

PLACE MATTERS

Jill Fuglister, *Coalition for a Livable Future*

“We all react, consciously and unconsciously, to the places where we live and work, in ways we scarcely notice or that are only now becoming known to us...our ordinary surroundings built and natural alike, have an immediate and continuing effect on the way we feel and act, and on our health and intelligence. These places have an impact on our sense of self, our sense of safety, the kind of work we get done, the ways we interact with other people, even our ability to function as citizens in a democracy. In short, the places where we spend our time affect the people we are and can become.”

— Tony Hiss, *The Experience of Place*, 1990

In many ways, the formation of CLF, our mission, and our work is an acknowledgment that place matters to all of us. As Tony Hiss points out, places can have profound impacts on our ability to live healthy, fulfilling lives. Places can inspire or discourage us. Places can impoverish or enrich us. CLF exists to ensure that our region is a great



Oaks Bottom © Michael Sewell

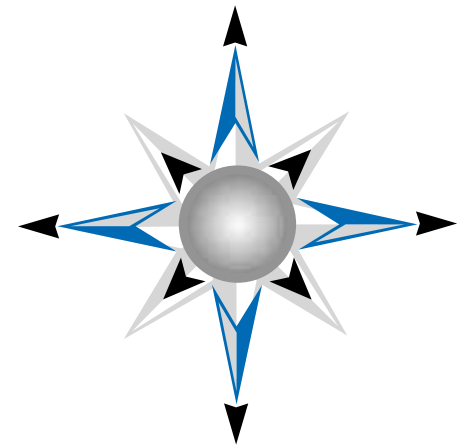
place—inclusive, vibrant, green, and healthy—for everyone now and in the future.

The theme of this issue of *Connections* is that place matters. Each of the authors approach this thesis from a different angle to reveal how our region's physical, human, cultural and social qualities influence our collective work to protect and enhance regional livability. They describe elements of our history and how it provides sources of strength and inspiration as we confront complex challenges to making this place more livable for everyone now and in the future. They express why this is a great place and remind us of why it is so important that we all work together to protect and improve it.

The political and civic culture of this place matters. Portland business leader **John Russell** shares his perspective on what he calls “the Portland mindset,” and describes how this mindset has influenced our quality of life, and what this means for the future. (See page 3.)

The natural environment of this place matters. Spectacular views of Mt. Hood and ready access to nature are defining qualities of our region. Salmon, the great blue heron, Oregon grape, and groves of soaring firs are part of our identity and culture. Nature and the city have long been viewed as conflicting and incompatible. **Bob Wilson** describes the interaction between city and nature, demonstrating that wild places are an integral part of Portland's urban fabric. (See page 4.)

The history of our region's communities matters. Damascus has become the focal point of the region's current deliberations on a potential urban growth boundary expansion later this year. In part because of this focus, CLF, in partnership with 1000 Friends of Oregon, undertook the Damascus Community Design Workshop this year to illustrate what sustainable and equitable urban development could look like in the Damascus area. Two members of the Committee for the Future of Damascus, **Marty Beaudet and Julie Wagner**, provide us with a brief history of the Damascus area and share how they are trying to engage in



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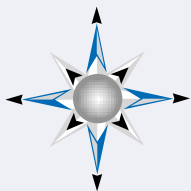
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Connections is the journal of the **Coalition for a Livable Future (CLF)**, a network of nonprofit organizations in the Portland-Vancouver metropolitan region who share a commitment to just, affordable and sustainable communities. Founded in 1994, we have grown from a small group of dedicated activists to over 60 diverse member organizations.

CLF holds regular public forums for discussion of regional livability topics. CLF Members meet six times a year in locations throughout the metro area to learn about and discuss current issues of interest, and make policy decisions for the Coalition. Our Board of Trustees meets monthly to make decisions about budget and fund raising issues, personnel, strategic planning and interim policy issues. Coalition members are invited to join one of several working groups devoted to specific issues, including affordable housing, greenspaces and natural resources, food policy, and transportation reform.

Who's Who in the Coalition for a Livable Future...
The following people are elected members of CLF's Board of Trustees.

- Jo Ann Bowman**, Member at Large
- Ron Carley**, Urban Conservationist for Audubon Society of Portland
- Sam Chase**, Executive Director of Community Development Network
- Mike Houck**, Urban Naturalist for Audubon Society of Portland
- Steve Johnson**, Member at Large
- Mary Kyle McCurdy**, Staff Attorney for 1000 Friends of Oregon
- Marcy McNelly**, Board Member of American Institute of Architects
- Brian Newman**, Board Member of Willamette Pedestrian Coalition
- Loretta Pickerell**, Member of Friends of Goal 5
- Ian Slingerland**, Community Organizer for Community Alliance of Tenants
- Ross Williams**, Outreach Coordinator for Citizens for Sensible Transportation

CLF Staff members include:
Jill Fuglister, Program Coordinator
Teresa Huntsinger, Assistant Coordinator

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The Work of the Coalition for a Livable Future (CLF)

In addition to research and public education, the Coalition advocates for progressive regional policy regarding land use, transportation, housing, public investment, economic equity, food access and the environment. CLF draws connections between growth management and social justice. We recognize that the economic and social health of one city depends on the health of its neighbors. Thus, we strive to promote "regionalism," a way of looking for the links between the cities and counties within our urban area, and beyond.

The Benefits of Joining a Coalition

The Coalition currently consists of over 60 member organizations. By joining the Coalition, your organization is helping to create a stronger, collective voice for a just, sustainable region. A diverse membership allows us to understand each other's issues and concerns, to find common ground, to share resources and information, and to collaborate in seeking funding for our common work.

Responsibilities as a Coalition Member

There are a variety of ways to be involved as a member of the Coalition for a Livable Future. Members must support CLF's mission and objectives (see page 15). Members may participate in any of our working groups, as well as our full Coalition and Board of Trustees meetings, and other CLF events.

CLF Member Profiles

Meet Two Members of the Coalition's Board of Trustees



Jo Ann Bowman

Jo Ann Bowman brings many years of community involvement and progressive leadership experience to CLF's board of trustees. She served as State Representative from District 19 in Multnomah County and was staff assistant to the Multnomah County Chair. Jo Ann has been involved in many community organizations, including the NAACP, City Club of Portland, World Affairs Council of Oregon, and the Interstate Firehouse Cultural Center. She currently works as a consultant providing facilitation, community planning and public policy development. In addition to CLF, Jo Ann currently serves on the board of Western States Center, Western Prison Project, LOTUS and the African American Chamber of Commerce.

Ian Slingerland



Ian Slingerland is a Community Organizer for the Community Alliance of Tenants, a grassroots tenant-controlled organization that was formed in 1997 in response to Oregon's increasing growth and decreasing supply of affordable housing. Ian directs implementation of CAT's issue organizing campaigns. His first work with CLF was as a member of the Regional Affordable Housing Advocates speakers bureau. Ian eagerly anticipates the day when the region's resources will be marshaled to tackle the persistent urban blight of wealth concentration.

Nurturing the Portland Mindset

By John Russell



Portland has a lot going for it: mountains, rivers, parks and more. But just as important as these obvious attributes is something I call the “Portland mindset.” A mindset is a collection of commonly held beliefs or attitudes.

In my classes in graduate business school, I had become attuned to the concept of a “corporate mindset,” in which one can infer general behavioral characteristics about corporations. I translated that

concept into the notion of regional mindsets, and it was clear to me then, and it is equally clear to me now, that Portland has a dramatically different mindset than other American cities in two fundamental ways. First, we Portlanders believe that the future is ours to create and to control. Residents of other regions throw up their hands and claim that nothing can be done to solve their problems. The second belief of the Portland mindset is what I call the “non-selfish” view of property ownership. The selfish point of view is that “This is my land, and I can do anything I damn well please with it.” That point of view ignores the responsibility that property owners have to contribute to the public good.

From personal experience, I can contrast the attitude that we can control and impact our future to the apathy and passivity of residents of the Seattle region where I grew up. Clearly, these attitudes are self-fulfilling. Passive people will not influence their futures, and proactive people will.

➤ *Nurturing the Portland Mindset continued on page 11.*

Place Matters continued from cover.

current local and regional and planning efforts to create and protect the things they want and value in their community. (See page 6.)

The food we grow and eat in our region matters. The Willamette Valley is one of the most fertile agriculture producing areas in the nation, and we are blessed with a bounty of delicious locally grown products. Food security and food sustainability issues¹ are beginning to gain the attention they deserve in our region. **Greg Higgins**, owner and chef of Higgins Restaurant, shares a thought-provoking piece on the role of regional cuisine in creating sustainability in Portland. (See page 8.)

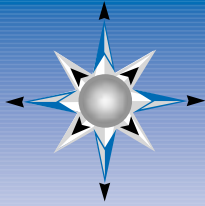
The distribution of social needs and economic resources in this place matters. **Myron Orfield** was in Portland recently promoting his new book, *American Metropolitics: The New Suburban Reality*. We learned that while Portland is doing much better by many social and economic measures than most other large metropolitan areas in the country, trends indicate rapidly growing disparity between our suburban cities. (See page 10.)

These are but a few of the many, many stories that explain why the Portland region is the place that it is and what this means as we work to create a better future for ourselves, our children and our grandchildren. These stories inspire us and give us strength to overcome the challenges facing this unique place we call home. ✧

¹ Food security is the ability of all persons at all times to access an adequate, nutritious, culturally acceptable diet through local, non-emergency sources. Food sustainability is growing, processing, distributing, and consuming food in ways that ensure economic, social, cultural, and environmental health now and in the future.

CLF member organizations:

- American Institute of Architects, Portland Chapter
- American Society of Landscape Architects
- Association of Oregon Rail and Transit Advocates
- Audubon Society of Portland
- Better People
- Bicycle Transportation Alliance
- Cascadia Behavioral Healthcare
- Citizens for Sensible Transportation
- Clackamas Community Land Trust
- Columbia Group Sierra Club
- Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission
- Columbia River Region Inter-League Organization of the League of Women Voters
- Community Action Organization
- Community Alliance of Tenants
- Community Development Network
- Creative Information, Transformation, Education
- Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon
- Elders in Action
- The Enterprise Foundation
- Environmental Commission of the Episcopal Diocese of Oregon
- Fair Housing Council of Oregon
- Fans of Fanno Creek
- Friends of Arnold Creek
- Friends of Clark County
- Friends of Goal Five
- Friends of Rock, Bronson and Willow Creeks
- Friends of Smith and Bybee Lakes
- Friends of Trees
- Friends of Tryon Creek State Park
- Growing Gardens
- Hillsdale Neighborhood Association
- Housing Partners, Inc.
- Jobs With Justice
- The Justice and Peace Commission of St. Ignatius Catholic Church
- Keepers of the Waters
- Northwest Housing Alternatives
- 1000 Friends of Oregon
- Oregon Council of Trout Unlimited
- Oregon Environmental Council
- Oregon Food Bank
- Oregon Sustainable Agriculture Land Trust
- People’s Food Co-op
- Portland Citizens for Oregon Schools
- Portland Community Land Trust
- Portland Housing Center
- Portland Impact
- REACH Community Development Corporation
- ROSE Community Development Corporation
- Sisters of the Road Cafe
- Southeast Uplift Neighborhood Program
- Sunnyside Methodist Church
- Tualatin Riverkeepers
- Tualatin Valley Housing Partners
- Urban League of Portland
- The Wetlands Conservancy
- Willamette Pedestrian Coalition
- Willamette Riverkeeper
- Woodlawn Neighborhood Association



The CLF has several working groups made up of folks interested in a variety of livability issues. Working groups guide the Coalition's activities, and they are the best way for interested individuals and organizations to get involved with CLF. Working groups are open to any who wish to participate! For more information, please contact the working group chairperson

The Washington County Housing Advocates Group is a coalition of organizations and individuals working to promote healthy diverse communities in Washington County by stabilizing and increasing the supply of affordable and accessible housing. We strive to achieve four goals: (1) coordinating advocacy, (2) organizing communities, (3) educating the public, and (4) developing resources. We meet the first Wednesday of each month at Beaverton City Hall. For more information call Tualatin Valley Housing Partners, 503-641-5437



Regional Affordable Housing Advocates (RAHA) RAHA consists of individuals who are interested in the housing crisis facing the Portland region, as well as those whose lives and work are impacted by the lack of affordable housing. We meet quarterly to strategize about how to inform the development of good affordable housing policy. For more information contact Sam Chase, Community Development Network, sam@cdnportland.org, 503-335-9884, or call Ian Slingerland, Community Alliance of Tenants, ian@aracnet.com, 503-460-9702.

Life on the Edge

By Bob Wilson
From *Wild in the City:
A Guide to Portland's Natural Areas*



© Michael Wilhelm

are playgrounds, picnic areas, old orchards and gardens, not to mention a couple of old city reservoirs; houses creep up on every flank; and from its summit, Portland's skyscrapers seem even closer than their actual four-mile distance.

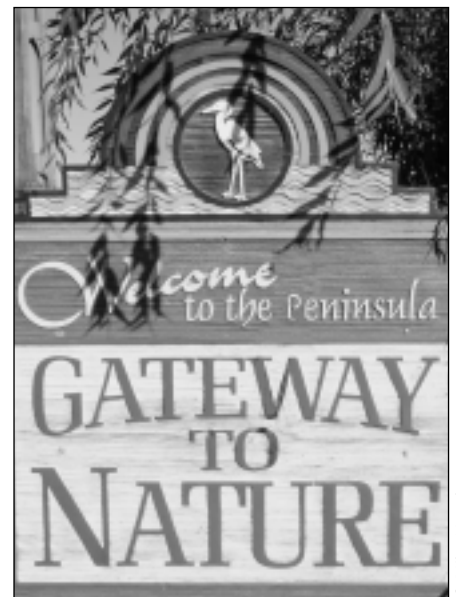
Still, the wild has been deliberately retained. The Olmsted brothers, recognizing the old volcano's potential early in the century, made several recommendations to preserve its pastoral qualities, and remarkably a good bit of Mt. Tabor's wild character remains. The result is that a spring sunrise can evoke the songs of 30 different songbirds, while nightfall can call forth the low whistle of a Screech Owl, or bats winging over one of the reservoirs. And in the grove that stands near the summit there can even be found such deep-woods species as Winter Wrens and Chestnut-backed Chickadees.

According to the prevalent twentieth century view, humanity and nature are polar opposites, each an affront to the other. But places like Mt. Tabor reveal a nature that includes people and point toward a way that people can include nature in their plans. If we let them, they can change how we see our place in the natural world.

Such places also suggest another small change in how we look at things. Five hundred years ago, restless explorers—chafing under old-world constraints—brought their dissatisfactions to a new world. For five centuries they and their descendants have looked toward the exotic for their salvation. With the great voyages of exploration as models, we continue to look at other countries, other cultures, other landscapes as far more attractive than our own.

Ecologists tell us that things are a little livelier at the edge where two ecosystems come together. And experience shows us that more wildlife can be found in this *ecotone* than in either one of the adjacent ecosystems. It is difficult to think of the hard edge between the country and the city as an ecotone. To the modern sensibility it is less like a meeting place than a radical disjunction. Still, I think there is value in seeing how indistinct this edge can be.

Portland is blessed with many such beautiful edges—places where the wild and the city are joined. Take Mt. Tabor for example. More than almost any place I know, it brings the country and the city together. First of all, Mt. Tabor is deeply connected to the human environment. On it



© Mike Houck

However, Portland's "urban wildernesses" help to moderate that prejudice and remind us of the innate fascination of the near-at-hand.

While such places can help us to formulate new ways of looking at the natural world, the edge between the urban and the natural isn't always an easy place to be. It is in fact a hard edge, placing great stress on both nature and culture. It calls on nature for tremendous adaptability and on culture for tremendous restraint. But as those who work to knit nature and culture together in the urban environment know, this edge is also a place of surpassing creativity—suggesting new possibilities for nature and for culture. It's a wonderful place to call home. It's wild. It's where the action is. ✧

Bob Wilson is the director of the Audubon Society of Portland's Nature Store.



"The belief that the city is an entity apart from nature and even antithetical to it has dominated the way in which the city is perceived and continues to affect how it is built. The city, the suburbs, and the countryside must be viewed as a single, evolving system within nature."

— Anne Whiston Spirn, *The Granite Garden*, 1984

No sentiment better characterizes the work and mission of CLF's Natural Resources Working Group. Another inspiration for our work is Fredrick Law Olmsted who, at the turn of the last century, firmly believed in the social justice value of parks in the urban environment. The wealthy, Olmsted argued, could get into their carriages and head out to the rural hinterlands, while the poor were left behind. In Olmsted's view, parks were places where people of different races, ethnic backgrounds, and economic status could mix. Thus, urban parks and Greenspaces were valued for their democratizing influence.

Today, we are attempting to rekindle the connection between social justice and environmental issues through the integration of parks and Greenspaces, affordable housing, living wage jobs, access to transportation, good urban design and creating compact urban communities through the Coalition for a Livable Future.

The CLF Natural Resources Working Group's number one priority over the last two years has been Metro's adoption of a regional fish and wildlife habitat protection program. This is also clearly an opportunity to address the recent listing of salmon and steelhead under the Endangered Species Act. The regional fish and wildlife habitat protection program (also called Goal 5) will ultimately specify where development is and is not allowed and where streams must be restored or enhanced.

Other issues the Natural Resources Working Group has focused on are Metro's Regional Greenspaces acquisition program, the Healthy Portland Streams program, Washington County's VisionWest planning process, the City of Sherwood's Raindrops to Refuge project, and ensuring parks and habitat restoration are integrated into Portland's North Macadam redevelopment plans.

For more information on the CLF Natural Resources Working Group please contact Ron Carley at 503-292-6855 x-112, rcarley@audubonportland.org or Mike Houck at 503-292-6855 x-111, houckm@teleport.com.

The Transportation Reform Working Group (Transformers) consists of individuals who are interested in reforming transportation throughout the Portland region. We meet the first Wednesday of the month, from 3:30-5:00 p.m. at 1000 Friends of Oregon (534 SW 3rd Ave., 3rd floor), to share information and strategize about how to inform the development of good transportation policy. For information call Ross Williams, Citizens for Sensible Transportation 503-225-0003 or ross@cfst.org.



The Natural Resources Working Group consists of individuals who are interested in maintaining, preserving and expanding our system of Greeninfrastructure, which includes parks, streams, rivers and wetlands, floodplains and natural hazard lands. They work to affect policy that impacts water quality, fish and wildlife habitat, and other natural resources both within and outside the Urban Growth Boundary. For more information: Mike Houck or Ron Carley, Audubon Society of Portland 503-292-6855 or houckm@teleport.com.



The Food Policy Working Group explores how to support regional farming and gardening by increasing access to regionally produced food, and protecting and initiating effective land use policies that strengthen community food security. For more information, call Jill Fuglister, 503-294-2889, or jill@clfuture.org.

Community Spirit Guides Damascus

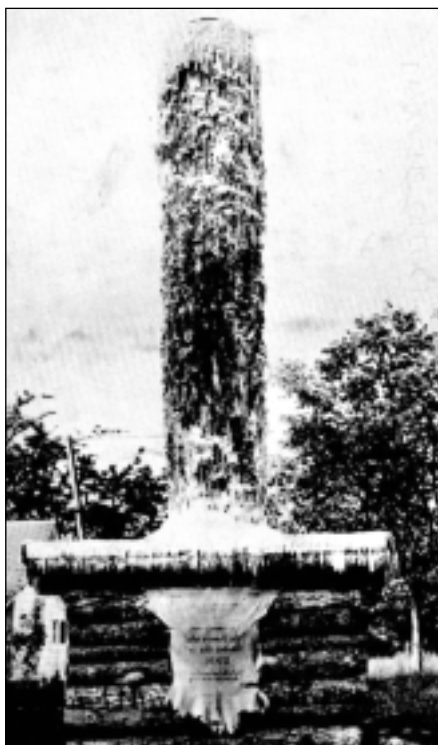
By Marty Beaudet and Julie Wagner

This June, experts from throughout North America joined with CLF members and Damascus area residents to develop a fresh vision for suburban development that exemplifies smart, fair, and ecological development principles. The results of the Damascus Community Design Workshop, a project of CLF and 1000 Friends of Oregon, are intended to be useful to local and regional residents, local governments and Metro as they decide whether, when and how to expand the regional UGB. The principles and designs developed in Damascus can also serve as a model for other communities.

The Design Workshop was facilitated by Patrick Condon, the James Taylor Chair of Landscape Architecture at the University of British Columbia. Condon is well known for working with diverse stakeholders to produce alternative models for livable and complete communities that work with, not against, the natural capabilities of the site.

The goals of the workshop included:

- apply design principles for urbanization that respect the unique visual quality and rural history of the area;
- use land efficiently;
- protect and restore natural areas and ecological processes important to people, fish and wildlife;
- preserve clean and natural flow in area streams;
- improve air quality;
- protect and create opportunities to grow food;
- provide for a fair share of the region's new jobs;
- include ample housing, schools, public infrastructure and facilities and transportation choices in every neighborhood; and,
- preserve and create cultural opportunities throughout the community.



This four-ton wax candle demonstrates the Damascus community's resourcefulness. It burned for 100 days to honor Oregon's Centennial celebration in 1959. (Photo courtesy of the Rykken Family)

Damascus has had a sense of community since the first land claims over 150 years ago. John A Forbes, who arrived in Damascus in 1875, wrote back to Iowa recounting the school functions attended by 200 to 250 members of the community. Nearly 85 years later during Oregon's centennial, Damascus became the heart of a statewide celebration. The local community came together once again and built a four-ton candle for \$1.50 that would burn for 100 days during the festivities, a project Portland had scrapped because of cost.

Today that same spirit continues as the community builds unity through schools, civic and sports organizations, service providers and local businesses. A unique kinship is felt in this community. Residents can sit down with descendants of the early settlers and hear tale after tale of how it was in Pioneer times and how Damascus was built. Today, as new families settle here they are adding to the history of the community.

Several structures in the area bear witness that Damascus has long been a community. Still standing at the intersection of Anderson and Chitwood roads is the one-room

schoolhouse built in 1876, the same year the land for the adjacent Pioneer Cemetery was donated. Visitors can walk through the cemetery reading the names on the headstones. Or they can drive down local roads bearing the same names—Barlow, Tillstrom, Hoffmeister, Wiese are just a few.

Often the cornerstones of a community, churches were also established in the early days. One story tells of how pioneer circuit rider J.H. Wood came to Damascus and erected the Union Church in 1888 after he was no longer allowed to use the local schoolhouse. The churches in our area are some of the strongest fellowships around. They open their doors to community organizations and offer families a place to come together.

Without question, the pioneers and the residents that have followed, have and will revere the lush green, the rolling hills and buttes and hallowed waterways that brought and kept them here. The original settlers thrived on fish, wild game and berries. Damascus residents and farmers still use the land to sustain them, both for pleasure gardening and for profit.

Local residents have come together over the years to form a number of community organizations. Damascus has a water district, a volunteer fire department, a newspaper, and a grange hall. As were the early settlers, many of the business owners in Damascus today are also residents of the community. Until recently, Damascans have operated without the need for local governance. The only unifying vision they



needed stemmed from the beauty outside their back door and a sense of shared history. But now the unity of the community is threatened by several factors.

Damascans face the likelihood that the Urban Growth Boundary will be expanded into their community at the end of 2002, forcing urbanization. Recently it has become clear that various entities outside Damascus have their own vision for the community.

Damascus is faced with the possibility of annexation into neighboring cities, which would split the area geographically and slice into its rich history. Such a move would put governance in the hands of remote political entities that might not look out for the best interests of local citizens. Damascans are also concerned about unchecked development they cannot control; development that would force more traffic onto their already overloaded highway and lush country lanes.

In the same spirit as those who founded the community, a group of local citizens, including descendants of the region's original pioneers, recently formed the Committee for the Future of Damascus. The Committee will study governance options for Damascus and strive to educate members of the community about all aspects of the impending urbanization.

In early June the Damascus area was the subject of an urban design workshop sponsored by 1000 Friends of Oregon and The Coalition for a Livable Future. Organizers presented design concepts that called for preserving natural resources, creating housing for all income levels, and building a complete community.

Reactions to the workshop among the local population have been varied. Many were concerned that yet another group of "outsiders" was making plans without concern for the wishes of longtime residents. Others, confused by jargon-laden slides and speeches, were merely stunned at the flurry of activity that portends changes they neither want nor understand.

Yet for those local residents who are actively looking to shape Damascus's future, the workshops provided a much-needed insight into the processes that will be necessary to preserve the way of life they have come to cherish in the community. Many of the new concepts learned in these sessions will be taken to heart as Damascus residents decide for themselves what to make of their community in light of impending urbanization.

Striking a balance of jobs, housing, preservation of green spaces, and a respect for the rich pioneer history the community shares will be a challenge for Damascus residents as the new century unfolds. It is certain that the spirit that built Damascus will continue to shape its destiny for generations to come. ✧

Marty Beaudet is a freelance writer. Julie Wagner is the editor of the "Damascus Observer" newspaper and was a participant in the Damascus Community Design Workshop. Both are members of the Committee for the Future of Damascus.

Many of the historical notes in this article can be found in *Days and Ways of Old Damascus*, by Lottie Maybee and Forrest Dale Forbes, © 1962 Damascus Road Press.

Damascus is rich in natural resources, including forested areas, buttes, streams, and productive farmland. (Photo courtesy of 1000 Friends of Oregon)

The resulting designs illustrate a community of 100,000 to 160,000 new residents and 40,000 to 60,000 new jobs. Of the 13,600 acres in the study area, 6,540 are used for housing and mixed-use projects, 4,000 for natural areas, and 500 for industry and business. Neighborhoods have commercial centers, offering shopping and jobs. The designs preserve existing homes while incorporating new ones at a variety of densities.

To better preserve the character of Damascus, the designers replaced the proposed Sunrise Highway with a network of parkways and boulevards. The design uses "green streets," that allow stormwater to filter into the ground rather than being funneled into pipes. The streets run mostly on a grid system that follows current property lines, and is designed to allow room for the natural network of streams, forested areas, and open space.

CLF and 1000 Friends of Oregon are currently presenting the final products throughout the local community, the region, and beyond. We are encouraging Metro to adopt the project's recommendations for this or any future UGB expansions. You can view the results of the design workshop on our website. Visit www.clfuture.org. For more information, contact Karen at 1000 Friends of Oregon, 503-497-1000 or Karen@friends.org.



Strengthening the Regional Food System

The Coalition for a Livable Future recognizes that a healthy regional food system is a core aspect of livability, and that food issues should be integrated with CLF's other regional planning work. The goal of the Coalition's Food Policy Working Group (FPWG) is to increase access to and consumption of regionally produced food by promoting sustainable farming, gardening, and local food markets and protecting and initiating effective land use policies that strengthen community food security.

To better understand and address these challenges, the Food Policy Working Group has engaged in several efforts to raise awareness of regional food system challenges and help strengthen the regional food system.

One of these projects, the Neighborhood Food Network, is an assessment of the local food system in N and NE Portland. The assessment includes a survey of 200 local residents, a set of food asset maps, (i.e., grocery stores, community gardens, farmers markets, emergency food sources, etc.), and recommendations for future policy initiatives or programs to improve the local food system.

The FPWG also advocated for the formation of a Portland/Multnomah Food Policy Council, which came to fruition in May when the Portland City Council unanimously voted for it. The Food Policy Council will explore local initiatives that support and sustain a vital regional food system and improve access by everyone to healthful, affordable food in our city.

CLF Food Policy Working Group members are also involved in Community Food Matters, a new initiative to build a collaboration among farmers, processors, retailers, chefs, and non-profits to strengthen the regional food economy. Community Food Matters convened a two-day forum in April engaging over 100 participants to examine these critical topics and begin to identify community priorities.

Cuisine as a Catalyst for Sustainable Community Development

By Greg Higgins



The term "Regional Cuisine" is widely believed to be defined as a body of recipes and cookery techniques handed down from generation to generation. The basis of these recipes and techniques are a common group of seasonally available ingredients originating from within that given region. The region is determined by a set of climatic conditions and geographic boundaries such as mountain ranges, river systems, bodies of water, broad plains and deserts.

Present day regional cuisines, like many other cultural vehicles, have become threatened by a broad range of factors. Mass transportation, global marketing, corporate consolidations and food technology advances have led to a homogenization of the world's cuisines. Historically, regional food systems helped define and create the diverse collections of cuisines world-wide. A neo-regional cuisine or a re-establishment of criteria to create a geographic-focused sourcing of food products within a climactic region would serve to accomplish several desirable goals. At "Higgins" we strive to re-create the concept of a regionally bounded cuisine. We focus on ingredients that are fresh, local, seasonal and sustainable. These products may be agricultural—fruits, nuts, vegetables, herbs, livestock or poultry; wild-crafted—mountain vegetables, fungi or sea vegetables; seafoods—fin fish, crustacea or mollusks; or artisanally produced—cheeses, wines, beers, distillations, breads, etc., but they have in common a concern for sustainability and regionality.

Community is a place-specific concept; it exists within a region, within a group of people sharing and interacting. Using food as a cultural and regional vehicle, we're able to foster this sense of community to mutual benefit.

Our choice to celebrate this rich bounty and diversity of our "place" lends not only complexity, nourishment and flavor to our cooking but innumerable other benefits to our lives within our community. Community is a place-specific concept; it exists within a region, within a group of people sharing and interacting. Using food as a cultural and regional vehicle, we're able to foster this sense of community to mutual benefit.

This approach to sustainable local food helps strengthen local economies, reduces excessive transportation of food, helps preserve and protect agricultural land uses, promotes environmental consciousness, strengthens urban/rural relationships, improves personal health through cleaner, fresher foods and builds communities through socio-economic relationships.

Our restaurant functions as a hub to bring together growers, artisanal food producers, foragers, fisherman, ranchers, our staff and our customers. Each plate of food represents the interactions of these diverse groups of people as well as the soil, air and waters of our lands. These relationships extend further than our own business and are mirrored in a group called the Chefs Collaborative. As a national board member and the Portland Chapter Chair, I'm fortunate to learn and share more concepts related to sustainable food production. With over a thousand members nationwide and 50 in the Portland-metro area, our group strives to teach ourselves, our customers, and our children about sound food choices. In the Portland area we conduct a number of programs focused on these principles.



Our Farmer-Chef Connection (in its second full year) is an attempt to bring farmers, ranchers and chefs together to facilitate better access to locally produced foodstuffs for those chefs, and broaden local markets for those producers. Our resulting Farmer-Chef guides are popular with both chefs and growers alike. The Edwards School garden and classroom program, headed by co-chair Linda Colwell, is a model program to teach kids about local food from seed to table, to compost and back. Co-Chair Krista Anderson runs our public outreach program at the Portland Farmer's Market where we share products and ideas with the market shoppers. These and other programs allow us to step out of our restaurant kitchens and share our passion for food and community.



Closely related to the idea of regional cuisine is the notion of a “foodshed.” The term foodshed, borrowed from the concept of a watershed, describes the “flow” of food from the area where it is grown to the place where it is consumed. Recently, academics and community activists have begun to use the term foodshed as a way of looking at and thinking about regional, sustainable food systems in contrast to the global food system where the average food item travels 1,300 miles from farm to table. Global food goods are deceptively inexpensive, shielding the hidden—environmental, social and human health-related costs.

Portland’s fertile consciousness about many of these vital topics is giving rise to diverse efforts to grapple with some of the more difficult facets of a community-based food system. (See sidebar.) Policymaking and sound planning are essential to steer things toward maximizing the wealth of resources we have within our region.

...eating is not only a biological necessity and a core part of our culture and community, it is also a political act.

In his 1989 book, *The Pleasures of Eating*, Wendell Berry wrote, “A significant part of the pleasure of eating is in one’s accurate consciousness of the lives and the world from which the food comes.” This elegant, yet simple statement encourages us to become aware of the dramatic differences between a regional foodshed and regional cuisine versus the global food system and “fast food cuisine.” It also reminds us that eating is not only a biological necessity and a core part of our culture and community, but it is also a political act. It says that we can create and sustain a vital regional food system — through visionary leadership, innovative policy and programmatic solutions, and personal choices—one plate at a time, by sharing and celebrating all that is precious in our Oregon. ✧

Greg Higgins is owner and chef of Higgins Restaurant in downtown Portland. He is an active proponent of sustainable food practices and is a board member of Chef’s Collaborative.

In addition to getting involved with these efforts through CLF’s Food Policy Working Group (contact Jill at 503-294-2889), your daily choices can support your regional food system.

- Purchase local, seasonal, sustainably produced food. Sources include shareholder farms, farmers’ markets, u-picks and farmstands, grocery stores and food co-ops.
- Grow your own food. Whether in your own yard or in a community garden, growing your own food and sharing your harvest helps build community, enhances the urban landscape, and re-connects people with nature.

To learn more about eating locally and seasonally in the greater Portland area, purchase a copy of *Portland’s Bounty*, a guide book designed for people seeking to make food choices that strengthen our local food system. It is full of resources for providing food to people in need, growing and preserving food, and purchasing locally grown food. *Portland’s Bounty* is available for \$8.50 plus shipping (\$3 for the first book and .50 for each additional book). It can be ordered from EMO/INEC, 0245 SW Bancroft Street, Suite B, Portland, OR 97201 or by calling 503-736-0835. It can also be found at several area bookstores.





Myron Orfield

Understanding Cities and Suburbs

By Jill Fuglister and Teresa Huntsinger

The Coalition for a Livable Future had the great pleasure of welcoming Myron Orfield back to Portland this June. Orfield's demographic and political analysis of metropolitan development was a catalyst for the formation of CLF in 1994. He was in Portland recently to promote his new book, *American Metropolitics: The New Suburban Reality*, and update us on how Portland's socioeconomic trends compare with other places. Orfield's latest research can help us think about the differences among the cities that make us the metropolitan area and what this means as we try to address the regional problems we face.

American Metropolitics looks in-depth at demographic characteristics of suburban communities from the 25 largest metro areas in the United States. By examining indicators for schools, taxes, infrastructure costs, racial make up, and physical growth, Orfield groups suburban communities into one of three major categories: at risk, bedroom-developing, and affluent job centers.

Based on this typology, he finds that 40 percent of the population of our nation's largest metropolitan regions lives in "at-risk" suburbs—places where there is a growing need for social services, aging or insufficient infrastructure and stagnant tax resources. Another quarter lives in "bedroom-developing" suburbs, fast-growing places that are home to many middle-class families with children, but few jobs. In these places a lack of commercial tax base and a high ratio of children often lead to overcrowded classrooms and low per-pupil spending. Just seven percent of the population lives in "affluent job centers"—suburbs with few social needs and a steady flow of jobs, high-end housing and retail outlets. But even in these places all is not well. Residents of these communities have often led the movement against congested roads and loss of open space, embracing moratoriums to restrict development.

As a result, Orfield finds that the notion that all suburbs are affluent and share the same characteristics is a myth. The "new reality," and a central thesis of Orfield's book, is that suburban communities are different from one another and that most suburbs are struggling with growth and development challenges. Furthermore, his research indicates that some suburbs are more troubled than the central cities they surround. He argues that struggling suburbs are at a greater risk of rapid decline once social stress appears and less likely to rebound because they lack the large central business districts and cultural amenities of central cities.

Orfield reminds us that each of the municipalities within a region compete with one another for tax resources and economic development. The results are that a majority of communities are unable to provide adequate infrastructure and services to their residents.

Regional solutions

To address these challenges, Orfield recommends regional solutions that include increased fiscal equity among local governments, with an emphasis on reinvestment in central cities and older suburbs; coordinated land-use planning, with a strong emphasis on affordable housing; and improved governance and leadership at the regional level. He asserts that every community benefits from these strategies:

- ❑ For central cities, regionalism means enhanced opportunities for redevelopment and for the poor.
- ❑ For stressed suburbs, it means stability, community renewal, lower taxes and better services.
- ❑ For rapidly growing bedroom-developing communities, it means sufficient spending on schools, infrastructure and clean water.
- ❑ For affluent job centers, regional cooperation offers the best hope for preserving open space and reducing congestion.

How does Portland compare?

Orfield's comparison of cities around the nation finds that communities in the Portland region display fewer signs of distress than most regions. Unlike the urban centers of most metropolitan regions in the country, the city of Portland has experienced considerable growth and investment over the past decade. Our downtown is strong and we are unique in that Portland's tax capacity is near the regional average.

Overall, 51% of our region's population lives in at-risk suburbs as compared to 40% nationally. Among some of these at-risk suburbs are Canby, Woodburn, McMinnville, Beaverton and Gresham. A very low percent of the region's population—only 2%—live in affluent job centers like Lake Oswego. The region as a whole has relatively low levels of social and economic disparity as compared to other metro areas. Orfield credits this difference to our strong regional approach to growth management and our land-use planning system, specifically the Metropolitan Housing Rule.¹

However, Orfield notes some disturbing trends. Segregation by income in our region's elementary schools is increasing at the highest rate in the country, growing by 39% between 1992 and 1997. This is a dangerous trend because Orfield finds that when a place's schools begin to become poorer, in more cases than not, the community will follow. In addition, while the gap in tax capacity² between our region's cities is among the lowest of the 25 metro areas in the study, it is increasing rapidly.

What this means for us

CLF agrees with Orfield that we must maintain and build regional coordination and comprehensive land use planning. We also agree that we should consider adopting measures that equalize fiscal resources among jurisdictions, including tax-base sharing, as part of a comprehensive economic development strategy. Furthermore, we concur that affordable housing must be available in every community in the region. ➤

¹ The Metropolitan Housing Rule is a state land use rule that requires all cities within the Portland Metro Urban Growth Boundary to allow construction of apartment buildings and low-income housing.

Recently, regional leaders have expressed renewed interest in tax base sharing, and we hope they will continue to investigate this idea. Our lagging economy and a growing recognition that each city's economic competitiveness relies on the health of the entire region, have prompted the metro area's economic development agencies to collaborate in taking an inventory of the region's economic development strategies. Portland State University's Institute for Metropolitan Studies will conduct the research and help facilitate an evaluation of the inventory. These efforts could lay the groundwork for a much-needed comprehensive economic development strategy for the four-county metro area.

In the arena of affordable housing, we need to implement existing plans. A broad group of citizens, government representatives, advocates, and housing developers worked to adopt a Regional Affordable Housing Strategy in 2001, but efforts to implement this plan are moving more slowly than we had hoped. We must make it a priority to follow through on the progress that has already been made toward providing a balanced supply of affordable housing throughout the region.

In addition, Orfield's work has prompted CLF to conduct further research on regional equity. We plan to explore more deeply how the benefits and costs of our region's growth management and

community development policies have been distributed among different places and different people in the metro area. Knowledge and understanding of regional equity, not to mention solutions for improving regional equity, lag far behind other regional efforts. We hope this research will provide new insights and result in new solutions for increasing fairness and justice in our region. ✧

2 Tax capacity is a community's ability to raise revenues to fund schools, roads, and other basic needs.

3 In Orfield's tax-base sharing model, each city in a region would contribute a certain percentage of its total tax base to a regional pool. The pool would then be distributed back to jurisdictions according to a formula that gave preference to communities with more modest local resources.

Nurturing the Portland Mindset continued from page 3.

I believe that this attitude caused the Oregon legislature to pass the first (and still the only) set of statewide land-use planning goals. This same attitude caused us to create Portland's Downtown Plan in 1972 and the decade-old 2040 Plan sponsored by Metro, resulting in the creation of some of our most cherished public places and community assets, like Pioneer Square, light rail, and Waterfront Park. Each of these efforts involved thousands of people. As in many things, indifference is the real enemy, and Portlanders are anything but indifferent!

The second attitude (the contribution to the public good of property ownership) is the social underpinning for the zoning laws that have been in effect in this country for nearly 100 years. It is also the basis of federal regulations on stream quality and wetlands, for example, and of our statewide planning goals, as well as local regulations. The particular regulation that is unique to Oregon is our requirement of an Urban Growth Boundary around every municipality. Owners of property just outside that Portland metro area urban growth boundary would clearly enjoy an economic bonanza if the boundary didn't exist, but voters have repeatedly reaffirmed that urban growth boundaries are an important tool for ensuring that Portland continues to be a great place to live and for protecting farmland and forests for the public good.

If property owners outside the boundary were free to do as they choose, as some demand, sprawl would be the inevitable result. We would look like Atlanta, Phoenix and Los Angeles. In the short run, that circumstance would benefit a few people significantly, but all the rest of us would lose a lot and lose it forever. The non-selfish point of view recognizes and even endorses that component of land ownership responsibility.

I own interests in office space in downtown Portland. Would zoning for greater height or greater density or more parking be to my economic advantage? You bet it would. But I recognize that those regulations are necessary for downtown Portland to be the kind of place that in the long term is attractive and vibrant. All of us reap the benefits.

We shouldn't forget that our wonderful Portland mindset is fragile. The influx of newcomers to the Portland region (who didn't arrive with that mindset) ought to give us pause. It's been suggested facetiously that there should be a civics course at the border for newcomers to Oregon, where these attitudes can be inculcated as a condition of entry. Because that's impossible, it may be that groups like the Coalition and



By supporting zoning tools such as the Urban Growth Boundary, Portlanders have repeatedly reaffirmed the attitude that property owners have a responsibility to contribute to the public good.

publications like this can remind us how we got to where we are and help teach newcomers why things are different here. ✧

John Russell is an owner of downtown Portland office buildings. He currently serves as a member of the Oregon Transportation Commission and the Portland Development Commission, and he has served as a member of the Portland Planning Commission and the Portland Historic Landmarks Commission.

Program Updates

Grassroots Monitors Program

This spring, CLF launched its Grassroots Monitors Program with a training attended by 25 Washington County residents. The Grassroots Monitors Program is designed to help activists in Washington County be more effective by coordinating their work across issue areas. The idea, in the Coalition's tradition, is to create mutually beneficial partnerships. The program will help CLF identify critical points for CLF involvement in the local implementation of our regional goals, and it will help local activists build broad support for policies that improve their community's livability. The end purpose of this effort is to ensure that public policies of local governments build sustainable, equitable, and livable communities as part of a healthy metropolitan region.

Grassroots Monitors:

- Attend community meetings and public hearings.
- Speak up in support of policies that promote livability, sustainability, and social justice.
- Share information and coordinate activities with fellow monitors, CLF staff, and partner organizations via email listserv.
- Receive training opportunities to increase advocacy skills, and participate in networking events.

If you're interested in learning more about CLF's Grassroots Monitors Program, please contact Teresa at 503-294-2889 or teresa@clfuture.org.

Interstate Alliance to End Displacement

CLF is a lead partner in coordinating the Interstate Alliance To End Displacement (IAED). The IAED is made up of individual and organizational allies who work to increase the power of low-income residents and residents of color in the Interstate Urban Renewal Area to prevent further forced housing displacement and preserve affordable housing. These residents have now formed their own organization, Residents Organizing Against Removal (ROAR).

Interstate residents and their allies can celebrate a victory for community stabilization in the City of Portland's approval of a new short-term rent assistance program for residents of the Interstate neighborhoods who are at risk of displacement. The program will help ensure housing stability for low-income residents of the ten neighborhoods influenced by the Interstate Urban Renewal Area.

The Interstate Alliance will continue to support ROAR's organizing and policy advocacy efforts in Interstate, while joining with allies from around the region to address our long-term goal of creating new revenue sources for affordable housing construction and preservation.

CLF encourages its members to join the IAED by signing the "Declaration of Rights to Stable and Affordable Homes." Contact Teresa Huntsinger at CLF, 503-294-2889, or teresa@clfuture.org to request a copy of the declaration.

Member Forum Schedule

Plan Ahead! Here is a schedule of upcoming forums for CLF members.

September 19, 2002

8 - 9:30 am
Westside Economic Study Presentation
Co-sponsored by the Westside Economic Alliance

November 21, 2002

6:30 - 8:30 pm
Annual Meeting and Board Election

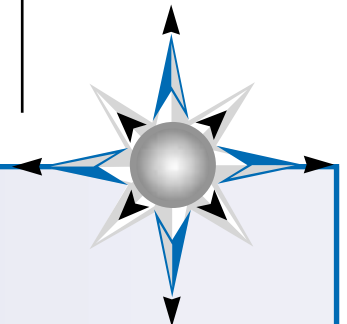
December 12, 2002

4 - 6 pm
Legislative Briefing

March 8, 2003

9 am - 2:30 pm
Membership Summit

Schedule subject to change. Contact Teresa Huntsinger at teresa@clfuture.org or 503-294-2889 or for location information.



How You Can Get Involved

The Coalition for a Livable Future is a network of organizations, but individuals can participate, too. Please contact Jill Fuglister or Teresa Huntsinger at 503-294-2889 or info@clfuture.org. You may also visit our website for more information at www.clfuture.org.

Join the Coalition for a Livable Future

While only organizations can be voting members of the Coalition, individuals play a very important role as our advisors and supporters.

You can participate in one or more of the following working groups: food policy; natural resources; affordable housing; and transportation reform. Please call 503-294-2889 to get connected.

Join our mailing list to receive *Connections*, the Coalition's biannual journal, and invitations to our educational forums.

To keep up to date you can subscribe to the *clinfo* electronic mail listserv, a weekly digest of Coalition activities and announcements. Just send your email address to info@clfuture.org.

Financial contributions will help the Coalition continue to coordinate the regional advocacy and education work of our non-profit members. Please make checks payable to the Coalition for a Livable Future. For your convenience, a remit envelope is included in this journal.

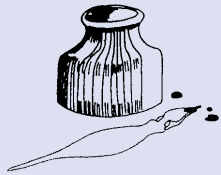
CLF Staff Update:

Kristen Teigen is happy to announce the birth of her son, Joshua. Unfortunately for us, Kristen decided to resign from her position as CLF's Development Coordinator after her parental leave.

CLF had two great temporary staffpeople this winter and spring:

Pamela Jimenez worked out of the offices of CLF member Growing Gardens. She coordinated the Neighborhood Food Network Project, an assessment of food accessibility in North and Northeast Portland.

Katelin Brewer, a student in PSU's Masters in Urban and Regional Planning Program, did an eight-week internship with CLF. Katelin organized the initial training that launched CLF's Grassroots Monitors Program for Washington County Residents.

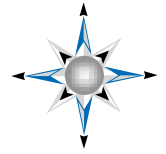


Have You Considered Providing for the Future of Greater Portland through Your Estate Plans? *Now's the Time!*

If you thought planned giving was only for the wealthy, you might be surprised about how easy it is for those with modest means to garner significant tax savings while ensuring a livable region for future generations. Planned giving, also known as estate planning, can meet two valuable goals at once! By including CLF in your plans, you can be guaranteed that a vision of a sustainable and equitable Portland region will continue for years to come. To discuss planned giving with CLF, please call Jill at 503-294-2889. Questions regarding the details of your plan and financial goals should be directed towards an independent, qualified financial advisor.

The Coalition for a Livable Future appreciates the continued support of our funders! We would like to thank and acknowledge the following:

Bullitt Foundation
Clark County
Community Initiatives Program of the Bureau of Housing and Community Development
Fannie Mae Foundation
Hetherington Fund and Amici-Mueller Oregon Fund of the Oregon Community Foundation
Rose E. Tucker Charitable Trust
United Way Focus Funding Program
Washington County



We would also like to thank current and recent volunteers!

Bill Barnes
Marj Cannon
Becky Channer
Kerri Creager
Lynn Dodson
Joan Frederiksen
Mike Litt
Bella Mata
Mark Maxcy
Bryan Ripka
Anthony Roy

We would like to thank the individuals who contributed to CLF in the last six months.

Sustainers Circle (\$500+)

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Lindsey McGrath

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➤ Thank you continued on page 14.

Thank you, continued


Shannon Katterle
Loren Kerkof
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Leslie Kochan
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Leslie Labbe
Thea Lander
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Ketzell Levine
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Cathy Zheutlin and Edis Jurcys

CLF Notes

 You are invited to subscribe to the clfinfo electronic mail list.

The clfinfo list is moderated by CLF staff. Most weeks you will receive one email message that is a compilation of action alerts and announcements from CLF members.

To subscribe, send your email address to:

info@clfuture.org

Visit CLF's web site!
www.clfuture.org

The site includes :

- free downloads of our publications
- results of the Damascus Community Design Workshop
- information about our working groups
 - an updated calendar of events
 - links to member organizations



CLF Wish List

In-kind donations to the Coalition for a Livable Future are tax-deductible and warmly welcomed! We are in need of:

Easel

Digital camera

Laptop computer with CD ROM

Powerpoint projector

Dictionary

Thesaurus

Please contact Jill or Teresa at **503-294-2889** if you can help us with donation or discounts on any of these items.

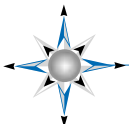
 CLF welcomes
**Clackamas Community
Land Trust,**
our newest member
organization

Our Mission

The purpose of the Coalition for a Livable Future is to protect, restore, and maintain healthy, equitable, and sustainable communities, both human and natural, for the benefit of present and future residents of the greater metropolitan region.

THE OBJECTIVES OF THE COALITION FOR A LIVABLE FUTURE

- 1. Protecting, maintaining and restoring the social and economic health of our urban, suburban, and rural communities, especially the distressed parts of the region;**
 - (a) Preventing displacement of low and moderate income residents and people of color as neighborhoods improve;
 - (b) Assuring easy and equitable access to employment and affordable housing throughout the region;
 - (c) Promoting the preservation and development of housing affordable to low and moderate income residents throughout the region;
 - (d) Protecting, maintaining and encouraging the development of living wage jobs, small businesses, and community-based and sustainable economic development throughout the region;
 - (e) Reversing the polarization of income and raising income and opportunities for the region's low-income residents;
 - (f) Preserving and enhancing a high quality public education system for all parts of the region and all residents;
 - (g) Encouraging the development of food production, processing, and distribution strategies that contribute to the local economy and ensure access by all community members to healthful and affordable foods within each neighborhood;
- 2. Developing a more sustainable relationship between human residents and the ecosystems of this region;**
 - (a) Reducing consumption (particularly of non-renewable resources), pollution, and waste;
 - (b) Changing the patterns of urban expansion from low-density suburban sprawl, which relies on the automobile and wastes valuable farm and forest lands and other natural resources, to more compact neighborhoods with a mix of uses conveniently served by public transportation;
 - (c) Expanding transportation options, including reducing dependency on automobiles and vehicle miles traveled per capita and increasing transit, bike and walking opportunities throughout the region;
 - (d) Protecting, restoring and maintaining healthy watersheds, fish and wildlife and their habitats, greenspaces, and other natural resources within and outside urban growth boundaries;
 - (e) Ensuring that the built and natural environment are integrated in a sustainable manner that supports neighborhood livability and protects wetlands, streams, water quality, air quality and the natural landscape and recognizes that both natural resources and humans are part of the urban ecosystem;
 - (f) Addressing past, present and future issues of environmental equity including: the siting and cleanup of polluting industries and waste disposal sites, remediation of toxic waste sites and water pollution, and the distribution of neighborhood parks, trails, and greenspaces;
 - (g) Encouraging the development of food production, processing, and distribution systems that regenerate and support natural systems and biodiversity, enrich neighborhood development patterns, and build community;
- 3. Assuring the fair distribution of tax burdens and government investment within the region;**
- 4. Promoting a diverse and tolerant society;**
- 5. Increasing public understanding of these regional growth management issues, developing effective democratic discourse, and promoting broader citizen participation in decision-making regarding growth in our region.**




Connections is the Journal of the Coalition for a Livable Future. Contact us at (503) 294-2889 or info@clfuture.org

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Coalition for a Livable Future Publications

- Portland Metropolitcs: A Regional Agenda for Community and Stability**
Myron Orfield's analysis of growth patterns in the Portland region. The full report includes 24 full-color maps.
(Published 1998) Download for free at www.cfuture.org
- Back Issues of "Connections" the bi-annual journal of the CLF** Download for free at www.cfuture.org
- Displacement: The Dismantling of a Community**
An in-depth study of the social effects of rising housing costs. The report consists of three sections: an Atlas of Affordability, showing changes that have taken place between 1990 and 1996; a set of interviews with people directly affected by displacement; and examples of effective tools that communities nationwide have developed to fight displacement.
(Published 1999) Executive Summary.....Free Full Report.....\$6.00
Download at www.cfuture.org

To order the Displacement Study full report from CLF, please fill out this form and mail it with a check or money order to:
Coalition for a Livable Future, 1220 SW Morrison, Suite 535, Portland, Oregon 97205.

Displacement Study _____ Copies @ \$6.00 each Amount Enclosed: \$ _____

Name _____

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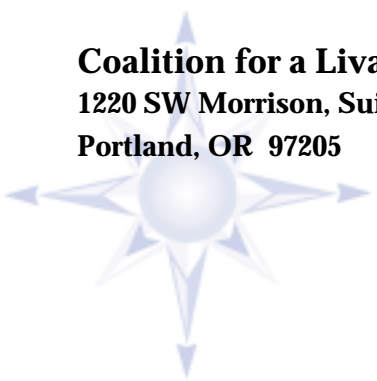
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