



Isothermal Planning & Development Commission

2019 Regional Legislative Priorities

Aging & Human Services

- Increase funding for Senior Centers by an additional \$300,000 in recurring funds.
- Strengthen and Fund North Carolina's Adult Protective Services Program (APS) in order to respond to the accelerated growth in the State's aging population, some of whom may be at risk of becoming victims of abuse, neglect or exploitation.
- Establish a joint legislative committee to examine issues pertaining to the state's growing older adult population and to make recommendations on how the state can better support ways for North Carolinian's to age with dignity.
- Invest in Medicaid Personal Care Services (PCS) and the Community Alternatives Program for Disabled Adults (CAP-DA) programs by increasing the reimbursement rate.

Community Development & Housing

- Seek access to affordable and adequate broadband to underserved and unserved areas of the region, utilizing the Isothermal Regional Commission (and other COGs) as a resource in ensuring full coverage for citizens and businesses in NC.
- Ensure access to affordable and adequate financial resources to support maintenance and capitalization of important public utilities to include broadband, water, wastewater and stormwater within the region.
- Support an increase in the level of funding for the Home and Community Care Block Grant, the HUD-VASH Program, and Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program.
- Continue to utilize Community Development Block Grant funding for scattered site housing and neighborhood rehabilitation programs.
- Work with State Housing and Infrastructure Officials to promote and develop infrastructure and housing investments in our region to include income diverse communities so that there would be a project eligibility for grant and or low cost loan assistantship in the Isothermal Region.
- Assist local governments in finding sustainable and affordable options for housing rehabilitation in existing neighborhoods and in providing multi-modal transportation options to connect affordable housing developments to employment and cultural centers
- Continue and support marketing and education efforts seeking to inform protected class members about their rights and fair housing in general – working to reduce language barriers and to provide translation services.

Economic & Workforce Development

- Support continued funding of the USDA Rural Development programs Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC), advocating for the inclusion of Cleveland County in the ARC region.
- Utilize COGs as a liaison between the state and local governments in legislative decisions and through state programs when appropriate.
- Ensure continued investment in workforce development through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) funding for adult and youth training programs that are responsive to the current and future needs of local businesses, and that supports the development of the Region's labor force through Career & Technical Education, Soft Skills, and vocational training, as well as support the achievement of Certified Work Ready Community status for the region's counties.
- Support legislation that will provide sufficient funding at the state level for incentive programs such as competitive incentive programs, robust state historic preservation tax credits, and the Main Street Solutions fund necessary to grow jobs and the economy.
- Develop legislation to revise the tier method of measuring levels of economic distress to focus on the causes of distress and taking sub-county, regional data into account.

Transportation

- Continue to seek future interstate status for US 74 from I-26 in Polk County through Cleveland County to I-85.
- Seek methods to increase the current level of NCDOT Division 13 and 14 maintenance funds, including pavement rehabilitation and bridge repair.
- Provide consistent NCDOT funding for streetscaping projects in the prioritization process or through grant funding.
- Work with state-wide partners to modify the 2013 STI law to restore state funding for bicycle/pedestrian projects and eliminate the 20% local match requirement.
- Work with NCDOT, law enforcement and other partners to achieve NC Vision Zero, a state-wide program which aims to eliminate roadway deaths and injuries using data-driven prevention strategies.