



Rural Oregonians for Black Lives Matter: Organizing Menu of Options

Rural Oregonians everywhere are insisting that Black Lives Matter in our communities and showing up to the work it will take to get us there. We know that building a safe and welcoming community for all takes a patchwork approach. There is no one “right” way and it will take all of us being willing to try new things, jump in where we can, and bring others along with us! And while our work is urgent, just like building relationships, perfecting a recipe, or planting a vegetable garden, it’s going to take time to take apart the old, racist systems and create new ones where everyone can live their life with safety, dignity and joy.

With food in mind, we invite you and your group to consider choosing an appetizer and a main course from the “menu of options” on the other side of this sheet to get started! Which of these ideas could work in your community? Which are already happening and could use your support? What new ideas does this list spark for you? We can’t wait to hear what you come up with!

What if there’s a Fire in the Kitchen?

An experienced team of cooks and a well-operating kitchen can prevent many disasters from taking place. However, no amount of menu planning can prevent the occasional crisis. In our communities these “fires” have been hate crimes, ballot measures targeting Black, Indigenous and People of Color and all poor people, large scale immigration raids, or white supremacist groups moving to town. When this happens in your community, it may derail your plan, but you will be much more able to respond effectively and quickly, having already prepared your menu.

For more ideas and examples, reach out to your ROP organizer or email us at office@rop.org! We would love to support your group in creating your plan and can offer trainings and tools, including sample letters to the editor, call scripts and other resources to advance our message of racial justice at the legislature and in our communities!

Appetizers

Coordinate a letters to the editor campaign

Ensure that racial justice stays at the forefront of your community's conversation by coordinating with your group to write a letter to the editor in each edition of your local newspaper or newsletter. Don't have a local paper? Create a schedule of posts on the community Facebook page or work with your local radio station to broadcast regular updates over the air.

Tell your legislators: Black Lives Matter

Request a meeting, make calls or write letters as a group to elected officials at any level of government. The more community members you involve the greater sway you will have. Check out the Movement for Black Lives policy platforms at m4bl.org and talk as a team about where you want to focus your first conversation.

Host a book club

Building the kind of enduring, broad-based movement needed for systemic social change requires us to take time to learn and reflect. Book clubs are also a great way to deepen relationships with folks in your community. ROP has a lending library with books to get you started.

Entrees

Explore local histories: Look to your library, schools, and museums

Do you want to understand how Oregon's racist laws and have shaped your community's history? Your local historical societies and museums can offer resources for understanding your local racist and anti-racist histories. Consider hosting a window display, supporting teachers to create virtual curriculum or putting up a display in the library entryway. Community specific stories are a great way to bring home the importance of local actions for racial justice.

Follow the money: Local budgeting for the people

As communities across our state continue to rally in the streets in defense of Black lives, what our government spends public dollars on impacts the wellbeing of every person who lives there. [Check out these tools and resources from ROP](#) for ideas on how your group can influence your local budget process and align your community with the [demands for racial justice from the Movement for Black Lives](#).

Engage in local elections: Candidate forums, STAND Guide, and ballot parties

There is more than just the presidential election to participate in this year. Your group can interview candidates about their stance on racial justice, organize ballot parties for community members to discuss the options and fill out your ballots together, distribute ROP's election guide: The STAND Guide (Small Town Actions for a New Democracy).

Host a Living Room Conversation on community safety

Host a community conversation to create a new vision for what a truly safe community could look like. To be able to change the current status quo, we must do the work of talking with broad swaths of our community and collectively shaping the alternatives we know we need. Reach out to your local ROP organizer to set up your first Living Room Conversation to kickstart support for and work towards alternatives to policing!

Foster a welcoming community: resolutions, signs in businesses, and cultural celebrations!

Founded on colonization and the removal of indigenous peoples, [and with Black exclusion laws on the books](#), Oregon has work to do in making our state and each of our communities welcoming for all those who live here. There are many creative ways to start, like distributing posters or flyers to local businesses with a message of welcome, get your city council or county commission to pass a welcoming resolution or your school board to pass an antiracism resolution like [this one from Newberg](#), or host a [celebration of the cultures](#) that community members identify with.

Still not sure where to start or wanting to do more?

Contact your local ROP organizer or email office@rop.org. We'd love to help your group build out a plan!