

Metro Councilor Caroline Miller

District 8, 1979 to 1980

Oral History



Metro | *Making a great place*



Caroline Miller
Metro Councilor, District 8
1979 – 1980

Caroline Miller grew up in Santa Monica, California, to a Costa Rican mother and American father. Eventually she made her way to Oregon where she enrolled as a student at Reed College and received her Bachelor of Arts and later, her Masters of Arts in Teaching. She also received a second Masters of Arts degree in Literature from the University of Arizona, Flagstaff. After graduating, Ms. Miller adventured to England, Europe and Africa, eventually teaching in England and Rhodesia. (Zimbabwe).

Upon her return to Oregon, after working as a teacher at Wilson High School (Portland), she applied her talents and education to political pursuits, heading the Portland Federation of Teachers #111 and lobbying for education in 1977. Ms. Miller's credentials in the political arena grew as she assumed the role of the first woman Parliamentarian for the Oregon AFL/CIO Conventions; campaigned actively for Neil Goldschmidt (mayoral campaign); served on the City of Portland Economic Advisory Committee; and won a seat on the Metropolitan Service District (MSD) Council in 1979 (representing District 8).

Caroline Miller's journey through the public spectrum continued when she became a Multnomah County commissioner in 1980. After leaving political office in 1988, Ms. Miller became a volunteer mediator for the Multnomah County court system – a position that she

held for over seventeen years. She also pursued a writing career and became a published author of short fiction stories.

In addition, Ms. Miller's artistic interests have resulted in installations of her silk paintings in galleries around Portland. In sum, Caroline Miller's life is an important part of Portland's history and the history of women in Portland's political system.



**Metro Councilor Oral History Interview
MSD Councilor Caroline Miller, District 8
November 15, 2007**

In Attendance: Councilor Caroline Miller, Narrator, Carrie M. Volk, Interviewer (Portland State University), Becky Shoemaker, Archivist (Metro)

Place: Metro Regional Center, 600 NE Grand Avenue, Portland, Oregon

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MSD Councilor Caroline Miller, District 8
November 15, 2007**

Key: Caroline Miller (CM), Carrie Volk (CV) and Becky Shoemaker (BS)

Format: Sides A and B of one audiocassette tape

TRANSCRIPT

[Begin Side A, Tape 1 of 1]

CV: This interview is being conducted by Carrie Volk on Thursday November 15, 2007. I am going to be interviewing Caroline Miller - a former Metro councilor from District 8. Becky Shoemaker (Metro Archivist) will be listening in.

BS: We're on.

CV: Can you state your full name and the Council district you represented and its characteristics?

CM: My full name is Caroline Miller and I'm glad I can still remember it. I believe that I was District 7 at the time. I think it's been redistricted - it's 7 or 13. I'm sorry, I don't remember. They keep changing those districts around. It's either 7 or 13 now - southeast...inner southeast. [CV shares ephemera with Councilor Miller's District 8 area noted] Oh my God, District 8! Oh well... [laughs] I did remember my name. I want that for the record!

CV: All right [laughs] Do you want to describe your personal background? Where you were born? If you would like too, where you grew up? And how were you were educated?

CM: Okay. I was born in the Panama Canal Zone. My father was in the US Navy submarines. He married my mother who was a Costa Rican and [she] didn't speak any English. So how the world they got together, I don't know. But they did, and he brought her back to Indiana and then finally to California. So I was raised in Santa Monica, California which is a little beach town. But when I grew up it was lined with Japanese bean fields and nowadays of course, it's very glitzy "Hollywoody". So that was my background. I came up to Oregon to go to Reed College [Portland, Oregon] and that's what brought me to the Oregon Territory.

CV: What was the highest level of education that you received?

CM: In Oregon or elsewhere?

CV: Just in general...

CM: Well, I have a Master's degree in...I got a Bachelor of Arts from Reed, and I got a Master's of Arts in the Teaching of English from Reed. I [also] have a Master's degree in Literature from the University of Arizona at Flagstaff.

CV: Can you tell me what your early career aspirations were?

CM: [laughs] To get married, of course, which I didn't do. But I went to England after graduating from Reed to marry a young Englishman who'd been an exchange student at Reed. That didn't work out. So then, I bummed around Europe and Africa for about four years, came back [to Oregon] and heard about the Reed M.A.T. program. Because I had earned my living as I was bumming around as a teacher, I thought, "Well, I've taught for four years...it seems to go okay, and I took the Master's of Arts teaching program at Reed. [Then I] taught at Wilson High School...was offered a job and I just stuck in Oregon. Why not Palm Springs, I don't know. There you are.

CV: Okay, can you tell me any of your pivotal moments or the people that were in your life that influenced your career? Maybe at Metro? And ...

CM: Well, why don't I reframe this for you and tell you how I got involved at Metro? Would that help?

CV: Yes.

CM: Yes, because I was teaching school in Portland, and I wanted to know a little bit about politics, and somebody says, "Neil Goldschmidt is running for mayor. Why don't you sort of ...?" I volunteered for his campaign. I was too stupid not to realize that you didn't have to work every weekend. So I kept showing up to canvas every weekend. I'm sure he must have thought, "Who is this dedicated woman?" I just didn't know any better. You signed up to canvas...you had to do all the canvassing. I was that green!

Anyway, I caught Neil's attention, at some point, because I left teaching to become head of the Portland Federation of Teachers. So, I headed a labor union and got deeply involved in AFL/CIO union politics. But I got a call from Neil Goldschmidt's office and they said they wanted me to serve on the city's Economic Advisory Committee. I said "no," and they said, "Well, why not?" I said, "Well, I don't know anything about economics." Well, they called back three times. The third time was the gentleman who was his [Goldschmidt's] second in command (a very nice man) and he said, "Carrie (because they called me Carrie), you don't get it. We need a woman; we need somebody from Labor. You're it!" So I said again, "Oh, okay." So [I] went to the Economic Advisory Committee for the City of Portland. I found it fascinating. You know, I mean it was whole worlds like, where do stoplights go? And where should sewers go? And things I thought that I would never have a world of interest in.

So, when they decided they were going to form the Metropolitan Service District [MSD], this sounded just like what I'd be interested in. I could keep my union work because at that time, it was an unformed government. We were not paid and umm, so I could continue to

work. So it was winner take all...twelve positions. Am I saying too much? Because I'm happy to stop...

BS: Not at all.

CM: Okay, winner takes all and there was a very nice lady who had signed up for it (I had taught her son). I thought she was wonderful - Sally McCracken. But I learned later that Sally withdrew [from the race] because I was running [and] because she thought I had this big labor organization behind her, I mean me. Well, what a joke that was. I hadn't even told Labor that I was running. Uh, a friend and I went out and knocked on a few doors on some major corridors...put up about twelve lawn signs and that was it...that was my campaign. I guess because I was Labor and Labor did endorse me, I won the election. So then, I found myself being charged with the task of creating a government from scratch. Really out of my depth...it was fun!

CV: I found some resolutions that had your name...

CM: Oh, gosh.

CV: So, I found this one - *For the Purpose of Authorizing New Positions Involved in the Reorganization of the Transportation Department*. Can you tell me a little bit about that? And what happened with it?

CM: No, I can't.

CV: All right.

CM: Did I initiate this?

CV: There's... (pointing at ephemera with Ms. Miller's name)

CM: There I am. Oh, I don't know...they probably railroaded me into it. I probably didn't even understand it. Let me tell you what I am most proud of in the one year that I was at Metro. Because of my labor background, there were two points of interest that in the one year that might be interesting: the appointment of the Council's chair which, you know, was done by the flip of a coin. You didn't know that?

[Pause] Okay. Well, should I start with the gossip part first? [laughs] Well, there were twelve of us on the Council. Well, why that's crazy, you know. It turns out the Council was split. Rick Gustafson, of course, was the newly elected executive, but the Council had one secretary and we were to appoint our own chair.¹ Well, I want you to understand that everybody else had been in politics. I mean there were some pretty savvy people who ran for that office. I was a complete outsider, so I did not know the lines of communication. Oh, this is gossip, and she'll probably kill me but one day I got invited to.... nice little gal, but I can't remember her name. Anyway, she was a Metro councilor...

¹ Rick Gustafson served as Executive Officer of the Metropolitan Service District (MSD) [a.k.a. Metro] from 1979 to 1987.

BS: Kirkpatrick [Corky]?

CM: And she invited me over to her home...

CV: [Showing Ms. Miller all twelve councilor's photos] Is she on here somewhere?

CM: Let me see...let me name the culprit. Yes, Cindy Banzer.² Yes, and we had tea and I sat there all afternoon trying to figure out what was going on. Well, apparently the short of...the nub of the story was that Cindy was supporting Mike Burton for the chair position.³ I think the scuttlebutt (and I learned this after the fact) was Rick was not keen to have Mike Burton as the chair. He wanted... (points to paper with photos) ...give me that thing back, will you, [the document] with the faces on it? He wanted Charlie Williams. Was his name Charlie Williams? Yes...

CV: Williamson?

CM: Williamson. He wanted Charlie Williamson.⁴ That's what I gathered. So everybody was aligned, but nobody knew where I was. Okay? So Cindy was apparently trying to figure out what I was going...where I was going to vote. Well, the truth of the matter is, I was going to vote for Charlie Williamson because why would I set up a situation where a director and the chair of the Council didn't communicate? Well, I figured it was a beginning government...we ought to at least have some communication. I don't know that Rick and Mike were...wouldn't have worked together. But the feeling was (I guess) that Rick wanted Williamson.

Well, of course when that happened, it [the vote] was 6-6. See? I didn't swing into the camp that would give 7-5 or whatever the math is; I split the Council. So it was decided that the new chair of the Council would win by [the] flip of a coin, very much the way Portland [was named], you know? Or Champoege, or whatever that one was where they flipped for the city. So that's how Charlie Williamson became the first chairman of the Metropolitan Service District.⁵ And I was instrumental in it by not knowing anything (making light). So that was the first thing where I probably had some significance.

The other thing was I became chair of the Personnel Rules Committee. Because we were creating a government, we had to have rules. Ah, there you go (CV shows document)...Ok, so I don't know whether... Rick and I never talked, but out of gratitude (perhaps for giving him Charlie Williamson - who knows), I became chair of [the] Personnel [Rules Committee]. Probably my labor background, too, [played a role]. As it was, I had been in the labor movement for quite some time. However, Rick told me that he was very concerned about my labor leanings, and that he had stacked the committee with another member who he thought would counterbalance and that was Jane Rhodes.⁶ So Jane and I are on the committee. I was the chair and then Rick stacked it with the head of the Personnel

² Cindy Banzer represented District 9 on the MSD Council, 1979 to 1984.

³ Mike Burton represented District 12 on the MSD Council, 1979 to 1984.

⁴ Charlie Williamson represented District 3 on the MSD Council, 1979 to 1984.

⁵ For the record, the first chair or presiding officer of the MSD was Mike Burton.

⁶ Jane Rhodes represented District 6 on the MSD Council, 1979 to 1982.

Department of [the City of] Portland, the mayor of Lake Oswego, and a couple of others all on the business side of things.

Well, the joke was on Rick because Jane was a math teacher at PCC (Portland Community College); she knew diddle about personnel and so she kept asking what to the rest of us were painfully obvious questions. As a result, we had to stop and slow up and explain things to her in such a way that it became very obvious as we were talking. We all had a kind of common consensus, so the irony of it is that Jane, not knowing anything, kind of coalesced the group and we worked very well together, and consequently came out with a smashing set of personnel rules, if I do say so myself. [laughing] In fact, I think I said at the last committee meeting that I had probably undone what a good labor leader should do - created a set of personnel rules that were so good that with such good procedures, a union would never take hold here. Umm, but they were, to the best of my knowledge until Rena [Cusma] came in, the personnel rules worked very, very well.⁷ So those are my two achievements.

CV: What were the largest issues that you faced on the [Metro] Council when you began your service?

CM: Well actually, there were two things. One is (from my perspective) being so naïve... not understanding the politics. All of these people had future plans. I'm pretty sure Marge [Kafoury] did; I know Cindy had come from the state [of Oregon].⁸ Betty [Schedeen] you know [was] a wheeler dealer.⁹ Craig [Berkman] was deep in the Republican Party.¹⁰ So there was a lot...I loved Corky Kilpatrick.¹¹ She, probably like me, was just serving...but umm...So, I had to learn the dynamics of political thinking and how people jostle for power.

The other (which I think is more interesting because that's the every day business of politics) was before Metro formed. The regional interests of the community were settled by a group called...I think it was CRAG [Columbia Region Association of Governments]. This was a group (you know about CRAG)...this was a group of managers who were either appointed or selected by the various political jurisdictions...you know, City of Portland, Multnomah County. I better say Gresham (or they'll be mad) and Troutdale. So what I found (and again this is gossipy. I'm really a gossipy historian...facts speak for themselves), is that the people that were in management [corrects herself] management were not responsive to the public. They did not know how to interact with the public - they didn't take the public in mind - because they were not working directly, specifically for any one political body. That gave them a kind of autonomy which did not translate well when suddenly they found themselves employees of a very political body.

So translating for this, if I say entrenched bureaucracy...oh, I don't want to say that because I think they were highly professional people and the director at the time finally left

⁷ Rena Cusma served as Executive Officer of the Metropolitan Service District (MSD) [a.k.a. Metro] from 1988 to 1995.

⁸ Marge Kafoury represented District 11 on the MSD Council, 1979 to 1986.

⁹ Betty Schedeen represented District 7 on the MSD Council, 1979 to 1983.

¹⁰ Craig Berkman represented District 3 on the MSD Council, 1979 to 1982.

¹¹ Corky Kirkpatrick represented District 4 on the MSD Council, 1979 to 1988.

(I think) after a couple of years. I don't think he could take this mélange. He ran the organization well (in a very efficient way) and we just gummed up everything by asking questions. But let me give you an example of how this worked. The Transportation Committee (changes quickly)... It may be why I did something with transportation. They were developing some plans for some sort of road somewhere (don't remember). You know, it had made perfect sense. There was point A and there was point B and there was a straight line and it had penciled out as the most efficient route. Except for one little thing - it went through some Indian burial thing...some religious thing. Well, of course the managers thought that we [members of the Council] were going to accept the most efficient point A to point B and made the most sense, but we didn't. [laughs] We made them go back and choose a more circuitous route. That, for them, was a real awakening.

So I'd say that the big challenge was not so much the political machinations among ourselves (although they were certainly there). There was a power struggle for who was going to control Metro. Was it going to be the Council or was it going to be Rick? Umm, that always happens. But the real struggle - the significant struggle - was not only creating a happy work environment through personnel rules and laws and governance (which is quite a challenge but very exciting), but also retraining a bureaucracy that was not used to working with the public on a one-to-one basis, or certainly not with politicians. That was a culture shock of momentous proportions and we lost people. But that's too bad, because I really thought they were very, very, good people. Maybe we should have left them alone. But, nonetheless, [pauses] it was a different world and some of them just couldn't play in it.

CV: So you think that you were better equipped? I saw in your file that you were [an] education lobbyist in 1977. Was that true?

CM: Yes, I was a lobbyist...

CV: So working with politicians...

CM: [interjects] ...through the union. You know, through the union...

CV: [Talking at same time] ...it better equipped you?

CM: I wasn't a lobbyist... Ah hah, I did lobbying. Umm, so I would say if...as I said I was only there a short year. They...I guess Earl Blumenauer (who was Rick's very good friend) - was looking for someone to bump Dan Mosee¹² [at] Multnomah County. So Rick approached me and asked if I would be interested and I said okay. And then they found Ernie Bonner to fill my place [on the Metro Council], and that's how the changing of the chairs went.¹³

BS: Caroline, can I just ask a question here? Going back to how you described CRAG employees and MSD employees having to come together under the new "Metro" which started in 1979 (with your tenure)... Did the tension exist across both of those

¹² Earl Blumenauer was elected to the Multnomah County Board of Commissioners in 1978, and served until 1986 when he was elected to the Portland City Council. In 1996 he was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives. Dan Mosee served on the Multnomah County Board of Commissioners from 1967 to 1968 and 1973 to 1980.

¹³ Ernie Bonner represented District 8 on the MSD Council, 1980 to 1985.

organizations that came together or was it more on the CRAG side? Do you remember?

CM: Well, if I remember, we just absorbed CRAG!

BS: Oh, okay.

CM: So they were all originally CRAG employees...people didn't get fired. As they say, even the executive director of CRAG became Rick's executive person. I really don't remember what his title was, but he essentially ran Metro. I mean, I love Rick dearly but you know, he came out of the legislature. What real background did he have with CRAG? So we were all in a learning mode...

BS: Ah huh.

CM: And though we essentially kept CRAG, the only new person I know I think that we had was a budget officer - a young woman - very competent. I think she may have been new. I think Rick brought in some of his people, but mostly they were CRAG administrators.

CV: Oh, okay.

BS: Thank you.

CV: I would like to touch more on, umm, you said, "They wanted a woman." They wanted someone that was from...

CM: Oh, what Neil wanted, yes...

CV: Yes, I saw that in the ballot that you ran against eight other guys, men.

CM: Oh, for Metro?

CV: Yes, so I was wondering if you could maybe, umm, just share a little bit about being the only woman in that...

CM: You know, I didn't notice I was the only [woman]... [laughs] No oh, because Sally [McCracken] resigned...withdrew... that's right.

CV: And do you think that they wanted a woman? They zeroed in on...

CM: Oh, no, let me make clear they [hesitates]... Neil [Goldschmidt] wanted a woman for his Economic Development Commission, which had nothing to do with Metro...

CV: Okay.

CM: I just...because of...I was involved with Economic Development Commission under Neil, and he chaired the meetings. So I got to (he's very demanding person - he's still demanding)...I learned a lot! So then, when they announced that they were going to form this government [MSD], and I saw its agenda, nobody recruited me. I'm afraid I recruited myself! I can't say that the public demanded me or anybody else. I just [sighs]...this

sounds interesting, umm, my major challenger of...yeah, there were (come to think of it) a couple of prominent people, but I didn't know it at the time. One was, umm, the brother of the speaker of the House of Representatives [State of Oregon]. He was running. And then a fella...I believe named Fredrickson... [pauses] David Fredrikson. He turned out to be my major challenger. In fact, someone came along and showed me that he had been, umm, (looks at picture of the 1979 Council)...Isn't there a Fredrikson? [pauses] David Fredrikson! My God, I'm good! I am good! Can't remember what district I ran for but... somebody showed me his brochure that he was moving around into one of the fancy dancy high voting things, and it was very impressive and I thought good lord, I hadn't passed out anything. I mean we had these twelve little lawn signs which a former student of mine had made. That was it! I hadn't really expected to win. I thought I wanted to know a little bit about how a political campaign was run. Well of course, I didn't. There was me and a good friend that pounded some signs out - twelve signs - and that was my campaign. So Lou was very organized - or David - very organized and I don't know how close he came but he was a lovely person. Just a dear person and he became a lobbyist for maybe PGE? So we interfaced, umm, quite a bit and I must tell you he would have been a better choice. The public kind of gets what they deserve.

BS: Can you describe how you distinguished yourself from him? In the...

CM: [interjects] I can't! I absolutely can't! I must simply...because there was absolutely no campaign other than what I told you. Umm, I just...labor endorsed me and I think *The Oregonian* endorsed David Fredrikson. I think they said some...I don't think *The Oregonian* has ever endorsed me. You know they're bilious about labor people, umm, so I think it just simply was, you know, labor has a newspaper they send out ballots with the names on it. And uh, who they were endorsing and I think people went with those little things and thought, well I don't know anything about Metropolitan [Service District]. They just [voted] Caroline Miller. I have to say that it was just a fluke. Had there been a runoff, I bet David would have beaten me because he knew what a campaign was and I didn't. So, in a way, Sally McCracken was [pauses] the smartest of all of us because she knew if I hit the race I'd win, but I didn't know that. So that was it.

CV: Did you have anything to do with the League of Women Voters? Or real into the umm, into this Council, they had all kinds of newspapers and...

CM: [Interrupts] Votes!

CV: And your name was in it and...

CM: [Interrupts] Did I get endorsed by them?

CV: No, but you were in the paper. I just thought well, she was a woman at the time, and I was just wondering if maybe they wanted you to get on board?

CM: That wasn't a real big women's period. I mean, it was maybe just a tad before *The Feminine Mystique*. I would, as I learned when I ran for county commission which was a campaign, uh, there were women who absolutely...I mean I had women on the doorsteps say to me, "I would never vote for a woman candidate." So we're a long way baby from

those days! You know, the greatest thing to women's liberation in my day was that you could smoke a cigarette that was sort of dedicated to women and lung cancer. You know, I'd forgotten what it was, but you know it was...

CV: [Interrupts] Virginia Slims [cigarettes] or something like that?

CM: That's it, and you've come a long way baby! That's it! That was women's lib when I first ran for office (laughing). I'd say being a woman might have been a handicap, and a woman endorsed by the labor movement must have been an anomaly. (All agreeing)

BS: That begs a question. How did you...was there camaraderie among the women on that first [MSD] Council because of your newness to the political realm?

CM: I can't speak to that. I wasn't sensitive to that. I just know that I got along with all of them and liked them. We got on very, very well. But that's all I know. As I said, when you're that green, you just don't understand the subtlety which may have been a blessing because afterwards, as I look back, I could see that there were political schisms all over the place. I [pauses]...Craig Berkman and I were the only registered Republicans. [I am] not a Republican anymore. But Craig kind of honed in on that...you know, fellow thinkers. Um, and so I think Craig was not perhaps as welcomed by this largely Democratic group. I think they're almost...maybe Craig and I were the only Republicans. Maybe the older guy (pausing to think)...But I think they were all Democrats and I know very active in the Democratic Party. But so Craig and I got on very well and in fact [pauses]...if I recall or if I'm not making it up, on one or two occasions, I was used as the intermediary to negotiate some little deals (I guess) so that Craig wouldn't get feeling too bad about the situation.

CV: It looks like you've covered a lot, so there were some questions about your resignation because I found all these...

CM: [interjects] Oh!

CV: [continues]...letters of resignation. I thought, wow, I'd like to see...so you were very, very personal in some of them. So I just thought...

CM: [interjects] Did I say something naughty?

CV: No, just very...you know, "Thank you so much" and stuff like that...

CM: Yeah, I had a great time!

CV: So, do you feel comfortable explaining why you left after a year and a half?

CM: Oh, I worked that long... a year and a half? [laughs] Because as I said, I was asked to run for the Multnomah County [Commission]. There was a gentleman named Dan Mosee that had I known at the time, I wouldn't have run. I felt very bad about running a year and a half out of office. But they desperately wanted Dan off the commission. I didn't know Dan. I didn't know...that was the thing, umm, apparently the politicians figured out he was considered to be impregnable. A real...you could never get him out [of office]. But there was a changing of the districts and I guess some of the Democrats figured out he'd be

vulnerable, and he'd be vulnerable probably to a woman. I didn't know this at the time - honestly I didn't. As it turned out, I just loved Dan Mosee. He was the sweetest little guy and I felt so bad about knocking him out. The truth of the matter is, Dan and I were probably more alike in our thoughts...we're kind of more Libertarian than anything. And uh...he uh...after I won...I did defeat him, and it was very interesting for me because then I really did understand what a campaign was because I had people advising me who were pros.

So it was very interesting from that perspective, and I am glad that I did that. But I remember the second year... [pauses] Am I going too far? 'Cause I can stop, because I'm moving [too far a field]. The second year [term] when I re-ran for Multnomah County, I wasn't as dearly loved by some of the wheelers and dealers because I was more independent and more libertarian. And they ran a candidate against me. One day when I was walking one of my precincts and I was a little bit lost, a car drives up and here is Dan Mosee (who was a Democrat and I was still basically a Republican at this time). And I get in, and he says, "Come on, I'll show you...you're lost. I'll show you where you're gonna go." And he...I get into the car and here was all my campaign literature (surprised) and I said, "Dan, why is my campaign literature in your car?" He said, "Well, I went to the Democratic precinct..." (because the Democrats had endorsed me despite what the wheelers and dealers had [wanted] and you take your stuff there and they'll give it to the precinct captains) and he was a sweetheart. He was taking my literature and [was] delivering it to the precinct captains to make sure it got out. I thought, "I should have never run against this man - never ever." [laughs] That was one of the great griefs in my life. I kind of got sucked into something that, umm, had I really known, I wouldn't have done. I'm sadder, older and wiser now and it's a good wisdom. I have to laugh at how really stupid I was, but I learned a lot.

But I think the most exciting thing was Metro. If I hadn't had such a good experience at Metro, I wouldn't have leapt into politics. After Multnomah County (that wasn't so good), I didn't go into politics and I left it completely. But Metro was exciting because to create a government out of whole cloth, to design it, pattern it, and to be working with people who were faced with the same challenge of creating something new and whose purpose you believed in, it was just incredibly exciting. So I think fondly of Metro. (Joking) I won't tell you what I think of...

CV: Yeah, it seems like you only were there for a year and a half but you started it...

CM: Yes.

CV: You were involved in so many of the new governed laws and...

CM: Yes.

CV: It was just...you have a good mark on it whether you think you [do or not] "Oh, I was only there for a year..."

CM: [interjects] Oh, me personally, you mean?

CV: [interjects] Yes!

CM: Oh, I can't remember that.

CV: So do you ever, umm, did you ever keep up with Metro or keep up with what they were doing and maybe have hearsay or...?

CM: No, I'm very much a look forward person. I don't look back. I don't. However, I did do one thing in looking back at Metro, and that was when Mike Burton ran [for Executive Officer of Metro].¹⁴ I did for Mike what I did for Neil Goldschmidt, only this time I knew better. I worked very, very hard for him, and one day when I was up in the office he came up to me and he said, "I've got to ask you, why are you working so hard?" and I said, "Well, Mike because I think I owe you." [laughs] When I looked back and realized that afternoon at Cindy's had been...when I realized that Mike was really as capable as anyone of leadership. It isn't that I didn't think Charlie [Williamson] wasn't capable. It's just that I felt sorry that he hadn't had a chance to shine, and I was going to help him.

CV: Did he win?

CM: He did!

CV: All right!

CM: In fact, I don't know how many years he was the executive director here?

BS: Eight.

CM: Eight...but never while he was director did I visit him or talk to him. I had paid my debt [and] moved on.

BS: How long did you serve at Multnomah County?

CM: The full enchilada! Eight years.

BS: Oh, eight years.

CM: Long years except for one period when we were a five-woman board, which I think people do say (both to my face and behind my back) that they were the "Golden Years". Uh, by then, women's liberation was a factor. Women were more aware of the importance of working and supporting each other. We had five women on the Board: myself, of course, Gladys McCoy, Gretchen Kafoury, Pauline Anderson and...Oh gosh, and I loved her dearly (she died of cancer and I did quite a bit of care giving for her so why I can't remember her name?)¹⁵ I don't know. But there were the five women, and boy did we get on like a house

¹⁴ Mike Burton served as Executive Officer of Metro from 1995 to 2002.

¹⁵ Gladys McCoy served on the Multnomah County Board of Commissioners from 1979 to 1984 and 1987 to 1993. Gretchen Kafoury served on the Multnomah County Board of Commissioners from 1985 to 1990. Pauline Anderson served on the Multnomah County Board of Commissioners from 1985 to 1992. The narrator later indicated that the woman she was referencing was Polly Casterline who served on the Multnomah County Board of Commissioners from 1986 to 1989.

on fire and even when we disagreed. [pauses] Uh, and that was a golden time, but it was two and a half years and I moved out of office as I had to. [By then] I had had enough of politics.

CV: Where did you go from there?

CM: Actually, I think [I was] fifty-eight at the time. So I was [pauses] ...I did a little consulting for Metro...not for Metro [but] for Multnomah [County]. [I] did land use planning for them [and] was a hearings officer [for the] Board of Equalizations, [and] listened to property tax appeals. Then they hired me back as a consultant because they had some problem with the Board after I left. Uh, and I did a lot of consulting for AFSCME #88 which is the largest local [Multnomah County] Local. So I went back to the house of Labor (pause) but mostly I just piecemealed it. I wanted to go into art! So I went to PCC [and] started there taking art classes.

CV: So what do you do now?

CM: Well, in part, I'm a silk painter.

CV: Oh.

BS: Great.

CM: [I have] been in a few galleries and uh...and I write. I've published several short stories and I'm working, you know, like everybody else [on a] perpetual book. Um, I think for seventeen years I was a mediator for district court or for small claims and landlord tenant laws. So, in fact, I did that the moment I came out of Multnomah County because I thought. "I have done enough chaos; I am now going to make peace." And I must say that mediating was a wonderful, rich experience, and I was very good at it. I will say that for the record. [laughs]

CV: You said that you don't really look back? Even before but uh, what does Metro have today that you maybe envisioned that you hoped that it would be?

CM: Well, Republican or not (which I am not anymore!), I do believe in land use planning. I do believe in coordinating and having a vision of a community for the future and using the land well and using the resources well. So I thought Metro had that and because CRAG (I'd gone to a few meetings before and that was a gorilla take all) and the big gorilla was the City of Portland and maybe on occasion, Multnomah County. But really, the big gorilla in the cage was the City of Portland, and I thought that Metro did a better job of evening out the resources.

CV: Even today?

CM: Uh huh.

BS: Well...

CM: You didn't know I was such a "Chatty Cathy"!

BS: Well, I knew that you would have a lot to contribute. [laughter] Can we go back to when Earl Blumenauer encouraged you to run for the county? What was the motivation to get Mosee off the commission at that time? Was he an obstructionist?

CM: I couldn't tell you. I don't know...

BS: He had just been there a long time?

CM: I know that Earl wanted to be able to count his votes and you couldn't count Dan to fall into line. [hesitates] I think that there was a little power struggle between Don Clark and Earl, and I think Earl wanted to get better control over the votes.¹⁶ That's gossip, but I think that's what it was and I think he asked his friend, Rick, "Is there somebody at Metro who's got a little political experience, [someone] who you work well with?" And Rick coughed me up and that's what happened. Unfortunately, for Earl, I turned out to be as problematic as Dan, so he had to move on and get other alliances. [laughs]

BS: So he was on the commission at the time?

CM: Yes, when I came on, Don Clark was the executive director (he'd been separated off from Multnomah Commission), and it was Dennis Buchanan, Gordon Shadburne, Gladys McCoy, Earl Blumenauer and myself.¹⁷

BS: Interesting. So within a four-year period there was a complete turnover? I mean McCoy was still there, but then there were these other women that came on...

CM: [interjects] Yeah.

BS: ...that you mentioned.

CM: Gladys at one point went off because she ran for the city (pause), and Earl ran for the city [of Portland] so he went off. Then there was just the second year I was in office they put the term limitations on, so then there was just the natural rotation of people rotating on.

BS: When you were at the county, how did you partner with Metro? Was there any involvement?

CM: Actually, no. Which is a very interesting, surprising question. I mean, I'm sure there was but not at the commissioner level to my knowledge. Certainly, I was never asked to partner. I think it was administrator to administrator.

BS: Okay, and what did you do? What was your focus on Multnomah County Commission as far as your projects and your passion when you were there?

¹⁶ Donald E. Clark served on the Multnomah County Board of Commissioners from 1969 to 1979.

¹⁷ Dennis V. Buchanan served on the Multnomah County Board of Commissioners from 1975 to 1982. Gordon Shadburne served on the Multnomah County Board of Commissioners from 1979 to 1986.

CM: Oh, well my passion...my passion, I'm afraid, was for the downtrodden. I mean I started what turned out to be a disastrous support group for ex-convicts. Of course, I championed... started what was then, the health shelter for women (which is now being taken over by the Salvation Army), but it was in downtown Portland. I created the ground rules for what now governs home health institutions of ten or less. There's a bill of rights (which we created), which the legislature adopted as the standard across the state. I was very proud of that, but of course, my staff did the work. It's a shame that they don't get the credit.

But yeah, so I think that somebody said to me once, "Who is your constituency?" and I just said, "Well, the home[less] [I was very dedicated to homelessness], the downtrodden and who cares for the ex-convicts." And unfortunately, they don't vote. So uh, I could have spent my time more usefully.¹⁸ But they didn't get me out, so I survived. [laughs]

CV: So you think that they didn't like...well, they thought maybe you were an instigator because of this? They wanted you to focus on other things that maybe...

CM: Yes, they wanted...

CV: [interjects] Maybe money?

CM: Yes, they wanted me to focus on other things, and I'm sure you get a...If you read all the history of me, you'll get a very...I mean *The Oregonian* just hated me! I tried to fight against the proliferation of jails. I wanted to go in [to create rehabilitation programs as a means of preventing future crimes]...and this is where it worked with the women because the women came on board and then *The Oregonian* hated all of us! We wanted to stop the building of jails and create programs for young people to prevent...to catch early, as I said. Other people said nobody's afraid of the pregnant sixteen year-old girl. But [I know] that child she's carrying has a great probability of becoming an unlawful citizen. And uh, people always want to deal with the frightening end of the spectrum (the person who is on the street). They didn't have a tolerance for...Excuse me...[clears throat] taking a little bit of risk in order to catch it upstream.

And I know I hit many a neighborhood. I took the battle on and I got bludgeoned for it. Umm, I would go to neighborhoods and I apparently was [effective], because my staff had come out of the criminal justice system – two of them [were] attorneys. Our statistics were so good that we began to turn around [the public], and after that I couldn't go to a citizen meeting without both the sheriff and the police department being there and the district attorney's office, without question. And I remember one night I went up to North Portland when they were really hot about prostitutes in their streets (stop me if this is irrelevant) and uh, and there was Fred Pearce, the sheriff there [at Multnomah County]; Schrunk was there; and I can't remember...it was a man who was the head of [a representative from the Portland Police Bureau].¹⁹ I mean, they didn't send minions...they came themselves.

¹⁸ The narrator later clarified that she could have spent more time courting a more powerful constituency in terms of promoting her political career.

¹⁹ The narrator is referring to Mike Schrunk who served as Multnomah County District Attorney from 1980 to 2012.

Anyway, the North Portland people were all hot. I'd expected to be eaten alive (pause) and by the time we finished our presentation, the community stood up and gave us a standing ovation.

BS: Wow!

CM: But unfortunately, the little guy on the street doesn't make all the decisions. The power brokers wanted more construction, more jails and...

[Beginning Tape 1, Side B]

CV: You're doing great, I love it.

CM: Oh, okay! I'm a "Chatty Cathy".

CV: No, so...

CM: So what came out of that confrontation with the police department and the sheriff's office was...I did concede to build this jail that's sitting out here that is empty. What is that one?²⁰ [pauses] Well whatever, it's out there [and is still sitting empty]. I said at the time we didn't need it; that I would consent. They didn't want me to vote against it; somehow they wanted me [the vote] unanimous. I said I would consent, [but that] Schrunk would have to testify to this under oath [that] they would stop building jails for ten years and put that money into kids. I got the promise, but I don't see it. [laughs] And the jail is sitting out there. So I guess I at least gave them trouble. I didn't win, though, but I gave them trouble.

CV: I could see as a former teacher, you could really get other teachers on the wagon with you and just say, "We see this in schools, we see, you know, the fatherless children, we see all these things that Caroline Miller's trying to do."

CM: If you could reach enough people and you had the media on your side, you could do it because the statistics were ridiculous. In fact, if you listen to the law enforcement people today, they'd come over to my side because we're housing mentally ill people in these jails...[and] drug addicted people in these jails. These are not people (when you think of a criminal) who are going to come out and beat you to death with a baseball bat. Well, they are there, but the truth is we could pull a lot of people out of the jails [and] get them a different kind of service and be in more...stop the cycle mode. The statistics were there but the law enforcement people just...you know, job security. Boy do they have it because fear is a great motivator, and they had *The Oregonian* on their side and all of the newspapers on their side, and the TV commentators on their side.

So I would say we five women took quite a bruising because fear is a wonderful motivator. But the facts weren't there and now you'll see judges saying, "Well, maybe we should have some prevention programs." And they had nothing for women, no programs for women. So out of this little ex-convict group, a group for women came out. It was called (it was pretty good for a while) New Horizon's, New Dimensions (thinking)...New Beginnings.

²⁰ The narrator is referring to Multnomah County's three-year-old, voter-approved, \$58 million Wapato jail.

CV: New Directions...

CM: New Beginnings! And they did quite a lot for women and we did some good work for men. Remember, when you are dealing with the dregs of society, the ratio of winning [and losing people] is not so great. We did a lot of good, but there was just so much hostility to helping convicts...so much hostility. I kept saying, "But you know what? You take a rabid dog, you take him off the street, you put him in his cage for ten years, you don't treat the illness, you open up the cage in ten years, let him in on the street unsupervised, are you safer?" But members of the public would say to me, "I don't care! At least I'm going to be safe for ten years!" It's hard to beat that mentality.

CV: What do you think of the new law where judges can give you (in Eugene, I guess)...this new thing where they can give you a punishment instead of jail? For instance, one of the brothers who was a neo-Nazi that attacked a synagogue in Eugene. His brother was put in jail because he had threatened murder and the other one was given six years of learning Judaism, going to synagogue, and being in a community with Jewish children. How do you like that? Whatever crime you did, you are totally immersed in the other side of it. Do you like that?

CM: I think it's a great idea...I think it's just a wonderful. As I said, I worked for the courts for seventeen years as a volunteer, but some of this the judges brought on themselves.²¹ They got...all of them got so [focused on] 'beating the bushes about the great crime waves' in this community that people took it out of their hands and then they started mandatory jail sentences which took the judges out of it completely. So they got bitten in the behind, to tell you the truth, and it serves them right. You can play that fear card to such a degree that people panic. So now they've been trying to undo these mandatory sentences and what is going on in Eugene [Oregon] is a perfect example. It's the way that they should've gone before. So, yeah, I think it's great. Let the punishment fit the crime. Some of these people who get into jail (like these skinheads)...you look at their backgrounds, their level of education...you know, taking them out of the street environment and putting them in a jail environment does not improve anything. So a kid that's got to spend six years sitting in a synagogue, I say, "Amen" to that. (All laugh)

BS: Caroline, could you tell us how you crossed over from a Republican to Democrat? What influences were there?

CM: Gosh, this is posterity. You're asking me to...

BS: [interjects] When did that happen?

CM: It happened with George Bush.

BS: Oh, okay. So it's more recent?

CM: Yes, it started a little before hand because I went to a Republican meeting and there

²¹ The narrator is referring to the mandatory jail sentencing guidelines passed by Oregon voters that restrict a judge's discretionary judgment.

was a woman in a gorilla suit and they were doing some of the most embarrassing skits on anti-abortion (or as they called it, you know. Okay, now understand when I was a part of the Republican Party we were a sane group. We had [Bob] Packwood; [Victor] Atiyeh was considered a far right...you know he would be considered left [today]; Nancy Ryles was in the legislature.²² These were reasoned, middle of the road people. I'm a fiscal conservative. You know, I want to see where every dime goes [pauses] and a social Libertarian, and a lot of Republicans were.

Well, I saw those people prancing up there. I am, let the record show, Pro-Choice. My view is if a woman can't control her body, she controls nothing. And while I respect (having been raised a Catholic and no longer a Catholic) where they're coming from, for me Pro-Choice is a bottom line issue. So that began to be the wedge in the Republican Party. I hope I haven't offended anyone but that is my bias. [If you] can't control your body, you're just not in control of anything. But finally, the first time George Bush got appointed by the Supreme Court [in 2001], I felt so ashamed of the Republican Party that I could not be a part of it. So then I went Green. I just joined the Green Party; I figured they were radical enough. I could not go to the Democrats because by then, I felt the politics is the same in either camp. So I decided I would be an agitator, which Earl [Blumenauer] would have told you I would have done. [laughs] I'm positive of that!

CV: Was that George Bush Sr. or George W. Bush?

CM: [interjects] No! I could stomach George Sr.

CV: Oh, okay!

CM: I could stomach him. He was intelligent and I know he's involved in oil. But the shenanigan they pulled with that first election...to me it was fairly obvious.

CV: How would you like to be remembered? It's very broad, but how would you like to be remembered, in general, at MSD [or] in the political world [in general]?

CM: I would like to be forgotten in the political world! [laughter] I am telling you this is why I had to think about this interview! I must tell you, I don't think I was a good politician. I'm positive that I was really a poor politician.

BS: What traits did you lack to be a good politician?

CM: Even though I was a mediator and I know how to create peace, there is something inside me that when something is stupid I just have to say so. Even if it is just my humble opinion that it is stupid, I just have to. And there was just too much hypocrisy in politics, too much fibbing, too much not playing straight with the public. It goes on all the time and

²² Bob Packwood was a member of the Oregon Legislative Assembly from 1963 to 1968. He was elected to the U.S. Senate in 1968 and served until his resignation in September 1995.

Victor G. Atiyeh was a member of the Oregon House of Representatives from 1959 to 1964; a member of the Oregon Senate from 1965 to 1978; and served as governor of Oregon from 1979 to 1987.

Nancy Ryles served in the Oregon House (District 5) from 1979 to 1981 and in the Oregon Senate (District 3) from 1983 to 1987

then what does the public have to defend itself against...this self-perpetuating body that thinks from one election to the next. Is the media before the state? Well, I lost a great deal of respect for the media. They are as hand-in-glove in this taking care of each other and furthermore, they are not insiders. You know, politicians use the media to get their message. So when somebody tells you what the inside scoop is, they've got the inside, one-side scoop by somebody who is engineering what they want to get out.

So I want to be remembered, I guess, as a person who had a high regard for the truth as I saw it and let the chips fall where they may. I took a lot of heat in that kitchen. I don't regret it. I look back and I got myself into scrapes with the judges. I mean the judges were not all I had hoped. I got into scrapes with the law enforcement people [and] my fellow politicians when they were being ingenuous. I could have not lived in politics; they would have got me eventually.

BS: With that said, what advice can you give someone who's thinking of running for public office today versus how it was back when you were Green?²³

CM: Well, I'm sure it's worse! I don't think we can change. Honestly, I think that everybody who goes in goes in with an ideal...I think there aren't many people who sit around and think, "I'm going to go into this and then I'm going to corrupt it for my own good." I really don't think that's it at all. The system itself is corrupt. Until we get a supreme court that tells us that money is not freedom of speech, it's not going to continue to be corrupt. And I suspect our forefathers would be very surprised to know that money is a form of freedom of speech. We have to change the system so we get money out of it. I read something by a professor that I think is brilliant (I've never really floated it but maybe in my last dying days I'll do this) but [he suggested that] part of political office should be by conscription. You know, people sit on juries and make life and death decisions. Why shouldn't we be conscripted to serve on a city council for two years and decide where stoplights are going to go? Everybody should do some public service in the form of not elected office but public office.²⁴ Imagine how that would be if a third of the people sitting on any board were there because their number came up and in two years time they'd be gone. How could you buy a board? Because these are people who are going to be there because, "Well, I'm going to do the right thing and there's nothing in it for me." Now maybe down the road somebody will find a way to corrupt (humans are ingenious). But it seems to me we have to radically change the system, because I know (and I'll put this on the record for anyone who wants to think about public life) the minute I decided to run for Multnomah County (this is a confession), I stopped looking at people as people. They started to be resources. "Will this person walk a precinct for me?" "Does this person have money?" "Will this person [do] mail [or] the phone bank?" They just stopped being people!

Well, that's the nature of the game. Frankly, if you want to win that game, you have to think that way...in this way. You have to be ruthless in your plans to win. You have to be a user, and you also have to decide who you can afford to alienate and who can you not afford to

²³ The narrator later wished to reiterate that during the time she occupied political office, she was a registered Republican, not a member of the Green Party.

²⁴ The narrator later clarified that "everybody should do some public service in the form of elected office."

alienate. Any person who gives [big] money to a politician and says, “I am just simply wanting access” is a liar. What they want is a vote and if you don’t give it to them the next time around, don’t look for that pot of money. I speak with experience. So yeah, money is corrupt. It corrupts you; it changes your point of view. It does not mean that you can’t do good things, but you have to do a lot of not so good things or queasy things that wouldn’t look good ten inches above the fold in *The Oregonian*, you know.

CV: Is there anyone right now that you see in politics that you feel like you really could...you feel like you recognize their values and morals just like what you were like at the time, maybe specifically a woman? But it doesn’t have to be...

CM: Yes, I’m supporting Hillary [Clinton] to death because I don’t want to die without seeing a woman president. Okay, but do I believe Hillary is...

CV: (Interrupts) Do you relate to her on any level? Or do you...

CM: [interjects] Well, I relate to her because she’s a tough woman. I have...I mean don’t believe that local politics can’t be as hot or dirty as national politics. It’s just played out on a smaller scale, and in some ways, more lethal. I won’t say who this politician was, but we were having a fight with the judges of Multnomah County. I laid out the reasons why we couldn’t let the judges have what they wanted, so much so that...I think it was...it may have been David Fredrikson who came up afterwards and said to me, “Carrie, the vote went against me 4-1. How could anybody not have supported your position?” And I asked that question of one of my colleagues and her answer was, “Carrie, I don’t want to ride on an elevator with the judges having crossed them.” God is my witness...that was her motive for the vote! So when I say local politics can be more lethal, I ain’t going to be on an elevator with Hillary, but yeah, I was on a lot of elevators with judges. I just hoped I never got a parking ticket. (All laugh) The only thing in my favor was that Don Clark wasn’t too partial to them either. So I felt that I was in good company. [laughs] No, I believe that everybody starts out (most everyone) with really good intentions. I’m saying that [in] this system, you can’t get into the tar pit and not get tar on you...just can’t.

BS: Well, it sounds like your experience at Multnomah County was really in the tar pit compared to your time at Metro.

CM: Oh, Metro was a walk in the park, but part of it was ignorance. As I look back, I could see things were going on [but] I didn’t know how to read them.

BS: And newness...

CM: [interjects] The newness, yeah, and having a real important pressing agenda. We didn’t have as much to machinate about for power. You know, you had to get your personnel rules; you had to get your budget; you had to...yeah, it was a happier time.

BS: I am curious if we could go back just a little. One of our questions was what [constituted] a typical day in the life of a Metro councilor? I know you split your time between your full-time job and whatever was on the agenda for Metro, but could you

describe that? What a typical day might have been like? Was it all hands on deck normally when there was a Council meeting or did you spend time in the office? What was it like?

CM: Well, first of all as I said, we were volunteers. We got a per diem when we came to a meeting. Otherwise, it was free. And you understand that I was a head of a union. I had a lot of grievances, a lot of fights, a lot of struggles, because that's all [the] union is - handling people who are in trouble. And I would remember I'd be up to the gills in some grievance I was filing on behalf of some employee and Metro would deliver our agenda books. I don't know what they must be like now; [back then] they were (for the record) four feet tall, and they would plop these on my desk and I would have to go through them. One thing I never learned (either at Metro or Multnomah County) is that I really read the material. Now that isn't true. You go down to legislature [and] you'll hear people saying, "What's this bill about? How should I vote?" (No, you will...I'm not being cynical). But I'm a reader, so I would read this stuff.

So it was a lot of work, but then I have to say, I think the Metro councilors (not being hardened politicians) were more like me in that regard. Unlike Multnomah County, where people had not read the agenda and it was pretty clear that they didn't know what was going on, I did not feel that with twelve honest tried and true citizens [MSD councilors]. They were a sharp group. I learned a lot from them by the questions they raised. So they did their homework. I will say that for them. I don't know if it's true anymore, but they did. Perhaps because of the newness, we all wanted to get it started on a good foot. So it was a lot of work. I'd say the public really got their per diem's worth from that twelve! But it was a lot of work and it was broad. That was the thing, I mean, part of the agenda was roads; part of the agenda was land use planning; part of the agenda was the division of gas tax (being a pass through agency and what that meant). You learned a great deal and you learned it fast. Again, Metro staff was superlative in their knowledge so you could go to them. Yes, you knew what they wanted from you, but boy they were on top of the facts. They were excellent!

BS: Did you feel you had to go through the gate of the executive officer to get at the staff, or could you comfortably go straight to staff? That's been a constant theme in this agency and I'm curious about how you sorted this out in the early days.

CM: No, I went to staff. It never even occurred to me to go to Rick to get information. Uh, at that time, Rick was not the problem; it was the professional executive director who left in two years. And he wasn't the problem. He was a very nice, competent man but I think he felt more of the intrusion of the councilors taking up his staff time.

BS: Now, was that the director of planning?

CM: Well, he was Rick's executive under...originally he had been the director of CRAG. He was really a sharp, wonderful [man]. I really loved him, but I could sense he wasn't thoroughly happy that we would bumble in. But I think he had a right to do that. I think over time, I got into the habit of letting him know who I was going to see (and that sort of thing) just to be courteous, because I could see that my just dropping in wasn't always good. But not with Rick. I don't think those barriers had... Now, with the next executive

who I [did not] did serve with [Rena Cusma] - who came in and gutted my personnel rules - I'm not surprised. Rena had a very different leadership style. She was very much in control. [Knocks on table] I could see that she might be (I'm guessing) the historical precedent for the beginnings of making it difficult for councilors (if that's the case) to go in. But I think that Rick was too new on the job. Maybe later he was, I don't know.

BS: What was his role as...how was he perceived on the Council? Was he a person that came to the Council and tried to set policy or was he more in a position of trying to recommend? There's a little bit of a difference there, but I'm curious because the role of the executive officer has been distinct and then Mike Burton set the stage for executive officer to go away in 2003. [The office of the Executive Officer was dissolved]

CM: Oh, I didn't know that.

BS: Yes, and it became the council president and the councilors [with a Chief Operating Officer]...

CM: [interjects] Oh, I guess I did know that.

BS: Yes, and you probably voted one way or the other for that [in the 2002 general election]. But in any case, I know that some executive officers have had a very distinct idea about what their role was. I'm curious about Rick. What do you think he thought his role was - more on the administrative side or did he dip his toe into policy?

CM: Well, I can only tell you how he behaved. I can't tell you what he thought his role was and that goes back to the selection of the chair. I think the board members who did not want Charlie in as the chair of the Council felt there needed to be a check and balance; that the camaraderie between Charlie Williamson and Rick was just too strong, [as they were] old political cronies, and that Mike [Burton] would be more of a different weight on the teeter-totter. I think that some of the more politically astute perhaps thought that there would be an effort to corral information or to control the board with this camaraderie with the chair. I never felt that, never sensed that, and that doesn't mean anything. What Rick did would bring the recommendations from the staff on the policy issues (and one of them was this road that went through this burial ground). He would read them and we would vote on them. But because we were spending so much time with personnel rules, we were doing a lot of structural policy as well as just the day-to-day work that you're doing now. Oh, I think I recall a couple of board members saying he [Rick] was trying to control the board, but you know it's pretty hard to control twelve disparate people. I never felt that pressure.

BS: Okay, great.

CV: Is there anything you want to add that we didn't ask or...?

CM: No, I think you've milked this puppy for all she's worth!

BS: Well, I can think of a number of additional questions, but in that one year and some

you served, did you perceive any challenges to this new form of government that you always had to be aware of [or] try to minimize?

CM: From the public's perspective?

BS: Yeah.

CM: Oh, absolutely, and I must say at [one] point, I kind of agreed with the public. People wanted to know why they were having to pay (actually, they weren't paying taxes because it was a...I believe the government's were still paying). I mean, you didn't get your levy for quite sometime, but they didn't know why they had to go through this other layer of government to get what they wanted. They thought it was a superimposed overlay of unnecessary bureaucracy and to some degree, I believe it could have really looked that way. If they had seen how CRAG had functioned (which I thought was really dysfunctional), then I think they would have felt better. I say dysfunctional because the City of Portland, as I said, was the "ten hundred pound gorilla."

Ironically, it would be the people in Troutdale that would (or Gresham) object the most because they were always suspicious of government (which I consider a very healthy thing). So they were always taking pot shots at Metro and not without reason. But had they seen how their tax dollars were disbursed, and the degree to which the City of Portland carried away, then they might have felt differently. But they didn't really see that. So the existence of Metro for the first few years...there were people who wanted to put it on the ballot and abolish it. So that was a really questionable issue, and Metro has probably survived because it still remains a fairly invisible government. You handle such esoteric things. You don't handle stray dogs barking, fire, crime.

BS: Pot holes...

CM: Right, so you do good work. You are allowed to do good work, and the public has just kind of caved in and said okay. I was so pleased that they gave you your tax money. I thought that was wonderful because even then, you see, it was kind of voluntary for the cities and you always wondered whether everything would...when you're passing through money to this agency and that [agency], it was always iffy.

BS: Did you deal with concerns over funding that first year?

CM: I think we all felt that we needed independent funding, that you couldn't just be really be an independent government if you were just waiting for the handouts that just drip to you from other governments. As for the federal money, we had very little control over that. As I said, at that time anyway, we were just 'pass through' so to do the land infrastructure and the roads and the things that needed to be done to hold the community together, we needed our independent [pauses] funding. So when I saw it on the ballot, I didn't have to pause to think about that issue or research it.

BS: Are you talking about the green spaces bond measure that passed?

CM: Yes, uh huh.

BS: Well, Carrie...

CV: All I was thinking about was the new ballot that just passed - giving the farmers the right to not sell their land.

BS: Measure 37?

CV: Yeah, and I saw that in your... I can't find it right now, but when I was researching you, you had done a similar thing with the urban growth boundary. How do you feel about the saving of the farms versus people not being able to buy a house, you know, with little income? I mean it's on both sides so...

CM: Well, this is where I get really freaky. [laughs]

CV: Maybe I shouldn't have asked?

CM: I come down with the farmers. People in a society have to make intelligent balanced decisions, and while I do understand passionately (having worked with the homeless) the need for affordable housing, this is not something that politicians can really mediate. At some point, the society has to have an awakening or awareness (like it is beginning to have) about the environment - that you can only have so much growth or it becomes unlivable. And I don't think you can legislate that. I think what governments can do as they try to do, but its burden is to make sure there's so much affordable housing. You know, just take over and say, "This is affordable housing." But this is going to take a cultural awareness, so my game strategy would be to keep that belt tight around the city and save those green spaces and those farmers. That doesn't [go down] well. No, it was (this time) all the votes of the real estate agents; all the contractors; all the developers; the labor union...all of that for a few trees who don't vote. But that's where I would have come down and...

CV: [Interrupts] But in '79, were you more tempted to have the urban growth boundary expanded because it was not very populated?

CM: Well, you tell [me], what was my decision?

CV: I just saw that on there that you were for it.

CM: I would have been inclined to support the green spaces, unless I've gone off the deep end since then and really gone senile. I'm pretty consistent in my view that planning requires planning for green spaces, planning for small farmers and for the community. You can't live in a concrete world and stay human. That's idealistic, but no you can't. You've got to have this mix.

BS: Well, I think if there are no other questions...

CV: Okay, then were done, I guess.

CM: I hope this wasn't too painful for you!

[\[End of Interview\]](#)

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Neil Goldschmidt
Sally McCracken
Rick Gustafson
Cindy Banzer
Mike Burton
Charlie Williamson
Jane Rhodes
Rena Cusma
Marge Kafoury
Betty Schedeen
Craig Berkman
Corky Kilpatrick
Earl Blumenauer
Dan Mosee
Ernie Bonner
David Fredrikson
Gladys McCoy
Pauline Anderson
Gretchen Kafoury
Don Clark
Dennis Buchanan
Gordon Shadburne
Fred Pearce
Mike Schrunk
George W. Bush
Bob Packwood
Victor Atiyeh
Nancy Ryles
George H. W. Bush, Sr.
Hillary Clinton
Casterline, Polly

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