



Southwest RTC's Scenario Planning Workshop Links Regional Visioning to Economic Prosperity

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On April 28, 2011, Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council (RTC)

hosted a one-day workshop that demonstrated to Clark County leaders how an understanding of community values, scenarios analysis, and collaboration across the public and private sectors can give regions a competitive advantage and help them be more resilient in the face of an uncertain future.

The workshop's keynote speaker, Alan Matheson, Envision Utah's Executive Director, explained how a common regional vision has empowered the communities in his region to successfully compete for jobs and resources while preserving the attributes of their community they value the most.

Mr. Matheson shared that one of the most valuable things they discovered in their community values research was that what they held in common was much greater than what separated them - and that was true across religious and political

"A vision is not a forecast, but a strategy to preserve best options."

*Alan Matheson
Envision Utah Executive Director*

"Values are not what you find out in polls. We talk about that as being the "waves" that change with election cycles and what's going on in the economy. When we talk about values, we're talking about those enduring elements that really matter to us. They're the "tides" of life and if they change, they only change over generations, not just with what is happening in the world."

*Alan Matheson
Envision Utah Executive Director*

Utah is consistently ranked among the best in the nation:

- #1 best state for business and careers (*Forbes* 2010).
- 1st in the nation for economic outlook and competitive environment (American Legislative Exchange Council 2010).
- 1st for best quality of life (Business Facilities 2010).

Mr. Matheson asserted this success is a direct result of the region's standard "Envision Utah" approach to problem solving - they bring people together, figure out what's important to them, involve them in developing and exploring scenarios to test out potential strategies, and then collaboratively implement the strategies that perform the best based on the indicators people care about.

and demographic lines. Knowing that what people really want out of life is held in common is something that facilitates better communication and working relationships.

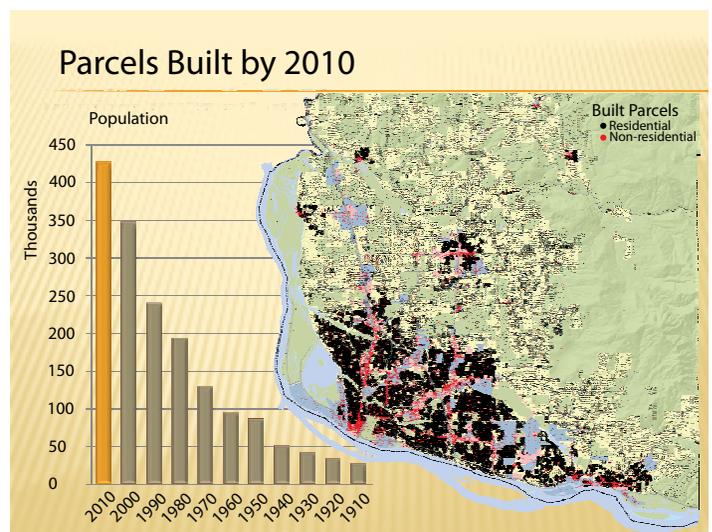
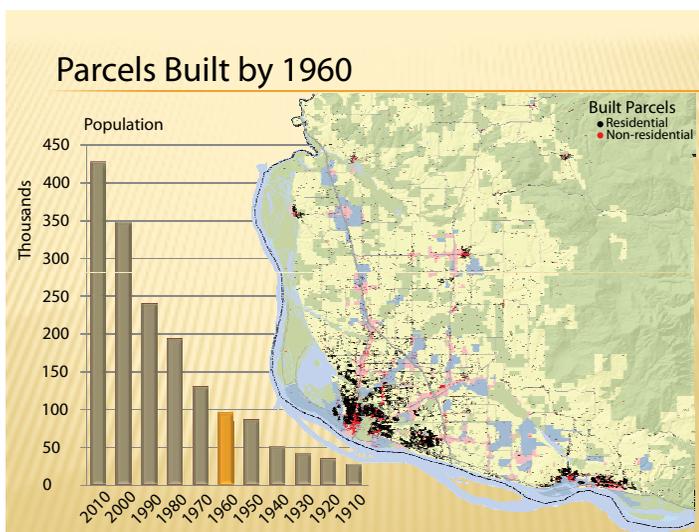
RTC Executive Director, Dean Lookingbill, walked the workshop participants through a series of maps and graphs that showed the transportation and land use changes in Clark County over time.

Mr. Matheson identified the benefits of this approach, including that it:

Mr. Lookingbill then suggested the audience consider:

- Gives the public choices and ownership of their region.
- Allows you to see the long-term consequences of today's decisions.
- Addresses uncertainty by allowing you to experiment with what might happen given different potential futures.
- Provides a quick, painless way to test policy choices.
- Reveals and promotes new strategies.
- Fosters consensus and political will.

- What future growth scenario would best help Clark County to emerge from our low economic time to an improved and more sustainable economy?
- How might our changing demographic, economic, and environmental conditions change the [development] model for Clark County?



Excerpt From RTC presentation showing developed parcels in Clark County in 1960 and 2010.

To wrap-up the workshop, Molly Coston, Washougal Councilperson and previous RTC Chair, shared her thoughts. Ms. Coston indicated one of the main ideas she would be taking back from the workshop was that scenario planning was values-driven, personal and engages our communities.

She also noted that scenario planning:

- Educates community members and gets them talking with each other.
- Gives community members a stake in the outcome.
- Allows community members to propose different solutions.
- Helps community members evaluate different ideas.

“We tend to take a look at what we’ve got, we take our data, we roll them into graphs, we project into the future, we extrapolate what life is going to be, but we never really look at it as a point of values. I think we can really start to hone in on that, and take a look at values, and figure out what those are and engage our communities... This may be a good time for us to implement scenario planning.”

Molly Coston
Washougal City Councilperson

The workshop was sponsored by the Federal Highway Administration and the Volpe Center in partnership with RTC and WSDOT’s Community Transportation Planning Office.

Following the workshop, the RTC Board of Directors directed staff to move forward by further defining how the Clark County region might implement a scenario planning process. In order to do this, RTC will be putting together a working committee to more clearly identify the purpose, process, timing, leadership, and budget needed to carry out a transportation and land use scenario planning process.

For more information on the scenario planning workshop (including video recordings):

- [RTC Scenario Planning Workshop Event Website](#)

For more information on scenario planning (including a recently published guidebook):

- [FHWA Scenario Planning Website](#)

New Planning Resources

[The 2011 Community Preference Survey - What Americans are looking for when deciding where to live.](#)

Research sponsored by the National Association of Realtors® updating 2004 research on Americans’ preferences regarding the communities in which they live. (March 2011)

[The Role of FHWA Programs in Livability: State of the Practice](#)

Summary. This research paper highlights the current state of the practice relative to the implementation of livability principles within the context of the Federal-aid highway program. (March 21, 2011)

[Managing Wet Weather with Green](#)

Infrastructure. Green infrastructure is an approach to wet weather management that is cost-effective, sustainable, and environmentally friendly. (Website)

Upcoming Webinars & Events

May 11, 2011, [Excellence in Transportation Planning](#). (Webinar)

May 24, 2011, [Forecasting Land Use Activities \(4\): PECAS - Spatial Input-Output Frameworks](#). (Webinar).

FHWA Webinar Series - [“Overcoming the Challenges of Congestion Pricing.”](#) Dates Throughout 2011.

June 13, 2011, [Short Course on Local Planning](#). (Sumner, WA)

Grant Opportunities

[Community Planning Grants for Plug-In Electric Vehicles](#).

The U.S. Department of Energy is offering \$5 million for communities and regions to plan and implement policies for the development of local/regional for plug-in electric vehicle charging infrastructure. Grants will range from \$250,000 to \$500,000 and are due June 13th.

WSDOT Updates *Airports and Compatible Land Use Guidebook*

This winter WSDOT Aviation updated its [*Airports and Compatible Land Use Guidebook*](#) to help airports, communities, and jurisdictions work cooperatively and proactively toward preventing incompatible development around airports in Washington State. The guidebook is also a great resource for state and regional transportation planners to learn more about promoting healthy connections between airports and communities through their planning work.

Land use compatibility is a key factor for airport preservation because of the effect adjacent land uses can have on airport activities. Development around an airport can reduce property available for operations and safety areas, create obstructions to the airspace needed for aircraft to safely approach and depart the runway, reduce clear airspace needed to support advanced technologies, and generate opposition to existing and future airport activities. Jurisdictions can use the tools and resources found in the guidebook to develop policies and regulations that discourage the encroachment of incompatible land uses adjacent to public use general aviation facilities.

WSDOT Aviation's *Airports and Compatible Land Use Guidebook* provides a step-by-step checklist to make land use compatibility resources near airports easier to use and understand. The checklist communicates state guidelines and best management practices, and directs users to more detailed reference materials.

Along with Aviation's *Airports and Compatible Land Use Guidebook*, that provides tools to assist in land use planning efforts, there is also a [video](#) available to give further insight into the guidebook's content. The video is available on YouTube or Windows Media Player.

WSDOT Aviation did extensive outreach on the *Airports and Compatible Land Use Guidebook* to obtain feedback from numerous stakeholders. It also plans to update this guidebook on a regular basis to reflect new and emerging best management practices for aviation land use compatibility planning. If you have questions about the guidebook, please contact WSDOT Aviation Planner, Carter Timmerman at 360.651.6312 or timmerc@wsdot.wa.gov.

The *Airports and Compatible Land Use Guidebook's* Six Step Process for Airport Land Use Compatibility Planning are:

1. Get Started and Gather Data.
2. Delineate the Airport Influence Area.
3. Identify Compatibility Concerns.
4. Prepare Comprehensive Plan.
5. Adopt the Comprehensive Plan.
6. Implement the Airport Land Use Compatibility Policies.

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