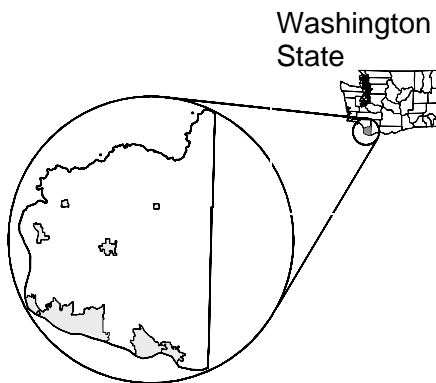

Clark County

Clark County, named after William Clark of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, is located in the heart of the Pacific Northwest. Clark County was the first county in Washington, created by the provisional government of Oregon Territory on August 20, 1845, and at that time covered the entire present-day state. The County seat, the City of Vancouver, is home to historic Fort Vancouver built by Hudson's Bay Company in 1824. Prominent geographic features, a rich heritage, abundant natural resources, and a well grounded economy have influenced the past, and continue to influence the direction set by Clark County leadership. The following sections, *Local Community* and *County Government*, describe the County's physical characteristics, demographics, economy, organizational structure, and elected offices.

Local Community

The planning and budget process is impacted by numerous factors, including current trends and issues which are generated at the regional and national levels. The information that follows describes the environmental, community, and economic factors that influence governing and budgetary decisions at the local level.



Geography and Climate

Located in southwestern Washington State, Clark County is approximately 70 miles from the Pacific Ocean. It is physically compact, measuring approximately 25 miles across in either direction, encompassing 656 square miles. The Columbia River forms the western and southern boundaries of the County, with over 40 miles of river frontage. On the entire west coast of North America, the Columbia is the only fresh-water harbor accommodating ocean-going commerce and the only water-grade route through the Cascade Range.

While the Columbia River forms the County's southern boundary, the Lewis River forms the northern perimeter. Annual rainfall averaging 41.3 inches a year contributes to other waterways and lakes in the region, such as the Washougal River, Salmon Creek, and Lacamas Lake.

Clark County lies within the Willamette-Puget trough, a geographic basin created by the Cascade and Pacific Coast mountain ranges. The Cascade Mountain range dominates the eastern border of the region, with the frosty white peaks of Mount St. Helens, Mount Hood, and Mount Adams prominent features on a clear day. The Cascades extend from southwestern Canada through the states of Washington and Oregon, and into northern California. The earliest attested use of the name Cascades is in the writings of famed botanist David Douglas. He describes the great white-capped mountains that loomed above the rapids as the "mountains by the cascades" and later simply as the "Cascades".

The climate in Clark County is influenced by this geography, which produces the wet, mild winters and moderately dry summers characteristic of the region. About 70% of the annual precipitation occurs between the months of November and March. The average high temperature in July is 79.9°F and the average low temperature in January is 33.7°F. The marine influence of the Pacific Ocean contributes much to the temperate climate.

Growth and Urbanization

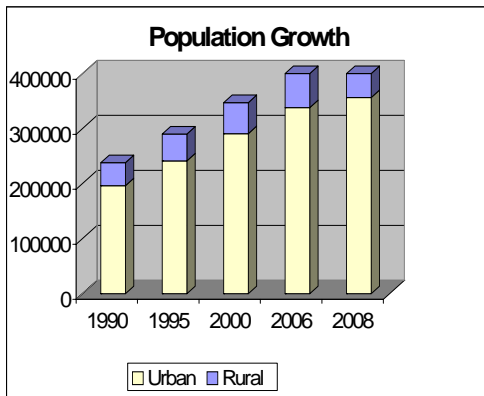
The effect of the past several years of population growth is one of the most significant factors impacting the County's planning and budgetary processes.

In 2008, Clark County (pop. 424,200) was second among the most rapidly developing counties in the state and one of the fastest growing areas in the nation. From 2000 through 2008, Clark County's population increased by about 79,000, an increase of nearly 23 percent. The effect of the past several years of population growth is one of the most significant factors impacting the County's planning and budgetary processes. Growth in Clark County can be attributed to a number of factors including its proximity to the Portland, Oregon metropolitan area, transportation infrastructure, economic base, and quality of life.

In 1994, Clark County adopted a comprehensive land use plan pursuant to the State of Washington Growth Management Act (GMA) of 1990. Amendments to the GMA in 1997 created an evaluation program, often referred to as the Buildable Lands Program, in which local governments analyze land supply to make sure that they have enough lands for development and that their GMA comprehensive plans are doing what they are expected to do. In 2007, Clark County adopted the second update of its Comprehensive Plan, providing policy guidance for how Clark County grows and provides services through 2024 as the County transitions from rural to suburban/urban.

Demographics

The majority of the state's population growth since 2000 remains concentrated in western Washington, with the largest eight-year gains occurring in four counties, including Clark County. Migration, primarily driven by jobs, is generally an important component of population growth. Recent data indicate that population gains due to migration have trended downward due to the housing contraction nationwide and slowing economic conditions. Even those areas of the country that are faring relatively better in terms of housing and job opportunities are not experiencing the level of migration that would be expected under more normal circumstances.



Clark County has a population density of 665.5 per square mile. The U.S. Census Bureau 2006 population estimates report that, of the population that reported only one race, 90.2% reported white, 3.9% reported Asian, and 2.1% reported African-American. The County population includes 6% Hispanic (of any race). The average household size is 2.69 persons compared to an average family size nationally of 3.15 persons. The County has 127,208 households and in 2007 the median household income was \$57,948. The 2007 local labor force is 211,040 persons, which is an 18% increase from the local labor force of 178,000 in 2000. The average wage per job was \$42,259.

Local Economy

Quick Facts for Clark County*

Total 2008 Estimated Population	424,200
Increase in Population (2000-08)	22.9%
Households	127,208
Homeownership rate	67.3%
Number of School Districts	10
College Graduates	22.1%
Principal Employers	
	SW Washington Medical Center
	Vancouver School District
	Evergreen School District
	Hewlett Packard
	Clark County
Principal Property Tax Payers	
	SEH America
	Georgia Pacific
	Wafertech
	Columbia Tech Center
	Property & Building Co. LLC

*Data from 2000 US Census Bureau and Clark County Assessor's Department

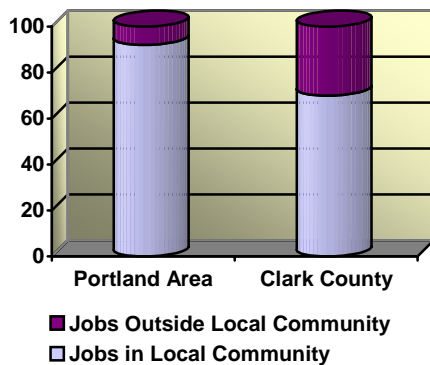
The Washington State economic forecast assumes a national recession that will last into the middle of 2009. However, the forecast for Washington State is for the downturn to be more muted, both in duration and depth, as a result of the aerospace and software publishing industries. Unlike the previous downturn in 2001, the economic projections anticipate a sharp decline in consumer spending this time, which would mean the impact on state and local sales tax revenues will be more pronounced.

Clark County's economy relates to both the State of Washington and the Portland, Oregon metropolitan area. Transportation facilities, serving both sides of the Columbia River, have created a regional hub for commerce. The area has served deep-sea commerce since 1906. Large oceangoing ships can navigate the lower Columbia River as far as the ports of Vancouver and Portland. The Army Corps of Engineers and two regional ports conducted a major channel-clearing project in the Columbia River, the first phase of which was completed in 2005. Transcontinental rail lines serving the County traverse major north-south and east-west routes. Three interstate freeways provide access to the economic centers of Seattle, San Francisco, and points beyond. The Portland International Airport, fifteen minutes south of Vancouver, is an important regional asset.

An essential support to the region's economic infrastructure is the availability of higher education. Washington State University's satellite campus in the City of Vancouver has enhanced the availability of higher education opportunities in the area and is the primary provider of undergraduate and graduate level college education in Clark County. It is one of 96 public and private universities in America with "very high research activity," as determined by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. Residents of Clark County have access to a relatively well-developed higher education sector, as well as access to additional programs in the greater Portland area.

The employment situation for the region and the nation is projected to be difficult. In Clark County, employment declined in 2008 in construction, manufacturing, and machinery. The decline in the housing market was a major factor in 2009/10 projections for construction employment and sales tax revenues. The number of Clark County residential building permits was down 41% for the period of January through November 2008, compared to the same period in the previous year. The health care sector and the information sector, however, both added jobs in late 2008. Clark County's largest employer is Southwest Washington Medical Center, with 3,800 employees.

**Jobs in Community per 100
Employed Workers in Labor Force**



Approximately 60,000 (28%) of Clark County workers commute to jobs that are located in the Oregon portion of the Metropolitan area. The County is included in the Portland, Oregon standard metropolitan statistical area (SMSA). Clark County represents 20% of the SMSA 2007 population of 2.1 million. The County's employment base has changed from manufacturing and government (almost 60 percent of all jobs in 1970) to one dominated by retail trade and services (47 percent of all jobs in 2005). The median household income in Clark County, at \$57,948, is 97% of the state average. Clark County has a smaller share of high-paying corporate-services such as law, banking, securities, insurance and consulting due to the proximity to Portland.

The large increase in the number of Clark County residents over the past few years has resulted in an increase in the demand for services, made somewhat more difficult by the revenue imbalance that occurs when growth comes disproportionately from residential rather than commercial expansion. The situation creates challenging issues for Clark County leadership. An increase in industrial and commercial development is needed to generate the increases in public revenues that are required to satisfy growing service demands. The economic downturn will further complicate the process of aligning services with demands.

Annexation

Annexation is the process whereby a city expands its boundaries to encompass new areas. Either a majority of the residents of an area adjacent to a city must vote to be annexed, or the owners representing 60% of the property value in an area must sign petitions for annexation.

When an annexation occurs, a significant portion of the local tax revenues generated by the annexed area shifts from the County to the annexing city.

When an annexation occurs, a significant portion of the local tax revenues generated by the annexed area shifts from the County to the annexing city. The primary revenue sources affected are sales tax (85 percent of which goes to the annexing city) and property tax (of which the Road Fund portion, or about 57 percent, goes to the city). Responsibilities and expenses for providing many services to the annexed area, such as law enforcement protection, road maintenance, and parks maintenance, also are shifted from the County to the annexing city. The County retains responsibility for regional services to the newly incorporated area such as court systems, public health and jail services.

The financial effects of annexations on the County depend on the level of service demands shifted to the annexing city. If the shifted service costs exceed the revenues lost, the net effect on County finances is positive. More resources become available for regional services and local services to residents of the unincorporated area. If the revenues lost exceed the service costs the impact is negative, and County-provided service levels are likely to suffer. Typically, annexations of areas which are predominantly residential have a positive net effect on County finances, while annexations of areas which are predominantly commercial have a negative net effect.

The 1997 annexation of the Evergreen and Cascade Park areas into the City of Vancouver included 57,500 citizens and was the largest annexation in the history of Washington State. The impacts of this and other annexations go beyond the short-term financial effects. Annexations occur each year, with the most recent being 597 acres of primarily commercial property called Section 30, which was annexed to the City of Vancouver in July 2008.

Quality of Life / Recreation

Clark County, situated along the mighty Columbia River with the majestic Cascade Mountains for a backdrop, is an ideal setting for work and play. Residents enjoy the opportunity to choose a rural lifestyle within close proximity to urban amenities. There are a wide variety of recreational opportunities and cultural activities in the area.

The County has over 20 art organizations, many available through the Columbia Arts Center; and numerous community events such as the Clark County Fair and the Fourth of July Festival. There are numerous historical sites and museums throughout the region, including the Vancouver National Historic Reserve. The metropolitan amenities of Portland are just minutes away across the Columbia River.

Recreational opportunities are numerous in and around Clark County. There are over 40 miles of Columbia River frontage for fishing and boating. The Pacific Ocean beaches to the west, Mount Hood and Mount Adams ski areas, Gifford Pinchot National Forest, as well as Mount St. Helens National Volcanic Monument are all within an hour's drive. The Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area, originating in Clark County, is renowned for sightseeing and recreational opportunities, including world class windsurfing and boating. Picnicking, hiking, equestrian trails, bicycling, canoeing, fishing, hunting, skiing, swimming, and boating are popular activities. A diverse selection of golf courses can be found in the County and Portland metropolitan area.

The Pacific Ocean beaches to the west, Mount Hood and Mount Adams ski areas, Gifford Pinchot National Forest, as well as Mount St. Helens National Volcanic Monument are all within an hour's drive.

The County has partnered with the City of Vancouver to operate a jointly funded parks and recreation program. There are 139 City of Vancouver parks and 102 Clark County parks (developed and undeveloped). These include 13 regional parks, 36 community parks, 132 neighborhood parks, and a number of other special facilities for local residents. Of the 102 parks located in unincorporated Clark County, 35 are being funded for development by voter-approved property taxes within the Greater Clark Parks District. The funding will also help build 41 sports fields to be located at multiple parks, sports complexes, and community partnership sites around the county.

County Government

A county is a political subdivision of the state. Counties derive their existence from state law and powers expressly conferred by the state constitution and state laws.

In the United States, government is divided into separate branches (legislative, executive, and judicial) and layers (federal, state, and local). Each branch and each layer is partially independent of the others. At the local level, government is further divided among general purpose entities, such as cities and counties, and special purpose districts, such as schools, utilities, and fire districts. Local governments may form cooperative inter-local agencies to jointly carry out designated responsibilities. Therefore, no government entity stands entirely on its own. Rather, each entity is part of a network of governments working together to deliver services to the public.

To understand a particular unit of government, it is useful to have a concept of its place in the overall system. The purpose of this section is to generally explain how Clark County fits into this system, and how county government relates to the federal government, the State of Washington, the cities within the County's borders, and the many special districts that serve the citizens.

A county is a political subdivision of the state. Counties derive their existence from state law and their powers are expressly conferred by the state constitution and state laws. For example, counties are required to appraise property values for tax purposes, and to collect property taxes from their residents. In this regard, counties act as agents for state government.

Locally elected officials, including the Board of County Commissioners, govern counties, and these officials have considerable latitude to establish policies on the basis of the local community's needs and preferences. Policies are developed on the basis of state law and in the context of the local community environment.

Locally elected officials, including the Board of County Commissioners, govern counties, and these officials have considerable latitude to establish policies on the basis of the local community's needs and preferences.

Counties coexist with a variety of other overlapping local government entities, including cities. The relationship between county and city governments can be slightly confusing, with no two relationships being the same. Many County services are "regional," meaning that they are provided to all residents of the County, regardless of the jurisdictional limits of a city. Property appraisal is a good example. The County appraises all property, whether or not it lies within an incorporated city. Local county services, however, such as Sheriff's patrol, are generally provided only in the unincorporated portion of the County.

Organization of County Government

Clark County is a *statute county*, which means that the organization of the County is prescribed by state statute. The following organization chart provides an overview of the County structure, including its elected officials, administrator, and major departments. For simplicity, the chart does not include the numerous inter-local organizations, advisory boards, or other organizations that are partially or wholly under the jurisdiction of the County.

As the following chart depicts, the voters of Clark County elect twenty-five officials, including three County Commissioners, ten Superior Court Judges, six District Court Judges, an Assessor, a Treasurer, an Auditor, a Prosecuting Attorney, a Sheriff, and a County Clerk.

The Board of County Commissioners appoints a County Administrator, who acts as the chief executive officer for the County. Reporting directly to the County Administrator are the Deputy County Administrator as well as heads of the nine departments:

- Community Planning Department
- Community Development Department
- Community Services Department
- Public Health Department
- Public Works Department
- Public Information and Outreach Department
- Endangered Species Act Program
- Weed Management Program
- Conservation Lands Program

Departments reporting directly to the Deputy County Administrator include:

- General Services
- Human Resources
- Budget Office
- Information Services
- Medical Examiner

County Elected Officials

Clark County Elected Officials

Dates shown represent the expiration date of the officials' current term.

Commissioner (District 1):

Tom Mielke 12/31/12

Commissioner (District 2):

Marc Boldt..... 12/31/12

Commissioner (District 3):

Steve Stuart..... 12/31/10

Assessor:

Linda Franklin. 12/31/10

Treasurer:

Doug Lasher 12/31/10

Auditor:

Greg Kimsey 12/31/10

Prosecutor:

Art Curtis..... 12/31/10

Sheriff:

Garry Lucas 12/31/10

Clerk:

Sherry Parker..... 12/31/10

Board of County Commissioners - The three member Board of County Commissioners is the County's legislative body. Primary elections of Commissioners are held by district, while the general election is county wide. Commissioners serve a four year term. Election terms are staggered so that no more than two Commissioners stand for election in any single year.

The Board levies all County taxes and appropriates all funds for expenditure through the budget process. It sets land use policy in the unincorporated area and hears appeals to land use decisions. It enacts ordinances that have the force of law in the County. It appoints members of citizen advisory panels, hearings examiners, and members of the Board of Equalization. It approves all contracts and grant agreements. The Board of County Commissioners adopts the County budget and appoints the County Administrator, the chief executive of the County.

Assessor - The Assessor is responsible for the appraisal of all real and personal property in the County for the purpose of assessing property taxes. The Assessor also supervises the County's Geographic Information System (GIS). The Assessor is elected at large to a four year term.

Treasurer - The Treasurer is responsible for the collection of all property taxes, the distribution of property tax revenues to the State and other taxing districts, receipting all money received by the County, and cash and investment management. The Treasurer provides services both to the County and to other government entities, including school and fire districts. The Treasurer is elected at large to a four year term.

Auditor - The Auditor is responsible for the recording of documents, titles, and deeds; the issuance of marriage licenses; the issuance of motor vehicle licenses; and conducts all elections. The Auditor also provides accounting services, performs fiscal analyses, and conducts audits. The Auditor is elected at large to a four year term.

Superior Court Judges

Dates shown are the expiration date of the officials' present term.

Department One:

Roger A. Bennett 12/31/12

Department Two:

John P. Wulle..... 12/31/12

Department Three:

John F. Nichols 12/31/12

Department Four:

Edwin L. Poyfair..... 12/31/12

Department Five:

Robert L. Harris 12/31/12

Department Six:

Barbara D. Johnson..... 12/31/12

Department Seven:

James E. Rulli 12/31/12

Department Eight:

Diane M. Woolard 12/31/12

Department Nine:

Robert A. Lewis..... 12/31/12

Department Ten:

Scott A. Collier 12/31/12

District Court Judges

Dates shown represent the expiration date of the officials' present term.

District One:

Vernon L. Schreiber..... 12/31/10

District Two:

James Swanger..... 12/31/10

District Three:

Darvin J. Zimmerman 12/31/10

District Four:

Kenneth R. Eiesland..... 12/31/10

District Five:

Richard A. Melnick..... 12/31/10

District Six

John P. Hagensen..... 12/31/10

Prosecutor - The Prosecuting Attorney is responsible for the prosecution of all crimes and violations of County ordinances. The Prosecutor also acts as legal counsel to the County and other local government entities. In addition, the victim/witness assistance program, adult diversion program, and the child support enforcement program are under the supervision of the Prosecutor. The State of Washington reimburses the County for one-half of the Prosecutor's salary. The Prosecutor is elected at large to a four year term.

Sheriff - The Sheriff is responsible for the provision of police services in the unincorporated portion of the county, including patrol, criminal investigation, and emergency response. In addition, the Sheriff administers the regional County Jail. The Sheriff is elected at large to a four year term.

District Court Judges - District Court is the trial court for ordinance infractions, misdemeanors, and civil cases involving amounts up to \$50,000. The District Court also has jurisdiction over the Community-Based Corrections Program. Clark County has six District Court Judges who are elected at large to four year terms.

Superior Court Judges - Superior Court is the trial court for felonies and for civil cases involving amounts over \$50,000. Superior Court also has jurisdiction over divorce, probate, juvenile, competency and domestic cases. Superior Court Judges are considered to be partially employed by the State of Washington, so the State pays one-half of their salaries and all of their benefits. Clark County has ten Superior Court Judges who are elected at large to four year terms.

Clerk - The County Clerk is responsible for maintaining the permanent records of the Superior Court, including all legal filings and records of all court proceedings. The Clerk is also responsible for receipting all monies received by the Superior Court. The Clerk is elected at large to a four year term.



CLARK COUNTY ORGANIZATION CHART

VOTERS OF CLARK COUNTY

