

## **Additional questions for Get Plugged In**

The Clackamas County Board of County Commissioners asked staff to answer unasked questions from the Get Plugged In event held Feb. 23, 2010. Here is a sampling of those questions and answers. Some questions have been edited for brevity.

**Q:** *Considering the millions of dollars taxpayers spend acquiring, protecting, restoring Oregon white oak ecosystems through the Metro Nature in Neighborhoods program, what actions will Clackamas County take to match those efforts by protecting the woodlands at the 3-Creeks Natural Area? Will the county consider constructing an access road to the ODOT property for parking?*

**A:** The County has placed a high value on this area for many years. At one time, the site – now known as the Harmony Community Campus (HCC) -- was comprised of a number of smaller parcels owned by private parties and the North Clackamas School District. In the 1980s the County led efforts to consolidate these parcels and plan for eventual use of the area as a regional center for commerce, recreation and education. These efforts included flood control measures, clean-up and environmental remediation.

In recent years, the county has revised its transportation connectivity plans in response to public feedback.

- The Harmony Community Campus Conceptual Master Plan calls for the preservation of the area with low-impact recreational activities (trail systems, wildlife viewing areas, etc.) in consideration of the diversity of wildlife habitat
- The planned Sunnybrook Boulevard west extension has been dramatically reduced in size to preserve as much of the natural environment as possible. If any significant trees are removed, two new ones will be planted. The roadway has been narrowed, the alignment has been adjusted to avoid as many significant trees as possible and we are considering innovative stormwater treatment options.

As for the possibility of a road to the ODOT property we have looked at many options. However, one of the major needs for the roadway is to alleviate current and future traffic congestion at the Clackamas regional area, including at the intersections of Harmony and 82<sup>nd</sup> Avenue. Building a road that just goes to a parking area would not help resolve these larger traffic issues.

**Q:** *How many years of urban renewal district money will it take to complete the McLoughlin Area?*

**A:** The length of an urban renewal district depends on many factors -- including the size of the area, the goals of the district and the projects planned for the area – that affect how much money can be raised in the district. Urban renewal districts in Clackamas County have lasted for an average of 20 years, but at this time we don't know how long a McLoughlin area district would need to last in order to achieve its goals.

**Q:** *What happens there, especially to services such as police, fire, in the interim [while an urban renewal district is in place] ---are they diminished?*

**A:** Other taxing jurisdictions' share of tax revenue from property inside the urban renewal area boundary is frozen for the length of the urban renewal plan implementation period. These special districts continue to receive tax revenue based on the property value when the urban renewal district began, but not at a higher rate until the urban renewal district ends. At that time, because of massive public investments made during the life of the urban renewal district, those taxing jurisdictions see considerable increases in tax collections. Over the life of an urban renewal area, assessed values can rise to more than twice the amount projected without urban renewal.

Service districts can also benefit from an urban renewal district in another way. Urban areas with blighting influences often have aging structures, which can place a high demand on service providers. Urban renewal provides for new development and re-development that uses up to date building codes and advanced fire protection technology, which often decreases the need for services. Since taxing district representatives are part of the planning process for the urban renewal district, they provide valuable input on the types of projects in the area and ways to increase the efficient provision of services.

Taxing jurisdictions, such as special service districts, are also protected from significant tax impact by state limits on how much an urban renewal district may collect over the life of the district.

To learn more about urban and rural reserves click here:

<http://www.clackamas.us/transportation/planning/reserves.htm>

**Q.,** *Is it appropriate for the county to spend tax dollars on public art displays along McLoughlin Blvd. in Oregon City?*

**A:** The displays in question are part of Oregon City's McLoughlin Promenade Restoration project. For more information, contact the City's project manager at 503-496-1550.

**Q:** *When one of your goals is to help those in the community, how can you justify closing public health clinics?*

**A:** It is Clackamas County's goal to assure primary care services to as many county residents as possible, and to do so within available funds. The current Primary Care Clinic in Oregon City – which is inaccessible to many Clackamas County residents due its location and associated transportation challenges – will remain open until 2012 while we audit primary care needs county-wide and develop a solution that better meets the needs of the larger population. In the future, services may be provided by a private provider and not necessarily delivered by County staff directly.

To learn more about public health clinics in Clackamas County click here:  
[http://www.co.clackamas.or.us/community\\_health/](http://www.co.clackamas.or.us/community_health/)