influence locally to improve the situation or advance the opportunity?*

Once Priority Areas are identified, the RSAC should discuss ways in which the Committee, supported by the Regional Solutions Program, can work to advance these priorities within their region. RSACs will be asked to review and update Priority Areas every two years.

### Statewide Priority Areas:

Governor Kotek asks that each Regional Solutions Advisory Committee work to advance the following issue areas:

- Housing Production
- Community Resilience
- Infrastructure

### Local Priorities:

Each RSAC should identify two to three issues facing its region that have regional significance and broad enough reach that communities across the region can be served by them.

### Considerations:

- **Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies (CEDs):** In developing & refining Regional Priorities, RSACs should consider connections and alignment with the Community Economic Development Strategies produced by the region's Economic Development District and Tribal governments to look for opportunities to amplify, advance, or complement them while avoiding duplication of effort.

- **Near-Term Impact:** RSACs are encouraged to focus on priorities that are timely, ready and able to benefit from deploying the expertise and resources of committee members and agency partners in the near-term (1-3 years).
- **Public Involvement:** RSACs are encouraged to include the public as much as possible throughout the Regional Priority setting process. There are several mechanisms to gather public input:
  - **Regional Solutions Survey Results:** The biennial Regional Solutions Customer Service Survey included an opportunity for respondents to offer comments to help inform the RSAC's Regional Priorities discussion. The Committee will be presented with their regional results of that survey for consideration.
  - **Public Testimony at RSAC Meetings:** Every RSAC meeting will include an opportunity for public comment.
  - **Written Public Comments:** The public should be encouraged to submit written comment about priority setting to Regional Coordinators for consideration by the Committee in advance of setting priorities.
  - **RSAC Member Outreach:** RSAC members are encouraged to discuss potential regional priorities with community members within the sectors they represent and share the results of those conversations with the Committee during public discussion about regional priorities.
- **Regional Solutions Staffing Capacity to support Priority Areas:** In choosing priority areas, committees are asked to recognize that agencies which are not statutorily connected to the RS program are not necessarily funded or staffed to engage in the work of the committee. Should a regional need arise that lacks sufficient staffing capacity within Regional Solutions agencies, committees are welcome to highlight this need for Regional Coordinators so they may raise the issue with the Governor, her staff and/or state agencies.
- **Sustainability Goals:** By statute, RSACs are directed to consider whether projects related to Regional Priorities seek to address the state's economically, socially and environmentally sustainable goals and objectives described in ORS 184.423. Statutory references below.
- **Separating Priority-Setting from Advocacy:** Though the Regional Solutions program often identifies policy intersections and opportunities to improve the effectiveness of state government through the course of our work, we do not engage in advocacy within this space. Regional Priorities should be separate from discussions that require statutory change. However, RSAC members are welcome to communicate their perspectives on potential policy and budgetary improvements with Regional Coordinators so they may bring the topic into discussion with the Governor, her staff and/or state agencies.

## Statutory References or Regional Priority Setting

### **ORS 284.754(4): Regional Solutions Program Advisory Committees**

(a) A regional solutions advisory committee shall be appointed for each region. Each committee shall consist of a minimum of five members appointed by the Governor, and serving at the pleasure of the Governor, as follows:

- (A) One local convenor who represents the region, who shall serve as chairperson of the committee;
- (B) One representative recommended by the executive body of the Association of Oregon Counties;
- (C) One representative recommended by the executive body of the League of Oregon Cities;
- (D) One person who represents local and regional business and industry interests; and
- (E) One person who represents philanthropic organizations.

(b) Regional solutions advisory committees shall:

- (A) Establish regional priorities for community and economic development in the region;
- (B) Assist regional solutions coordinators and regional solutions teams with obtaining, and connecting to, resources and funding; and
- (C) Consider, review and recommend regional implementation project proposals.

(c) In considering, reviewing and recommending regional implementation project proposals under this subsection, regional solutions advisory committees shall consider whether the project proposal seeks to address the state's economically, socially and environmentally sustainable goals and objectives described in ORS 184.423.

(d) Members of the regional solutions advisory committees are not entitled to compensation for the performance of official duties and responsibilities.\*\*

(e) The regional solutions coordinators and regional solutions teams shall provide staff to the regional solutions advisory committees as necessary to allow the committees to carry out the provisions of paragraph (b) of this subsection.

\*\* Committee members shall be compensated consistent with ORS 292.495

#### **184.423 Findings and goals regarding sustainability.**

The Legislative Assembly finds and declares the following goals for the State of Oregon regarding sustainability:

(1) In conducting internal operations, state agencies shall, in cooperation with the Oregon Department of Administrative Services, seek to achieve the following objectives:

(a) State purchases should be made so as to serve the broad, long term financial interests of Oregonians, including ensuring that environmental, economic and societal improvements are made so as to enhance environmental, economic and societal well-being.

(b) Investments in facilities, equipment and durable goods should reflect the highest feasible efficiency and lowest life cycle costs.

(c) Investments and expenditures should help promote improvements in the efficient use of energy, water and resources.

(d) State operations should be located in diverse locations, including rural and distressed communities.

(e) State operations and purchases should help maintain vital and active downtown and main street communities.

(f) State purchases should help support opportunities for economically distressed communities and historically underemployed people.

(g) State operations should reflect partnerships with communities and businesses.

(h) State operations should help reduce adverse impacts on native habitats and species and help restore ecological processes.

(i) State operations should be conducted in ways that significantly increase the efficient use of energy, water and resources.

(j) State operations and purchases should reflect the efficient use and reuse of resources and reduction of contaminants released into the environment.

(2) In supporting sustainable communities, state agencies shall seek to enable and encourage local communities to achieve the following objectives:

(a) Resilient local economies that provide a diversity of economic opportunities for all citizens.

(b) Workers supported by lifelong education to ensure a globally competitive workforce.

(c) An independent and productive citizenry.

(d) Youth supported by strong families and communities.

(e) Downtowns and main street communities that are active and vital.

(f) Development that wisely and efficiently uses infrastructure investments and natural resources.

(g) Affordable housing available for citizens in community centers.

(h) Healthy urban and rural watersheds, including habitats for fish and wildlife.

(i) Clean and sufficient water for all uses.

(j) Efficient use and reuse of resources and minimization of harmful emissions to the environment.

(3) Intensification of efforts to increase the economic stability of communities designated as economically distressed. [2001 c.918 §4]