



Communiqué

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COG receives \$2 million for NEPA/SEPA work

Thanks to the diligent work of our state legislators, COG received \$2 million in state dollars as their share of the environmental documentation for the SR 432 Corridor Rail and Highway Modernization projects. The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) are federal and state requirements that major transportation projects must complete before construction can begin.

The SR 432 Corridor is slated for major increases in truck and rail traffic over the next decade. The completion of the Columbia River channel deepening has heightened interest and development along the river, with increased international demand for export bulk commodities. Construction of the EGT grain terminal at the Port of Longview and expansion of the United Harvest and Kalama Export terminals at the Port of Kalama are direct results of the deepening project and increased demand.

The new EGT terminal, the proposed Millennium bulk facility at the former Reynolds aluminum plant, and purchase of the Barlow Point area by the Port of Longview, indicate that unit train activity is going to increase west of the Lewis and Clark Bridge. The existing rail network can accommodate the growth, but with three at-grade crossings resulting in traffic congestion, the delays and impacts to industries and businesses will cause a hardship for the region.

The 2008 SR 432 Realignment Feasibility Study determined that the projected growth in highway and rail traffic can be accommodated by extending the Port of Longview's rail line west through a grade-separated intersection at Industrial and Oregon Ways (State Routes 432 and 433). In addition, a second rail bridge over the Cowlitz River is needed for increased rail traffic, especially unit trains transporting bulk commodities.

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THEN & NOW

1980

Budget: \$387,773
Members: 19

2011

Budget: \$1,526,538
Members: 29

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Typical Transportation Project Development Process				B e g i n C o n s t r u c t i o n
Approximate Timeline (in years)				
SR 432/SR 433 Highway & Rail Modernization - City of Longview - Port of Longview - Cowlitz County, Washington				
Up to 1 1/2 Years	1 1/2 Years to 6 1/2 Years		6 1/2 Years - 10 Years	
		5 to 6 1/2 Yrs	7 1/2 Years - 10 Years	
<i>Planning Studies</i>	<i>Environmental Documentation (NEPA)</i>		<i>Final Decision/Engineering</i>	
Determine Existing Conditions Traffic Forecasts Analyze Needs Conceptual Solutions Preliminary Cost Estimates Cost Estimate Validation Process	Purpose/Need Traffic Analysis Preliminary Alternatives Public Outreach Technical Studies Air Quality Noise Analysis Socio/Economic Cultural Resources Biological Resources Hazardous Materials Water Quality Floodplain/Hydrologic	Energy Land Use Economic Wetlands Visual Effects Environmental Justice Cumulative Impacts Secondary Impacts Cost-Benefit Analysis Refine Alternatives Alternative Selection Section 4(f) Evaluation Record of Decision	60% Plans 90% Plans Specifications/Estimates Final Plans <i>Right of Way Engineering/Acquisition</i> Right-of-Way Setting Right-of-Way Engineering Appraisals Purchase Offers Counter Offers Relocation Asbestos Clearing Demolition Condemnation (if necessary) Federal Regulations	
Finished 2008		<i>Preliminary Design/Engineering</i> Geometric Design Typical Sections Grading Drainage Structural Traffic/ITS Signing/Striping Lighting Utilities 30% Plans	2013-2015	
		2012-2013	2015-2017	

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The planning cost estimates for highway and rail improvements are in the \$175 - \$200 million range.

The NEPA/SEPA documentation is slated to take up to 24 months to complete at a cost of \$4 million. With this state funding award, the project is 50% funded. The COG, as project lead agency, will seek additional funding with the help of a SR 432 Corridor Standing Committee. The committee is comprised of local governments, area industries and the railroads, and will meet later this month to determine the next steps.

The timeline on page one depicts the typical project development process from planning through environmental analysis, design and engineering before construction can begin. Under an accelerated timeline, the projects would ideally be completed by 2017. If you have any questions, contact Rosemary Siipola at 360-577-3041 or email at rsiipola@cwco.org.

Local Altrusa club garners award

Altrusa International of Longview-Kelso won the 2011 Mamie L. Bass Service Award for their role in the Cowlitz County Youth Drug and Alcohol Prevention Summit held last October. The summit, "Hand in Hand - Let's Take a Stand," was organized by the COG's Cowlitz Meth Action Team and targeted at-risk middle school students, provided information about resources on topics ranging from drugs, alcohol and tobacco use to general health, suicide, teen dating violence, teen pregnancy and self-harm.

over 250 middle school youth were reached and the community as a whole has benefited from the work, positive role-modeling and help that Altrusa provides. The Cowlitz Meth Action Team congratulates Altrusa International of Longview-Kelso and extends its gratitude for their support and service to the youth of the community.



Joann Law (center) accepts the Mamie L. Bass Service Award

Altrusa of Longview-Kelso helped by supporting the annual fundraising banquet. Due to the collaboration between Altrusa and the Cowlitz Meth Action Team,

COG staff and local officials receive state award

COG senior planner, Barb Kincaid, with Lewis County and Vader officials were notified that they have received the Governor's 2011 Smart Partnership Award for a development project to implement a comprehensive plan. The project and outcome met all eight criteria under this category.

General. One result was a receivership agreement whereby Lewis County assumed ownership and operation of the water system.



Prior to joining the COG staff, Ms. Kincaid served as project lead and grant writer as well as authored the action plan, with assistance from Cathi Read, Department of Commerce. The project was deemed "an open and transparent public project ... to weigh alternatives, develop an action plan, and implement the transfer (of the water system)." Barb Kincaid joined the COG soon thereafter and is currently working on the Cowlitz County comprehensive plan. Way to go, Barb!

...officials have just been notified that they have received the Governor's 2011 Smart Partnership Award...

Vader and Lewis County elected officials and staff collaborated to secure \$1.3 million in state grant and loan funds for sorely needed improvements to the Vader water system. A water utility plan and improvements were the outcomes of coordinated work by the city, Lewis County Commissioners, Public Works, Public Health and Budget Office, and the state departments of Health, Ecology, Commerce and Attorney

New phone process on Fridays

Starting on Friday, July 1, phone calls to the COG will be directed to an automated answering system on Fridays. Callers will be able to contact COG employees directly or leave a voice mail message without first connecting with the receptionist. Our office will be open and the caller will have the option to contact the receptionist if none of the choices meet their needs. This change in office procedure will allow support staff to provide more quality support to planning staff and special projects which will improve service to our members and the community.



May COG board meeting highlights

- ◆ Amended the COG petty cash fund to increase the limit from \$250 to \$500 per month;
- ◆ Approved the fiscal year 2012-2013 transportation work program for the Longview-Kelso-Rainier, OR urban area metropolitan planning organization and Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Planning Organization (see related article);
- ◆ Authorized a COG staff member and Substance Abuse Coalition board member to travel to Anaheim, CA for a Community Anti-Drug Coalition of America mid-year training institute, July 25-28;
- ◆ Were informed of the Port of Woodland’s newly adopted strategic plan by Nelson Holmberg, port manager and COG board member;
- ◆ Were informed by staff member, TJ Keiran, of upcoming online mapping training opportunities and related resources;
- ◆ Were informed by staff member, Rosemary Siipola, of the status of the SR 432 highway and rail corridor improvement projects; results of visits to Washington, DC offices of our Con-

gressional delegation; and the \$2 million in the state budget for their share of the project to develop environmental documentation for the SR 432 highway and rail corridor project;

- ◆ Were informed by the director of the COG’s joint application with the Columbia Pacific EDD for an economic development training series put on by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and WSU and the potential for a joint application to the federal department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) under their sustainable communities grant program; an application to the Washington State Department of Transportation and US-DOT for a scenic byway grant for “Fire and Ice Scenic Byway” proposal between Cowlitz, Lewis and Skamania counties; assistance needed by some COG members for changing boundaries of their commissioner districts; the need and plans for coordinating updates to area local governments’ shoreline management master programs, as funded by the state legislature; and coordinating planning issues associated with the medical marijuana topic; and
- ◆ Board members shared updates and projects underway in their jurisdictions.

For more information, contact the COG office.

Save the dates

Disaster and Safety Planning for Seniors

Door Prizes

Tuesday, June 14, 2011
5:30-7:30 pm
Elder Options
872 - 15th Avenue
Longview, WA
360-636-1000
www.elderoptions.org



FREE for seniors, families and caregivers

TOPICS

- ~ How to Prepare an Emergency Kit ~
- ~ Your Personal Disaster Plan ~
- ~ Fall Prevention Strategies ~
- ~ Home Safety Equipment ~

Refreshments

Space is limited—so call to reserve your seat!

SAVE THE DATE

Cowlitz County Complete Streets Workshop

June 27, 2011
1:00 pm to 5:00 pm
McClelland Arts Center
951 Delaware
Longview, WA



Complete Streets are road systems that provide safe, convenient access for all users including motorists, bicyclists, transit operators and users, and pedestrians of all ages and abilities.

The **Washington Coalition for Promoting Physical Activity** is providing this half-day interactive regional workshop that will lay the foundation for Cowlitz County to develop and implement effective complete streets policies.







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.

More save the dates . . .

Introduction to ArcGIS Online

June 21, 2011 ~ 9:00—11:00 am

Attendees will learn the basics of how to use ESRI's online mapping software and how to access local data

Please register online at:

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/92NDHNK>

This class will be held in the **General Meeting Room, Cowlitz County Administration Building**
207 4th Avenue North ~ Kelso, Washington

Admission is FREE and OPEN to all

For more information, contact TJ Keiran
CWCOG Senior Planner / GIS Specialist

E-mail: tkeiran@cwco.org

Phone: (360) 577-3041



**Cowlitz-Lewis
Economic Development
District**

Semi-Annual Board Meeting

June 30, 2011 ~ 12:00 - 1:00 pm
Chehalis, Washington

Location and lunch information along with the agenda and minutes from the last meeting will be sent soon

KEEP WATCH!

Seminar on how to review and comment on SEPA checklists

The CWCOG is sponsoring a free workshop **Thursday, July 14, 2011** on tips to review and comment on SEPA checklists. SEPA, or the State Environmental Policy Act, provides the framework for agencies to consider the environmental consequences of a proposed development before taking action. Annie Szvetez, SEPA Policy Lead at the state Department of Ecology, will present the class in two sessions, focusing on an overview of the SEPA process and providing direction on how to comment in order to have an effect on the decision making process. We will review specific examples of environmental checklists and comment letters, too.

The class will be held on Thursday, July 14, from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. in the General Meeting Room, third floor of the Cowlitz County Administration Building, 207 4th Avenue North in Kelso. Please register online at: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/ST8YYNT>.

Contact TJ Keiran, COG Senior Planner/GIS Specialist, at 360-577-3041 or tkeiran@cwco.org with any questions.

1980 Annual Report déjà vu

- ◆ Established a Mount St. Helens Disaster/Grants Team to work with local governments and funding sources to help with impacts from the eruption. The team prepared applications for Community Development Block Grants and many other programs to recover costs for damages and equipment used in the relief effort. This yielded over \$5 million in refunds that would not have been covered.
- ◆ Representatives from 12 local jurisdictions, nine private companies, four state and two federal agencies, special interest groups and the general public began updating the Regional Park and Recreation Plan to address the aftermath of the eruption that destroyed many recreational facilities and prompted planning for tourism, new recreation facilities and future recreation possibilities near the volcano.
- ◆ The 1979 Cowlitz County Economic Adjustment Plan identified three goals: (1) gain employment for approximately 1,000 permanently displaced forest products workers; (2) stabilize the current severe economic decline; and (3) mitigate the impact of future economic downturns by reducing the county's dependence on the forest products industry through economic diversification.
- ◆ The COG moved into active implementation of the Regional Housing Plan after four years of surveying, analysis and policy development by a multi-jurisdictional and interest committee.
- ◆ The COG's graphics department completed a new road map of Cowlitz County with street detail of the cities of Longview, Kelso, Castle Rock, Kalama and Woodland, along with all public roads in the unincorporated areas of the County.

July 2011 calendar

July 15	7:30 am	Regional Information Forum	Cowlitz PUD
July 20	1:30 pm	Cowlitz Housing First Coalition	CAP Altrusa Room, Longview
July 21	4:00 pm	CC Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee	CC Historical Museum, Kelso
July 21	3:30 pm	Cowlitz Substance Abuse Coalition and Cowlitz Meth Action Team	Kelso Presbyterian Church
July 27	1:30 pm	Housing Advisory Committee	CAP Altrusa Room, Longview
July 28	12:00 pm	COG Board Meeting	CC Admin Bldg, GMR
July 28	3:30 pm	Cowlitz Area TAC/RPACT	CC Conference Room B



Quote of the month: *“Education gives you knowledge of the world, cultural awareness, and the tools to have a voice in society.”*

Airi Kondo, Naselle High School Senior, 2011

