

Notes
Commission Urban Areas Tour West
October 28, 2008

- Tour objectives:**
- Provide Commissioners with overview of character of existing urban areas and nature of surrounding lands.
 - Orient Commissioners to landmarks and boundary locations of urban areas.
 - Identify opportunities and constraints of urban areas to accommodate future growth.

9:30 – 9:50 a.m. **Overview of Hood River Urban Area** w/Kevin Liburdy, Senior Planner, City of Hood River; and Anne Debbaut, Senior Planner, Hood River County
Location: North end of parking lot, Westside Elementary School, 3685 Belmont Drive
Notes: Kevin Liburdy and Anne Debbaut gave an overview of the Hood River urban area. Kevin said the city expects most future growth to occur on the west side of the city, the east side is mostly built out. The city has not done a buildable lands inventory and plans to do so in the next year. Affordable housing is an important issue in Hood River; the city has some information about existing short-term vacation rentals – there are approximately 150 in the city; development activity has dropped off since 2007 with some development approvals expiring; the sewer treatment plant has excess capacity; lack of north/south transportation routes are a constraint to development on the west side; the city is seeking grant funding for 3 additional traffic lights and is working with ODOT to make some improvements. The County just conducted a coordinated population forecast and adopted a 2% growth rate for the cities of Cascade Locks & Hood River and a 1.28% growth rate for the unincorporated areas. The County’s comp plan is dated 1984 with some sections updated since then.

10:30 – 10:50 a.m. **Overview of Cascade Locks Urban Area** with City Administrator Bernard Seeger
Location: Cascade Locks City Hall, 140 SE Wa-Na-Pa Street
Notes: Bernard Seeger & Chuck Daughtry, Director of Port of Cascade Locks, provided an overview of Cascade Locks. There are 120 acres of undeveloped industrial land that will drive future growth. The railroad tracks bisect the industrial land which is a constraint to development. The population forecast done with the County does not take into account the possible casino development. The City is working on a land trade on the west side involving land near the Pacific Crest Trail to accommodate some future development. Mr. Daughtry estimated a need for the population to hit approximately 3,000 in order to have the critical mass necessary to support key services in the community and anticipates that can happen within existing boundaries. The Port received a \$100,000 grant to expand/improve some riverfront beach to accommodate more sailing. Approximately 30 acres of industrial land on the east side is owned by the Warm Springs tribe (not trust land) but does not have interstate access. It was a former quarry & the city/port would like to see it become a marina in the future, but it is dependent, in part, on interstate access.

Most residents travel east to Hood River or west to Troutdale for services, not typically to Stevenson. The City is conducting a feasibility study to create a mountain bike trail network south of the urban area that could ultimately connect to the Wyeth bench. The City owns its power utility which serves an area beyond the city; grants or other support for undergrounding these lines are appreciated.

11:10 – 11:30 a.m. **Overview of North Bonneville Urban Area** w/Tom Jermann, Planning Advisor
Location: North Bonneville City Hall, 214 CBD Mall (off Cascade Drive)
Notes: Tom Jermann provided some history and an overview of North Bonneville. He said the top issue is livability and keeping large lot residential development. The population is currently 877 and they estimate it will be 2,500 at build out. The biggest challenge is for the city to stay viable. A lot of land in city limits/urban area is federally owned. Mr. Jermann thinks there's potential to improve links between North Bonneville and trail systems on federal land to the north. The city grew approximately 52% in last 7 years and now is planning under the Growth Management Act. Population growth includes migration from Vancouver & Portland Metro area. Population includes a lot of retirees. Undeveloped Port land along Hwy. 14 would need improved access from Hwy. 14 if developed.

12:00 – 12:20 p.m. **Overview of Stevenson Urban Area** & Brown Bag Lunch Stop w/ Ben Shumaker, Planner, City of Stevenson
Location: Rock Creek Recreation Center, 710 SW Rock Creek Drive
Notes: Ben Shumaker gave an overview of the Stevenson urban area. He described a large residential development that was under construction and has stopped. Another large residential development on the east side of town is under construction. It had neighbor opposition due in part to the increased density. The downtown core was redeveloped with street lights, sidewalks and underground fiber optic cable in early 2000s. Scenic Area grants helped fund that project. The current population is about 1,440. No recent forecast has been done. Water is not a constraint to development in Stevenson. He did note some areas of active landslides that will constrain development.

1:15 – 1:35 p.m. **Overview of Carson Urban Area** w/Karen Witherspoon, Skamania County Community Development Director
Location: Skamania County Public Utility District No. 1 (1492 Wind River Hwy. – entrance on west side of building)
Notes: Karen Witherspoon gave an overview of Carson. Peggy Bryan, Skamania County Economic Development Council, also was there and provided some information. Carson is the largest urban area in Skamania County – both in size and in population. It has a recent growth rate of about 3.9%. Most of Carson is privately owned. A zoning update is underway. Water is provided by Skamania PUD. Water supply is adequate now, but will need updates for buildout. The PUD also provides power county-wide. There is no sewer service. WKO mill employs approximately 110 people. Tourism also supports the area (fishing, hunting, snowmobiling, hiking, etc.). Economic development potential includes capturing tourist traffic headed in/out of the Gifford Pinchot National Forest. Carson, North Bonneville & Stevenson are in

one school district. Carson has an elementary school and a middle school. The high school is in Stevenson.

2:00 – 2:20 p.m.

Overview of Home Valley Urban Area w/ Karen Witherspoon, Skamania County Community Development Director

Location: Home Valley Park (south side of Hwy. 14)

Notes: Karen Witherspoon provided an overview. Peggy Bryan, Skamania County Economic Development Council also provided some information. Home Valley is the smallest urban area in Skamania County – approximately 555 acres, 147 parcels, and 350 people. The zoning is being updated including changing some 20 acre zoning to R-1 (1/2 – 2 acre). Home Valley has its own water system (which received 2 NSA loans). High Cascade Veneer (under same ownership as WKO in Carson) employs 12 people. Home Valley Park is outside the urban area – it's in the GMA, owned by USACE and managed by Skamania County.