



Volume 2, Issue 1

January 2012

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COG Members

Cowlitz County
 Wahkiakum County
 City of Castle Rock
 City of Kalama
 City of Kelso
 City of Longview
 City of Woodland
 Town of Cathlamet
 Port of Kalama
 Port of Longview
 Port of Woodland
 Wahkiakum Port District 1
 Castle Rock School District
 Kalama School District
 Kelso School District
 Longview School District
 Woodland School District
 Cowlitz PUD
 Beacon Hill Water & Sewer
 Cowlitz 2 Fire & Rescue
 Cowlitz Fire District 5
 Lower Columbia College
 Lower Columbia CAP
 Longview Housing Authority
 Cowlitz Economic Development Council
 Kelso/Longview Chamber of Commerce
 Wahkiakum Chamber of Commerce
 City of Rainier, OR

Phase 2 begins on vulnerable populations plan

COG's application for a Washington State Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Planning-Only grant that will provide \$24,000 to Cowlitz County for the next phase of the Vulnerable Populations Emergency Response Plan was a success! The Community Organizations Active in Disasters group (COAD), managed by

Cowlitz County Department of Emergency Management, will continue to serve as the core work group for this phase. Last November, the group prioritized strategies identified in Phase 1 and chose to focus on developing procedures and protocols for transportation and evacuation. A scope of work is under development and will be reviewed

in late January by a policy group which exercises oversight. A Request for Proposals will follow, with consultant services secured for the work in mid-spring. COG will contract with Cowlitz County to manage the project. For more information, contact Melissa Taylor or Jennifer Keene at the COG office.

Update on HUD sustainable communities grant

In December, COG learned that the Cowlitz-Lewis Economic Development District proposal for the HUD Sustainable Communities Grant was not selected for funding in the current round. However, the proposal did score high enough to merit "Preferred Sustainability Status"

for participating jurisdictions when applying for other federal grants. A list of agencies that will recognize the "Preferred Status" will be issued by HUD. COG staff held a debriefing session with HUD recently to determine areas of improvement for a future grant submittal. Two key shortfalls were

methods to include marginalized communities in decision making, and the need for more detailed descriptions of partner roles. We learned that the application was shy 0.007 of a point from being selected for funding. Reviewers expressed encouragement regarding future grant cycles.

Economic development district to hold semi-annual meeting

The Cowlitz-Lewis Economic Development District (CLEDD) board will meet 12:00 noon on January 25th at the Cowlitz County Conference Center, Longview. Special guest, Bill Lotto, Executive Director of the TransAlta Industrial Land Bank, will discuss the TransAlta project as they gear up to apply for a federal Economic Development Administration (EDA) public works grant for infrastructure improvements at the site. The application is due in March. Melissa Taylor, COG Managing Planner, will discuss the HUD Sustainable Communities

grant application and the "Preferred Sustainability Status" (PSS) earned by the CLEDD partnership and what it means for future federal grants. The board will review information received from HUD and the next steps for the project.

The board will finalize the 2011-2012 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies annual plan and discuss updates on projects. Steps will be taken to begin work on an interlocal agreement for the CLEDD.

For more information or to RSVP, contact Jennifer Keene at jkeene@cw cog.org or Bonnie Kelley at 360-577-3041 or bkelly@cw cog.org.



SR 432 rail and highway improvements project update

The Cowlitz Area Technical Advisory Committee recently recommended to the COG board that \$2 million in federal Surface Transportation Program (STP) Urban funds be allocated to the SR 432 Rail and Highway Improvements environmental documentation project. The COG board, at its December meeting, approved a resolution to dedicate and spend the funds for this project. The state legislature provided \$2 million during their 2011 session. The project, with these two sources, is now fully funded at \$4 million.

A Request for Proposals (RFP) for consultant services to develop the environmental documents under the national and state environmental policy acts (NEPA/SEPA) was published on January 12, 2012 and is available on the COG website at www.cwcog.org.

If you have any questions or would like additional information, contact Darlene Sharar, Project Manager at dsharar@cwcog.org or Rosemary Siipola, Transportation Planning Manager at rsiipola@cwcog.org.

Let's get connected: how street patterns affect travel

The CWCOC is developing a transportation systems plan for the Longview-Kelso urban area. An element of this effort is identifying locations where street improvements may be necessary or desirable to increase safety, improve circulation and adapt the street for multiple users. Since there are different types of street improvements to achieve different goals, each month the COG will feature articles about specific improvements to examine their characteristics and merits. This month we introduce “connectivity.”






Connectivity refers to the density of connections in a road network and the directness of links. A well-connected road network has many short links, numerous intersections, and minimal dead-ends (cul-de-sacs). As connectivity increases, travel distances decrease and route options increase allowing more direct travel between destinations and creating a more accessible and resilient system. All of this improves the ease and safety of walking and reduces driving distances. Improved connectivity increases transportation system “resilience” by increasing route options, which reduces problems when a particular street is closed.

Emergency response vehicles have shorter, more direct access,

reducing the risks for responders when a roadway is blocked by a traffic accident or fallen tree. A more connected street system allows a fire station to serve about three times as much area as an area with unconnected streets. It increases the efficiency and safety of services such as garbage collection and street sweeping (crash rates and insurance costs for such vehicles tend to increase if they are frequently required to back up). Also, water quality problems that result from stagnant water in dead-end pipes in cul-de-sacs are reduced. Increased road connectivity reduces per capita vehicle travel and helps reduce traffic congestion, accidents and pollution emissions. People can more easily and safely walk, bicycle and access transit.

The Transportation Systems Plan (TSP) can now be found on Facebook. “Like” us at <http://www.facebook.com/#!/pages/Kelso-Longview-Transportation-Systems-Plan-TSP/>.

Residential street patterns vary throughout the region, due to terrain, water courses, past developments allowed, and the type of development. Various examples are:

	Gridiron (c. 1900)	Fragmented parallel (c. 1950)	Warped parallel (c. 1960)	Loops and lollipops (c. 1970)	Lollipops on a stick (c. 1980)
Street patterns					

Annual contracts to be reviewed

Work program contracts for 2012 will be updated this year through legal review. This process may delay delivery of our annual contracts, but we are working to get them out as soon as possible.

Please contact Anisa Kisamore, Office Administrator, at 360-577-3041 or akisamore@cwcog.org if you have any questions.



Updates from LCREP

Call for Abstracts for the 2012

Columbia River Estuary Conference

The Estuary Partnership is calling for abstracts for the 2012 Columbia River Estuary Conference (CREC) to be held May 15-17, 2012 at the Liberty Theater in Astoria, Oregon. The theme this year is "New Scientific Findings and their Management Implications." Project leaders, program managers, and research scientists will highlight new findings and perspectives from research and monitoring efforts and the implications for ecosystem restoration and recovery of Endangered Species Act (ESA) listed species in the lower river and estuary. This is the seventh conference that focuses on restoration, research and monitoring in the region.

Sponsors and program committee members include Bonneville Power Administration, Pacific Northwest National Laboratories, the US Army Corps of Engineers, National Marine Fisheries Service, the Estuary Partnership and the Columbia River Estuary Study Task Force. Abstracts are due February 29 to Maggie Jones via email at: mjones@lcrep.org. For more information on submitting an abstract, see the conference

website (<http://cerc.labworks.org/index.stm>) or contact Maggie.

Stewardship program receives foundation grants

The **Wells Fargo Foundation, Juan Young Trust, Mountaineers Foundation and New Belgium Brewing** have awarded grants to the Estuary Partnership outdoor applied learning programs in Washington and Oregon. These funds will help support hands-on science classroom lessons and outdoor programs including field trips, on-water trips, and service learning projects. Wells Fargo Foundation funds came from their Oregon and Washington giving programs - a great symbol of our bi-state organization. The check was presented at a company meeting which provided an opportunity to cement the partnership.

Estuary Partnership supports area habitat projects

The Estuary Partnership, its Science Work Group and the Bonneville Power Administration have selected seven projects for restoration funding. This funding by BPA is for habitat restoration projects to improve the quality of rearing and spawning habitats for

salmonids in the Columbia River and connecting streams. Funding will support three land acquisition projects sponsored by the Columbia Land Trust: 1) protection of approximately 438 acres of tideland and upland habitat adjacent to the Columbia River in Pacific County, WA; 2) protection of approximately 113 acres of wetland and riparian adjacent to Baker Bay; and 3) protection of approximately 70 acres adjacent to the Deep River, in Wahkiakum County. Other projects include: a Wahkiakum Conservation District project to provide fish passage and improve tidal influence to 2.2 miles of Skamokawa Creek; a Scappoose Bay Watershed Council project to improve tidal influence and provide fish access to 58 acres of wetlands near Scappoose Bay, OR; and two design projects by the Columbia River Estuary Study Taskforce, one to reconnect 10 acres of wetlands to the Cathlamet Bay, OR, and the second to restore natural hydrology to 15 acres of wetlands adjacent to the Lewis and Clark River, OR.

For more information about the Estuary Partnership's Habitat Restoration Program, please contact Evan Haas, ehaas@lcrep.org or (503) 226-1565, x238.

December board meeting highlights

- ★ Adopted the 2012 COG Budget/Work Program in the amount of \$2,604,788;
- ★ Authorized staff members Matt Hermen and Jennifer Keene to travel to San Diego, CA for the 11th Annual New Partners for Smart Growth Conference, February 1-4, 2012;
- ★ Appointed a 2012 COG Officers Nominating Committee, comprised of Jim Biwer, Ryana Covington, Michael Green, Susan Humbyrd and Pete Poulsen;
- ★ Amended the 2011-2014 Regional Transportation Improvement Program to add \$2,100,000 in federal funds for two Cowlitz County intersection improvement projects and to match the state's \$2 million for the SR 432 Rail and Highway Improvements environmental documentation project managed by the CWCOG as the urban area Metropolitan Planning Organization;
- ★ Adopted certification to the federal Economic Development



Administration that the Longview Revolving Loan program is being administered according to the revolving loan fund plan and is consistent with the current economic development strategy report;

- ★ Amended the 2011 COG Budget/Work Program to add \$50,451 to reflect the addition of new grant awards and additional planning services for Castle Rock, the revolving loan program, Cowlitz County hazard mitigation planning, and regional transportation planning;
- ★ Recognized the services to the CWCOG by departing board members Kurt Anagnostou, Dan Buell, Carlton Appelo, and Rick Winsman;
- ★ Heard staff reports on the HUD Sustainable Communities grant application, work of the governor's Connect Washington task force, and status of the SR 432 Rail and Highway Improvements project.

For more information, contact the COG office.

TITLE VI and ADA Notice to the Public

COG ensures full compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the American Disabilities Act of 1990 by prohibiting discrimination against any person on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex or disabilities in the provision of benefits and services resulting from its federally assisted programs and activities. For more information, or to obtain a Title VI Complaint Form, call program coordinator at (360) 577-3041.

February meetings

Wahkiakum Information Forum	Feb 7	8:00 am	Commissioners Hearing Rm
Cowlitz Housing First Coalition	Feb 15	1:30 pm	CAP Altrusa Room, Longview
CC Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee	Feb 16	4:00 pm	CC Historical Museum, Kelso
Housing Advisory Committee	Feb 22	1:30 pm	CAP Altrusa Room, Longview
COG Board Meeting	Feb 23	12:00 pm	CC Admin Building, GMR
Cowlitz Area TAC / RPACT	Feb 23	3:30 pm	CC Conference Room B
Cowlitz Substance Abuse Coalition/Cowlitz Meth Action Team	Feb 27	3:30 pm	Kelso Presbyterian Church



Your 2012 COG staff

Director

Steve Harvey

Planning Staff

- Melissa Taylor, Managing Planner
- Thomas Keiran, Senior Planner/GIS Specialist
- Don Mathison, Senior Planner (Part-Time)
- Barbara Kincaid, Senior Planner
- Matt Hermen, Associate Planner
- Jennifer Keene, Associate Planner

Community Mobilization Staff

Shannon Miller, Coordinator

Transportation Staff

- Rosemary Siipola, Transportation Planner/Project Manager
- Darlene Sharar, Transportation Special Projects Manager
- Amy Asher, Associate Transportation Planner

Support Staff

- Anisa Kisamore, Office Administrator
- Shanda Turner, Finance Assistant
- Katie Wells, Administrative Assistant
- Bonnie Kelley, Receptionist/Secretary

Contact us: 360-577-3041
 Visit our website: www.cwcog.org



We are on Facebook ~ search for Cowlitz-Wahkiakum
 Council of Governments and “like” us!!

