

To stem substance abuse...



"I would love to go again; thanks for taking us" ~ Drug & alcohol prevention summit

The COG staff worked diligently with local community agencies in curbing youth drug use. One of those activities, which was the highlight of the year, was a county-wide drug and alcohol prevention summit in which 215 middle and high school students and 55 adult volunteers participated.

Another highlight was the collaboration with Woodland and Mark Morris high schools to provide "Social Norms" projects which uses school data to help students change their perceptions regarding how much their peers use drugs. This included the use of posters and an interactive PowerPoint presentation where students, through multiple-choice questions, had to indicate how many of their peers were using drugs. This was an eye opening experience for several teenagers.

This year completed the third year of "Through My Eyes," a unique, popular essay project led by the Daily News and the Substance Abuse Coalition. Approximately 20 essays were submitted by high school and college students describing the effects of marijuana and drug use in their environments.

In collaboration with the Woodland Police Department, Kalama Police Department, Godfrey's Pharmacy in Kalama, High School Pharmacy in Woodland, and the Woodland Citizens United, prescription drug drop-off sites were established in Woodland and Kalama, where over 300 pounds of prescription medications were collected, and where prescription drug education for adults in the community was provided.

We also partnered with Kelso High School to hold grade specific assemblies to over 1,700 students on heroin and prescription drugs. Other educational activities included:

- Coordinating presentations on methamphetamine and other drugs to over 700 community members, and partnering with the Housing Coalition to provide education to 125 landlords;
- Sponsoring a six-part webinar series on the effects of parental substance use on children with 42 attendees from multiple service agencies; and
- Educating approximately 18 families through Strengthening Families programs in Longview, Castle Rock and Woodland, and expanding the teen mentor program to 108 matches county-wide.



Connor Lane & Isaac Moline, teen mentor program

COG staff also partnered with the Longview Police Department to help finalize the Highlands Community Surveys for the purpose of gathering information on drug and gang activity in the Highlands.

Benchmarks completed this year included the planning and facilitation of a Kalama Town Hall on underage drinking, which spurred the community to start the Kalama Safe Communities Coalition.

A second benchmark was the graduation of 18 middle and high school students from Teen Leadership Week. Youth participated in various activities including low and high ropes challenges, True Colors personality traits, self defense, telling their story, dining etiquette and Adventures in Peacemaking.

Finally, \$3,650 was raised for use towards youth drug and alcohol prevention. The COG staff benefited from 388 volunteer hours by adult and youth volunteers.

Cowlitz-Wahkiakum Council of Governments 2010 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

Support Staff:

Anisa Kisamore, Office Administrator
Shanda Turner, Finance Assistant

Transportation Staff:

Rosemary Siipola, Transportation Planner/Manager
Amy Asher, Associate Transportation Planner
Robert Reeves, AmeriCorp Assistant
Jerry Sorrell, Transp Plnr/Mgr Part-Time (retired June)

Community Mobilization Staff:

Brian McCrady, CSAC & Drug-Free Communities Coordinator
Shannon Miller, Cowlitz Meth Action Team Coordinator
Tabatha Owens, Office Assistant
Mike Holmgren, Office Assistant (Americorps)

Nancy Harris, Administrative Secretary (retired Dec)
Bonnie Kelley, Receptionist/Secretary
Katie Wells, Administrative Assistant

2010 Annual Report

Cowlitz-Wahkiakum Council of Governments

From the Director . . .



Here we are after almost 50 years! The agency has gone through many transitions throughout those years reflective of the changing times, circumstances and needs of the region. The COG got its start as the Cowlitz County Regional Planning Commission in 1961 serving the county and its cities with planning services. The RPC was broadened in form and function as the Cowlitz-Wahkiakum Governmental Conference in 1971, tackling a variety of federal and state housing and planning programs. We were the regional clearinghouse, evaluating local grant applications for housing, public works, and social services to insure coordinated planning and service provision. We produced a comprehensive housing plan that guided funds to many projects over the next 20 years.

With diminishing federal influence in the 1980s, we assisted with regional issues like solid waste and water system planning, shorelines management, Mount St. Helens aftermath help and more planning services. We geared up the urban area transportation program to guide funding for road, street and bridge improvements of which there are a number of accomplishments. Renamed the Cowlitz-Wahkiakum Council of Governments in 1992, we formed and staffed several regional efforts: Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Planning Organization, Cowlitz-Lewis Economic Development District and Cowlitz Substance Abuse Coalition.

We now have the opportunity to meet the challenges coming at us; are we ready? With our members' commitment to work together these past years, we'll need it for many years to come, when it counts even more.

~ Steve Harvey, Director

To boost the economy . . .

The COG staff, in a team effort, worked to encourage and educate local business and governments in economic development. One of the highlights of the year was completing the first phase of the Business Disaster Resiliency Project. This project, funded through federal Economic Development Administration funds, educated stakeholders such as Chambers, Economic Development Councils and the Department of Emergency Management in a process to help local business build economic resiliency and stabilization in the face of natural disasters.

The COG facilitated an "Economic Development 101" training series for the City of Castle Rock's council members, planning commission, chamber, local business owners and school district. The classes illustrated the roles of each partner in the implementation of rural development as part of the city's comprehensive and strategic marketing plans.



EDA Field Rep, Jacob Macias at the groundbreaking ceremony of the Mint Farm Industrial Park

Participating in the ribbon cutting of the South Weber Avenue extension in October marked the completion of the Mint Farm Industrial Park's infrastructure. The project was funded by \$1.4 million in EDA stimulus grant money which COG staff assisted

in writing the grant application.

Two state representatives and a state senator directly involved themselves in the region's economic issues by participating in the Cowlitz-Lewis Economic Development District board.



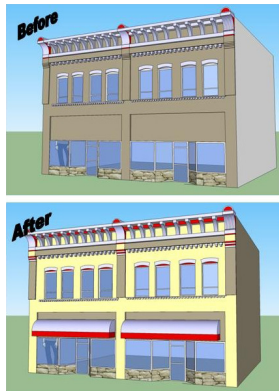
CLEDD Board Meeting

Other accomplishments included...

- Partnering with the City of Woodland for the Schurman Way/Guild Road improvements. The project was awarded \$2.4 million in EDA funds through the Community Trade Adjustment Act; the largest award in the nation and the only one west of the Mississippi.
- Establishing the EverGreen Sustainable Communities Consortium which brought together, for the first time, Grays Harbor, Mason, Pacific, Cowlitz and Wahkiakum Counties to pursue regional sustainable projects, programs and grants.
- Playing an important role in the formation of the Washington State Association of Economic Development District (WAEDD) formed for the purpose of educating EDD members across the state. COG staff is the board's first chair.

To improve the region . . .

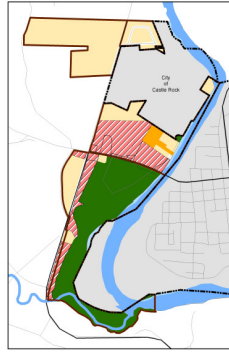
COG Planners have been assisting Cowlitz County Department of Emergency Management and 22 local governments in updating their multi-jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plans. These Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) certified plans identify specific measures, actions and programs necessary for the reduction of future losses associated with natural disasters such as earthquakes, wild land fires, flooding, landslides, severe winter storms, and volcanic activity. Please see Cowlitz DEM's website to view the draft plans and for opportunities to provide comments. (www.co.cowlitz.wa.us/dem)



Other accomplishments include revising Kalama's city sign code in coordination with the city of Kalama as part of its comprehensive plan; updating Cathlamet's park plan; assisting Cowlitz County staff in transferring shared regional utilities from the county to the city of Castle Rock; and fulfilling 82 requests for data, funding resources and other technical assistance.

In conjunction with Woodland staff and planning commission, COG staff updated the city's planned unit residential development ordinance espousing "Smart Growth" concepts to be implemented within the comprehensive plan.

COG staff provided several training opportunities to members. GIS staff hosted instructional sessions focused on the use of software and emerging technologies. Staff also partnered with Lower Columbia College to facilitate two workshops for the Highlands Neighborhood Association on how to use measurement tools for evaluating community improvement efforts.



COG Planners have aided Castle Rock residents, property owners, the city's planning commission and council with the annexation of 275 acres, which included modifying planning documents to facilitate the transition of annexed properties. Staff also processed annexations for the cities of Longview and Woodland, Cowlitz 2 Fire & Rescue, and Cowlitz County Fire District #4.

To keep us moving . . .

Transportation staff worked with the Cowlitz Transit Authority (CTA) and City of Longview to complete a Transit Enhancement Plan for local the transit system, CUBS. The CTA Board adopted the completed plan in December. The plan features service alternatives including a new express service linking Kelso with West Longview, increased service on select routes, expanded hours, increases in the number of bus stops and bus shelters at high volume locations. In addition to fixed route service enhancements, the plan includes recommendations for para-transit services, coordination with regional transportation partners, and establishment of performance goals.



LCC students

with available resources.

As lead agency, staff formed a SR432 standing committee consisting of public and private sectors to guide project development for highway and rail improvements. Staff partnered with the City and Port of Woodland to develop strategies for completing the Scott Avenue reconnection/I-5 crossing project.

In addition, COG staff:

- Completed the scope and secured funds for a Transportation Systems Plan.
- Developed and coordinated an inter-local agreement for the largest State of Washington award of \$675,000 in federal energy block grant funds.
- Assisted a committee of local officials in the selection of non-traditional transportation enhancement projects totaling \$1.4 million. Selections included street lighting along pedestrian trail to the marina in Cathlamet, construction of Highlands Area Trail in Longview, pedestrian improvements along Yew Street in Kelso, and murals and pedestrian enhancements along Elm Street in Kalama.



SR432/Talley Way interchange ground breaking ceremony

To address homelessness ...

The Housing First Coalition updated the Ten-Year Plan to End Homelessness through a process which included identifying strategies to increase program effectiveness, realigning homeless system resources, improving strategic implementation and use of resources, and applying the use of performance data to keep the plan relevant and focused on what works. Staff also helped develop a recommendation for local zoning codes regarding homeless facilities.

COG staff were honored with federal approval to attend the National HMIS/HEARTH Conference instituted by the implementation of the federal HEARTH Act. We learned how to use data to meet federal performance benchmarks in order to reduce homelessness at the local level enhancing coordination of the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS).

Chosen out of seven counties by Washington State Department of Commerce, staff facilitated a focus group that tested the proposed consolidated funding model.

Staff coordinated meetings for the Low Barrier Shelter Work Group which secured donations for hygiene kits assembled by Habitat for Humanity and CAP.

COG supported the public screening of "Lost in Woonsocket," a movie depicting the lives of the homeless in the town of Woonsocket, RI in an effort to bring more awareness to our local community.

To promote safe housing ...

COG staff have been involved in promoting affordable and safe housing for residents in Cowlitz and Wahkiakum counties. A few of those tasks include:

- Presenting an overview of community housing needs and programs at the Cowlitz Habitat for Humanity's Annual Meeting.
- Preparing background data to develop the city of Kelso's housing element of their comprehensive plan.
- Assisting the Wahkiakum County Continuum of Care group in reviewing homeless data, preparing a homeless housing needs report, and helping facilitate trainings by consultant, Common Ground.



To plan for what's next . . .

As we gear up for the future, COG staff have kicked off the update of the Cowlitz County Comprehensive Plan through a pro-active citizen-led steering committee. A consultant was hired to organize and conduct a broad based public involvement program. Activities included classroom visits, an on-line survey, outreach at community fairs and events, public workshops, service club exercises and conversation cafés.

A vision statement and guiding principles for a new comprehensive plan were crafted. The Final Vision Report included supporting materials, data and findings and a strategy for continued public and stakeholder involvement. In addition to the vision statement and guiding principles, committee members also identified target topics for more in-depth analysis of plan elements.

Financial report . . .

Beginning Fund Bal \$ 124,140

<u>Revenues</u>		<u>Expenditures</u>	
Federal	\$ 549,060	Personnel Cost	\$ 995,401
State	\$ 151,358	Contracts	\$ 202,781
Dues	\$ 241,513	Other Services	\$ 139,558
Contracts/Planning	\$ 385,049	Capital Outlay	\$ 8,582
Total Revenues	\$1,326,980	Total Expenditures	\$1,346,322
Total Resources	\$1,451,120	Ending Fund Bal	\$ 104,798
		Reserve Funds	\$ 70,000

Expenditures by Type of Service

