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Community members lead county visioning process

"Benton County is an incredible place to live. The expected growth increases of our communities are somewhere around 20,000. This is both exciting and daunting. We must find a way to respond to these growth patterns, so our Benton County remains a vibrant, healthy and safe place to live," said Matthew Gordon, member of the 2040 Thriving Communities Initiative council and pastor at First Christian Church.

The 2040 Thriving Communities Initiative is a community-driven exploration of what we like about where we live and how we want our county to be like in the future. Key to the initiative is the 2040 Thriving Communities Council that is leading the effort. The 2040 Council is a group of individuals representing a variety of interests, including the farming and logging industries, OSU, regional development, municipalities, the private sector, and community organizations.

Members of the 2040 Council have spent the fall months at community events and conducting listening sessions asking people in Benton County what they like about living in the county and what they want Benton County to be like between now and 2040. This visioning process will identify core values in order to address long-term, complex issues. The purpose of identifying core values is to align the work of government, citizen groups, businesses, and people to help us achieve our visions for the future.

"I'm excited to be part of this process," said Vincent Adams, member of the 2040 Thriving Communities Council and Extension Educator with the College of Public Health & Human Sciences at Oregon State University. "It is important that we engage with a full range of groups across the county to shape the vision of our shared future. We need to hear from as many people as possible. As a resident in this county, it matters to me that this effort does that."

View of the Willamette Valley from Mary's Peak. Photo courtesy of Peggy Lynch, 2040 Council member.

Individuals that work, live, and visit Benton County are encouraged to participate in a brief online survey that can be found at www.Benton2040.org. Responses are entirely anonymous and will be compiled and analyzed with comments gathered at public forums to identify the core values of communities within Benton County.

Core values are tentatively planned to be established in late fall 2016 in order to create a vision statement in early 2017. Once core values are identified, the 2040 Council will lead the establishment of strategies, actions, and measures of progress to guide future governance.

"At the county, we are seeing these population projections coupled with impacts of climate change like increased risk of forest fires and

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Community members continued...

shifting precipitation rates," said Commissioner Annabelle Jaramillo. "We know that we have to start planning for our future now and the county board is committed to realigning budgets, policies, and processes to have an infrastructure able to support the community."

In March 2016, the Benton County Board of Commissioners approved a resolution to create and develop the 2040 Thriving Communities Initiative and form the council. The initiative is facilitated by the county's sustainability coordinator, Sean McGuire, but directed by the 2040 council. As stated in the resolution, the council is charged with:

- Develop a countywide vision statement based on active and diverse community engagement
- Identify implementation strategies and actions that recognize systems-thinking and policy integration
- Capture innovative and integrated benchmarks, measurements, and data to assess the initiative's progress
- Collaborate with community partners to integrate the countywide vision statement and implementation actions into their operations
- Work in an iterative, five-year cycle where the vision statement, strategies, and actions are revisited by the council with active community engagement to ensure full implementation of the initiative.

"What excites me is that the 2040 initiative is working diligently to make the process accessible for all community members to participate in this important work," said Yazmin Brambila, executive director of Casa Latinos Unidos and member of the 2040 Thriving Communities Initiative council. "As a member of the 2040 council, my hopes are that all voices are heard to create a vision that positively impacts and is representative of the Benton County community."

For more information about the 2040 Thriving Communities Initiative, please visit *www.Benton2040.org* or contact Sean McGuire at 2040initiative@co.benton.or.us.

Dixon reflects on 16 years of Public Service

Although he was born in Maryland, Jay Dixon feels like a native of Washington. When Jay was nine, he and his mother relocated to Milton, Washington. During the 1950s he attended University of Washington and met his wife Pat, and in 1974 Jay and Pat relocated to San Francisco.

For the next twenty years, Jay led a highly successful career in banking that culminated in the senior vice president position at Ford Motor Company's First Nationwide Bank in San Francisco. "I had good bosses over the years, but the one that sticks out was my last corporate boss, the executive vice president at First Nationwide Bank. Later he became the worldwide employee relations manager, but he taught me a lot about management and that's what I've done all my life—manage service functions."

Jay and his family moved to Corvallis, Oregon and established Corvallis Hardware in 1992. Jay met a lot of the Corvallis community through the hardware store, and one of the most influential in his path towards being an elected official was Dick Hendrick.

Hendrick was Corvallis Hardware's CPA and the president-elect of the Corvallis Chamber of Commerce board at the time. Hendrick convinced Jay first to become involved in the Rotary Club of Greater Corvallis, and then the Chamber of Commerce board. After Jay became formally involved with these organizations, patrons at the hardware store often encouraged him to run for local office.

He was elected to the Corvallis 509J School Board in 1999, but still continued to receive widespread encouragement to run for city council or county commissioner. In November 2000 Jay Dixon was elected Benton County commissioner.

"The first time I walked in [to the county board office], I sort of wondered 'what am I supposed to be doing?' But as you receive letters, emails, phone calls, and meet people in the county, you figure out what the issues are and how you can positively impact them," said Dixon.

Jay championed multiple issues as commissioner, and has had a particular focus on the youth of Benton County. He chaired the first successful local option school levy campaign in Oregon, and currently is vice-chair of Oregon's Youth Development Council and president of the ABC House Board of Directors, a non-profit child abuse intervention center.

Looking back on his sixteen year career as county commissioner, there are several moments that stand out to Jay, but the county board's same-sex marriage vote rises above the others.

In March 2004, Multnomah County counsel issued a legal opinion that same-sex marriages were lawful and the county began issuing licenses to same-sex couples. A few weeks later, Benton County commissioners voted 2-1 to issue marriage licenses to same-sex couples.

"I voted 'No' because the Governor and Attorney General specifically told us not to issue the licenses, not because I believed that same-sex couples shouldn't be afforded the right to marry," said Jay.

Days following the board's vote, the decision was reversed after receiving two letters from the Attorney General and a phone call threatening the arrest of the county clerk.

"That series of decisions was probably the most momentous occasion in my time as a commissioner."

County government addresses a variety of issues, from species habitat management to voter registration. It's important to lean on collective discussions, past experiences, and outreach efforts to gain understanding of the public's wishes.

Jay values the trust people place in the hands of elected officials above anything else about serving as a commissioner, "The trust that the people put in you is invaluable. Even if you lose in an election, there are a good number of people that support you and still believe in you."

After a successful career in the corporate world and four terms in county government, Jay looks forward to continuing to serve Oregon's children and families through his work with the ABC House and Youth Development Council and is completely sure when he says, "I'm not retiring."

Training Increases Cultural Competence in the Health Centers

The Community Health Centers of Benton & Linn Counties are making sure they provide the highest quality patient care for every individual that walks through the centers' doors.

Culturally competent care delivers health care services that meet the beliefs, practices, and social, cultural and linguistic needs of patients. Ben Goodrum, nurse practitioner at the Benton Health Center, said, "Cultural competence isn't a destination. It's a journey."

Staff within the health centers began their journey about two years ago when they sought training opportunities to further their knowledge of providing care to patients with marginalized sexual orientations and gender identities. Training programs focus on raising awareness of the population, minimizing confusion about sexual orientation and gender identity, and how to handle these situations with respect.

"Systemic homophobia, transphobia and biphobia exist in the medical field. Health care professionals must know and understand the health needs of sexual and gender minorities," said Goodrum. "It gets into health ethics—making sure we're working towards equity for all—and ensuring the clinician-patient relationship is founded in respect."

One of the first and most important trainings conducted thus far was with the centers' client services representatives. The initial interaction with a patient occurs with individuals staffing the reception areas, and sets the tone for all following encounters. For patients that identify as transgender, the interaction at the front desk is crucial. Without training, it can be awkward to ask someone that doesn't conform to gender identity norms their name or what pronouns they use. Culturally competent care training provides the opportunity for client services representatives to handle all encounters with respect and confidence.

"Everyone in the health centers wants to serve people to the best of their ability. You can't do that if you don't know how," said Goodrum. "If you have someone in front of you that asks for hormone therapy and you feel like you don't know how to do that—it's disempowering not knowing how to care for somebody."

State Medicaid policy explicitly covers health care related to gender transition for transgender people (11 states + D.C.)

State Medicaid has no explicit policy regarding transgender health coverage and care (23 states)

State Medicaid policy explicitly excludes transgender health coverage and care (16 states)

Healthcare Laws and Policies: State Medicaid policies reflect varying interpretations of federal regulations that prohibit discrimination based on gender identity. Some state Medicaid policies explicitly include health care related to gender transition for transgender people, whereas other state policies explicitly exclude transgender health coverage and care. Source: LGBT Movement Advancement Project, http://www.lgbtmap.org/equality-maps/healthcare_laws_and_policies#sthash.Yn9eWTbN.dpuf

Sexual and gender minorities share the same health concerns with the general population, but they do experience some health concerns at higher rates and face other unique health challenges. For example, research shows that LGBT individuals are two and a half times more likely to experience depression, anxiety, and substance misuse, and new HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted infections are on the rise among gay and bisexual men.

Health providers (Health Center staff that have the authority to assess, treat, and give primary care) received an introductory training regarding care specific to transgender populations. This training raised awareness of unique health challenges within the transgender community and how to adjust the intake and overall care process to effectively serve these populations.

"A patient told me that they traveled three hours to visit the Benton Health Center for the services available here, and to see someone that knew how to care for them," said Goodrum. "The need for this type of care is happening at all six health centers. It's not concentrated in only Corvallis—it's across the whole county."

Community Health Center health professionals are continually honing their skills in order to provide the highest quality patient care, especially due to the extensive history of LGBTQ+ discrimination in the nation's health industry. The next cultural competency training planned is for all medical assistants within the six centers.

Although the health centers are committed to advancing its cultural competency, systemic changes of this nature don't happen overnight. However, the cultural change happening within the health centers in this region will increase equitable access to health care for all of Benton County's vulnerable communities.

Roundabout Receives Project of the Year Award

The Benton County Public Works SW 53rd St. and West Hills Rd. Roundabout project was awarded the Public Works Project of the Year for Transportation Projects less than $5 million by the Oregon Chapter of the American Public Works Association.

The intersection of SW West Hills Road and SW 53rd Street is traveled by approximately 10,000 vehicles each day, and serves as a connection between northwest Corvallis, Highway 20, Oregon State University, and northern Philomath. Between 1985 and 2010, there have been 38 recorded crashes at the intersection resulting in one fatality and 33 injuries.

Early on in the planning stage of this project, consultants conducted a transportation analysis for 2013-2031 and found that a roundabout would require greater capital investment, but the total life-cycle costs were lower than those associated with a traffic signal. The results also showed that the installation of a signalized intersection instead of a roundabout would result in approximately four more injury or fatal crashes and approximately four additional property damage-only crashes.

The American Public Works Association awards the Project of the Year to recognize excellence, innovation and cooperation with regard to management and administration of public works projects through the alliance of the managing agency, consultant and contractor.

Implementing a roundabout in an area with no prior experience with modern roundabouts was a challenge for the Public Works department. It required extensive research and communication with the community. County staff utilized open houses, postcards, County website, County newsletters, and press releases in local newspapers to provide community members with information about roundabouts and to provide construction updates. County staff also prepared informational brochures describing how to navigate the roundabout in a vehicle, as a cyclist, or on foot. Through public outreach, Benton County was able to come up with a design that not only met the safety and efficiency needs of the intersections, but also the desires of the community.

Public Works Director Josh Wheeler accepts the Project of the Year Award for Transportation projects under $5 million at the annual American Public Works Association Oregon chapter conference.

The goal of this project was to improve the safety of the intersection and reduce delays. Since the roundabout was completed, the average vehicle delay during peak flows was reduced to approximately nine seconds and there have been no severe accidents.

Join us in thanking our Public Works department for their commitment to excellence, safety and public outreach, and congratulating them on this prestigious industry award!

Fautin Receives Inaugural Award

Charlie Fautin, Deputy Director of the Benton County Health Department, received the Jane Moore Place Matters Award at the Biennial Oregon Health Authority Place Matters Conference in Portland. Fautin received this honor because of his long-term commitment, tenacity and leadership to ensure all people in Oregon live, work, play and learn in communities that support health and optimal quality of life. Fautin has demonstrated experience in developing long-standing and trusted public health infrastructure, cultivating new leaders and promoting a vision of the future of public health.

Place Matters Oregon is an effort of the Oregon Health Authority Public Health Division that seeks to foster conversations about how place influences our individual and collective health. The Jane Moore Place Matters award honors an individual or organization who has demonstrated long-term commitment, tenacity and leadership to ensure all people in Oregon live, work, play and learn in communities that support health and

optimal quality of life.

Fautin is well-known and recognized for his passion, leadership, accomplishments and dedication to health promotion and chronic disease prevention. Congratulations, Charlie!

Whitlock, Nasby, Haley, and Baillie are Road Scholars

The Oregon Roads Scholar program is a continuing education and professional development opportunity that provides local agencies with the latest information on road maintenance procedures and technologies, helping local government personnel to enhance their maintenance skills and knowledge. Joe Whitlock, Mark Nasby, BJ Haley, and Chris Baillie all passed their Road Scholar course earlier this fall. Congratulations!

Norris and Toyota of Corvallis Receive Benton County Environmental Awards

Andrea Norris, marketing and development coordinator at Oregon State University's campus recycling program and volunteer Co-Leader of the Corvallis Sustainability Coalition's Waste Prevention Action Team, received the 4th annual Benton County Environmental Individual Award at the annual Environmental Issues Advisory Committee public forum for her efforts to move the community toward zero waste through outreach and education.

Toyota of Corvallis received the Benton County Environmental Organizational Award at the annual public forum for their efforts to be more energy efficient, reduce the amount of water consumption, and improving air quality. Toyota of Corvallis is incredibly noteworthy as they are the first car facility in the United States with a LEED Platinum certificate and designed to be net zero energy.

The environmental awards are given to individuals and organizations that contribute significantly to the advancement and support of the county's environmental goals, in the areas of improved air quality, water quality, energy savings, environmental health, healthy ecosystems, natural habitats and sustainable resources.

Joe Whitlock, Mark Nasby, BJ Haley, and Chris Baillie all passed their Road Scholars I courses

Andrea Norris receives county environmental award from Commissioner Jaramillo at the annual EIAC public forum

Charlie Fautin (right) receives the inaugural Jane Moore Place Matters award at 2016 at the Biennial Oregon Health Authority Place Matters Conference in Portland held on October 5, 2016.

Collaborative chip sealing programs with Linn and Polk Counties

An average of 17 to 19 people are required to run a safe and effective chip seal program, but Benton County Roads Division doesn't have that many people on their crews any longer.

Chip sealing is the application of a protective surface to existing roads that can add up to five more years to extend the life of a road. When county workforces began shrinking in 2008 after the economic recession, the Benton County Roads Divisions had to come up with an innovative approach to complete chip sealing projects. Similarly, Linn and Polk Counties didn't have enough people to staff a chip sealing crew and were looking for solutions too.

About five years ago the Roads Divisions from Benton, Linn and Polk Counties got together and decided to work collaborative chip seal programs.

The counties' staff meet in early spring to structure timelines, equipment, and crews. Each county has a two-week window to complete their chip sealing. During each county's two-week window, that county has priority. If the county needs trucks, rollers, crew staff, the other two counties are obligated to provide the resources to complete the chip seals. However, since all the planning and scheduling takes place during the spring, each Roads Division knows how many people and trucks are going to the other county well in advance of production time.

"When we blend the crews from the counties, the production level is great and the quality of the chip seals is fabulous," said Jim Stouder, Roads Division manager in Benton County. "Running a chip seal program costs about $2,500 an hour, so every hour is crucial. These blended crews are finishing a day or two early because everything is on schedule and everyone knows what they're doing."

This summer the collaboration kicked up a notch beyond scheduling and sharing crews.

When Benton County's chip spreader broke down in 2015, the three Roads Divisions had to become all the more innovative. A chip spreader is a large piece of machinery that lays down the rock and requires two people operate. Although Linn County has a chip spreader, it affected all three counties' timelines and crews when Benton County's machinery broke.

Faced with an extreme cost to replace the chip spreader, Benton and Polk Counties decided to split the cost and the brand-new, co-owned chip spreader was used for the first time this past summer.

Now that Benton and Polk County co-own a chip spreader, Polk County is benefiting from a new training opportunity. While the chip seal crews are made up from staff from Benton, Linn, and Polk counties, previously the chip spreaders were only operated by staff from Linn and Benton County because they had the experience operating chip spreaders. With the new chip spreader, staff at Polk County are learning how to operate the machinery and gaining practical experience, all while the three counties are getting the production completed on time and in some cases, early.

OTHER COLLABORATIONS THAT COUNT: Public Works Department works with ODOT to prioritize U.S. Highway 20 projects

Benton County Public Works Department advocated strongly for safety upgrades to U.S. Highway 20 between Corvallis and Albany in recent years. In October ODOT announced it will be funding three projects to drastically improve safety on this section of Highway 20. Shoulders on each side of the road will become three feet wider from US-20 at mile post five to US-20 at Granger, along with installation of guardrail and signage in the vicinity of Garland Nursery, a protected left turn lane will be installed at Granger Avenue. Additionally, a center turn lane will be added on US-20 between Merloy Avenue and Conifer Blvd. These improvements are anticipated within the next 5 years.

Natural Areas and Parks Department collaborates with OSU course

Master planning vegetation and storm water management concepts for North Albany County Park will be developed by OSU undergraduate and graduate students enrolled in a sustainable site planning course. OSU students will review the park's soil drainage patterns and existing vegetation, and then provide county staff with species re-vegetation recommendations with specific consideration of how climate change will impact the physical environment of North Albany County Park over time.

Health Department spearheads mental health counselors in county schools

Utilizing funds stemming from the health and safety levy, the Health Department facilitated a partnership with Trillium Family Services and Benton County School Districts to staff mental health prevention activities and a counselor in every school. The Health Department spearheaded funding this effort using levy funds, which led to Trillium leveraging additional funds from schools and through billings for services to make this project a reality.

DA and Juvenile Department receive Victims Assistance grant

The District Attorney's office and the Benton County Juvenile Department were awarded a three-year Victims Assistance grant from the U.S. Department of Justice. This grant allows for one full-time staff person to provide services to victims of crime, an area of great need within both the District Attorney's office and the Juvenile department.

Community Development partners with ODF for Wood Chipping Program

Benton County will team up with Oregon Department of Forestry during spring 2017 to offer a wood chipping program to county residents.

Inaugural Blue and White Volunteer Appreciation Night

Roughly 60 volunteers attended an appreciation reception hosted by the Benton County board and departments. The inaugural 2016 Blue and White Appreciation Night was hosted at the Benton County Fairgrounds on September 27, 2016.

"The members of our commissions and committees dedicate their personal time to do so much valuable work for the county. We felt we ought to go out of our way to thank them and show our appreciation," said Anne Schuster, county commissioner.

Participation on county boards and commissions involves citizens directly in local government in an impactful way and provides the Board of Commissioners with timely input on important issues. Benton County has 24 advisory boards, commissions, and committees and seeks enthusiastic and diverse members interested in becoming more involved with their local community on a variety of issues.

County counsel Vance Croney emceed the door prize giveaways and commission chair Annabelle Jaramillo gave brief remarks to open the night. County employees staffed information tables for guests to learn more about the various volunteer opportunities within the county.

Any individuals interested in serving on a county advisory board, commission, or committee can review the vacancies table and contact Teresa Farley at 541-766-6890 or teresa.farley@co.benton.or.us or visit *https://www.co.benton.or.us/boc/page/committee-vacancies for more information.*

Commissioner Annabelle Jaramillo welcomes volunteers to 1st annual Blue and White Volunteer Appreciation Night.

Board, Committee, or Commission	Number of Vacancies	Position Requirements
Bicycle Advisory Committee	2	Benton County Resident
Board of Property Tax Appeals	4	2 – Non-official holding Benton County Resident
Disposal Site / Solid Waste Advisory Council	2	1-Adair Village Resident; 1- Monroe Resident
Emergency Medical Advisory Committee	1	Public-At-Large
Fair Board	2	Benton County Resident
Food Service Advisory Committee	2	1-Food Service Industry professional; 1- Public-at-Large
Historic Resources Commission	1	Public-at-Large
Mental Health, Addictions and Developmental Disabilities Advisory Committee	4	3- Student/Staff of Public Schools /Universities; Medical practitioners; Law Enforcement /Courts; Local Advocacy Groups; Business or Community Service Organizations/Associations; Service Provider Representatives; Allied Agencies/Department of Human Services Partners
1-High School student		
Natural Areas & Parks Board	1	Benton County Resident
Public Health Planning Advisory Committee	5	3 - Well-Informed on Health Matters; 2 – Health Care Practitioner
Roads Advisory Committee	2	Own or reside in Benton County

Recreational marijuana operations in Benton County

Benton County is in the midst of a two-part development code amendment process to review where and how recreational marijuana operations should be allowed in the County.

The first step was to adopt code amendments allowing recreational marijuana operations as mandated by the state and in select zones within the county, such as the Exclusive Farm Use, Forest Conservation and Industrial Zones. These code amendments became effective on December 24, 2015. The chart below identifies what types of recreational marijuana operations are allowed in each zone.

The second step is an ongoing public outreach process to gain community insight on what types and what level of recreational operations should be allowed in the zones that were not identified in the code amendments adopted in December 2015. A community listening tour was held in March 2016 to gain feedback about all the remaining zones.

During the tour, community-members expressed interest in being able to grow recreational marijuana in the Rural Residential Zone, which is currently prohibited. In early October the Board of Commissioners decided to hold additional public outreach opportunities and postpone the public hearings originally scheduled for October and November 2016.

After gaining input from the public and residents of the Rural Residential Zone, County planning staff drafted three conceptual code amendment alternatives for the Rural Residential Zone: 1) no change, grow sites remain prohibited; 2) allowed only in certain cases; highly restricted; or, 3) broadly allowed; some restrictions. A hands-on code amendment workshop was held on Nov. 2, 2016 to discuss the three conceptual code amendments with the public.

The three conceptual code amendment alternatives are available for review online: *https://www.co.benton.or.us/cd/page/marijuana.* County planning staff asks the community to share all feedback and thoughts about the three conceptual code amendment alternatives by Dec. 5, 2016. Individuals can contact Linsey Godwin at 541-766-6819 or linsey.godwin@co.benton.or.us with questions or comments.

A follow-up meeting to discuss feedback and next steps will be held Thursday, Dec. 8, 2016 from 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. in the Sunset Building main meeting room, 4077 SW Research Way, Corvallis, Oregon. If code amendments move forward, public hearings will be rescheduled for January 2017.

Residential Zones

Rural Residential Zone	Village Residential Zone	Urban Residential Zone	Philomath Residential Zone
PROHIBITED	PROHIBITED	PROHIBITED	PROHIBITED

Commercial Zones

Rural Commercial Zone	Village Commercial Zone	Urban Commercial Zone	Philomath Commercial Zone
PROHIBITED	PROHIBITED	PROHIBITED	PROHIBITED

Industrial Zones

Rural Industrial Zone	Agriculture Industrial Zone	Urban Industrial Zone	Philomath Industrial Zone
ALLOWED	ALLOWED	ALLOWED	PROHIBITED

Note: In the event of any discrepancies between this chart and Ordinances 2015-0270 and 2015-0271, the Ordinances will take precendence. Visit co.benton.or.us/cd/page/marijuana or call the Community Development department at 541-766-6819 for more information.

Other Zones

Landfill Site	Public Zone	Special Use Zone	Home Occupied in any Zone
PROHIBITED	PROHIBITED	PROHIBITED	PROHIBITED

Multi-purpose Agriculture Zone	Exclusive Farm Use Zone	Forest Conservation Zone	Floodplain Agriculture Zone
ALLOWED	ALLOWED	ALLOWED	PROHIBITED