

REGIONAL FOCUS

The City of Veneta – Staying in the Flow

In the last three years, the City of Veneta has experienced a 5 to 7 percent annual population increase – and this growth shows no signs



The issue of growth will remain at the top of Veneta’s agenda.

of slowing down. This presents some challenges for Ric Ingham, Veneta’s City Administrator since February 2004. According to Ric, “It’s much like white-water rafting. You learn to stay in the flow of the current, always avoid the big holes, and remember to always keep it fun for everyone involved.”

The city has addressed many of the challenges with this recent growth pattern by expanding its water and wastewater systems, acquiring a new well site, and completing the transfer of water

rights. Finding a water supply is a time consuming process, given that it takes numerous exploratory wells for every production well that is brought online. For a growing community of 3,660 citizens, a new well may be needed as quickly as every three to five years.

Another challenge is developing a land use plan that accommodates the increased number of residential and commercial building permit applications. Veneta is fortunate to have a 15-year available land supply, but with wetland constraints and the number of large subdivisions under review, careful planning is critical.

Tackling these challenges takes resources and qualified staff. In the past year, to address the growing demand for services, the city has taken several steps to enhance operating revenue, including a 3-cent per gallon gas tax, a stormwater surcharge, transportation and stormwater system development charges (SDCs), and planning and building department fee increases. SDC revenue is used to provide infrastructure, such as stormwater facilities, to accommodate growth.

With a plan for growth in place, Veneta has laid the groundwork on which to build an economic

THIS ISSUE

- 2 Director’s Desk
- 3 Veneta in Balance
Staff Focus
- 4 Veneta Served Locally by
LCOG’s Senior Meals, Senior
Connections
AMERICORPS*VISTA Volunteer
for Senior Connections
Program
- 5 Veneta Holds “Design Your
Future Community” Meeting
on Growth
- 6 Senior & Disabled Services
Becomes a United Way
Agency
Delta Ponds Plan
- 7 2005 LCOG Appreciation Dinner
Meals on Wheels Volunteer and
Staff Training
- 8 2005 Oregon Planning Institute
Working and Playing Together -
LCOG Annual Picnic
- 9 LCOG Assists in Obtaining Over
\$7.5 Million in Loans
- 10 Calendar



FOCUS
City of Veneta

See **CITY OF VENETA** page 3



DIRECTOR'S DESK

LCOG's 60 Years of Service – Building Intergovernmental Trust

Periodically, we, as individuals and organizations, should each take a deep breath and contemplate our objectives. Where have we been? Where are we headed? In LCOG's annual cycle, the first Board meeting of each new fiscal year provides just that kind of opportunity. For several years, the July meeting has been stripped of business items so that Board members are able to take the broad view — to look over their shoulders at hits and misses and to identify public policy priorities on the horizon.

On July 28, the Board's annual planning session was held at the Cottage Grove Community Center. Kicked off with a dinner and informal conversation among the elected officials of LCOG's member agencies, the session was facilitated by Stan Biles of Management Solutions. Stan's career in public service has included county and state administrative work, as well as service as elected city councilor and mayor of Olympia, Washington. In our region, Stan is remembered as an effective member of the Lane County government in the 1970s and early 1980s.

In my view, the three hours spent by Board members and management staff were valuable and well worthwhile. A summary report is being prepared, but three general observations about the planning session may be pertinent here.

First, it was gratifying to hear the Board share their perceptions of the agency's "hits" of the past year. Often, perceived successes (and failures) are viewed quite differently by policy makers and the agency management. But, taken together, the listing of "most successful" cooperative ventures was very affirming. The agency has done good work, even in challenging budgetary times.

Second, I was struck by the Board's thoughtful discussion of what had inhibited successful intergovernmental cooperation over the past year. Highlighted were: "communication" (a clear explanation of reality), "understanding" (a realistic grasp of facts), "trust" (at a personal level, particularly among and between elected officials), and "resources" (the money and staff time needed to implement improvements). A critical assessment of the reasons why some things have not worked is a valuable enterprise; and the identified factors can be addressed in future efforts.

Finally, the Board identified a number of regional issues that were considered

particularly ripe for consideration in the coming months. The agency's Executive Committee was asked to flesh out the recommendations of the Board. But there was agreement that several key topics should be placed on future Board agendas. Examples included: Public Safety (consideration of the County Task Force plan and the related need for public education); tax structure and local government finance; accommodations for population growth (buildable lands availability and urban growth boundaries); education and workforce development; an I-5/Franklin Boulevard interchange; a revisit of the adequacy of the current MetroPlan, and intergovernmental opportunities in telecommunication and Internet access. This is surely a diverse and interesting list.

LCOG will not unilaterally resolve all of these identified public policy issues. However, this agency can and should play a constructive role in identifying priorities, assembling the information and catalyzing an informed discussion. Building upon the intergovernmental trust that LCOG's 60 years of service has established and our success rate of the past, it is reasonable to anticipate continued positive improvement in the well-being of this regional community.

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

Veneta in Balance

Veneta is growing and the community wants to make sure the quality of life in Veneta grows with it. The City has a number of beautiful and significant natural resources within its boundaries. A riverine system of wetlands and Fern Ridge Reservoir contribute significantly to the character of the community. Natural resources can be a valuable amenity for a community and their omission can lead to additional costs for human-made infrastructure to take on the function of natural resources, or to address new problems resulting from the loss of resources. To help balance growth with concerns for natural resources, Veneta has embarked on a study to help balance environmental concerns with development concerns, and to

provide more tools for incorporating natural resources into the design of new development.

In addition to natural resources, a key component of the community character is the downtown area. Veneta is currently seeking funds for a downtown development plan which will result in a "new" old town. With two highways bisecting the City, the highway area often becomes both the focus of local commerce as well as the image which stays in the minds of passers by. The City aims to establish a core downtown area conveniently linked with the highway area, so local residents and travelers alike can enjoy a true picture of community character.

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.

from CITY OF VENETA – STAYING IN THE FLOW page 1

base for attracting new businesses to the community. To assist in future challenges that come with a small city's growing pains, Ric is hoping to attract and retain experienced staff to oversee an ever-growing workload.

The issue of growth will remain at the top of Veneta's agenda for a while. Ric looks forward to working with local interest

groups representing schools and libraries, public safety, and business to address livability issues. Good relationships with state agencies such as the Oregon Department of Transportation, Department of Environmental Quality, and the Department of Land Conservation and Development will also help to meet the increased traffic and transportation demands that come with growth.

STAFF FOCUS



Denise Walters Associate Planner

Denise Walters joined LCOG in October 2002. Her main duties include current planning, program evaluation, and Oregon Planning Institute (OPI) conference coordination. She is currently working with the City of Veneta to help resolve conflicts between the city's goals for natural resource protection and goals for connected street and utility systems.

Prior to coming to LCOG, Denise received her Masters Degrees in Public Administration (MPA) and in International Studies in 2002. She received Graduate Teaching Fellowships in Community Development, Cross Cultural Communication, and Perspectives on International Development at the University of Oregon.

Denise can be reached at (541) 682-4341 or dwalters@lcog.org.

Veneta Served Locally by LCOG's Senior Meals and Senior Connections Programs

Veneta's senior residents have access to crucial services provided by LCOG's Senior & Disabled Services. Services are provided by the Senior Meals Program dining room, staffed by Site Coordinator, Anne James and the Senior Connections office, staffed by Area Coordinator, Kim Kaufman. The Senior Meals Program and the Senior Connections office are located at the Tony Garcia Service Center at 88149 Territorial Road in Veneta.

The Garcia Service Center operates in a building owned by the Fern Ridge School District. Recently, the District leased the use of the building to the Mid-Lane Community Chest, which then sub-leased to the Senior Meals and the Senior Connections programs and several other local service providers based on square footage used. The costs of operating the building have been recalculated and have been spread across all users, which resulted in a two-fold increase in the Senior Meals Program rent payments.

The Senior Meals Program serves a nourishing meal at 11:30 a.m. on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday to seniors ages 60 and older. Last fiscal year, 5,197 meals were served in the dining room to 69 seniors and 5,198 Meals on Wheels were delivered to 45 home bound area seniors. Meals are subsidized by federal funds and participant contributions, but to maintain service levels, the Senior Meals Program must raise approximately 20 percent of the annual operating budget by securing charitable gifts. Each of the 12 meal site communities in Lane County contribute toward this goal. This year, the fund raising goal for the Veneta's dining center is \$10,000.

Senior Connections connects seniors and unpaid caregivers to services and resources they need in order to remain living independently in their own homes. Last year, Area Coordinator Kim Kaufman helped



288 Veneta area seniors access medical transportation, Meals on Wheels, energy assistance, and other supportive services. The Senior Connections office had 2,048 phone contacts with seniors, families, and friends, all who needed information or referral assistance. Kim does not do this alone. Last year he coordinated approximately 13,000 hours of services donated by community volunteers. Senior Connections promotes individual choice and independence by providing the essential coordinating link between seniors and unpaid caregivers and the help they need to stay in their homes.

For more information, please contact Sandy Karsten, Senior Meals Program Manager, at (541) 682-4378 or skarsten@lco.org.

Americorps*VISTA Volunteer for Senior Connections Program

Senior & Disabled Services' Senior Connections Program has selected Patricia Dawson to serve under the Americorps*VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America) program for the next year. She will serve as the Senior Connections' Resource Development Coordinator.

Her primary duties will be to assist the Senior Connections staff and volunteers to design and implement an innovative resource development plan. Patricia has extensive experience in the areas of fundraising, grant writing, and community organizing. She will help with public

awareness of senior needs and the expansion of the program's economic base.



Veneta Holds “Design Your Future” Community Meeting on Growth

In June, Veneta hosted a community meeting to discuss growth and its implications for the city and the surrounding region. The meeting was the first of 14 community meetings being conducted throughout the Southern Willamette Valley as part of Region 2050, a long-range planning process underway since 2000. Participants engaged in a three-hour facilitated discussion about three alternative growth scenarios: compact urban growth, satellite communities growth, and rural growth.

The meeting was attended by 56 people, 12 of whom were randomly selected citizens who do not normally participate in the public process. Elected officials, planning commissioners, committee members, civic groups, the chamber of commerce, other interest groups, and residents also participated. The top goals of participants were focused on land use and development, economy, environment, and education. On the whole, participants liked the satellite communities growth scenario best, although several leaned toward the compact urban or rural growth scenario.

Participants generally envisioned a community of the future that supported a more compact form of development that is walkable and bike friendly, with a diversity of housing types and transportation alternatives. The desire to develop the downtown area as a city center was a common theme along with addressing the impacts

of development, especially traffic, and maintaining buffers between communities.

Participants identified the need for major improvements to Highway 126 and alternative routes (Cantrell Road), using the railroad right-of-way for a commuter line or for road use, improving Highway 126 to four lanes of access to Eugene and elevating two lanes to minimize impacts to wetlands, improving Territorial Highway north to Clear Lake Road and use as a major transit corridor, building and improving sidewalks, and increasing transit service. The need for alternative water sources to serve growth was also identified.

In addition to Veneta, community meetings have been held in Creswell, Cottage Grove, Alvadore, Goshen, Waltherville, Crow, and Pleasant Hill-Jasper. Meetings are also scheduled for Junction City, Oakridge, Coburg, Lowell, Springfield, and Eugene.

For information about Region 2050 and the scenarios, please visit www.Region2050.org or call Carol Heinkel at (541) 682-4107 or cheinkel@lcog.org.



Veneta citizens discuss growth and ways to protect quality of life in the city and the region.

Senior & Disabled Services Becomes a United Way Agency

LCOG's Senior & Disabled Services (S&DS) became a United Way of Lane County certified agency in the fall of 2004. Once certified, Senior & Disabled Services submitted an application to the United Way for campaign funds to expand prescription drug assistance and Medicare Part D outreach services offered by its Senior Connections Program. United Way approved this application and awarded S&DS \$5,000 per year for 2006 and 2007. The beneficiaries of these United Way-funded services are older residents living outside of the Eugene-Springfield metropolitan area.

This was an important acknowledgment by the United Way Board of Directors and staff; it was recognized that a public human services agency shares the same program goals and funding challenges as local non-profit agencies. Senior & Disabled Services, in turn, understands the benefits of being a United Way certified agency and truly appreciates the opportunity to join with United Way in its quest to improve the lives of Lane County citizens.

For more information on Senior Connections' efforts to help older people access

prescription drugs, please contact Joan Taylor, Senior Connections Program Manager, at (541) 682-4374 or jtaylor@lco.org.



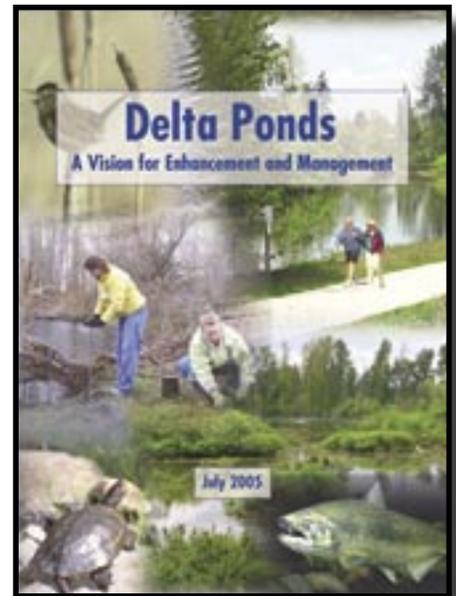
United Way of Lane County

Delta Ponds Plan Formalizes Long-term Vision

Over the past several years, significant resources have been directed toward the enhancement of the Delta Ponds system including its habitat, access, aesthetics, and hydrologic function. Delta Ponds is a unique open space resource situated adjacent to the Willamette River in a heavily urbanized portion of Eugene. A remnant of an aggregate mining operation, this 150-acre ecosystem of ponds, channels, uplands, and wetlands owned by the City of Eugene and Lane County has evolved into a favorite spot for bird watching, fishing, and hiking, and provides valuable habitat for a variety of wildlife. The area also poses a number of difficult management issues such as invasive plant and animal species colonization, rare wildlife species,

access management challenges, and water quality issues.

Partners in this effort include the City of Eugene, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Lane County, the U.S. Bureau of Land Management, Oregon Parks and Recreation Department, and Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. In support of this effort, LCOG was requested to prepare a plan for Delta Ponds to incorporate the extensive list of enhancements currently being planned with a long-term vision for the Delta Ponds system, and a set of management objectives and actions that will guide long-term management of this resource.



The Delta Ponds – A Vision for Enhancement and Management document and vision map can be found at <http://www.lco.org/pubs.html>.



Mark Your Calendar January 26, 2006



**Celebrating 60 Years of Service
2005 LCOG Appreciation Dinner**

Marking the 60th Anniversary of the formation of Lane Council of Governments in 1945, this Appreciation Dinner will be a special celebration. The members of LCOG's extended family are urged to mark their calendars for Thursday, January 26,

at the Lane Community College Meeting and Learning Center.

LCOG's traditional awards for outstanding contributions to the well-being of the regional community by private citizens,

intergovernmental teams, public employees and elected officials will be presented at the Dinner. The formal solicitation of award nominations will be made in October, but it is not too early to be thinking about individuals and teams that should be honored.

Meals on Wheels Volunteer and Staff Training by OSU/Lane County Extension Service

Those who work with Meals on Wheels know that a brief encounter can change the day for a homebound person. Susan Busler, extension faculty from Oregon State University (OSU)/Lane County Extension Service, developed and delivered an eight-week training series for 42 Meals on Wheels volunteers and staff from both Senior & Disabled Services and the American Red Cross this past spring.

The classes provided information and training in the areas of communication, sen-

sory changes, memory loss, depression, medication management, food safety, home safety, and community resources. Volunteers who completed the eight-week series received a \$100 stipend. A Northwest Health Foundation Helping Hands grant paid for the stipends, mileage, refreshments, and training materials.

Ninety percent of the participants indicated that the training was very worthwhile and all of the participants declared that their



perceptions changed about the potential of a brief encounter with a homebound person. Staff is exploring ways to offer this valuable training in the future.

For more information, please contact Sandy Karsten, Senior Meals Program Manager at (541) 682-4378 or skarsten@lco.org.



SENIOR MEALS PROGRAM
Good Food.....Good Friends.....Good Times

Register Now for 2005 Oregon Planning Institute



**Ellen Lowe,
Keynote Speaker**

Registration is now open for the 2005 Oregon Planning Institute (OPI), to be held on Thursday and Friday, September

15 and 16, at the University of Oregon. This year's conference will provide a venue to discuss the challenges and opportunities of Oregon's land use system under the theme *The Promise of Paradise*. After LCOG Director George Kloepfel welcomes attendees, Eugene Mayor

Kitty Piercy will deliver opening comments, and the keynote address entitled *Reclaiming OUR Oregon* will be presented by political lobbyist Ellen Lowe. Ms. Lowe works on a spectrum of issues including work for the Oregon Law Center, Oregon Food Bank, Basic Rights Oregon, the Columbia-Willamette branch of United Way, and many, many more.

Session tracks cover a spectrum of issues including; economic development, transportation planning, smart development, environmental justice, and legal and legislative issues. Sessions will provide a forum to vision a future for Oregon's land use system, to understand legal issues for cities such as "standing" and Measure



37 claims, and to learn about innovative approaches to community issues.

OPI is sponsored through a sustaining partnership of the Association of County Planning Directors; City Planning Directors Association; Department of Land Conservation and Development; Department of Transportation, Lane Transit District, Planning, Public Policy and Management Department at the University of Oregon, and Oregon Chapter of the American Planning Association. Please register and review the conference program at <http://www.lcog.org/opi>.

Working AND PLAYING Together

Annual Picnic - Great fun for LCOG staff and family



"The Regionables" gave a great performance while staff and family mingled, ate, and enjoyed the festivities.

A sunny August afternoon at Alton Baker Park served as a delightful backdrop for this year's LCOG summer event. Staff and their families came together to share

musical talents, favorite food dishes, and skills in flipping burgers. Balloon artistry and face painting had picnic-goers decked out in full color. An excursion to a nearby

pond to net some dragonflies wrapped up the evening. It was a wonderful setting to get acquainted with staff and meet their families!



LCOG Assists in Obtaining Over \$7.5 Million in Loans

During the past year, LCOG has assisted Lane County small businesses in obtaining over \$7,500,000 in business financing. As a result of these loans, there will be a positive impact on the area's economy through job growth and retention. Over 200 jobs will be created and saved in the next two years. LCOG has 12 different loan programs, each with attractive rates and terms, to choose from. The dedicated Loan Program staff has over 60 combined years of financial experience to help our community's small businesses realize their potential.

LCOG is proud to help foster local businesses and keep jobs in Lane County.

Distribution of Loans in Lane County:			
BUSINESS TYPE	LOCATION	BUSINESS TYPE	LOCATION
Video Rental	Cottage Grove	Real Estate Agency	Eugene
Auto Body	Cottage Grove	Medical	Junction City
Environmental	Coburg	Door Manufacturer	Eugene
Accountant	Springfield	Hotel	Florence
Hotel	Creswell	Children's Entertainment	Springfield
Funeral Home	Florence	Retail/Architect Firm	Eugene
Restaurant	Springfield	Investments	Cottage Grove
Communications	Eugene	Imports	Eugene
Investments	Eugene	Bed & Breakfast	Florence
Waste Management	Cottage Grove	Medical	Springfield
Steel	Eugene	Hotel	Florence
Glass Service	Florence	Florist	Oakridge
Accountant	Eugene		

To reach LCOG's Loan Program staff, please call Steve Dignam at (541) 682-7450 or sdignam@lco.org.

Stimulate economic development in Lane County!

EASIER ACCESS TO CAPITAL HIGHER LOAN-TO-VALUE LOWER INTEREST RATES

Steve Dignam
Program Manager
(541) 682-7450
sdignam@lane.cog.or.us
www.lcog.org/admin/lend.html



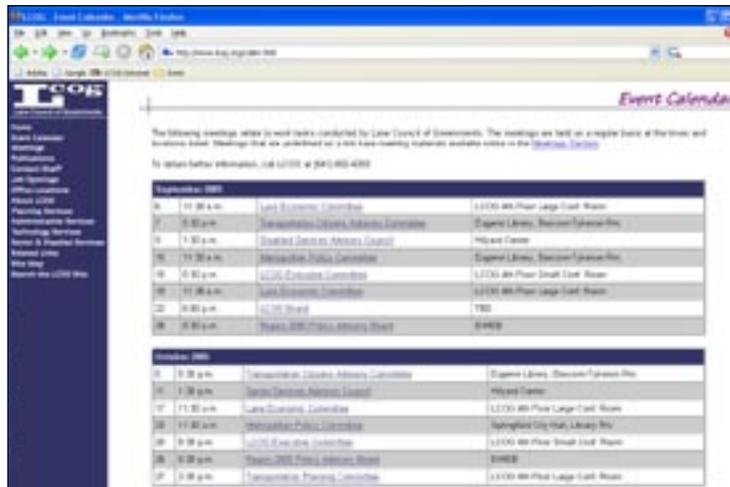
Small Business Loans
from Lane Council of Governments



Contributors to this new program: U.S. Economic Development Administration, Regional Investment Board, Lane County, Citizens Bank, Liberty Bank, Oregon Pacific Bank, Selco Credit Union, Siuslaw Bank, Summit Bank, Umpqua Bank, Wells Fargo Bank, West Coast Bank



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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