



DRAFT VISION ACTION PLAN STRATEGIES & ACTIONS

Presented to Sisters City Council on November 28, 2018

**Sisters Country Horizons – Our Community Vision
City of Sisters, Oregon
December 2018**

**Prepared by
NXT Consulting Group • Bend | Portland, Oregon**



INTRODUCTION & OVERVIEW

The following document presents a list of recommended Strategies and Actions from the **Sisters Country Horizons Draft Vision Action Plan**, presented to Sisters City Council on November 28, 2018. (A complete version of the draft plan can be found on the Horizons website at: [https://sistershorizons.org/learn-more/.](https://sistershorizons.org/learn-more/))

The Vision Action Plan has been developed as part of the Sisters Country Horizons community visioning process. Its purpose is to help Sisters Country move in the direction of the community's long-term vision, also developed as part of the visioning process.

The Horizons project's **Vision Action Team** (VAT), 32 citizens representing all walks of life, perspectives, and geographic areas of Sisters Country, developed the Draft Vision Action Plan. This group met six times between September and November 2018, including outside research assignments, in developing a series of draft strategies and actions.

The **Strategies** in the Draft Vision Action Plan are the result of an extensive community conversation, including stakeholder interviews, community meetings, community forums, and an online community survey. Through this process hundreds of potential ideas were whittled down to a list of 54 draft strategies and then further reduced to a list of 20 top priority strategies. From there, the VAT vetted, refined and in some cases consolidated this list.

The resulting strategies are organized into four "focus areas," each representing a vital aspect of the future of Sisters Country: **Prosperous Sisters** (jobs, economic opportunity, small business, etc.); **Livable Sisters** (growth, development, planning, transportation, etc.); **Resilient Sisters** (health, safety, disaster preparedness, etc.); and **Connected Sisters** (leadership, decision-making, education, participation, etc.).



For each Strategy in the Draft Vision Action Plan, there are one or more **Actions** intended to help implement that strategy over the next five years and beyond. Additionally, each action has identified one or more **Suggested Lead Partners**, who will be asked to lead in its implementation. The plan also identifies **Potential Supporting Partners, Milestones, and Timelines** for each action.

As a community-based initiative, the final **Vision Action Plan** will have multiple partners involved in its implementation, coming from the public, private and nonprofit sectors. A good share of the recommended actions will be led by the **City of Sisters**, but other Lead Partners are expected to include **Deschutes County, Central Oregon Intergovernmental Council (COIC), Sisters Ranger District/U.S. Forest Service, Sisters School District, Sisters-Camp Sherman Fire District, Sisters Park & Recreation District, Economic Development for Central Oregon (EDCO), Sisters Chamber of Commerce, Sisters Arts Association, Citizens4Community**, and others.

The final **Vision Action Plan** will be a "living plan" and a guide to future action by the Lead Partners who sign on to help implement it. It will not be a legally binding document, but rather a catalogue of ideas and possibilities with the ambition of making it happen to the best of the City and its partners' abilities.

Some actions in the plan may take up to five years (or beyond) to fully implement, and not every action called out in the plan may be achieved. It is also expected that the final list of Lead Partners may change or evolve over time, as may the actions themselves that they commit to undertake.

That said, based on the input of nearly 2,000 participants, it is the community's expressed desire that most of what is called out in the Vision Action Plan will, in fact, be achieved. And the results will mean a more prosperous, livable, resilient and connected Sisters County better prepared for whatever the future brings.

Following public comment and contact of Suggested Lead Partners for the draft plan in December 2018, a **Final Draft Vision Action Plan** will be presented to the Sisters City Council on January 9th, 2019. Adoption of a final plan by Sisters City Council is slated for February 13, 2019, following which other key project partners will be asked to endorse the plan.

PROSPEROUS SISTERS

This focus area is about creating a Sisters Country that is prosperous for all its residents. It covers such topics as jobs, small business, economic development, and all those local activities that generate income for Sisters: tourism, arts, crafts, culture and community events, outdoor recreation, and more.

★ **Prosperous Strategy 1: Four-Season Tourist & Visitor Destination.** Strategically develop Sisters Country's tourism and destination economy, increasing the number of shoulder season and winter events and attractions, such as performances, festivals, retreats, educational speaker series, trainings, and outdoors sports tournaments.

Actions: 1.1 Sisters Event Committee & Coordinator; 1.2 Permanent Multi-Use Events Center; 1.3 Four-Season Competitive Tournaments; 1.4 Sisters Country Winter Festival; 1.5 Regional Events Partnerships; 1.6 Ice Rink & Fly-Fishing Pond

★ **Prosperous Strategy 2: Oregon's Artisanal Capital.** Develop and promote Sisters Country as the "Artisanal Capital of Oregon," building on its strategic location and spectacular environment, expanding the artisanal economy including visual artists, trades and crafts people, musicians, performance artists, writers, brewers, distillers, and farm-to-table chefs.

Actions: 2.1 Public Art Installations; 2.2 Artisanal Capital Marketing Plan & Programming; 2.3 'Made in Sisters' Annual Festival

★ **Prosperous Strategy 3: Sisters Makers District.** Develop and promote a Sisters Makers District, where wood, metal, and glass crafts, woven crafts, pottery, and arts studios mix with local food and craft beverages, creating a pedestrian friendly zone that compliments, diversifies, and expands the local economy and supports entrepreneurialism and innovation.

Actions: 3.1 Sisters Makers District Designation; 3.2 Makers District Marketing Plan; 3.3 Sisters Makers Event; 3.4 Makers District Pedestrian Zone

★ **Prosperous Strategy 4: Vibrant & Diverse Local Economy.** Facilitate local Entrepreneurial Infrastructure and the development of Sisters Compatible Light Industrial land and building inventory, as well as Support Vocational Education & Workforce Development.

Actions: 4.1 Local Entrepreneur & Start-Up Infrastructure; 4.2 Light Industrial Space & Lands; 4.3 Emerging Workforce Development

★ **Prosperous Strategy 5: Forest Service Property Development.** Facilitate the development of a masterplan on the U.S. Forest Service property that is compatible with the community's character and identity, combining mixed-used commercial, residential and recreational facilities that anchor and define the community, create new jobs, and provide housing options.

Actions: 5.1 Interested Parties Meeting; 5.2 USFS Property City Advisory Committee; 5.3 Data Collection & Feasibility Analysis; 5.4 Design Competition & Symposium

LIVABLE SISTERS

This focus area is about creating a Sisters Country that is livable for all its residents. It covers such topics growth and planning, housing, transportation, parks and recreation, environmental quality, biking and walking, and other factors that combine to make Sisters Country such a great place to live.

★ **Livable Strategy 1: Walkable Downtown.** Expand pedestrian-friendly amenities in Downtown Sisters, encouraging residents and visitors to get out of their cars and walk, including during the evening hours.

Actions: 1.1 Pedestrian Flag Program; 'Hey, 1.2 Let's Walk There!' Initiative; 1.3 Improved Downtown Lighting.

★ **Livable Strategy 2: Affordable Housing.** Increase the availability of affordable housing in Sisters Country, including a comprehensive review of the 2010 Sisters Housing Plan, promotion of a diverse mix of housing types, and support for private and volunteer programs that address the issue of housing affordability.

Actions: 2.1 Sisters Housing Plan Update; 2.2 Workforce Housing; 2.3 Long-Term Rental Housing.

★ **Livable Strategy 3: Integrated Transportation System.** Implement the updated Sisters Transportation System Plan that addresses changes in local and regional growth and new state transportation policies. Determine a preferred alternative to address congestion on Highway 20 in Downtown Sisters, exploring alternate routes and roadway designs, traffic management strategies, bicycle and pedestrian options, signage, and centralized public parking.

Actions: 3.1 Intra-Sisters Country Transit; 3.2 Activity Bus Route; 3.3 Grant Funding for Transportation; 3.4 Washington Avenue Bike Boulevard; 3.5 Alternative Regional Transportation Options.

★ **Livable Strategy 4: Expanded Trail System.** Support Sisters Trails Alliance and the U.S. Forest Service in expanding and integrating equestrian, bicycle and hiking trails throughout Sisters Country and beyond, connecting unincorporated rural communities with Downtown, linking Sisters to Redmond and Bend, and facilitating appropriate access to recreational areas.

Actions: 4.1 Trail Expansion Outreach; 4.2 Trail Expansion Funding; 4.3 Regional Trails System; 4.4 Separated Bike and Equestrian Trails on Sisters Tie Trail.

★ **Livable Strategy 5: Parks, Recreation & Greenspace.** Identify potential new parks, greenspaces and recreation sites and facilities in Sisters Country to meet the needs of a growing resident population and create new public amenities and visitor attractions. Recognize and honor the City of Sisters' status as a Tree City, and develop Dark Skies program.

Actions: 5.1 Greenspace and View Corridor Assets Inventory; 5.2 Greenspace and View Corridor Standards; 5.3 New City Park on East Portal Property; 5.4 Tree-Planting/Replanting; 5.5 New Community Recreational Facilities.

RESILIENT SISTERS

This focus area is about creating a Sisters Country that is resilient for all its residents. It covers such topics as public safety, health and wellness, social services, fire safety and disaster preparedness, and other initiatives that will help our community to be prepared for unanticipated events or a less certain future.

★ **Resilient Strategy 1: Urgent Care Facility.** Pursue establishment of a comprehensive urgent care facility in Sisters, providing walk-in and related ambulatory care and medical services for a rapidly growing population and increasing numbers of tourists.

Actions: 1.1 Needs Analysis; 1.2 Gaps/Barriers Analysis; 1.3 Close Gaps and Eliminate Barriers.

★ **Resilient Strategy 2: Communications Connectivity.** Improve communications connectivity and infrastructure (telecommunications, broadband, mobile and Internet services) in Sisters Country with special attention paid to underserved areas.

Actions: 2.1 FirstNet Communications Tower; 2.2 Underserved Areas; 2.3 Remediation in Underserved Areas.

★ **Resilient Strategy 3: Age-Friendly Community.** Support an ‘age-friendly’ community in Sisters Country, encouraging key organizations to share resources and to advocate for issues relevant to all ages and abilities.

Actions: 3.1 Inventory of Age Specific Facilities and Programs; 3.2 Community Calendar; 3.3 Access to Healthy Outdoor Activities – On Unincorporated Lands; 3.4 Access to Healthy Outdoor Activities – Within City Limits.

★ **Resilient Strategy 4: Fire/Drought Resistant Building & Development Codes.** Review and update City of Sisters and Deschutes County building and development codes to improve and enhance the fire and drought resistance of homes, communities and landscapes in Sisters Country.

Actions: 4.1 State Regulatory Framework; 4.2 Sisters-Specific Regulatory Framework; 4.3 Retrofits to Critical Infrastructure, Other Structures and Landscaping.

★ **Resilient Strategy 5: Disaster Preparedness & Response.** Promote enhanced coordination of disaster preparedness and response efforts in Sisters Country within the statewide network. Improve and enhance natural disaster preparedness and socioeconomic resilience training and education programs.

Actions: 5.1 Active Forest Management; 5.2 Models for Active Forest Management; 5.3 Economic Uses of Forest Management By-Products; 5.4 Community Outreach Activities; 5.5 Comprehensive Natural Hazards Planning and Preparation.

CONNECTED SISTERS

This focus area is about creating a Sisters Country that is more connected, making all its residents feel welcome and involved. It covers such topics as governance and leadership, education and learning, civic engagement and dialogue, volunteerism, and other things that bind us together as a community.

★ **Connected Strategy 1: Small Town Atmosphere.** Promote the small-town atmosphere and friendly vibe of Sisters Country as the city and region grow, increasing outreach and opportunities for face-to-face contacts, neighbor-to-neighbor cooperation, and visitors-to-locals connections and commerce.

Actions: 1.1 Values-Based Marketing Campaign; 1.2 Strengthened Business Community Connections; 1.3 New Celebrations; 1.4 Community Hub Activities.

★ **Connected Strategy 2: Innovation & Distinctive Programming in Schools.** Support the innovative curriculum, distinctive programming, community-based initiatives, and year-round use of existing Sisters School District facilities, bolstering the district as the "hub of the community" and connecting its students to the community and beyond.

Actions: 2.1 Schools Marketing Campaign; 2.2 New Schools Partners and Leaders; 2.3 Community HR Database; 2.4 Annual School Pitch Event; 2.5 Crowdfunding for New Programs.

★ **Connected Strategy 3: Multi-Purpose Community Center.** Plan, finance and develop a multi-purpose community center in Sisters, featuring year-round programming and opportunities for community members of all ages and abilities to gather and connect, take part in healthy recreation and exercise, and participate in classes, arts, lectures, and community events.

Actions: 3.1 Existing Elementary School Conversion; 3.2 Community Center Task Force; 3.3 New Funding for Sisters Park & Recreation District.

★ **Connected Strategy 4: Diversity & Inclusion.** Bring Sisters Country's less frequently heard voices into a more diverse, welcoming and inclusive community conversation, fostering greater tolerance in the community helping newcomers as well as long-time residents to feel valued and supported.

Actions: 4.1 Community Demographics Assessment; 4.2 Barriers to Diversity; 4.3 Mental Health Support Systems.

★ **Connected Strategy 5: Leadership Training & Development Emphasizing Youth.** Develop a deeper pool of leadership through mentorship, education and training, opportunities for civic participation, and community involvement across the generational spectrum with a particular emphasis on youth and young adults.

Actions: 5.1 Community-wide Leadership Training Model; 5.2 Existing Leadership Barriers; 5.3 Mentorship Program; 5.4 Key Community Leadership Partners; 5.5 Sisters Foundation.