



May 2006

The Scrimmage Line

On the Field

Details on the next RGF—CIC meeting will be sent out shortly.

The Scrimmage Line serves as the Current Issues Coalition's "Condensed Minutes."

CIC is a committee of the Responsible Growth Forum and meets monthly to review issues relating to growth in Southwest Washington.

For more information on the CIC, please contact Megan Forell at (360) 695-1385.

Jonathan Schlueter—Westside Economic Alliance

Jonathan Schlueter, executive director of the Westside Economic Alliance, was the guest speaker at the May 24, 2006 RGF – CIC meeting. The Westside Economic Alliance comprises of both private sector employers, non-profit organizations, and real estate developers charged with shaping local public policy. Focusing on the needs of the Westside of Portland metropolitan region, Westside Economic Alliance provides a business perspective in the public forum, serving as a source of information and expertise on key public policy issues, while encouraging job creation and economic development.

On the Horizon

Biotechnology company, Genentech has selected Hillsboro for the construction and development of their new facility that will use genetic materials in the production of products. Becoming the first biotech company for the Westside, Genentech will diversify the economy and bring a well-tuned workforce, 3,000 in total, to the area. Westside Economic Alliance is currently conducting public opinion polls to learn how the company will be received. The land Genentech plans on developing, will be the last large parcel track in Washington County.

METRO

When asked his opinion on how Metro controls regional spending, Mr. Schlueter explained that Metro takes gas tax and Federal highway money, then divvies it out to what they deem needy (bike paths and pedestrian improvements). This process usually does not fair well for Washington County.

For instance, Highway 217, the areas primary North/South artery, serves Washington Square, several manufacturers and key employers. This two-lane stretch of highway is 7.5 miles long and is the source of major congestion. The areas it connects have grown extensively and the population is expected to continue rising 30% over the next 20 years, to over 110,000 vehicles a day. In order to respond to this growth, 217 needs improvements but it is not eligible for Federal funding. The highway expansion to accommodate it's growing area will have to come from Metro.

Another ill-fated traffic plan was the proposed Westside Bypass that would link Ridgefield over to Cornelius Pass Road, looping around to Sherwood. When this plan was cancelled, Metro promised the money allotted for the development of the bypass would go to 217 improvements and arterial roads. This has yet to happen.

Interesting Fact

Everyday, 71,000 employees leave Washington County to work in other areas, while 72,000 employees travel to Washington County for work.

GMA

Clark County is at the tail end of a long process. The capacity focus still clouds it's future, along with the assumption that 50% of critical lands will develop.

Wetland and Habitat Ordinances

The Wetland Ordinance was adopted May 30th, 2006.

The Habitat Ordinance continues to be a problem for rural land. The next hearing will take place on June 20th at 10:00 a.m. in the Commissioners' Hearing Room.