

COMMUNITY CONGRESS V

A Sustainable Clackamas County

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Clackamas County Sustainability Initiatives

May 12, 2007

Clackamas County plays several roles as a leader in sustainability: greening the County's own operations, implementing community and economic development programs and educating the public. The following is a summary of some actions to-date.

Lean and Green Operations

Policy direction — In 2005, the Clackamas County Board of Commissioners adopted a *Policy on Sustainability Practices*, a broad directive to reduce the environmental impacts of operations of the County, its service districts and contractors. The policy sets specific standards for construction and maintenance of buildings, use of products with recycled content, and a comprehensive recycling and reuse program for County facilities.

A Green Landmark — The U.S. Green Building Council awarded its LEED™ Silver certification to the Clackamas County Public Services Building in Oregon City. Clackamas County also was recognized in 2006 by the National Association of Counties for Outstanding Leadership in Energy Efficiency. These honors recognize that the building meets a rigorous set of healthy, environmentally responsible construction standards. The Red Soils campus sets the tone for a new master-planned campus with buildings that will exemplify green design.

- Compared with the buildings previously occupied by the County, the Public Services Building reduces annual energy costs by \$58,000.
- Ninety percent of all employees have access to natural light and outside views, enhancing health, productivity and morale.
- To protect water quality and reduce infrastructure costs, water from the parking lot drains into vegetated swales and detention ponds.
- Covered bicycle parking, showers and lockers promote bicycling.
- The County also is adding to its fleet of hybrids fuel-efficient vehicles.

Fish Passage — By removing or replacing more than 46 culverts on County roads that were preventing salmon from accessing high quality habitat and spawning areas, the Roads Department has added 77 stream miles for potential fish passage.

Paper use — The County purchases copier paper with 30% recycled content, in line with Federal procurement standards. In addition, the Facilities Department directs janitorial companies to use recycled content paper products for paper towels, toilet tissue, etc.

Lighting — The County, from 1993 through 2003, saved the county almost 2.2 million Kilowatt hours annually or about \$111,000 per year. Most projects have a rate of return on the investment of more than 20 percent per year. In addition, with support from the Energy Trust of Oregon, the County retrofitted traffic signals with LED lights that reduce energy use by 80% to 90% and extend their lives.



Community and Economic Development

Green Ribbon Committee — This diverse group of public and private leaders was appointed by the Board of County Commissioners to develop a sustainable industry strategy that builds on Clackamas County's strengths in agriculture and forestry. Part of their mission is to develop a plan for a sustainability center that will catalyze partnerships and innovation in these economic areas.

Redevelopment of brownfields — There are at least 1,000 acres of brownfields in the County, properties where expansion or redevelopment is complicated by actual or perceived environmental contamination. Most of these sites are in commercial or industrial areas. Redevelopment can provide employment opportunities near County residents and other services. Clackamas County provides staff assistance to property owners, including conducting assessments of strategic industrial properties.

Green and affordable housing — Clackamas County was a partner in the development of a 14-unit housing project that garnered the Home Depot Foundation's Award of Excellence for Affordable Housing Built Responsibly. Located near Milwaukie, the SE Phillips Creek project was built by the Clackamas Community Land Trust, a local non-profit organization that uses a land trust model to preserve long-term housing affordability and extend home ownership to more residents. The County assisted with funding and clean-up of contamination found on the building site. The Earth Advantage certification process was used to guide and document green development choices.

Environmental Youth Corps — The Clackamas County Environmental Youth Corp offers Clackamas youth ages 14-21 meaningful environmental education and paid work experience while improving the ecological health of local forests and public lands. The program trains, employs and serves more than 300 youth annually through a variety of environmental education and forest-related public works projects with partners such as the Bureau of Land Management and the Forest Service.

Home weatherization — Since 2002, Clackamas County's Weatherization Program has increased the efficiency of more than 1,200 homes for low-income residents, using insulation made from recycled materials. Residents are shown how to manage their energy use more efficiently through workshops and in-home visits.

Transportation and land use — Construction of light rail to Clackamas Town Center began this year. The County continues to work with its cities and regional partners to plan for further expansion, including a South-North Portland to Milwaukie light rail line. Light rail planning is closely linked to land use, housing and roads and transit connections.

Public Education

Recycling — Household recycling was expanded to include plastic tubs and lids. Future possibilities, such as food waste collection, continue to be reviewed. The Recycle at Play program provides recycling containers for parks, ball fields and other public spaces or events operated by cities in the County. The Recycle at Work program also provides technical assistance to businesses and residences. The County works to ensure that new commercial buildings have adequate space and access for garbage and recycling containers.

School partnerships — In collaboration with the Oregon Green Schools program, the County encourages schools to conserve water, energy and materials. It also offers a program in which businesses can donate no longer needed items to local schools.

Habitat restoration — Water Environment Services works with volunteer organizations and has planted more than 10,000 trees and restored over five miles of streamside habitat. Volunteer organizations and watershed councils can access tools and other support through WES for their additional restoration projects.

