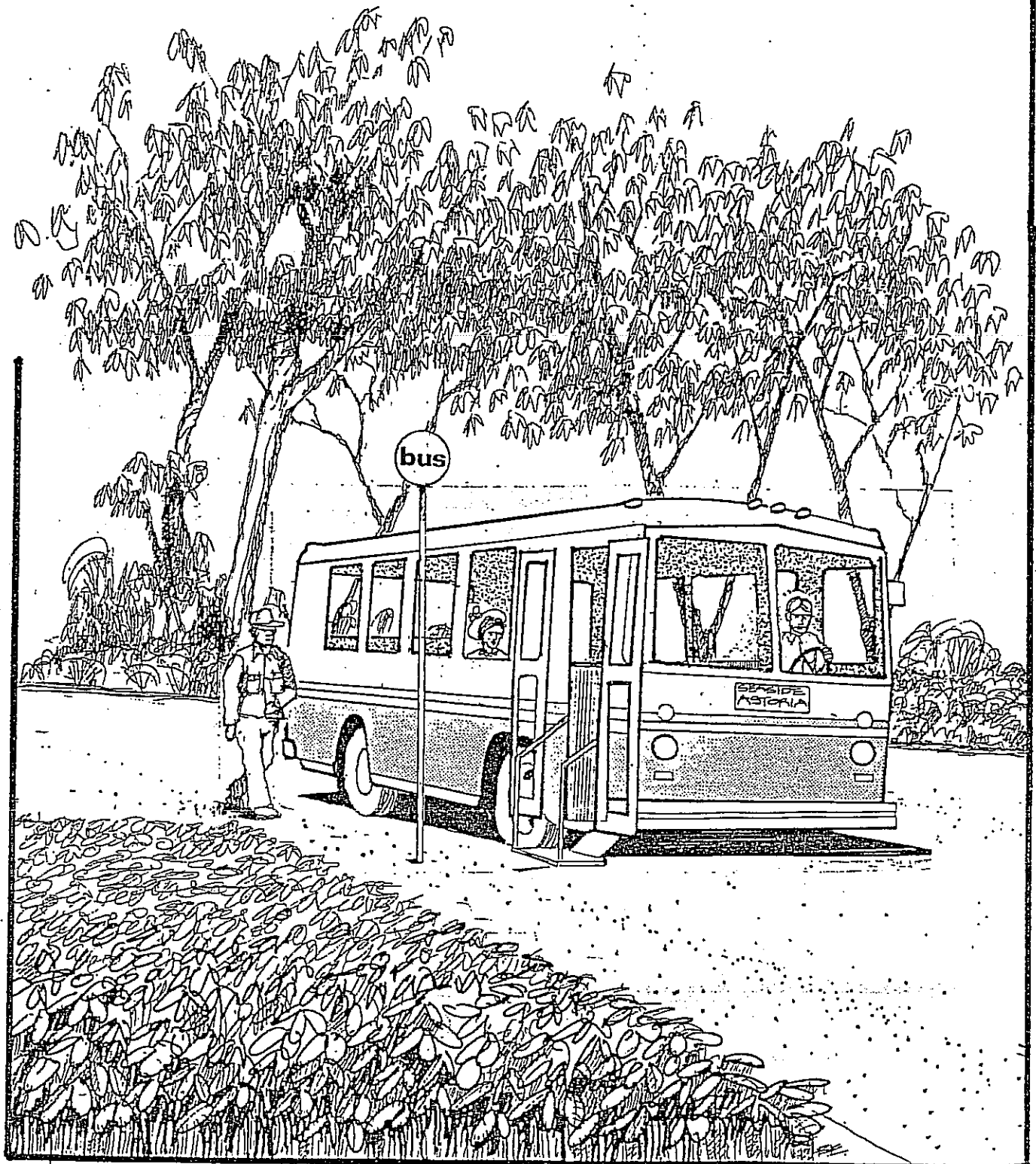


Goal 12

CLATSOP COUNTY
GOAL 12
COUNTY-WIDE ELEMENT

TRANSPORTATION



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GOAL 12 TRANSPORTATION

Adopted July 23, 1980 by
Clatsop County Board of Commissioners
Amended by Ordinance 94-02, 93-06, 93-14 and replaced by Ordinance 03-09

Introduction

Clatsop County is served by a full range of transportation systems: highway, rail, water and air. All of these systems have been heavily influenced by the natural features of the land and water; the single most important factor being the Columbia River. The river was the means of access for the earliest settlers, and has continued to be the major access route for the County from the Pacific Ocean inland to the Willamette Valley and beyond. The railroad follows along the south bank of the river in the County. The busiest access road on a year-round basis is the Columbia River highway. Ocean shipping and inland barge traffic follow the river and finally the major airport is located on the estuarine flats at the mouth of the river.

The interrelated nature of transportation and land use planning determines the form which development assumes. Housing and employment projects never locate where there will not be roads and roads are never planned unless they will link land use activities. Transportation systems are considered one of the primary leaders in development.

Basic Findings

Air Transportation

There are three airports in Clatsop County: Clatsop County Airport near Youngs Bay, Seaside Airport near Seaside, and Karpen Airport near Svensen. Clatsop County Airport is located on 870 acres in Warrenton approximately three miles southwest of Astoria. The airfield consists of three intersecting runways. The predominant activities of Clatsop County Airport are general aviation and the U.S. Coast Guard.

The Airport Master Plan is being developed by the Port of Astoria. Part of the study is the possibility of installing an Instrument Landing System to allow use by U.S. Coast Guard Falcon jets. Regulations and standards of the Federal Aviation Administration may require moving one section of dike to create a sufficient clear zone. The area to the southeast of Clatsop County Airport is within Warrenton's Urban Growth Boundary. For this and other areas the City has developed zones to protect the approaches to the airport.

The Seaside Airport, operated by the State of Oregon, is a general aviation airport which has low usage consisting mostly of single engine aircraft. The Aeronautics Division of Oregon Department of Transportation has been concerned with existing and proposed development around the end of the airport runways. The airport and surrounding area to the south is in Seaside's Urban Growth Boundary, while the area north of the airport is in the City

of Gearhart. Each of the cities has made provisions within their plan and zones to protect those areas in front of the runways.

The Karpen Airstrip is a private turf airfield used by the property owners along the field. The field has very low usage consisting of single engine aircraft. Land use round the airstrip is predominantly low density residential.

Rail Transportation

Clatsop County is served by the Burlington Northern Railroad. Until 1970, service was provided by the Spokane, Portland and Seattle Railroad which was combined with several other railroads to form Burlington Northern Railroad. There is approximately 50 miles of single track located along the Columbia River from Westport to Astoria with branches going to Hammond and Warrenton and Camp Rilea. Burlington Northern shipped five times as many carloads to Astoria as it brought out in 1974. Present demand does not warrant any additional lines. Future expansion of railroad service will depend to a large extent on regional and national policies concerning import and export of goods and resources. Existing tracks could carry much larger quantities of freight.

Water Transportation

Water transportation activities are dominated by the Columbia River which forms the north border of Clatsop County. The Columbia River ship channel handles all classes of waterborne commerce including dry cargo ships and tankers up to 50,000 tons, barges, log rafts, commercial fishing vessels and pleasure craft. The Skipanon Waterway is used primarily for log rafts, commercial fishing vessels and pleasure craft. The Youngs River is used extensively for log rafts. In addition, many of the sloughs and channels of the Columbia River are used for log raft transportation and storage.

The Port of Astoria district encompasses all of Clatsop County. Port facilities are located in the City of Astoria on the Columbia River adjacent to the main ship channel 10 miles upstream from the river mouth.

The State of Oregon Land Board is in the process of obtaining the land at Tongue Point and will be cooperating with the Port of Astoria to establish new port facilities for potential uses such as, log exports, container cargo and possible coal export. The State Land Board has been negotiating for several months with the General Services Administration which declared the property surplus to the needs of the Tongue Point Job Corps Center.

Land Transportation

Highways cover less than 1% of the land area of Clatsop County, but provide year-round access to all developed areas. The federal aid highway system in Clatsop County consists of approximately 242 miles of roads. In addition, there are over 400 miles of county roads, state park roads, city streets and other public roads.

There are three major roads which form the basic framework of the highway network and account for 80-90% of total vehicle miles traveled each year. U.S. 30 runs east-west along the Columbia River between the county line near Westport and the City of Astoria. This road provides the major connection between the Astoria area and the manufacturing towns of the lower Columbia River and Portland. U.S. 101 runs north-south along the Pacific Coast between the Columbia River Bridge at Astoria and the Tillamook County line near Arch Cape. The road provides the main connection between the two population centers of Astoria and Seaside, as well as access north into southwestern Washington and south along the coast to Tillamook County and beyond. The third major road is the Sunset Highway, U.S. 26, which runs east-west through the southern portion of the County between Cannon Beach Junction near Seaside on the coast, and the County line near Sunset Springs at the southeast corner of the County. This road provides a connection between the resort communities on the Clatsop coast and the population center at Portland.

Other principal roads include state route 53 which runs from Necanicum Junction, 13 miles east of Seaside on the Sunset Highway, south into Tillamook County; and state route 202 which runs from Astoria in a south-east direction across the central part of the county to the Nehalem River Valley and on into Columbia County. Other roads on the federal aid system totalling 94.99 miles provide local access primarily in the northwest and northern areas of the County.

High gasoline prices have cut down traffic on most Oregon highways, but not on the north coast. In 1979, Highway 101 at Gearhart was one of the few major state routes with more traffic than in 1978. Overall traffic in Oregon was down 4.1 percent in May 1979 as compared with May 1978. But at Gearhart, traffic increased by 1.5 percent during the period, to an average daily traffic volume of 7,700 vehicles in 1979. Highway 101 across the Clatsop Plains ranked seventh in terms of increased traffic in Oregon. Many of the cars and trucks that traveled Highway 101 in Clatsop County were tourists, but there apparently was an increase in local traffic as well.

Minimizing access is a major concern of the State Highway Department. However, authority must come from the local

jurisdiction to establish criteria or policies to reduce the number of accesses.

Driveway access to arterial streets is of primary concern. The long-term effects of poor access management are erosion of roadway capacity and high accident frequency. For example, there are approximately 170 different access points along U.S. 101 between the cities of Warrenton and Gearhart. If the number of new access points for commercial and residential development are allowed to continue, this will create additional congestion on an already congested highway.

As is the case with most other counties, one of the major problems confronting Clatsop County is providing enough funding to maintain the roads within the unincorporated County. The County road system has 216 different roads, consisting of 270 miles of road, of which 246 are maintained.

Seventy percent of all County roads are oil mat due to the large amount of expansion and contraction of soils in the County. As of 1980, none of the County roads exceed their design capacity.

Clatsop County is served by four trucking firms: City Transfer, Nehalem Valley Motor Freight, Oregon-Nevada-California (ONC) Freight, and United Parcel Service. The major ICC carrier service in the Astoria area is Nehalem Valley Motor Freight, Inc. Ninety-five (95) percent of their movements are along Highway 30. The time involved traveling this road from Portland to Astoria, plus a lopsided haul/backhaul ratio, limits the amount of goods traffic.

Bus passenger service is provided by Greyhound Bus Company from Portland to Astoria. In the past, the ridership has been low which has resulted in a reduction in service from four schedules to the present three runs a day.

Transportation has long been a problem for the elderly and handicapped in this County. The Area Agency on Aging provides mini-van service for the elderly in the County. Currently, the one mini-van in use carries an average of 800 people a month. They have a second van but lack of funds for a driver. Each area in the County gets service at least once a week except in the Jewell area which is on a call basis.

Escort services for clients of the Public Welfare Division, the Children Services Division and the Area Agency on Aging are provided in Clatsop County by volunteers. Transportation for the developmentally disabled adults is provided from Seaside, Gearhart, Clatsop Plains, Hammond, Warrenton and Astoria to the Clatsop County Developmental Training Center. The fixed daily route serves approximately 14 people doing about 22 days per month.

Goal 12 - Transportation

Goals and Objectives

The formulation of goals and objectives represent an important component of the Transportation System Planning (TSP) process. Goals and objectives are intended to reflect the vision and character of Clatsop County as the community develops its transportation system. The goals and objectives also are intended to implement and support the other elements of the Clatsop County Comprehensive Plan.

The Clatsop County TSP goals and objectives serve two main purposes: (1) to guide the development of the Clatsop County transportation system during the next 20 years; and (2) to demonstrate how the TSP relates to other County, regional, and State plans and policies. The goal statements are general statements of purpose to describe how the County and the TSP intend to address the broad elements of the transportation system. The objectives are specific steps that illustrate how the goal is to be carried out.

The goals and objectives were formed as part of the Clatsop County TSP planning process. They reflect the input of residents, businesses, and agencies that was obtained during the course of preparing the TSP. They also reflect current local, regional, and State goals and policies, and are intended to support these policies. Transportation-related goals and objectives in Clatsop County's Comprehensive Plan have been incorporated into the TSP goals and objectives.

Goal 1: Mobility

Develop a multimodal transportation system that serves the travel needs of Clatsop County residents, businesses, visitors, and freight transport.

Objectives:

1. Provide a network of arterials and collectors that are interconnected, appropriately spaced, and reasonably direct.
2. Balance the simultaneous needs to accommodate local traffic and through-travel.
3. Minimize travel distances and vehicle-miles traveled.
4. Safely, efficiently, and economically move motor vehicles, pedestrians, bicyclists, transit, trucks, and trains to and through the County.
5. Use appropriate, adopted Clatsop County road standards during development of new roadways.
6. Encourage development patterns that offer connectivity and mobility options for members of the community.
7. Work to enhance the connection of the Port of Astoria and the Warrenton Harbor to the surrounding communities.
8. Coordinate with rail and shipping entities to promote intermodal linkages for passengers and goods.

9. Recognize and balance freight needs with needs for local circulation, safety, and access.
10. Provide an interconnected system of roads, pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and other forms of transportation that will link communities.
11. Promote intercity connectivity between major population areas, including linkages to the Portland metropolitan area.

Goal 2: Livability

Provide a transportation system that balances transportation system needs with the desire to maintain pleasant, economically viable communities.

Objectives:

1. Minimize adverse social, economic, and environmental impacts created by the transportation system, including balancing the need for road connectivity and the need to minimize neighborhood cut-through traffic.
2. Preserve and protect the County's significant natural features and historic sites.
3. Promote a transportation system that is adequate to handle the truck, transit, and automobile traffic in such a way to encourage successful implementation of County economic goals and the preservation of existing residential neighborhoods.
4. Work with local and State governments to develop alternate transportation facilities that will allow development without major disruption of existing neighborhoods or downtown areas.

Goal 3: Coordination

Maintain a transportation system plan that is consistent with the goals and objectives of local communities, the County, and the State.

Objectives:

1. Coordinate transportation planning and implementing actions with state agencies, local governments, special districts and providers of transportation services.
2. Provide a County transportation system that is consistent with other elements and objectives of the Clatsop County Comprehensive Plan.
3. Provide a County transportation system that coordinates with other local transportation system plans and rural community plans.
4. Coordinate land use and transportation decisions to efficiently use public infrastructure investments to:
 - a. Maintain the mobility and safety of the roadway system
 - b. Foster compact development patterns in incorporated and rural communities
 - c. Encourage the availability and use of transportation alternatives
 - d. Enhance livability and economic competitiveness
5. Cooperate with local jurisdictions and rural communities in establishing and maintaining zoning standards that will prevent the development of incompatible or hazardous uses around airports.

6. Work to protect airspace corridors and airport approaches.

Goal 4: Public Transportation

Work to improve cost-effective and safe public transportation throughout Clatsop County.

Objectives:

1. Coordinate with the Sunset Empire Transportation District (SETD) to encourage commuter bus service to serve communities throughout Clatsop County.
2. Encourage a carpooling program for County employees and others to increase vehicle occupancy and minimize energy consumption.
3. Work with SETD to develop transit systems and stations and related facilities in convenient and appropriate locations that adequately and efficiently serve resident and employee needs.
4. Work to improve the signage and amenities at transit stops and stations.

Goal 5: Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities

Provide for an interconnected system of pedestrian and bicycle facilities throughout Clatsop County to serve commuters and recreational users.

Objectives:

1. Coordinate with the goals and objectives and recommended improvements set forth in the Clatsop County Bicycle Master Plan.
2. Use unused rights-of-way for greenbelts, walking trails, or bike paths where appropriate.
3. Develop and periodically update inventory information on existing bicycle routes and support facilities.
4. Promote multimodal connections where appropriate.
5. Promote increased bicycle awareness and support safety education and enforcement programs.
6. Develop safe and convenient pedestrian and bicycle systems that link all land uses, provide connections to transit facilities, and provide access to publicly owned land intended for general public use, such as the beach.
7. Promote development standards that support pedestrian and bicycle access to commercial and industrial development, including, but not limited to, direct pathway connections, bicycle racks and lockers, and signage where appropriate.
8. Protect and expand public access via pedestrian ways, bikeways, and trails for recreational purposes.

Goal 6: Accessibility

Provide a transportation system that serves the needs of all members of the community.

Objectives:

1. Coordinate with SETD to encourage programs that serve the needs of the transportation disadvantaged.

2. Provide for the transportation disadvantaged by complying with State and Federal regulations and cooperating with local, County and State agencies to provide transportation services for the disadvantaged.
3. Upgrade existing transportation facilities and work with public transportation providers to provide services that improve access for all users.
4. All improvements to the transportation system (traffic, transit, bicycle & pedestrian) in the public right-of-way shall comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

Goal 7: Environment

Provide a transportation system that balances transportation services with the need to protect the environment and significant natural features.

Objectives:

1. Provide a transportation system that encourages energy conservation, in terms of efficiency of the roadway network and the standards developed for road improvements.
2. Encourage use of alternative modes of transportation and encourage development that minimizes reliance on the automobile.
3. Work to balance transportation needs with the preservation of significant natural features and viewsheds.
4. Minimize transportation impacts on wetlands and wildlife habitat.

Goal 8: System Preservation

Work to ensure that development does not preclude the construction of identified future transportation improvements, and that development mitigates the transportation impacts it generates.

Objectives:

1. Require developers to aid in the development of the transportation system by dedicating or reserving needed rights-of-way by constructing half- or full-road improvements needed to serve new development, and by constructing off-road pedestrian, bicycle, and transit facilities when appropriate.
2. Consider transportation impacts when making land use decisions, and consider land use impacts (in terms of land use patterns, densities, and designated uses) when making transportation-related decisions.
3. Ensure that amendments to the comprehensive plan, land use designation amendments and land use regulation changes that are found to significantly affect a transportation facility are consistent with the identified function and capacity of that facility.

Goal 9: Capacity

Provide a transportation system that has sufficient capacity to serve the needs of all users.

Objectives:

1. Protect capacity on existing and improved roads to provide acceptable service levels to accommodate anticipated demand.
2. Limit access points on highways and major arterials, and use alternative access points when possible to protect existing capacity.
3. Provide frontage setback requirements from the public right-of-way for all designated arterials within the County adjacent to commercial and industrial development.
4. Minimize direct access points onto arterial rights-of-way by encouraging common driveways or frontage roads.
5. Update and maintain County access management standards to preserve the safe and efficient operation of County roadways, consistent with functional classification.

Goal 10: Transportation Funding

Provide reasonable and effective funding mechanisms for countywide transportation improvements identified in the TSP.

Objectives:

1. Develop a Capital Improvements Program that establishes transportation priorities and identifies funding mechanisms for implementation.
2. Identify funding opportunities for a range of projects, and coordinate with local, State, and Federal agencies.

Goal 11: Safety

Provide a transportation system that maintains adequate levels of safety for all users.

Objectives:

1. Undertake, as needed, special traffic studies in problem areas, especially around schools, to determine appropriate traffic controls to effectively and safely manage automobile and pedestrian traffic.
2. Work to improve the safety of rail, bicycle, and pedestrian routes and crossings.
3. Coordinate lifeline and tsunami evacuation routes with local, State, and private entities.

CLATSOP COUNTY TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM PLAN

Supplemental Document to the Comprehensive Plan

On File in the Clatsop County Community Development Department
Adopted by the Clatsop County Board of Commissioners
on October 22, 2003 Ordinance 03-09