

Agenda Item Number 12.

Follow-Up to Board Planning Session

Presenter: George Kloeppel

Action Recommended: Commit to Pursue LCOG Initiatives

Background:

Attached are the “chart notes” from the Board’s September 24 Planning Session, and a one-page listing of the high-priority desired “outcomes” in each of the five public policy categories. At its meetings in October and November, the Executive Committee discussed the data to determine what initiatives would be most constructive and appropriate for our organization in the coming year. As was the case at the September Planning Session, the screen that the Committee utilized asked: (1) if the issue was regional in scope and (2) if it was well-suited for LCOG’s attention (as opposed to that of some other entity).

Recognizing that LCOG’s ongoing programs and services would continue across a broad spectrum of public issues, it was concluded that special energy should be applied in the areas of **Communication & Governance** and **Human Services**. In both areas, the Committee members felt that it would be important to have the hands-on involvement of members of the Board of Directors. Hence, it is recommended that each area have a task team including members of the Board that would receive COG staff support and would meet separate from Board and Executive Committee meetings.

The assignment for the task teams in each case will be to identify specific action steps that the organization, likely in partnership with others, can take to advance the desired outcome.

Communication & Governance

The majority of the initiatives that were envisioned in this category addressed the value of communication—communication that is informative and two-way, communication of needs and issues between communities and between levels and types of government. Absent a sincere dedication to this type of intergovernmental- and public communication concerning needs, issues, opportunities and services, the region would be a poorer place. Two-way

communication between the people and their public institutions is vital, and in our American system, effective communication lies at the heart of governance. Similarly, the planning session in September set forth the ideal of better communication with the State Legislature, as well as with the public.

The “governance” aspect of this category is rich right now as well. It was not clear at the Planning Session that there was interest in re-designing the local government world. But questions of who best to provide a service and at what geographic level are asked more seriously now than in the past.

As an association of governments, LCOG may be able to play a constructive role in achieving, or working toward, this vision. The task team assigned to address this vision will be asked to identify the specific changes and action steps that hold promise of yielding positive change.

Human Services

In some respects, Oregon has been on the forefront in the pursuit of better ways of meeting human needs. Clearly, the one-stop, locally controlled Area Agencies on Aging are examples; and yet, much more can and should be done. The identified visions that fell within the human services category in September spoke to the importance of five key elements in an improved human services system:

- Equitable—meeting the needs of families and individuals fairly and predictably
- Sustainable—a system that is strategic and avoids starts and stops
- Innovative—a system that minimizes inefficiencies through creative approaches
- Communicative—a system that values timely and accurate communication
- Coordinated—reducing gaps and overlaps through insightful design and communication

Though human services might be thought of as a shared State and county responsibility, the current “system” is far broader and more complex than that. Every one of LCOG’s member governments is engaged in the human services system. Furthermore, non-profit agencies and faith communities are major players in this community’s efforts to address human needs.

The task team assigned to address the vision of an improved system—perhaps one that attends to the five bullets above—is asked to identify the steps that LCOG could take on its own, or more realistically facilitate with partners, to yield a positive improvement.