

METRO
2019 LEGISLATIVE ISSUE IDENTIFICATION

Department: Research Center

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ISSUE: Oregon Geographic Information Council (OGIC) Framework Data

BACKGROUND: Metro is a pioneer in the preparation of standardized data at the regional scale for use in public sector planning, programming, and policy-making. Metro's Research Center (RC) created and has for years sustained the Regional Land Information System (RLIS), which provides data to support critical Metro functions such as Urban Growth Boundary decisions, the Regional Transportation Plan, and various operations including solid waste flow management. The State of Oregon has sought for some time to emulate Metro's example by creating a "framework data" repository at the state scale. The data in this repository would be similar to Metro's RLIS in content and would span the entirety of Oregon.

Framework data includes fundamentals such as where streets, rail lines, and other transport assets are located; the boundaries and characteristics of taxlots; jurisdictional and legislative district boundaries; and other data essential for supporting public decision-making. Making statewide framework data available through a central repository in a standardized format would allow state agencies to provide consistent services statewide (e.g. ensuring that school districts know their student populations accurately and that emergency service providers know how to get to people in need quickly and efficiently). Unfortunately, Oregon does not now have complete and standard framework data statewide. The main obstacles include lack of technical resources (e.g., local staff capacity and the means to create data and maintain it) and lack of institutional resources at all levels of government for collecting, standardizing, and aggregating the data to regional and state geographies.

The Legislature created the Oregon Geographic Information Council (OGIC) as a governor-appointed body of experts to help ensure that framework data are created, sustained, and governed appropriately.¹ OGIC makes recommendations regarding framework data to the Legislature every long (odd numbered year) session.

To realize its mandate, OGIC is recommending a 2019 legislative concept that would adequately program for and fund framework data creation, management and storage in a central state repository. It proposes that the state increase funding to support the programs needed to achieve that goal, with oversight provided by OGIC and state staff per current law. OGIC's programmatic recommendation is to target framework data program activities and funding at the selected levels of government (including city, county, special district, region, and state agency) where they can do the most good. OGIC's preliminary proposal, pending legislative

¹ Metro's RC Director Jeff Frkonja represents regional interests on OGIC and is currently serving as OGIC chair.

feedback, is to generate the required funds by tapping existing state-administered fees (where the programs supported by those fees utilize framework data).

RECOMMENDATION: Support OGIC’s framework data legislative concept, which would return benefits to Metro and to the jurisdictions within Metro’s boundary.

To support this effort, Metro staff and Councilors should also work to

- Improve awareness of the value of framework data among local government partners in the Portland region;
- Make local leaders aware of the framework data legislative concept, including that the proposal would create new *state* revenues, much of which would be spent at the local level;
- Encourage local leaders to offer support for the framework data legislative concept.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY: OGIC was created in a somewhat different form more than a decade ago. During the 2016 session one legislator introduced a bill that would have required all public bodies to share data, but in Metro’s view (a view shared by most cities and counties), the 2016 bill was deeply flawed in that it failed to resource the needs and provide solid governance. Local and regional pushback resulted in the Legislature withdrawing the bill in favor of creating a working group to extensively revise it. Metro played a key role in that working group and helped produce a bill (HB 2906) that received almost universal support and became law during the 2017 session. That bill reconstituted OGIC, enlarged OGIC’s data and budgetary governance roles to better target resource needs, and enlarged OGIC’s representation to include more local voices. The 2019 framework data legislative concept is the work of the “new OGIC.”

OTHER INTERESTED PARTIES: All counties, cities, and special districts within Metro and statewide would benefit from seeing the framework recommendation realized and are affected by state law and programs concerning framework data.

IMPACT IF PROPOSED ACTION OCCURS:

- More money for framework data creation, management, and sharing will be available to all levels of government in Oregon, including Metro;
- Areas of the state previously lacking some or all framework data would have resources to create that data;
- The Legislature would be able to enact its objective of requiring that all public bodies share framework data with each other (but not to the public or private firms) free of charge.