



Clark County Commission on Aging  
1300 Franklin Street, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Vancouver, Washington

## MEETING NOTES

Monday, October 22, 2018  
4:30 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

**Members Present:** Marian Anderson, Ali Caley, Chuck Green, Amy Gross, Marjorie Ledell, Temple Lentz, Linda O’Leary, Larry Smith

**Members Absent:** Donna Roberge

### 1. Welcome and Call to Order

Temple Lentz opened the meeting.

### Approval of Agenda

The agenda was approved unanimously by the commission.

### Approval of September 18, 2018 Meeting Minutes

The August 21, 2018 meeting minutes were unanimously approved by the commission .

### 2. Presentation: Planning for our Transportation and Mobility Needs

Finding effective ways to meet the transportation needs of the increasing numbers of older residents will be critical for our local governments. Learn more about what goes into planning for all modes of transportation and how we can improve the mobility options for seniors who want to remain independent as long as possible.

Matt Hermen, a transportation planner with Clark County, will describe how multiple modes of transportation; biking, walking, vehicles and buses; are planned for locally to meet the needs for present and future populations. He will also discuss the county’s transportation successes and challenges.

Growth can be good and/or bad, depending on how it is done. It can mean more services and amenities are available. It can also lead to sprawl, traffic congestion, and blight.

Current Clark County Comprehensive Plan figures:

- 2035 Population: 577,431
- 2015-2035 Population Increase: 128,586
- Persons per Household: 2.66
- 2035 Employment Forecast: 232,500
- 2015-2035 Job Increase: 101,153

Population and trends



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- There were roughly 225,000 people in the county in 1990
- By 2016, the population has roughly doubled
- The county population trend is expected to continue upward over the next 20 years

#### Age and sex distribution

- 1990: the majority of population is between the ages of 30 and 45. This age range tends to be associated with families and several people living together in a house. You can see a larger portion of the population also under the age of 15.
- 2010: you can see the large population groups are aging
- 2016: you can see two major population groups, those around 50-60 and those around 30. Older age groups tend to have fewer people living under one roof.

#### Mode of transportation to work

- Transportation modes in the county have not changed much in 20 years
- Driving alone continues to be the primary transportation mode (over 80% in 2016)

#### Travel time to work

- Travel times for those commuting to work have increased from 2010 to 2016
- This could either be from increased traffic, or people choosing to live further away from their workplace

#### How does Clark County grow?

- Clark County includes the cities of Vancouver, Camas, Washougal, Battle Ground, Ridgefield, La Center and a small portion of Woodland. The Town of Yacolt is also in the county. Unincorporated Clark County makes up the areas outside of the cities and town.
- Each city has a designated urban growth area, which delineates where each city plans to grow in the next 20 years

#### Vancouver Urban Growth Area (UGA)

- The Vancouver UGA is the largest in the county
- In 2010, the City of Vancouver had a population of 183,500 people and was the 4<sup>th</sup> largest city in the state of Washington
- In 2010, unincorporated Clark County population within the Vancouver urban growth area had a population of 138,741. If this area was a city, it would have been the 5<sup>th</sup> largest city in the state of Washington

#### Land use and transportation cycle

- Land is developed
- Increased traffic
- Deterioration of service
- Public calls for improvements
- Arterial improvements
- Increased accessibility
- Increased land availability
- Land use change
- The cycle then continues back to land is developed, etc. Each of these elements are discussed in more detail below.

#### Land is developed

- Historic urban development, example: downtown Vancouver in 1852
  - Designed for pedestrians
  - Streets are in a grid and there is uniform street width
  - If this grid were built today, it would be high cost because of the amount of right-of-way (street) infrastructure
  - You can still see the grid today in downtown Vancouver

- While some blocks have merged, it has been adaptable to accommodate change over time and seems like it will work well to connect the downtown area to the city's new waterfront redevelopment.
- Suburban residential development, example: Truman Neighborhood subdivision in 1968
  - The grid pattern still exists, but the location of the development is further from the city's downtown area and core services
  - The subdivision is designed for the automobile. The public right of way is only designed to serve cars and there are no sidewalks, as they are not required
  - By 1974, we can see the houses in this subdivision have been built
  - We can also see that Truman Elementary school has been built, after the residential development, but there are no sidewalks for the students to walk on from home to school
  - In 2016, we can see that there are still no sidewalks on the local streets, but there is now a sidewalk on 44<sup>th</sup> street, where federal funding was used to purchase right of way on land to accommodate a sidewalk between the neighborhood and the school
  - Retrofitting this neighborhood with sidewalks would be expensive and require right of way acquirement or removal of on-street parking
- Why are growth patterns different?
  - Consumer preference
  - Federally subsidized mortgage loans
  - Large-scale production building
  - Interstate highway system
- Suburban development, example: subdivision near Salmon Creek in 1989
  - The grid network has been replaced by cul-de-sacs
  - Cul-de-sacs help maximize land for residential development
  - In 1994, we can see the subdivision was built and there are sidewalks on both sides of the street, as that is now a requirement. There are also no services in the immediate area
  - In 2016 we can see that Chinook Elementary School has been built. Initially kids living in this neighborhood took the bus to school because their school was further away
  - Today, kids in this neighborhood live within 1-mile of the school and school buses do not serve the development. This means kids typically walk or are driven to school
  - Due to the cul-de-sac design of the neighborhood, kids need to take a serpentine route to get to school

#### Increased traffic

- Capacities of Clark County Streets - capacity is the total amount of volume of vehicles that streets are designed to accommodate. Our larger roads have the largest capacity.
- Traffic volumes in Clark County – traffic volumes can be measured in the PM peak/rush hour. I-205 north and southbound have the heaviest traffic volumes in the county during rush hour.

#### Deterioration of service

- As traffic increases, service deteriorates
- Service deterioration can be measured through a volume-to-capacity ratio. When a street has volumes at 90% of what it can accommodate, we consider those streets to be failing. The county forecasts volume-to-capacity ratios out into the future, to assist with planning.

#### Public calls for improvements

- Public calls for improvements could be street widening, new streets, operational corrections, etc.

- The county has a 20-year transportation financial forecast as part of the comprehensive plan. The largest portion of the costs are for maintenance of existing infrastructure.
- The 20-year transportation financial forecast shows a \$158,000,000 deficit where costs outweigh expected revenue.

#### Arterial improvements

- Project prioritization - transportation improvements are prioritized based on the following criteria, in which are listed in order of highest weight, with safety being the most important criteria. The county council approves transportation improvements each year within the 6-year Transportation Improvement Program and the Annual Construction Program.
  - Safety
  - Future need
  - Congestion relief
  - Multimodal
  - Route connectivity
  - Public and outside agency support
  - Economic development
  - Leverage of non-county funding
  - Environmental impacts
- Road improvement example: NE 119<sup>th</sup> St was initially built as a rural road. A  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile stretch was recently improved to meet urban road standards. Cost of project: \$23.5 million.

#### Increased accessibility

- Once road expansion occurs, it provides easier vehicular access to urban development
- Access to transit
  - We can analyze the catchment area around public transit stops to forecast potential users of the transit system. A  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile catchment area is used to forecast potential users of the system. Bus riders tend to drop off outside of that  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile.
  - When analyzing the  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile area, there's a difference if we look at a circle with a  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile circumference around each bus stop and measuring feasible walking routes within  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile of the transit stop. A neighborhood with a well-connected grid pattern provides accessibility to more homes than a less-connected suburban neighborhood. In some suburban neighborhoods within the county, homes may be very close to a bus stop, but it would take more than  $\frac{1}{4}$  mi to walk to the stop due to the location of roads and sidewalks.
  - Pedestrian easements can be used to connect a cul-de-sac to a bus stop.
    - Clark County Code requires this connection if there is an existing bus stop at the time the developer submits an application.
    - However, many neighborhoods are designed before transit is available in the area and developers are not required to make connections if a bus stop isn't already there.
  - Recommendation - Cul-de-sacs within a certain distance to collector and arterial streets should be required to provide pedestrian easements to the street, whether or not a bus stop is already located along that street. Because services are located after residential neighborhoods are built, this would provide more direct access to those services for pedestrians.
- Street classification -
  - There are four primary street classifications in the county:
    - Collector - 30 MPH speeds
    - Minor arterial - 35 MPH
    - Principal arterial - 45 MPH
    - Rural major collector - no bike lanes, no sidewalks, no shoulder

- o Many services in the county, such as grocery stores and hospitals, are located along arterial streets, which are the largest streets under county jurisdiction. Even though many of these streets were primarily built for automobiles, the services on the streets need to be accessible to everyone no matter what mode of transportation they use.
- Sidewalk design requirements

Street Classification	Sidewalk Width Required	Total Sidewalk Width	Roadway Width Required
Local	5 ft	10 ft	26-36 ft
Collector	6 ft*	12 ft	34-46 ft
Commercial/ Industrial	6-8 ft*	12-16 ft	40-42 ft
Arterial	6 ft*	12 ft	48-80 Feet
* May be reduced when detached			

- o Clark County Code – sidewalks are required to be provided on both sides of all public streets in urban areas and within rural centers
- o State law
  - Sidewalks shall be 5-ft wide, unobstructed, with vertical or horizontal separation, ADA compliant and included on both sides of the street unless otherwise stated in the grant.
  - Washington Transportation Improvement Board provides funds that may not be used for excessive design, mitigation beyond federal or state requirements, or other unusual project features. (WAC 479-05-131)
  - In the table above, note that as roadway width increases and road speeds increase, sidewalk width does not. Jurisdictions in Washington that want to build sidewalks larger than the state TIB funds allow. Clark County would need to come up with additional funding sources to fund those projects.
- o Attached v detached sidewalks
  - Attached: sidewalk is next to street
  - Detached: sidewalk has grass strip between road and sidewalk, providing a bigger buffer from the car traffic
- o The county has a sidewalk program which currently has an annual budget of \$200,000. Sidewalk projects are ranked using the following criteria, with more weight given to items at the top of the list.
  - Safety and comfort
  - Destination access
  - Health outcomes/quality of life/ADA
  - Implementation
- What is Clark County doing to change this cycle?
  - o ADA accessible crosswalk buttons are being installed at intersections.
  - o Pedestrian detection technology is being implemented. For instance, there is a new pedestrian refuge on Hwy 99 which uses an infrared signal to stop traffic. It is designed to help with safer street crossing.

- Complete streets. The county is working on amending its comprehensive plan policies to incorporate transportation for all modes of transportation.
- Strategies to improve mobility for seniors
  - Pedestrian connection requirements, as described above in the cul-de-sac connection recommendation.
  - Green Streets Program – this is a stormwater program where vegetated stormwater infrastructure is built between the roadway and sidewalk, and is a way to build buffers between auto traffic and pedestrians encouraging a safer environment for walkers.
  - Change in zoning/development codes to help improve connectivity and accessibility in future development.
  - Neighborhood level planning could be used more frequently in the county, to identify and address mobility challenges.

#### Questions and comments from COA members with speaker's responses:

- **Comment:** Do we require sidewalks for new residential development in the county? **Response:** Yes, sidewalks are required on both sides of the street. They are allowed to be either detached or attached. If detached, sidewalk width can be more narrow. **Comment:** are gutters and curbs also required? **Response:** Yes, they are both required.
- **Comment:** are there street lighting requirements in the county? **Response:** there are not street light requirements in the county, but there are in the city. The county provides some street lights for safety. **Comment:** are there designated areas for animal crossings? **Response:** there are for salmon, but not for residential pets or deer.
- **Comment:** in one of your slides you showed travel time to work data. I was curious on the source for that graph? **Response:** The 2010 data is from the 2010 US Census. The 2016 data is from the American Community Survey. The data is for Clark County residents, no matter where they are working. **Comment:** 2010 was near the start of the recession and there was a reduction in I-5 traffic at that time. How much increase from 2010-2016 is due to coming out of the recession versus growth? **Response:** Higher unemployment in 2010 is a factor. But we did also look at 2000 data, and growth is a big part in the increase.
- **Comment:** where is NE 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue and what do you call the side of the road in that example? **Response:** That section of road is north of Whipple Creek. The white line to the edge of the street is a shoulder. You could ride a bike in it, but it is not technically a bike lane. **Comment:** in regards to the push buttons at street crossings, is there a standard number of seconds that someone has to cross a street and does it take into account disabled or elderly people? **Response:** We have a standard for the timing of the walk and flash to walk you see on the signal, but there is no hard and fast standard. We base walk time on 5 and 10 seconds. The flashing "don't walk" crossings use a 3 ft per second assumption. We're a bit more conservative with our time assumptions than some other jurisdictions, but we time the pedestrians crossing by balancing mobility for automobiles. **Comment:** is there research on time needed for someone who is disabled to cross the street? **Response:** federal law recommends 4 ft per second and if you have people with additional needs to use 3 ft/second. We use the 3 ft/second because you could have someone who needs that time. **Question:** is there any history of accidents occurring at that crossing rate? **Response:** it can cause more traffic at the intersection because of the increased car wait-time. We put safety first, but there is always a balance between safety and mobility.
- **Comment:** are cul-de-sac easements required? **Response:** only if there is a bus stop already nearby. **Comment:** to clarify, your recommendation is to have easements whether or not a bus stop is there yet? **Response:** correct.

- **Comment:** what role do accidents play in this? **Response:** when we evaluate safety concerns, it's based on historic collision accident rate. When we look at areas where bikers may be involved in a rural area, if we see a trend, we try to alleviate the problem either through signage or improvement to the striping.
- **Comment:** have there been changes in terms of sign or sign lettering size? **Response:** yes, road signs are going through a change now. Residential street signs are yellow now and are changing to black and white and are more reflective. There has been a font change in the federal standards, so that is being implemented as well.
- **Comment:** thank you for 119<sup>th</sup> street improvement.
- **Comment:** can you clarify your suggestion regarding requiring new developments to connect to bus stops, whether or not the bus stop has been built yet. **Response:** my recommendation is that if development is located along a collector or arterial street, it should be required to build the connection even if the bus stop doesn't exist yet. **Comment:** could the county address your recommendation? **Response:** Yes, we could coordinate with CTRAN on a code update.

#### Questions and comments from the audience with speaker's responses:

- **Comment:** is 68<sup>th</sup> street is a collector or arterial? **Response:** I think it's a collector. **Comment:** I'm an advocate. I wanted to make sure the public is involved before the plan is made. A lot of money could be saved if we work together with the city and county, to help funding for sidewalks. **Response:** the challenge was when the subdivision was originally built. **Comment:** how did the county decide to lower the speed limit? How is the county going to increase walkability? And the flashing signs, do they work? **Response:** speeds are adjusted through public works who conduct a survey of car travel speeds. The flashing lights and signs work initially, and then motorists get used to it and they have less of an effect. **Comment:** Walkability is really lacking in the Hazel Dell area, we really need to connect some of those trails. If we could work together and plan connectivity and easements, that would be good. **Response:** I agree.

#### 3. New Business, Updates and Announcements:

- Nov 13 – the next COA transportation speaker will be Becky Steckler, with Urbanism Next, University of Oregon, who will talk about transportation of the future.

#### 4. Public Comment

- Derek Heugel with Wolf Industries. [Provided handout to COA members of one of his company's home models.] Marjorie stopped by my shop and invited me to attend tonight. My primary clients are seniors and I am available to answer any questions you may have about what we do. **Question from COA:** are you regional? **Response:** yes. **Question from COA:** regarding model C, which you show on the flyer, is it ADA accessible? **Response:** yes, our homes meet ADA standards. **Question from COA:** I am on the Community Roots stakeholder group. Do these comply with City of Vancouver standards for tiny house? **Response:** yes, they are small, modular structures built to the state housing code and have a gold label. On site, they only need to be inspected for connection. They can be built on a concrete slab but do not have to be. **Question from COA:** can you build homes without stairs? **Response:** yes. Also, Clark County has a great option with a hardship. **Question from COA:** If we wanted to see some examples of these models, how could we see them? **Response:** You can stop by our shop and I can give you locations to check out. **Question from COA:** are there ranges in size? **Response:** Yes, we have three models: 10x30 and 10x40 and 14x44. The big one is 2-bedroom, the others are 1-bedroom.

**5. Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 5:30 pm.

***The Clark County Commission on Aging provides leadership and creates community engagement in addressing the needs and opportunities of aging.***

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