

ADMINISTRATIVE DISTRICT 2

COLUMBIA REGION ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS

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prepared for

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by

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## COLUMBIA REGION ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS

### History

The Columbia Region Association of Governments was formally created in October, 1966 as the successor to the Portland Metropolitan Planning Commission. Between October and May, 1967, agreements were conducted between the two for transfer of projects, staff and property. By May, CRAG was staffed and all projects were transferred.

The composition of the Metropolitan Planning Commission led to the formation of CRAG. MPC members were the City of Portland, Multnomah, Clackamas and Washington Counties. Smaller cities in the three-county area as well as the Washington side of the metropolitan area were not included in the MPC. However, the CRAG membership base was expanded to include the entire area and include the smaller cities.

Reorganization of metropolitan planning activities with the formation of CRAG also provided the opportunity to include the Portland-Vancouver Metropolitan Transportation Study. For transportation purposes the CRAG Executive Board with the addition of representatives of the Oregon and Washington highway departments became the transportation coordinating committee.

Other related multi-jurisdictional agencies in the Portland area include the Portland Metropolitan Area Local Government Boundary Commission, the Metropolitan Service District, and Tri-Met, the regional transit agency. Each is basically single purpose in nature with a specific legislative base. None have broad planning responsibilities similar to CRAG.

The Columbia Region Association of Governments planning area includes 3,552 square miles of Oregon territory in the Counties of Columbia, Clackamas, Multnomah and Washington. Clark County in the state of Washington has a significant part of its urban population represented by the City of Vancouver.

In 1970 the Oregon population in the Oregon portion of the CRAG area was 909,465--or 43.5% of the entire state. Counties in the region represented the first, second, fifth and ninth most densely populated jurisdictions in the state with gross densities ranging from 1,316.0 persons per square mile (Multnomah) to 45.1 persons per square mile (Columbia). From another perspective, 84.7% of the 1970 population was considered "urban" by the Bureau of the Census definition.

The budget document for CRAG's 1972-73 fiscal year highlights the environment in which the Association functions:

In 1910 the system of local government in the CRAG region was relatively simple. There were 27 general purpose governments (5 counties and 22 cities) providing services to about 308,000 people. To be sure, there were other units of local government but they were few in types, consisting of school districts and ports. People had virtually no automobiles and there were no airplanes. No sewage treatment facilities were called for and there was little concern about air pollution, noise pollution, land use, etc.

Today in the same region there are five counties, 44 cities, 110 school districts, five sanitary districts, 72 water districts, 57 fire districts, four park and recreation districts, 36 street lighting districts, one public utility district, one hospital district, two vector control districts, seven cemetery districts, 24 drainage districts, five port districts, one tri-county transportation district, two air pollution control authorities, not to mention the dozens and dozens of federal and state agencies and quasi-governmental and private agencies.

This conglomeration of governments provides services to 1,064,230 residents who drive 764,520 vehicles over hundreds of miles of public roads, and who contribute to our increasing problems of water pollution, air pollution, noise pollution, land pollution, traffic congestion, poor housing, solid waste disposal, and so on.

Additional insight is found in a publication of the Portland Metropolitan Area Local Government Boundary Commission:

Local government in Oregon, particularly in the state's metropolitan areas, is characterized by many small independent units, most of which provide but a single function within a limited geographical area. The "system" of local government in the Portland metropolitan area is further characterized by a disparity in the service and taxation levels throughout the area and by overlapping areas of influence. This inhibits coordination of services and encourages intergovernmental competition, and makes difficult the formulation and implementation of a regional growth policy. The complexity of the "system" plays a significant role in the individual citizen's apparent inability to understand local government. Thus it is difficult for the citizen to identify with and become involved with and become involved with his local government.

#### Organizational Structure

The Columbia Regional Association of Governments board is a two-tiered structure comprised of a General Assembly and an Executive Board. Five counties and thirty-one municipal governments are represented on CRAG, of which twenty-eight are located in Oregon and three in Washington.

There are thirteen municipal governments in the region which are not members of CRAG. However, the largest of these has a population of 2300 and the average size of the thirteen is around 400. A breakdown of non-members includes seven in Clackamas County, three in Multnomah County, three in Washington, and two in Clark County.

While the by-laws of CRAG provide for associate membership by organizations such as the four port districts in the region, or special purpose agencies such as Tri-Met, none have chosen yet to become members.

The voting structure of the General Assembly is a weighted voting structure consisting of one representative from each of the member city governments with three representatives or votes for the City of Portland. Each of the counties has two votes except Columbia County which has one vote.

The Executive Board consists of eleven members with a weighted voting structure. The City of Portland has one representative with four votes. Each county has one representative with two votes except Columbia County which has one vote. Mayors of the cities in each of the five counties convene to select one representative from each county with one vote.

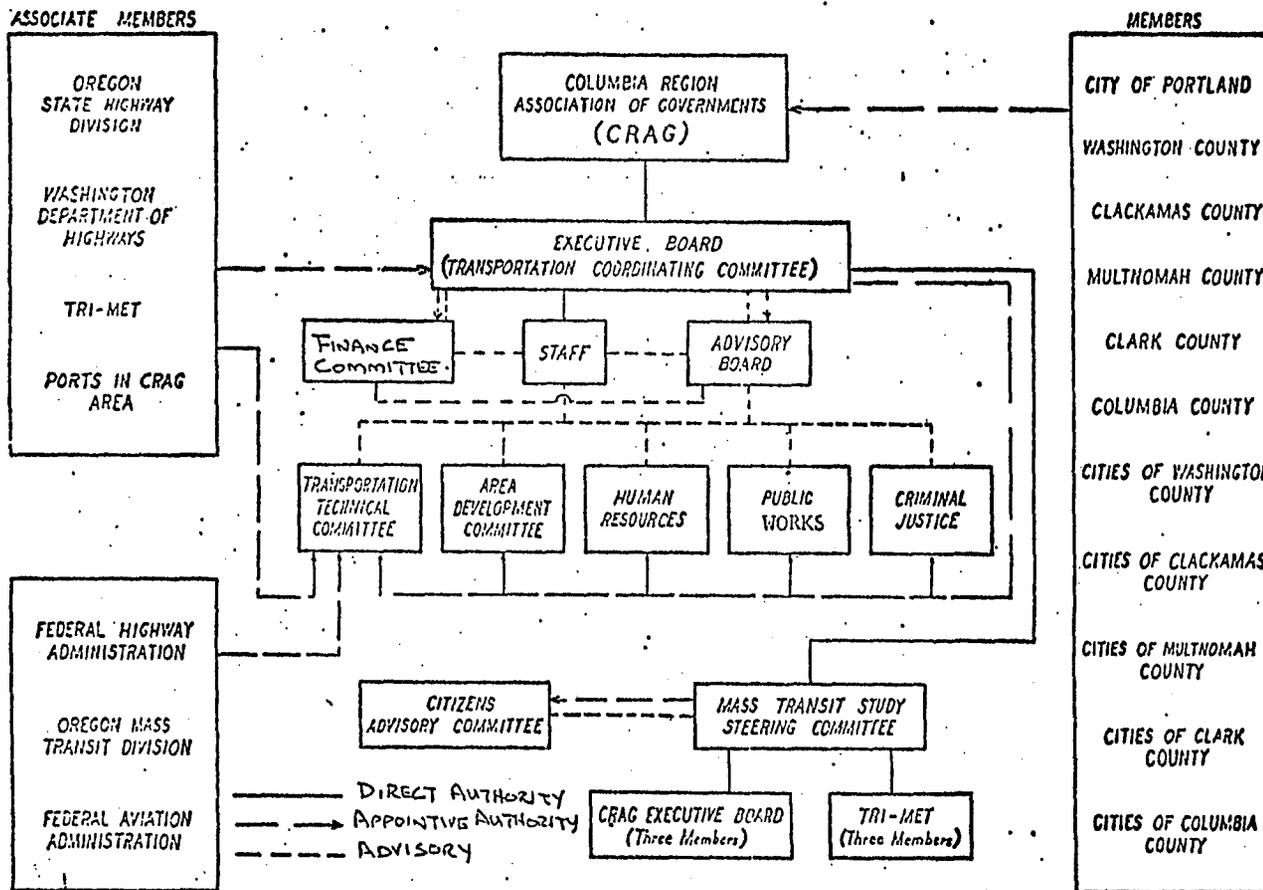
An attached chart illustrates the organizational structure of the Columbia Region Association of Governments. In addition to the committees indicated by the chart, CRAG has established an Action and Direction committee to evaluate the development of CRAG, its present role and functions and recommend actions to improve and strengthen CRAG.

The present staffing structure of CRAG consists of thirty-one staff positions allocated to the six major program categories: (1) area development; (2) public works; (3) transportation; (4) criminal justice; (5) social services; and (6) administration. Of the thirty-one staff positions, twenty are professional positions allocated among the work program activities with eleven technical and administrative support positions.

Professional positions include the following:

- Executive Director
- Assistant Director
- Area Development Director
- Director of Research and Economics
- Criminal Justice Planning Director
- Human Resources Director
- Transportation Director
- Senior Planner
- Principal Planner
- Senior Engineering Aide
- Assistant Planner II

# PORTLAND AREA PLANNING ORGANIZATION



- Criminal Justice Planner II
- Regional Engineer
- Associate Planner I (2)
- Senior Accountant
- Criminal Justice Planner
- Social Services Director
- Senior Economist
- Mass Transit Coordinator

Finances

In terms of program content and expenditures the FY 1972-73 request is as follows:

	<u>Budget</u>	<u>% of Budget</u>
Salaries and Benefits		(75)
Area Development		
(Planning and Programming)	\$112,680	18
Public Works	56,005	9
Transportation	133,110	21
Criminal Justice	59,395	10
Social Services	23,688	4
Administration	81,382	13
Materials and Services	133,259	(22)
Capital Outlay	3,695	(1)
Contingency	<u>14,823</u>	<u>(2)</u>
	\$618,037	100

Of the proposed total budget, the State is expected to provide \$115,000 (19.2%), the federal government \$308,360 (51.6%) and local membership dues will provide the balance--\$174,677 (29.2%). Local funds are derived on a membership assessment formula of 16¢ per capita with a minimum payment of \$100. Where municipalities are not members, the County pays the per capita assessment and represents the area in the General Assembly and Executive Board.

Federal funding sources are as follows:

HUD "701"	\$190,000
LEAA	60,000
DOT/UMTA	58,360

From state sources, CRAG receives \$115,000, of which \$110,000 is provided by contract with the State of Oregon Highway Division with participation of the State of Washington Department of Highways for urban area transportation planning. The remaining \$5,000 is the State of Oregon planning grant from the Local Government Relations Division.

It should be noted that of the \$618,037 budgeted for 1972-73, only \$598,037 has been secured--\$20,000 from the Port of Portland is still pending. Hence, program content and allocations will be subject to adjustment.

#### Work Program

CRAG work program elements proposed for 1972-73 consist of:

- Development of preliminary land use and environmental elements of the comprehensive plan.
- Preparation of a manual of standard land development codes and regulations.
- Preparation of guidelines for regional capital improvement programming.
- Definition of the issues of local finance and fiscal policy.
- Maintenance of A-95/203/PNRS project review and environmental impact statements and continuing inter-governmental liaison and interpretation of regional plan elements for local governments.

- Monitor local jurisdiction sewer and water project progress for conformance to regional plan objectives and provide technical assistance in boundary determinations and interim problem analysis.
- Identify critical problem areas with respect to surface drainage and establish regional standards for engineering design.
- Complete the comprehensive regional solid waste study by determination of the most feasible disposal method and identification and analysis of landfill sites.
- Maintain elements of the adopted transportation Operations Plan including continuing surveillance of transportation data, conduct of special travel surveys, maintenance of land use inventory, reappraisal of current plan elements and community attitudes, and development of a five-year transportation system improvement program and assist in preparation of 1974 National Transportation Needs Study data.
- Conduct continuing problem analyses and update the regional criminal justice plan.
- Conduct special regional criminal justice plan elements and maintain liaison with local law enforcement agencies.
- Conduct analyses and prepare a preliminary regional housing plan.
- Maintain a program of public information and assistance to member governments.

In addition, CRAG is presently negotiating a contract with the State Department of Human Resources for the conduct of area-wide planning for the aging. Significant portions of the work would be conducted by two councils of aging in the region with CRAG in a regional coordination role.

### Problem Areas

The following discussion is based upon field interviews, discussions with CRAG staff, and review of documents related to CRAG. While CRAG is undergoing a self-reappraisal through its Action and Direction Committee, the following comments may provide additional areas for committee review.

The most frequently stated concern about CRAG from local officials was the manner in which regional plans have been prepared. The practice of "merely tying all the local plans together" was severely criticized. The present land use plan is basically a composite of local land use plans and, as such, has caused the expected problems inherent in the patchwork approach to regional policy development. To this extent, the feeling was that CRAG was not taking the lead in developing regional growth, development, and conservation policies.

The second major area of criticism was an apparent feeling of lack of guidance in overall program management. Questions were raised regarding the current staffing pattern and quality of work produced by CRAG. In particular, there was concern expressed of a lack of total program management--bringing all staff components together in a unified approach to timely formulation of regional plans and programs.

Other concerns raised during the course of interviews were:

- Too little guidance from Area Development staff in identification of regional development priorities.
- Limited staff capability to carry out public works program activities, such as updating regional water and sewer plans.
- Local jurisdictions not willing or able to contribute staff resources to meet CRAG substantive program needs. As an example, the team approach to solid waste disposal plan development was less than satisfactory.

- Need for mandated local funding to overcome annual fluctuations and uncertainty--such as \$20,000 gap experienced in 1972-73 local funding.
- Need for state development policy and guidelines or criteria for regional and local plan considerations. The relationship of LGRD to CRAG is not predicated on any regular or continuing basis nor upon any established criteria--therefore, the relationship with the State is uneven and sometimes unsatisfactory.
- Municipalities of 2,000 to 3,000 people feel that costs of membership in CRAG outweigh the benefits.
- Appropriate regional planning could probably be accomplished with the addition of one more Washington county.
- State and federal funding carry sufficient administrative difficulties to merit consideration of increased local support. State planning grants are so small that they are hardly worthwhile.
- Too great a proportion of land use plan and economic/demographic research is funded by transportation planning program fund sources.
- Present transportation planning efforts are being carried on without the capacity for testing land development alternatives and implications. In addition, present transportation planning efforts may reflect too great a bias toward the automobile as the long-term primary solution.
- CRAG is not helping local governments test the transportation implications of major detailed sub-area land use studies.
- Other regional planning activities are being undertaken outside the framework of CRAG. In particular, comprehensive health planning is being completed by

a separately incorporated private organization with little contact with CRAG. Similarly, a staffed regional manpower planning program is being undertaken through the Mayor's Office in the City of Portland. Again, there is little evidence of liaison and coordination with CRAG.

### Recommendations

In view of the nature of the problem areas identified and in view of the current status of the CRAG ad hoc Action and Direction committee, it would seem presumptuous to provide extensive recommendations for amelioration of the various concerns.

That committee in its October 11, 1972 report observed:

To meet the present need, local governments must have a stronger organization through which to plan and give direction to regional development. In short, CRAG must make the transition from an advisory voluntary association to a planning organization. As such, its central authority should be to review plans and implementation programs developed at any level of government--local, state, and federal--that have a significant impact on the region. Such authority should include the right to approve, disapprove and modify plans and programs as they affect the region.

To exercise this authority, CRAG must carry out reviews of plans and programs, develop regional plans, and aid constituent local governments in strengthening their planning. The organization will need authority beyond voluntary intergovernmental compact, and it will require a source of revenue independent of that provided by its members.

Some general comments are in order regarding the direction and capacity which CRAG has set to meet regional needs.

Regional organizations and membership participation in CRAG itself deserve rationalization. In this regard, the most hopeful force is existence of the Portland Metropolitan Area Local Government Boundary Commission. Even closer working relationships between CRAG and the Commission seem warranted--to the extent that there is full understanding and concurrence on the mutual objectives of the two organizations.

Internal management, budgeting and work element control need review and attention so that CRAG fiscal resources are best utilized.

CRAG should strengthen its efforts to provide more intensive leadership toward examination of regional plan implications and the relationship of regional plans to local plans. Particular opportunities occur in the A-95 review process.

CRAG leadership may wish to act as a catalyst to bring more broadly-based emphasis to state officials for needed state development policy--rooted in the regional planning process and dependent upon local regulatory measures.

These general comments derived from analysis of problem areas identified in field interviews address and/or complement most of the seven basic conclusions reached by the CRAG committee:

- Goal Establishment - CRAG should establish broad regional goals, objectives, and priorities to guide substantive work program elements in: land uses, sewerage systems, water systems, transportation systems, parks and open spaces, storm drainage systems, solid waste disposal systems, public safety, social service programs, economic development and fiscal policies.
- Fiscal Policy - The regional association should advocate guidelines for constituent government utilization with regard to those projects which implement regional plan recommendations.

- Data Gathering - CRAG should firmly establish its position as the central depository and distribution center for economic, social, demographic and governmental services data.
- Plan Preparation - "Upon adoption of regional goals and objectives, CRAG should prepare a new regional plan. The plan should set guidelines for the region's development and for the allocation of resources to implement it. The plan should include but not necessarily be limited to: land uses, sewerage systems, drainage and water systems, transportation systems, parks and open spaces, solid waste disposal systems, public safety, social services, economic development, and fiscal policies. In each of these planning areas, the plan should concentrate on policy statements and include procedures for updating on a regular basis."
- Priority Setting - "CRAG should develop criteria by which proposals will be evaluated to determine their compatibility with regional goals, objectives, and plans. On the basis of the criteria, priorities will be established regarding the type and timing of developments and the allocation of resources."
- Review for Plan Conformance - "Under the A-95 review process, CRAG has the responsibility of reviewing applications for federal money, to determine if the proposed project is compatible with regional plans. This review process should be extended to any planning, improvement, or development project, without respect to funding source, that may have a significant impact on the region."
- Citizen Participation and Procedure - "CRAG should establish procedures which insure involvement in and acceptance of the regional plan. There should be assurance of input in the process of plan formulation by local government and by the citizen. Procedures should provide for public meetings and hearings, for coordination, for negotiation and communication among planning agencies, government officials, and citizen advisory groups."