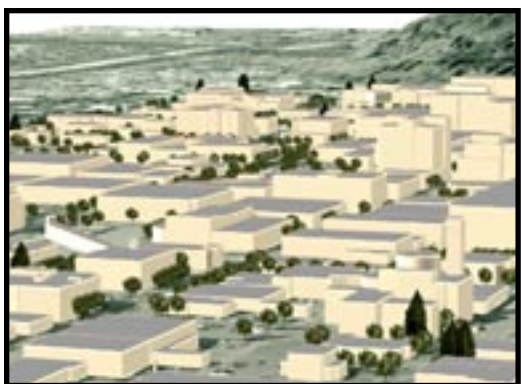


REGIONAL FOCUS

Geographic Information in Lane County and the Road Ahead

During the past 30-plus years, computer technology has come a long way, even if much of the information that it manages has remained fairly constant. Land or geographic information is still the cornerstone of local government operations. Government agencies and citizens need



3-D perspective of downtown Eugene looking toward Skinner Butte.

(Building footprints and street trees provided courtesy of Sarah Zaleski, City of Eugene Planning and Development Department.)

to know about property ownership, regulations, availability, and physical and environmental variables that affect the land, the local economy and quality of life.

Almost 40 years ago, LCOG initiated the use of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) in Lane County by converting paper maps into digital information that could be used in many ways. A few years later, an innovative site address file

(ADLIB) was developed on the regional main-frame computer. It served as a key to the access and integration of other important data collections maintained for the region by the local government computer consortium, the Regional Information System (RIS). During the intervening years, specialized computer systems for handling geographic information have evolved to become the essential integrators of this information. Today, site addresses along with parcels and literally hundreds of associated data layers and information files are maintained and shared through Lane County's Regional Land Information Database (RLID).

Geographic information is both ubiquitous and indispensable to local government. GIS data and mapping capabilities continue to be integrated into other computer based systems to the point that users have come to expect them to do their jobs. Modern land use planning requires GIS just as planners 30 years ago came to rely on overlaying maps on light tables to see patterns and relationships. Public safety agencies depend on GIS as they once did on wall maps with push-pins for operations planning, analysis, and E9-1-1 emergency response.

See **GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION** page 3

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DIRECTOR'S DESK



Are You Really 60 Years Old? Time Flies, Doesn't It?

At the January 26 LCOG Appreciation Dinner, the extended

family of this organization will celebrate the 60th anniversary of the formation of the Lane Council of Governments. We mark November 1, 1945, as the birthday of a voluntary association of governments that has earned a strong reputation for facilitating good government through cooperation.

Sixty years is a long time. But, as noted in a *Register-Guard* story of March 5, 1984, the farsighted work of "an informal group composed of about 60 key citizens" began two years before our official birth date. As World War II moved slowly toward conclusion, "Eugene-Springfield area civic leaders and business people" initiated a comprehensive planning program directed toward "winning the peace" for

the community after the war. The plan was job-oriented, focusing upon the public works projects that would be desperately needed in the post-war era. But as the *Register-Guard* story noted, "such planning led to larger considerations of the community's long-term needs." It was groundbreaking stuff; and *Yank Magazine*, an Army publication read around the globe, took notice of what was happening here in a March 3, 1944, article. *Yank* praised the effort in Eugene-Springfield, Oregon for creativity and foresight, and for "doing its share in building a new and better America."

After the war ended in 1945, the work of the planning council, as it was called, shifted from finding jobs to coordinating planning functions. In that year, as the *Register-Guard* story observes, "...the council, by then more directly tied to local units of government, hired its first full-time paid director, Howard Buford." As LCOG's "number one staff member," Howard served the agency for 28 years.

Sixty years ago, six local governments—the Cities of Eugene and Springfield, Lane County, Eugene Water Board and School Districts 4 and 19—pooled \$14,000 and established the Central Lane County Planning Commission. The name was changed in 1961 to the Central Lane Planning Council, and in 1970 to the Lane Council of Governments. Throughout its six decades, LCOG has remained committed to efficient and effective local government and to "doing its share in building a new and better America." Happy Anniversary, Lane Council of Governments!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "George". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

LCOG's Regional Focus newsletter is distributed across Lane County to members and other interested parties, and is now available on our website at <http://www.lcog.org/rfnews.html>.

We are conducting an ongoing review of our mailing list to cut costs associated with the distribution of the Regional Focus. If you would like to stop receiving the Regional Focus by mail, please contact

Ann Mortenson at (541) 682-4373, or by e-mail at amortenson@lcog.org. Thank you for reading, and feel free to contact us with suggestions regarding topics about which you would like to learn more.

LCOG to Celebrate 60th Anniversary

The LCOG Board will hold its annual Appreciation Dinner on Thursday, January 26, 2006. The evening will include a get-acquainted hour beginning at 6:00 p.m., a dinner prepared and served by students of the LCC Culinary Arts Program at 7:00, and a program where outstanding members from various sectors of the community are acknowledged, followed by a guest speaker.

The Appreciation Dinner will take place at Lane Community College's Center for Meeting and Learning. Information regarding entrée options, dinner costs and how to submit reservations will be mailed in early December.



from GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION page 1

With more recent advancements in GIS technology, the systems are converging with traditional Computer Aided Design/Drafting (CAD) systems. Public works departments and utilities are now mapping and managing their facilities with GIS. Tax assessors are converting their ink-on-mylar tax maps to GIS, opening the doors to more effective administration of local taxation.

Everyone who has used Google Maps or other web-based mapping systems to locate the nearest pizza restaurant or get driving directions from Point A to Point B recognizes the power of location. This phenomenon is introducing GIS concepts to the masses and simultaneously raising the bar of expectations for both the quality of geographic information and the automated tools used to analyze and report it.

With each successive innovation in information technology, the value of the underlying land information grows. The importance of adopting data standards

and effectively sharing the information to reduce costs and redundancy also grows. In Lane County, LCOG and its government agency partners have long recognized the importance of geographic information and the considerable costs of developing and maintaining it. This has resulted in a cooperative approach that is notable in LCOG's longevity and success over the past 30 years.

It may be difficult to foresee all of the technological innovations that will shape the future of GIS, but it is not hard to envision what is in store for LCOG and its partners. The cities of Eugene and Springfield, Lane County and EWEB are all actively expanding their respective GIS capabilities and focusing greater attention on geographic information. Cities outside the Eugene-Springfield metro area and other smaller agencies represent the next wave, as the need to address local growth issues and the economics of geographic information and affordable technologies converge.

STAFF FOCUS



Sherry Giglia

RLID Support & Training Specialist

Sherry Giglia joined the Information, Research and Analysis Department at LCOG in August 2005. Her primary responsibility is user support and training for the Regional Land Information Database (RLID), an integrated data warehouse of regional land and property information maintained by LCOG. She will also be involved with the design and implementation of future enhancements to the RLID system and other GIS project work.

Sherry comes to LCOG with over 20 years of customer service and management experience and a recent masters degree in Physical Geography and Earth Information Science Technology from Oregon State University. She worked with the Zebrafish Information Network at the University of Oregon as a research assistant prior to accepting her new position with LCOG.

Sherry can be reached at (541) 682-4495 or sgiglia@lco.org.

Sixty Years of Natural Resource Planning

LCOG's natural resource planning team is comprised of staff with a wide range of experiences, technical backgrounds, skills, and interests. The spectrum ranges from parks planning to on-site wastewater treatment. This diversity has allowed LCOG to assist local governments in meeting the challenges of preserving ecosystem health and quality of life while accommodating larger populations. Member agencies continue to direct LCOG to design, seek funding for, and coordinate regional environmental planning and compliance attainment.

Water, both its quantity and quality, has been identified as one of the most critical issues facing our region today, and LCOG is currently working on a number of water resource projects. Local governments have been very supportive of the regional Total Maximum Daily Load planning effort, which LCOG designed to assist in the attainment of water quality standards and increase the effectiveness of water quality improvement strategies. Extending north outside of Lane County, LCOG water resource staff have been coordinating a multi-jurisdictional response to high levels of nitrate in groundwater and drinking water.

LCOG's ability to manage complex projects and ensure timely progress is also being utilized to improve the health of the metropolitan region's waterways. The Metro

Waterways project is bringing federal funding to the metropolitan area for waterway improvement, habitat enhancement, and flood protection. The recent release of the long-term vision for the Delta Ponds, which LCOG produced for the City of Eugene, is another example of how partnerships can address natural resource challenges and how effective coordination leads to tangible results for the entire community.

"Rainstorming" is a Rouge Valley Council of Governments (RVCOG) and LCOG partnership that provides stormwater quality planning assistance to coastal cities and counties. LCOG has been working with the cities of Wheeler, Bay City, and Rockaway Beach to help address some of their stormwater management needs

Last year, LCOG helped the State of Oregon develop a voluntary on-site wastewater treatment system (septic system) maintenance and inspection program for the coastal management area. This year, LCOG will be taking the first steps to implement that program by setting up training to certify inspectors, working with lending institutions and realtor associations to encourage increased inspections, and distributing outreach materials to rural residents.

In the parks and open space planning arena, LCOG has taken the lead on a number of recent efforts including the *Rivers to Ridges* Regional Parks and Open Space Plan and Park and Open Space Master Plans for the cities of Creswell and Coburg.

Almost all of these projects utilize LCOG's extensive Geographic Information System (GIS) data. The region-wide information is extremely beneficial when trying to address natural resource issues which rarely fall within the boundaries of only one jurisdiction. This data is helpful when presenting information to the public, analyzing trends, and monitoring results. The past 60 years of LCOG contributions have allowed the GIS network in Lane County to develop into the respected and innovative leader in regional GIS that it is today; and the next 60 years hold many opportunities to build upon these successes.



Delta Ponds in Eugene



GIS Technology – Travel Time, Routing, and Site Analysis

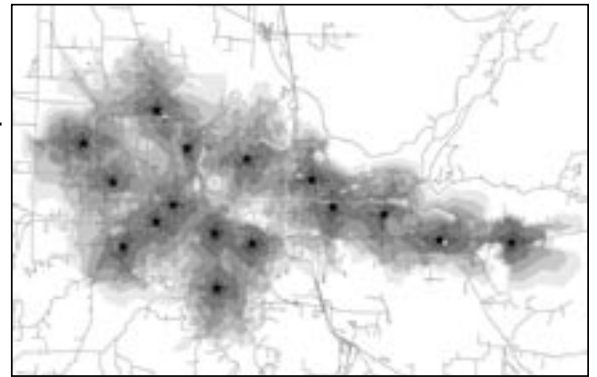
LCOG and its partner agencies are realizing the benefits of a two-year effort spent in planning, creating, and maintaining a unified set of digital street data for Lane County. With the release of Network Analyst, a new tool from the GIS software company ESRI, several powerful features have been combined into one package to assist site analysis, solve complex routing problems, and realistically estimate travel times.

Two years ago, LCOG teamed with the Public Works departments of Springfield, Eugene, and Lane County to integrate each agency's digital street maps into a single GIS file to feed a new E911 dispatch system. The multi-agency GIS team creating this data used specific standards to meet both the needs of E911 and those of the partner agencies. These built-in standards (one-way streets, speed limits, etc.) can be referenced by Network Analyst to find shortest-path routes, determine

travel-time radii, calculate "travel shed" areas, and locate the "closest facility" to a given location. This functionality enables a more realistic travel-time analysis for a wide range of routing and facility placement scenarios.

Planners can create service areas to determine a "best fit" location for a new fire station, school, or maintenance facility. Emergency responders can compare measured response times against modeled response times to refine emergency vehicle placement. If deployed properly, Network Analyst could also quickly find the shortest path to a nearest facility (e.g. a hospital) for an emergency caller. Commercial interests may use Network Analyst, in conjunction with census or other data, to determine what type of demographic lives within a given travel time of their facilities—or of their competitors.

Delivery or pick-up services can use the software to solve complex routing solutions narrowed by curbside choice, time-frame limitations, and the order in which stops must be made in addition to "regular" inhibitors such as one-way streets, speed limits, and roadway width. All of this translates in to a tremendous potential for travel analysis by many types of interests.



Using GIS technology, this image illustrates estimated service areas within 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 minute "drive-times" for all of the fire stations in the Eugene-Springfield metropolitan area.

LCOG Offers Training Courses for RLID Users

The Regional Land Information Database (RLID), has evolved since its inception in 2000 to become the most complete collection of land and property information in Lane County. It is widely used by local government agencies as well as a growing number of commercial subscribers, including title companies, developers, attorneys, realtors, banks and appraisers.

As a service to the user community, the RLID Support Team offered two training

workshops this past summer at LCOG, free of charge to subscribers. Both workshops were well-attended and feedback was positive—so they have been made a regular event!

In November, a successful "New User" Training Workshop was facilitated by Sherry Giglia, LCOG's RLID Support and Training Specialist. Sherry will be offering new user trainings every other month beginning in January 2006. On alternate

months, she will offer a more advanced training workshop focused on either a particular application or a particular group of users.

For more information about subscribing to RLID, or if you are a current RLID user and would like more information on upcoming training workshops, please contact Sherry at (541) 682-4495 or sgiglia@lco.org. Suggestions for future training topics are welcome.



Kay Metzger Appointed Director of Senior & Disabled Services

LCOG Executive Director George Kloepfel, has

announced his appointment of Kay Metzger as the agency's Director of Senior and Disabled Services, effective February 1, 2006. Kay will succeed Ted Stevens, retiring S&DS Director, who has served since 1987.

Kay Metzger began her tenure with LCOG in 1990, in a temporary position working half-time as a case manager and half-time as a clerical person. After three months, she was hired permanently as a case manager, serving as both an intake worker and ongoing case manager for the senior population. Kay was promoted to Program

Supervisor in September 1994, and for the next five years was assigned various tasks such as quality assurance and training and the implementation of several new programs. She was LCOG's lead person for the Oregon Health Plan Phase 2, the Oregon Trail Card, and Oregon ACCESS. Kay also held supervisory assignments with LCOG's Senior Intake Unit, Protective Services, Information and Referral, the Florence Branch Office, and the Financial Services Unit. She was responsible for planning and coordinating the opening of two new branch offices in Cottage Grove and Springfield. In 1999, Kay was promoted to the Springfield Branch Manager. She has been the Program Manager since 2002, during which time she has served as the Co-chair of the Oregon Association of Area Agencies on Aging and Disabili-

ties (O4AD) Program Managers, and has served on many state level committees dealing with program and policy changes.

Kay brings to the Director's chair a well-developed knowledge of LCOG's Senior and Disabled Services programs and the needs of the Medicaid clients in Lane County. She is enthusiastic about broadening the scope of her responsibilities to include Older Americans Act programs and to helping steer the division through the challenges of operating with reduced public funding.

Senior & Disabled Services Launches New-Look Website

With a bevy of new features and an overhauled look, LCOG's Senior & Disabled Services (S&DS) unveiled its redesigned website at www.sdslane.org on November 15. The enhanced design is the most significant overhaul to the site since its launch in June 2000.

The latest version of the website includes many tools for clients and other interested parties to find information about the many services that S&DS offers. User-select-

able font sizes make the pages more accessible to those with sight impairments, and an overhauled navigation system allows a more intuitive way of finding needed information. The site also features interactive maps and several downloadable brochures and forms.



For more information about the services that Senior & Disabled Services offers, contact Information and Referral at (541) 682-4038.





Ted Stevens, Director of Senior & Disabled Services, Retires

Ted Stevens, director of LCOG's Senior and Disabled Services Division since 1987, will retire at the end of January. In expressing its appreciation for his long and dedicated service, the LCOG Board of Directors passed a resolution at its December 1 meeting. The

Board took particular notice of Ted's tireless advocacy for the elderly and disabled citizens of the region and also observed that he is "appropriately recognized throughout the State of Oregon and beyond as a creative and knowledgeable Area Agency on Aging director." Ted's colleagues on the LCOG staff join with the Board of Directors in thanking Ted for his

"professionalism, friendship and substantial contributions to the betterment of this region and to the well being of its citizens."

A reception will be held to mark Ted's retirement on Monday, January 30, from 4:30 to 6:30 at the Downtown Athletic Club.

New Health Insurance Plan a Success

LCOG introduced a new direction in health insurance during the 2004-05 fiscal year, implementing the Health Reimbursement Arrangement (HRA) plan to eligible employees. The HRA is a high-deductible plan with an employer-funded account to help members reach the deductible and maximum out of pocket amounts. A critical component of the HRA plan is the employer-funded account for each employee, into which LCOG put \$2,000 (pretax) per employee account in FY 2004-05. The remaining balance in the employer-funded account can be rolled forward into future years so it provides a major incentive to spend health care dollars wisely.

Although there were many concerns about the plan change and some initial administrative problems, the HRA plan has proven to be a big success for LCOG and for the employees. The total cost of insurance was reduced by over 10 percent (over \$80,000 from the prior PPO plan), with the employees getting most of the savings. The paid claim-loss ratio was only 51.5%, much lower than anyone expected and low enough that future rates should be lower. At the end of the year, more than half of the employees had more than \$1,000 in their employer-funded accounts, and only 13 percent had spent the entire

\$2,000. When these savings are combined with the money that employees did not have to spend for monthly premiums, most employees saved money.

The HRA offers more savings in future years. The excellent claim loss ratio in FY 2004-05 and the structure of the plan resulted in a less than 7 percent increase in total health insurance cost for the fiscal year. Future years should continue to limit annual increases in health insurance premiums, and many employees will be able to add more savings to their employer-funded accounts.

Network of Care – A Comprehensive Website for Seniors and Persons With Disability

On October 26, 2005, Governor Ted Kulongoski launched the “Oregon Network of Care,” a multilingual, community-based website that provides comprehensive long-term care information and education to the thousands of Oregon seniors and persons with disabilities. This online tool provides critical information, communication, and advocacy tools with a single point of entry for seniors, persons with disabilities and their caregivers.

“Network of Care” is the first outcome of Senate Bill 870, passed by the 2005 Oregon Legislature, to “modernize” Oregon Project Independence, which provides the services necessary to keep seniors in

their own homes. This modernization is intended to expand access to services to people with disabilities.

The new website gives seniors and their caregivers the ability to find the right service at the right time, to educate themselves about the issues they care about, find assistive devices, understand current policy initiatives, and communicate directly to elected officials. It will also help them manage their affairs and important records. View the new website at **www.oregon.networkofcare.org**.

The website also provides a comprehensive directory of service providers, easy-to-

search libraries and vital information about specific disorders, pending legislation and advocacy, as well as daily news articles from around the world concerning aging and disabilities.

The website is a cooperative project of the Oregon Association of Area Agencies on Aging and Disabilities (O4AD) and the Department of Human Services. Funding for the site is from the Older Americans Act and Oregon Project Independence (OPI).

For additional information regarding “Network of Care”, please contact Patti Little at plittle@lcog.org or 541-682-4137.



Visit the comprehensive website for seniors and persons with disabilities at **www.oregon.networkofcare.org**.



Medicare Part D – Prescription Drug Benefit

The new Medicare Part D Prescription Drug Benefit represents the largest expansion of the Medicare program since its inception in 1965. Beginning in January 2006, Medicare will offer insurance coverage to help people age 65 and over or those with certain disabilities pay for prescription drugs. Everyone with Medicare is eligible for Part D coverage, regardless of their income or resources, pre-existing conditions or current prescription expenses.

There are approximately 55,000 Lane County citizens who are eligible for the new prescription drug benefit. To help with this effort, Senior & Disabled Services Senior Connections has hired Brent Wood as the Medicare Part D Outreach Coordinator to speak throughout Lane County. Brent is available to provide presentation(s) and/or written materials to assist seniors in making a decision concerning Medicare Part D.

To schedule a time for Brent to speak to an organization or group on the Medicare Prescription Drug Benefit, please contact Brent at bwood@lcog.org or (541) 682-3769.

Beginning January 2006, nearly 5,000 Senior & Disabled Services (S&DS) "Dual Eligible" clients will receive their prescription drug coverage through Medicare Part D, instead of Medicaid. These clients will be automatically enrolled in a prescription drug plan by the federal government. This daunting task is to ensure that the plan the individuals have been assigned is the best plan for them. S&DS hired 13 employees on November 1 to assist clients who are considered dual eligible clients—those clients who are covered by both Medicaid and Medicare. Choice Counselors plan to contact each of the dual eligible

clients to offer assistance in determining which plan is the most effective for their needs, i.e., drug coverage, plan co-payment costs and pharmacy choice. In addition, the Choice Counselors will provide assistance with requests for exceptions for medications which are not covered under the plan. If you have questions regarding dual eligible clients and wish to speak with a Choice Counselor, please call (541) 682-4137.

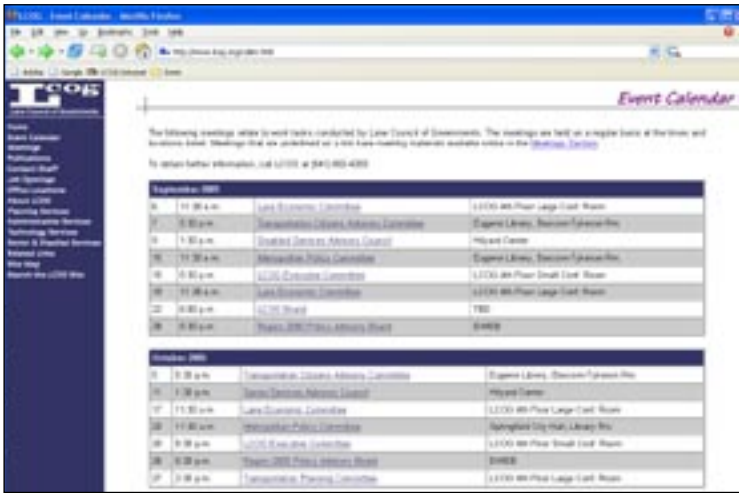


LCOG

LANE COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

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CALENDAR: www.lcog.org/calen.html



Current meeting schedules are now available on the LCOG website at www.lcog.org/calen.html

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