



Communiqué

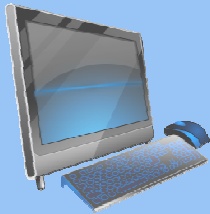
Volume 1, Issue 10

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You can help develop "Great Streets"!

NEW WEB SITE

Please visit our revised website: www.cwcog.org



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Your assistance is needed to help local officials better understand your ideas and concerns about our transportation system and what could be done to improve it. Staff from the CWCOC and urban area jurisdictions are developing a transportation systems plan (TSP) for the Longview-Kelso area to guide development of a sustainable transportation system. Not only will it focus on local traffic congestion and safety, it will also identify opportunities for enhancing economic development and improving the area's quality of life and place through a variety of improvements.

There will be a **"Great Streets Summit"** on **Thursday, November 3, 2011, from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. at the Cowlitz PUD John Searing Auditorium, 961 – 12th Avenue, Longview.** The planning team will introduce the project and its purpose, describe how plan decisions will be made, and present key findings from their initial studies.

The "Great Streets" concept will be introduced and examples presented to show how the technique might be put in place in the Longview-Kelso area. A highlight of the evening will be an interactive workshop where participants will have the opportunity to provide comment on transportation issues and concerns and to make suggestions about improvements.

For more information, contact Rosemary Siipola or Matt Hermen at the COG.

Participants will have the opportunity to provide comment on transportation issues and concerns and to make suggestions about improvements.



Boise, Idaho "before" and "after" Great Streets improvements

Disability Lifeline payments end October 31

A new housing and essential needs program will provide rent and minimal utility assistance.

Beginning November 1, the State of Washington will end cash payments to very low-income people who are temporarily unable to work due to an injury or disability. The state has allocated \$1,126,951 to Cowlitz County over a 20-month period to fund a new Housing and Essential Needs Program (HEN) that will provide rent and utility assistance to a limited number of persons who are receiving Medical Care Services for a temporary disability. This assistance has a lifetime limit of 24 months. Approximately 400 low income individuals are currently on Disability Lifeline in our county; however, funding levels are not adequate to assist everyone who meets the program criteria.

The \$197 cash benefit is being replaced with a non-entitlement program authorized this year under House Bill 2082. This change means that everyone who is certified as unable to work due to a temporary disability will not necessarily receive housing assistance. The state is asking local providers to track people who are eligible but turned away in order to evaluate impacts to local communities. Lower Columbia CAP will operate the program on behalf of Cowlitz County, and will begin taking applications for assistance on November 1. For more information, contact Melissa Taylor at the CWCOG office, 577-3041.

LCC program to go state-wide

Hats off to Lower Columbia College! The state Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board has issued a Request for Qualifications for a consultant to help implement LCC's Individualized Certificate Program (ICP) across the state's community and technical college system. The goal is to make on-the-job training more accessible and effective; it also aligns with the "Retooling Washington's Workforce" initiative.

The employer-driven ICP is a model connecting college-level education and training to employers with openings for entry-level jobs at family-sustaining wage levels, but without enough employment demand to warrant a dedicated college program. Dave Ramsey, manager of the program at LCC, seeks out employers who need workers that meet certain knowledge and skills particular to their job site. The business serves as the primary training site providing technical education,

equipment and expertise. Students also complete general education courses on campus.

Earlier workforce education and training programs prepared a classroom full of students for certain jobs or industries. With the rapid changes occurring today, that

method may produce too many graduates for too few actual job slots. In the employer-driven ICP model, college students and staff work with local businesses and workforce development agencies to combine traditional classroom curriculum and workplace learning to certify student competency. The programs can vary in length from 15 to 45 credits and are usually completed in 3-4



quarters. The Workforce Board sees this as an important innovation in boosting training that is directly connected to employment.

For more information, contact the ICP office at LCC at 360-442-2332.

Complex federal application submitted

COG staff recently tackled and completed a comprehensive yet detailed grant application to the federal Housing and Urban Development department (HUD) for a regional sustainable communities grant. If selected by HUD (we expect HUD's decision in December), the project will establish a multi-faceted regional plan for the Cowlitz-Lewis Economic Development District (CLEDD) area. The project's activity will generate a regional sustainable vision for community vitality and a "toolkit" for updating local and regional plans for transportation, economic development, housing, comprehensive plans and development codes, and management practices.

The regional plan will be organized around three core elements: Social Equity, Natural Environment, and Economic Vitality. While the typical topics of housing, transportation, recreation, and environmental resources would be examined in such a study, several new topics will be explored, such as Quality of Place, Fiscal Resiliency, Community Health, Renewable Energy, Local Food Production and Food Insecurity, Energy Conservation and Green Building, Mobility and Connectivity, and Workforce Development.

A key finding uncovered during a recent community assessment is that despite a strong sense of investment in small, local communities, there is a notable lack of

Core elements of the plan are Social Equity, Natural Environment and Economic Vitality.

(continued from page 2)

regional cohesion, vision and cooperation at the county or regional level. The CWCOG will serve as staff to the CLEDD in an extensive community engagement process to develop a plan that will address these shortcomings. Key features of the proposal include using tools such as:

The Futures Game – engaging the community in discussion of long-term impacts of short-term decisions;

Community Visioning Sessions – using the services of *Innovative Leadership*; and

Strategic Discussion Groups – identifying sustainability goals, strategies and performance measures to see if the region is moving towards or away from an established goal. Specialized, targeted studies will be conducted and used to inform the strategy discussion groups.

The planning process will produce the following deliverables:

- ✓ A Regional Plan for Sustainable Development that serves as a guide or toolkit to incorporate sustainability principles into local plans and codes.
- ✓ A Sustainability Checklist to help public and private sectors evaluate projects to determine the extent to which they promote sustainable practices.
- ✓ A series of economic studies including a strategic plan, industry cluster analysis, workforce development plan, and sub-regional plans to support community and economic vitality.
- ✓ An Affordable Housing Model to assist in locating housing where it sustainably meets the needs of the region’s citizens.
- ✓ An Aging Readiness Plan with steps to support “aging in place.”

For more information, contact Melissa Taylor or Jennifer Keene at the COG.

What’s innovative about the state’s transportation survey?

From Transportation Daily, October 5, 2011 by [Larry Ehl](#)

Citizen opinions wanted! People in Washington State can voice their opinion about transportation needs, issues, and investment, thanks to a [web survey](#) sponsored by the state Transportation Commission. This comprehensive survey has 50 questions covering all modes, funding mechanisms, and long-term issues. Recognizing people’s busy lives, the Commission enables a person’s survey to be saved and completed later.

What’s really intriguing is that this survey will have statistically valid results, but is also open to whomever would like to take it. For a survey to be statistically valid, it must be random and the sample size must be geographically balanced so that results can be projected accurately to the total population. This is being achieved by means of a random selection of 100,000 households across the state via a postcard inviting them to participate on the web. To ensure there is no bias in the sample, the postcard contained a security code that is required to take the survey at <http://www.wstcsurvey.org/>. The goal is to get a minimum of 5,000 responses statewide. That’s an unusually large sample for a survey.

People who did not receive the postcard can still take a survey at: www.voiceofwashingtonsurvey.org. Because anyone can take the survey as many times as they’d like, the results will be less scientific or statistically valid. However, the results of this “open” survey will be compared to the invite survey for validation of

results. The results of both surveys will be submitted to the Governor and Legislature.

Other unique aspects are:



- ✦ The address-based sampling eliminates the problem of reaching cell-only households, unlisted numbers, and people without internet access.
- ✦ Statistically significant samples in 14 regions enables detailed regional comparisons.
- ✦ Robust demographic subgroup samples (age, gender, ethnicity, income, etc.) allows in-depth analysis of differences in attitudes and priorities.

Commissioner Anne Haley, from Walla Walla in the more rural part of the state, observed that “The survey will have projectable data for each of the 14 regional and metropolitan areas in our state, which means our decision makers will be able to better understand the unique needs and priorities for each area. This will give the Legislature and Governor the ability to make targeted investments that address the needs of each region. We know “one size does not fit all” and this survey ensures we clearly understand what does fit for folks in each region across the state.”

The survey and analysis is being conducted by [EMC Research](#), a full-service research firm, specializing in polling, focus groups, and public opinion research consulting.

September executive meeting highlights

The wasn’t a COG board meeting in September. The Executive Committee met to approve September expenses; approve an amendment to the regional transportation improvement program (RTIP) to change the category of funding for a Westside Highway concrete paving project; and review progress on a proposed COG staff compensation plan. For more information, contact the COG office.



1968 Annual Report déjà vu

- ★ The Cowlitz Regional Planning Commission became the Cowlitz-Wahkiakum Regional Planning Commission in October.
- ★ An urban area population study was completed with complete population growth and composition analyzed to the year 1990; the economic trends of the urban area were broken down to usable segments comparing household and business trends to the year 1990; and land use of the urban area was mapped, analyzed, and compared in light of the population and economic segments. This study set forth the trends for expansion, amount

of vacant land available for open space, housing and industrial uses. The completion of these studies enabled all agencies to have a comprehensive view of the growth and development of all areas of Cowlitz County.

- ★ Updated and revised the zoning ordinance for the town of Woodland.
- ★ Started the update process of the comprehensive plan for the city of Kelso.

November 2011 calendar

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| Nov 3 | 4:00 pm | CC Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee |
| Nov 3 | 6:00 pm | Great Streets Summit |
| Nov 4 | 7:30 am | Regional Information Forum |
| Nov 16 | 1:30 pm | Cowlitz Housing First Coalition |
| Nov 17 | 12:00 pm | COG Board Mtg |
| Nov 17 | 3:30 pm | Cowlitz Area TAC/RPACT |
| Nov 21 | 3:30 pm | Cowlitz Substance Abuse Coalition and Cowlitz Meth Action Team |
| Nov 23 | 1:30 pm | Housing Advisory Committee |



CC Historical Museum, Kelso
 Cowlitz PUD Auditorium
 CC Historical Museum, Kelso
 CAP Altrusa Room, Longview
CC Admin Bldg., GMR
 CC Admin Bldg., GMR
 Kelso Presbyterian Church
 CAP Altrusa Room, Longview

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.

