

CLATSOP COUNTY STRATEGIC PLANNING OCTOBER 2020 INFRASTRUCTURE FOCUS AREA

Introduction

Clatsop County is developing a Strategic Plan to serve as the cornerstone of an annual process to link planning, budgeting, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation. The Board of Commissioners retained Portland State University, Center for Public Service, to facilitate and guide the planning process. The County has (1) defined a Vision, Mission, and set of Values; (2) assessed past, current, and likely future conditions that suggest areas that could benefit from special attention; and (3) evaluated and selected the most important areas for the Plan to address in FY 2021-22 (Focus Areas).

In August 2020, the Board of Commissioners identified five focus areas for the Plan to address, and created work groups to develop reports describing issues and evaluating potential actions to address them:

- Governance
- Infrastructure
- Economic Development
- Environmental Quality
- Social Services

In September 2020, the Infrastructure Focus work group subcommittees (Affordable Housing, Child Care and Broadband) convened to discuss areas for focus and improvement over the next 12-18 months. Participants include:

Infrastructure Focus Area: Subcommittee Participants

Affordable Housing	Child Care	Broadband
Lianne Thompson, District 5 Commissioner	Lianne Thompson, District 5 Commissioner	Lianne Thompson, District 5 Commissioner
Don Bohn, County Manager	Don Bohn, County Manager	Don Bohn, County Manager
Leslie Ford, Columbia Pacific CCO	Dan Gaffney, former school administrator/advocate	Deborah Simpier, Althea
Jennifer Purcell, State of Oregon, Regional Solutions	Eva Manderson, NW Regional CCRR	Dave Neys, Sunset Amateur Radio Club
Stuart Emmons, Architect	Kevin Leahy, CEDR and SBDC	Bob Duehmig, OHSU and Clatsop Community College
Jenny Pool Radway, Consejo Hispano	Jennifer Purcell, State of Oregon, Regional Solutions	Ayreann Colombo, COL-PAC
Todd Johnston, Northwest Oregon Housing Authority	Courtney Bangs, Commissioner-elect	Jim Gardner, Information Technology

Viviana Matthews, Clatsop Community Action		Lindsay Davis, OSU Extension Services
Gail Henrikson, Community Development		Joe Frannel, Eastern Oregon Telecom

Description of Focus Area

For the purpose of the Strategic Plan, Infrastructure has been defined to include three priority subareas for further consideration and collaboration during this initial planning period: Affordable Housing, Broadband and Child Care. The County recognizes this definition does not encompass all the infrastructure needs of the community; but represents the emerging priorities of the Board of Commissioners and the various focus groups at this time. As strategic planning will be an annual exercise, other Infrastructure actions will be evaluated and included in future iterations of the County plan. The Economic Development and Social Services focus groups also prioritized elements of these subareas as part of their deliberations.

Clatsop County endeavors to convene, research best practices and partner with diverse stakeholders to develop actionable plans to expand the infrastructure in these key areas. Beyond convening and/or participating in planning efforts, Clatsop County may continue with one of three roles: direct service, partner, or supporter. In terms of these three action areas, most commonly the County will serve the role of partner and/or supporter. Direct service provision will primarily come from our not-for-profit and private sector partners.

The County will pursue our role in a spirit of teamwork, productivity, transparency/accountability, effectiveness and efficiency, and equity/fairness. Future planning priorities will likely expand to other critical infrastructure needs such as dikes/levies, consolidated 911 and emergency communications infrastructure.

Recommended Actions

Overview

After a brief introduction to the strategic planning process, the various subcommittees developed actions for focus and investment. The proposed actions were then placed into tiers. Tier 1 refers to items that will be a primary focus during FY 2021-22, while recognizing select actions will be multi-year engagements. Tier 2 refers to items that will be worked on as time and resources are available; if not completed in the FY 2021-22 cycle, they will roll over as part of FY 2022-23 considerations.

A summary of the work of each subcommittee follows:

Affordable Housing

The goal of the Affordable Housing Subcommittee is to expand the capacity for public, private and not-for-profit sectors to create and maintain safe, quality and affordable housing options at all income levels to meet the evolving housing needs of the greater

Clatsop County community; including units for residents with unique/special requirements.

The Affordable Housing Subcommittee identified three action areas for FY 2021-22, all of which have been identified as Tier 1.

Task #	Tier 1 - Foundational
1	Form a working group to develop strategies for the County to be an active and strategic partner in the development of public, private and not-for-profit affordable housing units. Also identify county-owned property potentially suitable for affordable housing; initiate a process to engage public, private and non-for-profit partners in site-specific development options/strategies.
2	Form a working group to identify barriers and gaps to affordable housing and to identify what types of housing are missing.
3	Create a dashboard of all housing units in the development pipeline, including <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Location 2. Type 3. Number of units/bedrooms 4. Affordability, and 5. Development Timeline

Detail of Tier 1 Recommendations: Affordable Housing

1. Form a working group to develop strategies for the County to be an active and strategic partner in the development of public, private and not-for-profit affordable housing units. Also identify county-owned property potentially suitable for affordable housing; initiate a process to engage public, private and non-for-profit partners in site-specific development options/strategies.

How the action will address an issue of importance

This action will reference the Clatsop County Affordable Housing study, the Clatsop County Planning Commission Affordable Housing recommendations and the Oregon Housing and Community Services (OHCS) Regional Housing Needs Analysis Methodology as a starting-point for strategy and tools development specific to the role for Clatsop County.

Clatsop County is not presently active in the development and provision of affordable housing. A number of options as to a future County role will be evaluated and assessed, including 1) options to provide flexible funding for predevelopment expenses for not-for-profit housing developers through a housing fund or other mechanism; 2) evaluation of regulatory barriers in the siting, design and construction of affordable housing; 3) options/strategies to generate affordable housing units in rural areas; 4) strategies to address utilities and other infrastructure needs; 5) access to County owned property suitable for affordable housing; and 6) strategies to address homelessness – amongst others.

The County will network closely with not-for-profit developers, social service partners and others.

How the action fits with other current policies and activities

The County and city partners agreed to collaborate and fund a study of affordable housing needs in 2018. Angelo Planning Group was contracted to perform project management and facilitation; with Johnson Economics tasked with preparing a Clatsop County Housing Trends and Needs Analysis. The trends and needs analysis was released in January 2019 and the final report in July 2019. Affordable housing is consistently identified by business, education, not-for-profit, faith and government sectors as a primary concern for the livability, public health, and safety of our community(ies).

Who does what and how

Clatsop County will retain a consultant to lead a process to discuss options for the County to partner and support the development of affordable housing.

Timeline

Clatsop County will initiate this process during the 2nd quarter of FY 20/21, with a Board discussion of findings and recommendations in the 4th quarter.

Funding Requirements

Funding for a consultant to facilitate and provide technical assistance is estimated at \$20,000 and is included in the FY 20-21 adopted budget.

Description	One-time Expense	Annual/Ongoing	Total
Consultant	\$20,000	TBD	\$20,000

Monitoring Progress

Regular Board of Commissioner and stakeholder briefings and updates.

2. Form a working group to identify barriers and gaps to affordable housing and to identify what types of housing are missing.

How the action will address an issue of importance

While providing a wide variety of affordable housing options at all income levels is the broad public policy goal; it is also critical to understand the barriers and gaps to affordable housing and to address the more specialized housing needs of our community. This process will endeavor to identify the barriers and gaps and identify the full range of housing needs to serve everyone in our community.

How the action fits with other current policies and activities

This action item is complimentary to other priorities and will be informed by a number of State, County and regional data sources; and the participation of local social service not-for profit agencies.

Who does what, and how

Clatsop County will convene a process to identify, discuss and make recommendations for addressing barriers and gaps to affordable housing and to address more specialized housing needs. This will include participation of public, private, not-for-profit and faith-based stakeholders.

Timeline

This action item will be performed during the first two quarters of FY 21-22.

Funding Requirements

It is anticipated a consultant will be retained to facilitate the conversation with stakeholders and provide technical assistance and data analysis.

Description	One-time Expense	Annual/Ongoing	Total
Consultant	\$20,000	TBD	\$20,000

Monitoring Progress

Regular Board of Commissioner and stakeholder briefings and updates.

3. Create a dashboard of all housing units in the development pipeline, including:
 1. Location
 2. Type
 3. Number of units/bedrooms
 4. Affordability, and
 5. Development Timeline

How the action will address an issue of importance

Collecting, analyzing and sharing data is an important element of moving strategically forward with the development of affordable housing for all income levels and special requirements. This platform will be a tool for public policy, project focus and, ideally, new partnerships.

How the action fits with other current policies and activities

This action item is foundational to efforts to move strategically in meeting the broad affordable housing needs of our diverse community. It is consistent with Board goals, priorities and initiatives.

Who does what, and how

Clatsop County is currently partnering with Clatsop Community Action (CCA) to develop this dashboard.

Timeline

It is anticipated the dashboard will be complete at the end of the third quarter FY 20-21.

Funding Requirements

The project is being supported by existing staff and expertise. At this time, no additional resources are anticipated.

Description	One-time Expense	Annual/Ongoing	Total
TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD

Monitoring Progress

Regular Board of Commissioner and stakeholder briefings and updates.

Broadband

The Broadband Subcommittee views broadband infrastructure through a number of unique, yet interrelated lenses, including: economic, equity, education, health care, social, and urban/rural. Reliable, affordable and adequate access is seen as an essential factor for the resiliency, livability and stability of our greater community.

To this end, the subcommittee developed two Tier 1 and one Tier 2 recommendations. Tier 1 refers to items that will be a primary focus during FY 2021-22, while recognizing select actions will be multi-year engagements. Tier 2 refers to items that will be worked on as time and resources are available; if not completed in the FY 2021-22 cycle, they will roll over as part of FY 2022-23 considerations.

Task #	Tier 1 - Foundational	Tier 2 - Administrative
4	Develop and implement a geographic specific strategy to improve internet connectivity to the most underserved communities in the short/medium term. Begin with the Jewell/Elsie/Vinemapple area based on the highest percentage of families without internet service. Develop a process that can be replicated in other communities in future phases.	Evaluate land use and policy implications for the expansion of 5-G wireless.
5	Participate in the COL-PAC Broadband Action Team (BAT) process to develop a strategic plan to improve the hard fiber infrastructure for Columbia, Clatsop, Tillamook and western Washington County.	

Details of Tier 1 Recommendations: Broadband

1. Develop and implement geographic specific strategies to improve internet connectivity to the most underserved communities in the short/medium term. Begin with the Jewell/Elsie/Vinemaple area based on the highest percentage of families without internet service. Develop a process that can be replicated in other communities in future phases.

How the action will address an issue of importance

The availability, performance, reliability and affordability of internet access is a public policy concern across all geographic areas; but especially the rural underserved areas of Clatsop County. Due to the online demands placed on individuals and families by COVID-19, access is not merely a convenience, but rather a lifeline that has implications for education, employment, health care, and socialization. By leveraging existing infrastructure and focusing on partnership and collaboration; the goal is to improve internet access via public/private partnership in the short-term. Longer term hard infrastructure investments will come at a later time through a planning process described in Action Item #2.

How the action fits with other current policies and activities

Improvement of internet access is vital for economic development, quality education, expanded access to healthcare, and forming/maintaining social connections. This action item allows the County, in partnership with other stakeholders and interests, to address equity and access issues for families and individuals in specific geographic areas.

Who does what, and how

Clatsop County will convene a diverse work group of public, private and not-for-profit representatives to document, analyze and evaluate short-term investments to improve internet access in a specific geographic area. This does not contemplate the installation of broadband infrastructure (see action item #2), but rather building upon existing infrastructure to improve internet access through wireless and other means. A process template will be developed for application to other geographic areas of the County.

The goal of this action item is to timely address the internet access issues in underserved rural communities, until such time a longer-term infrastructure plan and investment strategy is in place.

Timeline

The facilitated process will begin in earnest the second quarter of FY 20-21. The goal is to develop a capital improvement and service delivery strategy by the end of

the third quarter of FY 20-21. Implementation of the plan will be dictated by securing funding for infrastructure investments (state, federal and local resources). The first geographic area to be addressed is Jewell, Elsie and Vinemaple (Jewell School District) – based on data that estimates 30% of families in the area are currently without internet access based on information provided by Northwest Educational Services District (NWESD). This is the highest percentage in Clatsop County, followed by Astoria School District (16%) and Knappa School District (15%).

Funding requirements

Description	One-time Expense	Annual/Ongoing	Total
Facilitation	\$ 20,000		\$20,000
Infrastructure	TBD	TBD	TBD

Monitoring progress

Regular Board and stakeholder briefings/updates.

2. Participate in the COL-PAC Broadband Action Team (BAT) process to develop a strategic plan to improve the hard fiber infrastructure for Columbia, Clatsop, Tillamook and western Washington County.

How the action will address an issue of importance

Under the leadership and technical expertise of COL-PAC; Clatsop, Columbia, Tillamook and western Washington County will collaborate on a process to develop a Broadband Infrastructure Strategic Plan. This long-term plan will focus on the hard infrastructure improvement and investment.

How the action fits with other current policies and activities

This action is consistent with federal, state and local goals to improve broadband infrastructure and provides a process and expertise to develop a comprehensive and long-term strategy.

Who does what, and how

This action item will be led by COL-PAC with active involvement of other members and stakeholders through the Broadband Action Team (BAT).

Timeline

The goal of the BAT is to complete a comprehensive hard-infrastructure broadband strategic plan by spring 2021. The strategic plan will form the basis for additional study and research – leading to grant applications and funding strategies for capitalization of the required infrastructure. This part of the process is anticipated to take 3-5 years.

Funding requirements

Description	One-Time Expense	Annual/Ongoing	Total
TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD

Monitoring progress

Regular Board and stakeholder briefings/updates.

Child Care

The Child Care Subcommittee met as part of an established group of stakeholders collaborating on ways to expand and improve child care options in Clatsop County. Members of various Focus Groups have identified child care as an essential element of meeting the economic, livability, and public health and safety goals of our community.

The focus group discussed a number of broad goals, including 1) expanding options and capacity; 2) support child care businesses through technical assistance and training; 3) provide culturally relevant child care and child care options outside normal business hours/days; 4) identifying diverse funding sources (state, local government, business, and philanthropic) and 5) addressing living wage for child care providers.

To this end, the subcommittee developed one Tier 1 recommendation. Tier 1 refers to items that will be a primary focus during FY 2021-22, while recognizing select actions will be multi-year engagements.

Task #	Tier 1 - Foundational
6	Clatsop County to convene, participate and support an enduring effort to identify and implement a broad range of strategies to expand and retain quality, diverse and sustainable child care resources. This process includes a literature review of best practices deployed in other communities and strategies to leverage public, private and not-for-profit expertise and resources.

Details of Tier 1 Recommendations: Childcare

1. Clatsop County to convene, participate and support an enduring effort to identify and implement a broad range of strategies to expand and retain quality, diverse and sustainable child care resources. This process includes a literature review of best practices deployed in other communities and strategies to leverage public, private and not-for-profit expertise and resources.

How the action will address an issue of importance

The current lack of affordable and accessible childcare hinders education and employment opportunities for working families within the county. In turn, countywide economic growth is repressed and families are under stress. This action will create and support a local forum for continuous and coordinated planning and actions.

How the action fits with other current policies and activities

This action is complementary and foundational to addressing many of the overarching goals for the community as identified in the various focus groups. Quality, accessible and affordable child care is the gateway to employment, early education, safety and security. In order to meet our vision as a complete community; we will endeavor to address this vital component of infrastructure.

Other ongoing activities include a Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD) audit to identify areas where the County zoning code may be out of sync with state regulations regarding home-based childcare. The purpose of the audit is to identify ways to make home-based childcare more prevalent. Clatsop County and six cities are participating in the audit process.

Who does what, and how

Clatsop County will convene, participate and support a process to engage multiple stakeholders in a sustainable forum to identify and collectively implement programs and services in support of child care initiatives. This process has already been initiated and will continue for the foreseeable future.

Timeline

The Child Care work group has been meeting and will continue to meet with the leadership and support from the County.

Funding requirements

The work group will be supported by County staff. Future financial requirements will be determined as the planning process continues.

Description	One-time Expense	Annual/Ongoing	Total
TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD

Monitoring progress

Regular Board and stakeholder briefings/updates.

Tier 1 Summary Estimated Expenses

Subcommittee	Task	One-time Expense	Annual/Ongoing	Total FY 21-22
Affordable Housing	1	\$ 20,000*	TBD	\$ 0
	2	\$ 20,000	TBD	\$ 20,000
	3	TBD	TBD	TBD
Broadband	4	\$ 20,000	TBD	\$ 20,000
	5	TBD	TBD	TBD
Child Care	6	TBD	TBD	TBD
	Total	\$ 60,000		\$ 40,000

*included in FY 2021 adopted budget