

## OC Jobs First Collaborative

August 23, 2024

### **Ish Herrera**

let's move to Agenda Item four. Welcome, Dr. Walrod, good morning. Before handing it over, I want to briefly acknowledge the hard work the team has done on Regional Plan Parts One and Two. We've received valuable feedback from many of you over the past months, and our submission deadline is approaching at the end of this month. Today's action item is not for final approval, but to approve submitting this current version to the state. As we've said, it's a living document, so further iterations will follow after receiving state feedback. With that, Dr. Walrod, the floor is yours to review the recent edits and take us to a motion and second

### **Dr. Wallace Walrod**

Thanks, Ish, for the great setup. Good morning, everyone. I want to echo that this is a living document, with more opportunities to improve even after state feedback. I'll quickly run through the recent changes from the last version.

Pages 14-18: Changed 'Native American' to 'American Indian and Alaska Native' per the data source.

Page 22: Added content on women-owned small businesses and referenced Regional Plan Part One.

Page 30: Included info on Orange County's groundwater replenishment system.

Page 58: Clarified unavailable American Indian and Alaska Native data.

Page 64: Added content on green tech adoption.

Pages 72, 77, 79, 83: Added info on CSUF Center for Family Business, business management courses, supply chain impact on small businesses, and hyperlinks to related programs.

Page 86: Included content on education services, electric buildings, and climate resiliency.

Page 87: Added housing near hotels for workers and promoted electric products.

Pages 93-94: Addressed small business recovery post-COVID and added cultural engagement spaces.

Pages 96, 129, 130: More examples of business support organizations, worker ownership, and small business strategy.

That covers the key updates. Happy to take any questions or comments.

### **Linda DiMario**

Yes, I have a question, Ish, for Dr. Walrod. We've referred to this as a living document, which makes sense. My question is: will we use a similar review process moving forward? Will the group continue to be involved in reviewing updates, or will certain individuals handle that? That's what I'm curious about.

### **Ish Herrera**

We'll likely bring the document back periodically. Going forward, changes will probably be based on what we learn during the catalyst phase. As we get involved in pre-development and see what projects come forward, we might add new content or shift focus depending on the projects and their pathways. The document remains open for suggestions, which we'll address at collaborative meetings. That's the process I envision. Thanks for the question, Linda. Any other comments or questions from the group? I don't see any in the chat.

**Luis Sarmiento**

Thank you. I could only attend the last few minutes of office hours, but I appreciate the chance to touch base. THRIVES believes there's still work to ensure our plan fully benefits disinvested communities, though we appreciate the changes made so far. The inclusion of CIELO and Coopercion Santa Ana is a great step. While we couldn't provide as much feedback this round, we'll continue to contribute and ensure we center disinvested communities' voices. Lastly, we're supportive of submitting the document to the state to meet the deadline.

**Teresa Schickling**

I was part of the office hours as well and just want to thank everyone. I was really impressed with the time and effort put into going through the document line by line. Thank you all for your hard work.

**Linda DiMario**

Thank you, Luis, for sharing your perspective. This is why I raised the question earlier—because I know you and your organization will continue to be deeply involved. We're all committed to advancing projects for disinvested communities. That said, when a collaborative member proposes changes to this living document, I'm asking if those changes are automatically included or if there's a due process. I just want clarity on how we handle proposed additions, even if we're almost entirely in agreement.

**Dr. Wallace Walrod**

Yes Linda, we appreciate that. And I think probably, in the spirit of that, probably what the best process would be, is anybody who is wanting additional changes to the document, submits those in writing, and we share those directly with the collaborative and at the next collaborative meeting, we can have a good discussion about those. I think that's the best process to accomplish that.

**Ish Herrera**

Thank you for the discussion. Any further questions or comments on the feedback or next steps? If not, I'll entertain a motion to approve submitting this version to the state by the August 31 deadline. Linda, I see your hand—motion from Linda. Is there a second? Pepper, thank you for seconding. All in favor, please indicate in the chat or give a thumbs up. Any opposition? No opposition noted. Any abstentions? Seeing none, we have unanimous approval to submit the current draft to the state. What you just approved may seem small, but it's actually a major milestone. Many regions are scrambling to meet the deadline with a quality product, and the fact that you've completed this ahead of schedule, with ample opportunity for input, is commendable. Give yourselves a pat on the back! Now, we'll move on to agenda item five, which is related to item four. I'll hand it over to Jesse to walk us through the updates to Regional Plan Part One, which we discussed a couple of weeks ago. Jesse, the floor is yours. After Jesse's update, we'll open it up for comments, discussion, and then move to a motion to approve.

**Jesse Ben-Ron**

This is a follow-up from our last meeting. Some collaborative members expressed concerns about reviewing two lengthy documents with limited time to prepare, so we've allowed an additional two weeks for review. There haven't been major changes; we've simply added sections related to community engagement with groups like THRIVE, Coopercion, CIELO, and Latino Health Access. We also incorporated updated research from the UCI Labor Center, using more recent data from 2023 or

2024. To make it easier for you, we highlighted the changes in red, so you don't have to sift through the entire document. We want to ensure that any new submissions to the state receive your approval first. Nothing has changed from two weeks ago; we just wanted to give everyone more time to review. As the state has requested Regional Plan Part Two, it's an opportune moment to include these updates in the Regional Plan Part One as well. Once approved, we'll upload it to the Jobs First website for public access. I'm open to any questions or comments and can jump to specific sections if needed.

**Iosefa Alofaituli**

Hey, Jesse, this is Iosefa, yeah, I'm sure you and Ish and Dr. Walrod have mentioned this a number of times. But I think because of the density of both of these documents and the process, which has many layers to it, can you just in like 30 seconds, remind us the purpose of plan part one, part two, and then now that we're submitting Plan Part Two, what happens from here? Again? I know you guys have done this many of times, but for a lot of us, it's we're still trying to track all the different pieces?

**Jesse Ben-Ron**

Absolutely, Iosefa. I'm always glad to clarify, as I know there are many moving parts. This all began with Regional Plan Part One, which primarily consists of hard data and research. The state reviewed this to gain a better understanding of each region, including Orange County's key industries, labor market, and inequities in health and environment. This document serves to educate state leaders and inform our decisions. We presented sections of this report to provide a crash course for everyone, as we all come from different backgrounds and may not be familiar with all the data, especially regarding environmental and public health issues. Now, we move to Regional Plan Part Two, which is more qualitative. It develops strategies based on the hard data we've gathered, including strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT). The goal is to guide our initiatives. As we embark on project selection, it's crucial that these projects align with the strategies we've developed. So, we have hard data, strategic development, and project selection—all interconnected to ensure alignment, as the state expects us to follow this approach.

**Iosefa Alofaituli**

Thank you so much. Of course, that does help to illustrate, and I wonder Jesse and the team if a simple illustration of that process, it could be created just as a reference piece, because, I mean, just as you described it, I see it as like, first part is landscape, current, you know, what's the current state of the region? Second one is strategically, how do we address these inequities, or what have you? And then it sounds like the third part now is projects, they have to align with those strategies that then address the current state, right?

**Jesse Ben-Ron**

Yeah, so I think that's so we can try to make a graphic or summation of that, but Right? I think at a high level, that's exactly why this was done in, I would say, this linear fashion. But happy to do that. We'll bring that up at the next meeting. No problem.

**Ish Herrera**

Great, great suggestion Iosefa And thank you, Jesse, for responding to the question. Are there other comments or questions related to this item? Feel free to drop it in the chat or raise your hand or just

come off me to offer your your comments, and if not, I certainly will entertain a motion to approve, if anybody would like to do that for this part of the agenda.

**Teresa Schickling**

I'll, I'll put forward the motion.

**Ish Herrera**

Okay, thank you, Teresa. Teresa has motion to approve regional plan, part one for submission back to the state with with part two, as Jesse indicated, so is there a second for the motion that's on the floor?

**Jeff Ball**

Ish, I will second.

**Ish Herrera**

We have a motion and a second on the table. Any comments or discussion? No comments? Okay, all those in favor of submitting Regional Plan Part One, please indicate with a thumbs up. I see unanimous approval in the chat and from the thumbs up. Congratulations to everyone! This was no small feat, and I appreciate all the feedback and edits that were incorporated into the document. Thanks to the research team and Dr. Walrod for their hard work on refining Part One. The state will now have both Part One and Part Two from Orange County, successfully meeting your deadline. Congratulations! Looking ahead, we'll start scheduling meetings in October to determine which projects this collaborative recommends for implementation funding. This is part of the statewide effort to allocate the \$9 million available to our county through Catalyst funding. The OCBC team will provide more details about this next phase soon. Please keep an eye on your email for upcoming communications. Maria has shared the link for the Orange County Community Forum for September 24 in the chat. Make sure to register yourself and your colleagues, and let's share this throughout the county.

**Linda DiMario**

Thank you. Ish, yeah, and thanks everyone for for this incredible project and work. Couple of questions. One is because we have in our possession and access to a tsunami of documents and research and so forth. May I ask that the regional part one and the regional part two that we just approved be available to us just in a single link, so we can just go to them and have access to them for our colleagues and friends, I'd appreciate that. The second thing is, could from Jesse and Maria, could we have the timeline moving forward that's just called out for us just as clearly as you can make it available so that we know what to expect again so we can respond to our constituencies and and colleagues. Thank you.

**Jesse Ben-Ron**

Yeah, Linda, so the second part, yes, the biggest question mark is when the state will drop the regional Investment Initiative implementation? SFP, I don't know, Maria, I know you've had conversations with some of the state staff, if they've given a specific day, maybe they haven't. It's supposed to be just sometime in September, hence why we just put we're going to probably have a meeting on hold for the for September 20, in the hopes that it's out and we can try to discuss it and try to wrap our arms around it. But that's probably the biggest thing that will determine the timeline is, when does that SFP get

released, and when is the due date for regions to submit right their letters of support for preferred projects, or identify what the preferred projects are? I don't have those, Maria, but I don't know if you've had more recent conversations. We can try to probably do something around catalyst a little bit better for you. Linda, but it's that's the biggest question mark is, when does that drop, and what's the window to actually submit applications for? I don't have the answer to that. When I had my most recent conversation with them a little less than two weeks ago. But again, Maria, I'm not sure if you've had a more recent update since then.

### **Maria Linares**

Yes, it's the same situation, Jesse. There are internal changes happening, so I've been waiting on updates from them. I requested any helpful templates for collaborative members, but they don't have any to share at the moment. They are having internal meetings to discuss possible changes and extensions to some of the original due dates for our region. I'd like to create a graphic for better visualization, and we will have someone assist with that. You can find the most recent timeline on our OCBC website; I'll share the link in the chat. The Jobs First Collaborative timeline will change, and I'll update it as soon as I have new information. I realize I could have done a better job at sharing this with all of you, since we don't all visit the website daily. The timeline is located near the middle of the page, and I'll be working closely with the state on these updates.

### **Linda DiMario**

Thank you, Maria. I missed that, so I appreciate that.

### **Ana Urzua**

Hi. Good morning everyone. Yeah, I My question was similar to Linda's about, yeah, just what comes next, and specifically, you sent over the rubric. And I was late this morning. I don't know if that was already reviewed, or what the next steps are for the rubric.

### **Jesse Ben-Ron**

I'd like to offer office hours for any interested collaborative members. If you'd like to schedule a session similar to the one we did for Regional Plan Part Two, please let me know your availability for next week. I want to finalize feedback before making any markups, and I'll aim to accommodate the majority's schedule. We also need to know when the implementation SFP is released and whether the guidance from February is still accurate. Given that the draft is based on recent guidance, we might need to adjust based on any updates from the state. My preference is to build something now while being prepared to pivot later, rather than waiting for the state and rushing at the last minute. I understand there's pressure to complete Regional Plan Part Two and roll out Catalyst while preparing for the upcoming SFP. The state seems receptive, but this leaves us with uncertainties about potential changes. In Orange County, we're managing well, but we're in a waiting game, and that's why OCBC hasn't clearly communicated what the next few months will look like. We're awaiting significant updates from the state that could impact our plans.

### **Teresa Schickling**

I wanted to quickly ask about the event on the 24th. I've registered, but I noticed the invitation mentioned the possibility of needing to drop people off if it gets too crowded. I'm happy to help with that if needed.

Also, as we promote the event, should I be targeting colleagues in the industry or our clients? What type of attendees are you hoping to attract?

**Jesse Ben-Ron**

I think both groups are important. The main goal is to showcase the hard work you've all done and engage the community in potential projects. We've already done outreach to residents who want to learn more about this initiative, and they've received the invite. We aim for a balanced attendance, so if we reach capacity, we may need to limit the number of attendees from any one sector, including residents. It's a trade-off with a free event and limited space, but we'll do our best to accommodate everyone.

**Luis Sarmiento**

Thank you. I appreciate Linda's earlier comment about the process for making edits to Regional Plan Part Two. It's important for us to revisit this topic. As a collaborative, we bring diverse areas of expertise—environmental work, academia, labor, and economic development, as Linda has noted. I believe we should leverage these strengths in our planning process, especially regarding participatory planning with disinvested communities. Highlighting these areas of expertise will enhance our collective decision-making as we develop our regional plan. Thank you.

**Ish Herrera**

Thank you. Luis, any other comments or questions or announcements any of you would like to make before we sign off here today, and I just want to share. I invite all of you to consider attending California forwards Economic Summit. I dropped some information in the chat for you all to take a look at we have our Early Bird registration through August 31 we would love to have a contingency of our orange county partners and friends there to take part in these statewide activities. So reach out if you have any questions, or we can help with helping you participate and be there. But any other questions or comments from the group for the good of the order, anyone would like to share. Otherwise, I wish you all a great rest of your day and a great weekend, and we will be in touch soon via communications through email, and elsewhere. Have a great rest of your day, everybody. Be safe out there.