

Metro Councilor Tanya Collier

District 9, 1986 to 1993
Oral History





ca. 1993

Tanya Collier
Metro Councilor, District 9
1986 - 1993

Tanya Collier was born in Tulare, California in 1946, and moved to Portland, Oregon with her family in 1950, where she attended a number of public grade schools, including West Gresham, Lane, Kelly, Binnsmead, and Kellogg, before enrolling in St. Anthony's Catholic School. She graduated from John Marshall High School in southeast Portland, and went on to earn an Associate of Arts degree in Political Science at Clackamas Community College in 1973. In 1975, Ms. Collier earned a Bachelor's degree in Political Science from Portland State University (PSU), and received a Master's of Public Administration degree from PSU in 1979.

Ms. Collier's path to elected office was marked by both professional and voluntary activities in the public and non-profit sectors. Over a ten year period, she gained valuable experience in public policy development through her work as executive director of Multnomah County Children's Commission (1976-1978); as staff assistant to Multnomah County Commissioner Barbara Roberts (1978); as special project manager at the City of Portland's Bureau of Budget and Management (1980); and as assistant director and later, director of Multnomah County's Department of Intergovernmental Relations and Community Affairs (1980-1983).

In October 1983, she was hired as the general manager of Portland Energy Conservation, Inc. (PECI) – a non-profit corporation charged with implementing the private sector goals of the City of Portland's Energy policy. In March 1985, Ms. Collier applied her special skills in group negotiation to her position as labor representative with the Oregon Nurses Association – a position she retained while holding elected office at Metro. In addition, Ms.

Collier shared her knowledge, experience and unique perspective as a political activist with students while teaching courses in intergovernmental relations and public management as an adjunct professor in the School of Public Administration at Portland State University (1982-1984).

In addition to her professional work, Ms. Collier immersed herself in a wide variety of civic activities, including membership in the Oregon Women's Political Caucus (1976-1987); Multnomah County Community Action Agency (1977-1980); the Joint City-County 911 Emergency Service Task Force (1979-1980); the Council of Intergovernmental Coordinators, National Association of Counties (1981-1983); the Multnomah County Charter Review Commission (1983-84); the Metropolitan Citizens League (1983-1984); and the Portland State University Foundation (1984-1985). [See Ms. Collier's *Metro Elected Officials: Public Service Profile* for additional information about her civic activities]

After two unsuccessful bids to secure a seat in the Oregon House of Representatives in 1978 and 1980, Ms. Collier's goal of seeking political office was realized in July 1986 when she was appointed to fill a vacancy on the Metro Council (District 9) – a vacancy created by the resignation of Hardy Myers in June of that year. She was subsequently elected to complete the unexpired term of Mr. Myers in November 1986, and successfully ran for re-election in 1988.

During her tenure on the Metro Council, Ms. Collier was elected presiding officer (1990 and 1991), and served on a wide array of internal and external committees. [See Ms. Collier's *Metro Elected Officials: Public Service Profile*] Some of the highpoints of her service on the Metro Council included the opening of the Oregon Convention Center (September 1990); the establishment of the Metropolitan Exposition Recreation Commission (to manage the convention, performing arts and EXPO facilities); the modernization of the Metro Washington Park Zoo (later the Oregon Zoo); the establishment of an innovative curbside recycling program; the closure of the 50 year old St. Johns Landfill (1992) and the creation of a neighborhood mitigation program; the siting of a new regional landfill in Arlington, Oregon to effectively manage the region's solid waste; the implementation of the Household Hazardous Waste program; the development and implementation of the Metro Council's Performance Audit program; the preparation and adoption of the Regional Growth Management Goals and Objectives or RUGGO's (which are the foundation of Metro's Regional Framework Plan); and initiating the process to begin the transfer of Multnomah County parks and pioneer cemeteries to Metro (creating the cornerstone of Metro's parks and natural areas program).

On January 3, 1993, Tanya Collier left Metro after her election to the Multnomah County Board of Commissioners (District 3) in November 1992 – a position she held until 1997. After leaving elected office, Ms. Collier returned to Metro to work in labor relations (1999 to

2000), and eventually as Human Resources director of the Metropolitan Exposition-Recreation Commission (MERC) - a position she held until her retirement in June 2005.

As a private citizen, Ms. Collier focuses her time and energy on family activities and creative pursuits such as photography, writing, quilting, needlepoint and sewing. However, she remains engaged in civic affairs and issues related to human rights and regionalism.

In addition to her career in the public sector, and her many contributions to civic life, Ms. Collier's abiding belief in social progress fostered a life-long commitment to achieving equal rights for women by increasing the number of women serving in elective office. Along with other women of her generation, she was on the forefront of a movement to recruit and mentor women seeking political office, and served as a role model to those who followed in her footsteps.

In sum, Tanya Collier's public service is an important part of the Portland metropolitan region's history and her story contributes substantially to our understanding of how women shaped the political landscape at the local, state and national level.



**Metro Councilor Oral History Interview
MSD Councilor Tanya Collier, District 9
November 2, 2007**

In Attendance: Councilor Tanya Collier, Narrator, Chelsea Vaughn, Interviewer (Portland State University), and Becky Shoemaker, Metro Archivist

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

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**Metro Councilor Oral History Interview
Councilor Tanya Collier, District 9
November 7, 2006**

Key: Tanya Collier (TC), Chelsea Vaughn (CV) and Becky Shoemaker (BS)

Format: Sides A and B of two audiocassette tapes

TRANSCRIPT

[Begin Side A, Tape 1]

CV: To start with, can I get you to state your name and the district you represented?

TC: Tanya Collier and it was District 9.

CV: And what neighborhoods were those?

TC: Southeast Portland.¹

CV: And what years were you in office?

TC: Beats me. [laughter]

CV: Okay, I believe I have that here, 1986 to 1993?

TC: Yeah. And I don't know what you're going to ask me...Hardy Myers resigned to go back east, Washington D.C., I believe, and so I was appointed to fill his term.²

CV: Okay. To get some background information first, did you grow up in that neighborhood?

TC: I did.

CV: So you have ties to it?

¹ At the time, District 9 encompassed southeast Portland including the Sunnyside, Mt. Tabor, the southeast section of Laurelhurst, Montavilla, Foster-Powell, and Lents neighborhoods.

² Hardy Myers represented District 9 on the MSD Council, 1985 to 1986. From 1979 to 1983, Mr. Myers served in the Oregon House of Representatives, the last four of those years as its speaker. In addition, he served three terms as Oregon's Attorney General (1997 to 2009).

TC: Right now, I live a stone's throw from the house I grew up in. My kids and I both went to Marshall High School. I've been in that neighborhood since 1954.

CV: Did you go to college locally as well?

TC: I did. I started out at Mt. Hood Community College. I then went to Clackamas Community College. I got my AA Degree in Political Science. Then I went to Portland State. I got my B.S. in Political Science. I returned after my kids were middle school age and got my Master's in Public Administration.

CV: Were you always interested in doing public service?

TC: I was. From the time I decided to go back to school when I was 26, I knew I wanted to major in political science. Everybody tried to talk me out of it because it was so useless. I don't think I knew I wanted to be an elected person at that time, but I went. When I got to Portland State I was an intern for a guy named Marko Haggard who ran an [internship program]. I went to the [Oregon] Legislature, and when I walked in I said, "Whoa, man this is for me!" So I ran for office after I graduated. I was 30 years old. I wasn't 22 or something. I ran for office and I lost the first time by 30 votes, and then I lost the second time (this was for State Representative) by 100 votes against the same guy.³ Talk about not learning your lesson! I said, "Okay, I am going to go back to school. I'm going to get my Master's degree. I'm going to do public service through public administration and actually get a job, and I'm never running for office again."

CV: [laughs]

TC: That's kind of how that went. Then a few years later, what year did I do this... '86? Yeah, three years later is when Hardy [Myers] quit [the Metro Council]. Rick Gustafson called me up and asked if I would like to submit my name.⁴ They had to vote on me (I've forgotten how many people there were), and next thing I know I was back in it.⁵ At the same time we were volunteers, so I [also] did collective bargaining for the [Oregon] Nurses [Association].

CV: Can you describe that job a bit?

TC: Which job?

CV: The [Oregon] Nurses Association.

³ Tanya Collier's opponent in the 1978 and 1980 House of Representative races was Drew Davis. Mr. Davis represented District 20 (Portland/Multnomah County) from 1977 to 1982.

⁴ Rick Gustafson served as Executive Officer of the Metropolitan Service District (MSD) [a.k.a. Metro] from 1979 to 1987.

⁵ At the time of Tanya Collier's appointment, the Metro Council consisted of twelve elected officials.

TC: Yeah, actually it has a bearing on this. I represented seven bargaining units. I negotiated on behalf of nurses' wages, hours, working conditions, which was an interesting juxtaposition to this [holding political office]. It actually ended up dovetailing nicely. I'm the reason why we don't have lawyers doing collective bargaining here [at Metro].

CV: How so?

TC: I suggested that it be a position, and I lobbied for it being a position...that we bring it in house. It's really expensive to have lawyers do collective bargaining, and it's very narrow once you learn it (if you have a knack for it).

CV: Were there any other organizations you were affiliated with when you started at Metro?

TC: I should have brought you my resume. I had a number of community activities that I did. I was very active in the Oregon Women's Political Caucus. Do you remember that Becky?

BS: Yes.

TC: I marched in the ERA (Equal Rights Amendment) Parade with my grandma, but that was just a little thing. I was chair of MCCA, which was the Multnomah County Community Action Agency.⁶

CV: You mentioned that you had been contacted about applying for Metro. What made you decide to actually apply beyond the initial request?

TC: I think I still had that bug about being elected. It was latent at that point, you know, it was buried, but I didn't even hesitate. I was relatively new at my job, and I asked my coworkers, "What do you think I should do?" They all said I shouldn't do it, so of course promptly I did. [laughter] I always loved to ask advice and then do what I wanted. It was easier to be appointed than it was to run. I don't think I would have run for it. I think if Rick wouldn't have called me, my elected days would have been over.

CV: When you did run for Metro, what was that like?

TC: You know what? I think I ended up running...I think I served seven years, and I think I ran three times. They kept changing it. I think, maybe in the beginning it was two years, and then...I've forgotten exactly how it works. [to Becky] Do you remember?

⁶ The purpose of the Multnomah County Community Action Committee (MCCA) was to help poor and underprivileged residents living in the southeast area of Portland (East Multnomah County).

CV: One thing I found was that you had ran, I believe, in '86 and then again in '89. Does that sound accurate?

TC: No, I ran three times, but I don't remember why three times. [Maybe] for four-year terms. I think they moved from two-year to four-year terms during that time.

CV: They seemed to have a lot of changes actually in the structure.

TC: Yeah, well when I started out there were thirteen [districts].⁷

CV: Right.

BS: If I can just ask one question. How did you know Rick Gustafson? What was your association with him?

TC: I met Rick when I was an intern... [Rick] and Earl Blumenauer were active in Democratic circles, and I was active with the Democratic Party.⁸ That's how I met them. Oh, and we were in Campaigners together. Do you know about Campaigners?

CV: No, what was that?

TC: It was this wonderful group where people learned...well, its purpose was to elect liberal Democrats to office. We had a speaker every Thursday morning at seven o'clock. They gave [us] three topics and we had to speak for a minute, kind of like Toastmasters. Rick was a member of that, [and] so was Earl Blumenauer (they were very close friends). Once every two years we put on a play - a funny play with music. Somebody in the group wrote it, [and] we all had parts. I was a baby lawn sign! You know, it was just a great group, and that's where I met them. That was where I learned to not be so nervous [with] public speaking. That was another issue; I was just scared to death. [turns to Becky] Do you know Frank Roberts?⁹

BS: Yes.

TC: He was the speech professor at Portland State [University]. He was a member of this group [Campaigners]. He dragged me down, signed me up for a speech class, and

⁷ Beginning in 1993, the number of Metro Council districts was increased to thirteen districts (as ratified through the General Election in November 1992).

⁸ Earl Blumenauer was elected to the Oregon Legislature in 1972. In 1978, he was elected to the Multnomah County Board of Commissioners, where he served for eight years before being elected to the Portland City Council in 1986. In 1996, he was elected to the US House of Representatives (Oregon's 3rd congressional district).

⁹ Frank Roberts was one of the original faculty members at Portland State University, serving from its inception as Vanport Extension Center in 1946 until his retirement in 1982. He served more than two decades in the Oregon Legislature first as a state representative and then as a state senator.

signed me up for Campaigners. Within a year there it wasn't an issue for me anymore. Isn't that amazing? The effect people have on your lives.

CV: Are there any other people or events you feel influenced your decision to join Metro?

TC: You know, it was really fun to be almost on the ground floor of something, because the year I was the intern in the [Oregon] Legislature was the year the legislation [forming Metro] passed. Rick and Earl and Ron Cease - a bunch of people that by then I knew because of the Democratic Party - were instrumental in establishing what was then called - what did you call it - MSD [Metropolitan Service District]?¹⁰

CV: When you first began at Metro, what was that experience like?

TC: My first vote was for the [Oregon] Convention Center. I'd never even seen a document about the Convention Center. In fact, Metro was having some issues back then, and I remember having an argument with Ron Cease that maybe the Port [of Portland] should do the Convention Center and not MSD.

CV: How come?

TC: Metro got off to a real, real rocky start, and actually, it was too bad. I even remember what the issue was, though I wasn't part of it then. Rick was new and wanted to make a splash - do something that would make people say, "Oh, thank God we have Metro." What he chose was Johnson Creek, the flood plains, and, actually, it was brilliant. I think he just moved too fast and didn't get the neighbors involved. The next thing you knew there was a riot about it. [turns to Becky] Do you remember?

BS: I don't remember that, but I've read about it.

TC: It was a good idea, but everybody was exuberant, and the agency wasn't yet trusted. Anyway, so my first vote was for the Convention Center. I think it was \$55 or \$80 million dollars and I just said, "Yes."¹¹ You know, I knew by that time it was going to pass. People had kind of told me about it, and they made sure I was going to vote "right" on it when they interviewed me for [the position].

CV: How did your experiences with Metro change over time? Did you get more experienced in the job?

¹⁰ Ron Cease was instrumental in founding the Department of Public Administration at Portland State University. In addition to his work as a professor of Public Administration and Political Science, he served as a state representative and then as a state senator in the Oregon Legislature from 1985 to 1997.

¹¹ On November 4, 1986, voters passed a Metropolitan Service District (MSD) ballot measure approving \$65 million in General Obligation bonds for capital construction of a regional convention facility. In addition, the MSD sought \$15 million from the 1987 Oregon Legislative Assembly to assist in the development and construction of the Oregon Convention Center. [See MSD Resolution No. 86-723]

TC: Well, I thought I wanted to be in politics to make policy. I didn't want anything to do with the finances. I didn't want anything to do with budgets, and Mike Ragsdale, who...we were nonpartisan, but he was one of the few Republicans.¹² Have you met him yet?

CV: I have not.

TC: He's wonderful. I just love him. He took me aside and said, "Tanya, you can't make policy unless you understand the budget and how it works." He'd served in the [Oregon] Legislature; in fact, he was there when I was an intern, although I had not met him [yet], I don't think. That's why you see all this finance stuff down here. [gestures to paper with her service record] First, I think, he started me out as Vice-Chair.¹³ He got me into it, and made me understand the relationship between finance and budget policy. Big, big impact on how I did business from thereafter. Talk about how people affect your lives!

CV: What were some of the changes you made after that? How did you deal with policy differently?

TC: I then understood that you had to fund it. [laughter] Oh, what a concept, right? I just wanted to do good, you know, because he was more conservative and I was more liberal, he was very willing...he and Dick Waker (who died) both took me under their wing.¹⁴ They didn't make me become conservative, but they did temper me so I was more reasonable about it. Things like the collective bargaining in-house...that was a budget decision as much as a philosophical decision. I was fortunate to be able to work with them.

The other person on council that had an impact on me was George Van Bergen, who was also a Republican.¹⁵ This is very interesting because I think, more or less, that those were the only three Republicans back in those days. He was an attorney from Clackamas County, and what he did was he gave me a more rural view. Dick and Mike were both from Washington County, which I used to routinely make fun of, you know, being a good Southeast Portland girl. We worked well together - compromising [and] putting things together. That's the impact that other people have. I think if you're willing to open yourself up and not say, "Oh, he's a Republican. I'm not going to have anything to do with that."

CV: When you were at Metro, do you remember any significant projects or assignments that particularly stick out to you now?

¹² Mike Ragsdale represented District 1 on the MSD Council, 1986 to 1990. Before his tenure at Metro, he served as a state representative and then as a state senator in the Oregon Legislature from 1973 to 1980.

¹³ Tanya Collier served on the Council Budget and Finance Committee from 1988 to 1990.

¹⁴ Richard "Dick" Waker was appointed to the MSD Council effective January 27, 1983; he was subsequently elected to the MSD Council on May 15, 1984, and represented District 2 until 1988.

¹⁵ George Van Bergen represented District 6 on the MSD Council, 1983 to 1994.

TC: Well, I was fortunate with the [Oregon] Convention Center. My first vote was that, and then when we christened it, I was presiding officer.¹⁶ Mike [Ragsdale] had just ended [elected office]. There's a memorial plaque over there somewhere...I've never actually seen it. Jeff Blosser told me he knows where it is - the plaque with our councilor names on it.¹⁷ So I have my own memorial plaque! [laughter]

So that was a huge project. I'm trying to think...working together with Tom Gunn. He represented AFSCME [American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees]. There was no union [at Metro] when I came. AFSCME formed when Rick left and Rena [Cusma] came on.¹⁸ Rena - who is one of my very best friends in the whole world - angered people with how she dealt with the transition. People were afraid they would lose their jobs. Tom Gunn - who is also a lifelong friend now because of my work with the Nurses' [Association] - we worked together so that wasn't as bad as it could have been. I can't remember specifics; I just remember that it wasn't as bad as it would have been...that you needed a labor person on the council. Who would have guessed?

CV: Did being a labor person come up in any other ways, being on the council?

TC: Not in any good ways. People, Republicans in particular, would tease me about it.

CV: Really?

TC: Yeah, oh yeah...I was one of them. I'm trying to think of other projects. We came close (if you interview Jim Gardner, you ask him about this) to assuming responsibility for TriMet.¹⁹

CV: Were you in favor of that or not?

TC: Yes, I was.

CV: Why didn't it work out that way?

TC: TriMet wasn't in favor of it! What a surprise, right? Actually it still makes a huge amount of sense to me to combine them, but it will never happen at this point.

CV: Really...

TC: We made the decision to truck the garbage up the [Columbia] Gorge, which was very, very controversial. You should have heard the testimony about the trucks, and the

¹⁶ In 1988, Metro broke ground on the Oregon Convention Center, and the facility opened in 1990. Councilor Collier served as Presiding Officer of the Metro Council from 1990 to 1991.

¹⁷ Jeff Blosser became the Executive Director of the Oregon Convention Center in 1989.

¹⁸ Rena Cusma served as Executive Officer of the Metropolitan Service District (MSD) [a.k.a. Metro] from 1988 to 1995.

¹⁹ Jim Gardner represented District 3 on the MSD Council, 1985 to 1994.

beautiful scenery, and how the trucks were going to ruin it. We chose the site for the landfill in Gilliam County, [to Becky] Arlington, right?

BS: M-hmm.

TC: Boy, this is stuff I haven't thought about in years. It must be twenty years because the contract's being renewed.

CV: Really?

TC: Yeah, big recycling changes, huge recycling changes. You know we used to wash everything? My friend, Sharron Kelley²⁰...remind me to tell you about Sharron and Gary [Hansen]²¹...we went on to the [Multnomah County] Commission together. She said, "Tanya, you..." (remember I'm still learning) "...Tanya, if you don't find a use for the recycling, all you do is have clean garbage in the landfill." [laughter] Oh, how about that? I was learning the issues from the ground up, because I didn't know about...well, back then, frankly, not very many people did.

CV: And what about your friends Sharron and Gary?

TC: Sharron and I had known each other for a long time outside of this because I worked off and on at a lot of jobs. I was an intergovernmental relations person for the county, and she was a citizen activist out in East County. She was the only person further east than me, so we knew each other. I don't know if she was on Metro first or [if] Gary was. I did not know Gary, but the two of them and I ended up being together for probably fifteen years in public office.

The biggest thing that we did (this was towards the end)...we were all three on the [Metro] Council [and] we wanted Metro to have the parks and Expo, but the [pioneer] cemeteries were the hang up. Multnomah County wouldn't give them [parks and Expo] to us unless we took the cemeteries, so we decided that was going to happen. The first person to leave Metro was Sharron, and she got elected to the [Multnomah] County Commission from East County. Then Gary, a couple years later, won election cycle eight or maybe...no, I think she [Sharron] was appointed to fill somebody's spot. Polly Casterline died, so she ended up serving almost three terms when there was a two-term limit.²² Gary followed over to the commission. Gladys McCoy was the chair of the commission, and Gladys McCoy didn't want to have the parks given away, with or without the cemeteries, if I recall correctly.²³

²⁰ Sharron Kelley represented District 7 on the MSD Council, 1983 to 1989. Ms. Kelley subsequently served on the Multnomah County Board of Commissioners from 1989 to 2000.

²¹ Gary Hansen represented District 12 on the MSD Council, 1983 to 1990. Mr. Hansen subsequently served on the Multnomah County Board of Commissioners from 1991 to 1998.

²² Polly Casterline served on the Multnomah County Board of Commissioners from 1986 to 1989.

²³ Gladys McCoy served on the Multnomah County Board of Commissioners from 1979 to 1984. In 1986, Ms. McCoy was elected as Multnomah County Chair and served until her death in 1993.

Well, guess who else gets elected to the commission? I go over there. We now had three votes, and guess how Metro got the parks and cemeteries and Expo? They needed three votes. That's not why I ran, but that was the first thing that happened...five to eight years worth of work taken care of just like that. All they needed was just one more vote...one little vote!

CV: What were some of the other challenges while you were in Metro that you ran into?

TC: I didn't have any challenges with Rick. At that point I think he was on the council, wasn't he? No, but he was there all the time. It was different. There was something [that] changed in the structure between he and Rena, and I loved serving with Rick. Rena was a different issue. We fought, oh my god, we carried on and fought and fussed. Like I said, she's one of my best friends. I drove to Nyssa [Oregon] in the spring to see her. But we had a difference of opinion. Now, we knew each other for a long time, too. I was at the county [Multnomah]. She was head of environmental services, and I was head of intergovernmental relations. We got along well there, but man, she had a whole different idea about how to run Metro than what Rick did. I liked what Rick was doing, so I fussed at her, you know, open warfare, kind of.

BS: What were some of the differences? Command control verses collaborative or...

TC: Well, first of all, she fired everybody.

CV: Really?

TC: Yeah. I don't think she would term it, "fired everybody." If I remember correctly, on Christmas Eve or [during] Christmas week, all the managers came [in], and they found a thing on their desk. [turns over a piece of paper] Turn it over, it was their resignation. Then she [Rena] would choose who's to accept [and] who's not to accept. There was chaos in the streets. [laughs] I mean, it was awful, really awful. Given my labor background - and actually she has a labor background, too - I just really objected to it, and I took her on about it. The other thing that she did that made me not trust her in that position was she brought all the old people who worked for Multnomah County into her inner circle. I objected to her trying to make Metro...what I interpreted as making Metro into Multnomah County. We ended up serving together for a really long time.

CV: Did you feel that you guys just had different goals for Metro?

TC: Yes.

CV: And what were your goals for Metro?

TC: Anything that was really regional, I wanted to work towards bringing it under the umbrella. I was very exuberant, so I think I made a lot of mistakes in doing that. I think, in the beginning, Metro was intended to replace county [services], and I wanted to see

that consolidation happen. Rena and I did agree on that. Washington and Clackamas County really objected to it! [laughs]

BS: I can understand that...

TC: Yeah, I know, so can I now. But like I said, I had this vision, you know. Some things worked out better than other things.

CV: What were some of the things that worked out better?

TC: Well, we did close the [St. Johns] Landfill.²⁴ We did institute a great recycling program. We did open a new landfill [in Arlington]. We did bring the zoo into modern times. We built the Convention Center, which was no small deal. Although, in retrospect, I wish we would have dealt with the hotel issue then, but nobody was willing to take it on.

CV: What's the hotel issue?

TC: Building the [Oregon] Convention Center hotel, which everybody's now still arguing about. We shouldn't have done the expansion without some sort of agreement about it, because it's too big for the hotel system that's around it. I came back later as an employee and learned all these issues from a different point of view, which was really, way cool. What else did we do? [pause]

CV: You mentioned some things that didn't work out as well. Do you want to talk about a couple of those?

TC: Well, let's finish [with the things that did work out].

CV: Okay.

TC: We balanced the budget, which was no small deal. There were some real bad errors, and I've forgotten now what happened, so we put all the stuff in place - checks and balances.

BS: Was that the influence of Mr. Ragsdale when the Republicans were on the council?

TC: No.

BS: Oh...

TC: It was the influence of the press beating the shit out of us. [laughter]

²⁴ In 1980, Metro assumed responsibility for landfilling operations at the St. Johns Landfill. Ten years later, ownership and liability for the St. Johns Landfill was transferred to Metro from the City of Portland to Metro. Landfilling at the St. Johns Landfill ended in 1991, and the landfill cover construction project began. In 1992, Metro staff began to implement closure operations.

BS: Whoa!

TC: Yeah, yeah. [laughter]

BS: Well, whatever worked!

TC: Yeah. In the beginning, Metro was way slim. I mean there weren't very many employees and things. Okay, what else?

CV: Well, you just mentioned the press. What was the press's take on Metro at the time?

TC: Skeptical.

CV: Really?

TC: Yeah, they were skeptical... [calling it an] "experiment that didn't work." It would be fun to go back and look at some of those articles now. Nobody knew who any of the councilors were, or how it was going to play out, or how Rick fit in with the councilors. I think I might have been in the second group of councilors, maybe the third group.

BS: So, how did Rick...how did he see his role as interacting with the council?

TC: Fatherly.

BS: Fatherly?

TC: That's my recollection. That may not be his. You might not bring that up with him. I don't know if he saw it that way. And it was kind of an all for one, one for all. I mean, he fought with people like Bruce, the guy that got...Etlinger, maybe?²⁵

BS: M-hmm.

TC: Yeah, I think he and Ernie Bonner may have crossed from time to time.²⁶ What he was trying to do was really make it non-partisan, which was the right thing to do. In the beginning it wasn't, although it was called non-partisan. I don't think it was very non-partisan. By the time we got to my group, and a few Republicans actually had broken through and gotten elected to it, I think it became much more non-partisan.

CV: So the original group was much more Democratic [Party] based then?

TC: Yeah.

CV: Okay.

²⁵ Bruce Etlinger represented District 10 on the MSD Council, 1981 to 1983.

²⁶ Ernie Bonner represented District 8 on the MSD Council, 1980 to 1985.

TC: Liberal Democrat, too. And they were still fighting the battles about why it was here, and what to do with it. And you had to deal with the leftover CRAG [Columbia Region Association of Governments] people...which I was never in the CRAG building.

CV: Okay.

TC: I think I served on a committee of some sort there, some volunteer thing. I think my first one [building location] was the one down on Front Street, and then we saved this building [Metro Regional Center].²⁷ That was one of my last votes, I think. No, it couldn't have been one of my last votes, because I think I actually served here. When did this come in?

CV: [to Becky] When did this come in?

BS: I think the early '90s?

TC: If I was here, I was not here for very long. My main memories are from the other building.

CV: Okay. In talking about the early years of Metro, what do you think were some of the greatest successes early on?

TC: It survived, and it defined its role. I mean started to define its role. Its role is now defined, but that was due to the work in those early years. It could have gone belly up, and at least once it was on the ballot.²⁸ The way it was phrased on the ballot, it was a set up phrasing. We'll have to go back and look at what that phrasing was, but I don't think you knew if you were saving it or if you were abolishing it.

CV: How so?

TC: Oh, it was...that's what it said. It said, "Abolish MSD." That's what it said.

CV: Really?

TC: M-hmm, and establish Metro Services. There was something in there that abolished MSD and established [Metro]. So I'm still not sure what people thought when they were voting for!

CV: What do you feel was your biggest contribution looking back at your time at Metro?

²⁷ Metro moved into its regional headquarters on NE Grand Avenue in April 1993. Formerly the Sears department store building, the newly remodeled \$24.4 million building was renamed the Metro Regional Center.

²⁸ Ballot Measure 6, which called for the reorganizing of the metropolitan service district and the abolishment of CRAG, was approved by the voters in the May 1978 primary.

TC: I don't know, Chelsea.

CV: Really?

TC: Yes, because everything was a team. You really did work as a team. You lobbied, and you got your stuff through the budget, and you made friends on the council, and you worked together in different groups. It was...you worked with this group on this issue and this group on that issue, and actually I'm kind of proud of that. I didn't approach it the same way when I got to the county. They had a different form of government and it wasn't the team thing like this. Sharron, Gary and I were a pretty good team there, especially on Metro issues, because everybody kind of understood. Generally speaking, [with] the Metro stuff, the council was so big that you had to do it in groups. If I didn't believe something that Rena was doing was right, I had to go get my seven votes, and I got good at that. [laughs]

BS: By that time it was back to seven? They had redistricted?

CV: Or was that just a majority vote?

TC: No, just the majority. Yeah, no I never served when it was seven. Twelve, thirteen, and then it was [back to] twelve.²⁹

CV: Okay. Do you feel that that was one of your strong points, actually, to kind of be a team player, as it were, or making compromises with others?

TC: Um, I don't think I was a very good compromiser.

CV: Okay.

TC: I think I was more of a fighter and then I lost or I won.

CV: Okay.

TC: Although, I learned to compromise and I developed a set of skills that served me much better down the road. It was, for me, a huge learning experience, learning how to be an elected person; learning how to get along and work with other people in a team setting; learning not to make stupid policy. I mean, I can't believe I had Dan Cooper [Metro attorney] draw up the merging of the three counties thing. He did everything to talk us out of it and we were not going to budge on it, so we suffered the embarrassment for that. You learn these lessons as you kind of go along.

CV: And you think that aided you in your future career outside of Metro?

²⁹ The creation of Council District 13 was authorized by the Oregon Legislature in 1989; the boundaries were established by the Metro Council in 1991; and approved by the voters in the General Election of November 1992. Due to redistricting in 1993, the Metro Council was reduced from thirteen to seven districts.

TC: Absolutely, and not just my career, my life.

CV: In what ways?

TC: I was sort of a black and white person in those days, and learning to compromise, learning to work with other people, learning to prioritize what you want to do. I can remember Dick Waker saying to me, "Tanya, you can't do it all." You can't. You know, I just hadn't lit yet on what it was I wanted to do. I just was everywhere, plus working full time, plus having a couple of kids. Luckily, I had a lot of energy. I learned to prioritize. It's hard on your family...doing all those things is hard on your family. I'm glad that now you don't have to work full-time when you do it. That's the other way Rick and Rena had it over the council, too. They were full-time, so they could just plot and carry on until the cows came home!

But you asked that question...as I think about it, Chelsea, part of it is just aging a little bit, getting some experience. I don't necessarily think that you would have to do it this way to learn the same lesson. If you don't learn a lesson, circumstance always gives you another opportunity to learn exactly the same lesson, over and over and over again. So it is experience, I think, as much as anything, and growing up, and I...I'm trying to think...I might have been the youngest person [on the council].

CV: So most people had more experience in this field when you started?

TC: No, but they were older. Rick had served in the [Oregon] Legislature, so he had more experience.³⁰ Of my group, I don't think that anybody else had ever been elected to anything. They went on to be elected to other stuff. I didn't actually get into this to use it as any sort of a stepping-stone.

CV: So why did you get into it?

TC: Because I wanted to serve. Yeah, but I didn't once...when I got appointed, I didn't say to myself, "Oh, now I can be President." You know, this was plenty, and actually I loved my job with the nurses. But I said I did intergovernmental relations for Multnomah County (I was a lobbyist for the county down in the legislature). I worked for the City [of Portland] in the budget department at one point while I was getting my Master's degree. So I kind of knew all the local government stuff and most of the actors, which is very helpful.

CV: What was the [Metro] Council's relationship with the Executive Office while you were here?

TC: It was pretty good with Rick; it was spotty with Rena.

³⁰ Rick Gustafson served as a state representative in the Oregon Legislature in the Oregon Legislature from 1974 to 1978.

CV: Okay.

TC: But Dick and Mike, in particular, worked well with Rena, and because they took me under their wing, I caused less fuss than I might have had they not helped me to see some light! [laughs]

BS: Was that Mike Bonner?

TC: No, [Mike] Ragsdale.

BS: Oh, Ragsdale.

TC: Yeah. Ragsdale and Dick Waker were very good friends, and they adopted me and that was great.

CV: And what did you learn from them?

TC: Um, all the stuff actually that I said earlier.

CV: Okay.

TC: I learned the budget. I learned not to take on every task that caught my interest, which was everything - no task didn't catch my interest because I hadn't settled yet on what my focus was going to be.

BS: Can I just ask one question? Tanya, what was your relationship administratively to your support staff? Can you describe that? It is one little hole in our [agency] history we are recouping...administrative history about, you know, how [you] gained support from folks that were [members of the] rank and file rather than management. Do you have any reflections on that?

TC: I do, and you need to interview Don Carlson.³¹ Our support staff was Don Carlson and, I don't know, maybe, five or eight people. We had a clerk for the Board [Metro Council]. I think we were pretty much perceived as an enemy. I'm making it sound worse than it was...at least, not to be one hundred percent trusted by the full-time people.

CV: How come, do you think?

TC: Well, the exec[utive officer] controlled the exec part of it, and wanted to run everything, which I don't blame him or her [for], you know. We were there for policy, and to balance the budget. You always have a push and pull with that set up, and in fact, now I have lots of experience. You always have that pull, and I think while I thought the pull was

³¹ Don Carlson served as Deputy Executive Officer with Rick Gustafson, and later joined the Metro Council Office as Operations Manager. Eventually, he ended his tenure at Metro as a staff member in the Finance and Administrative Services Department.

bad, or uncomfortable back then, I think it's what makes it work now. I've come full circle here; you have to have the dynamic. Now, the personalities can get along better or worse, whatever, but you have to have that dynamic. You cannot have part-time elected councilors trying to run the operation, so you always have to figure out how you're going to make that work. You do have to have somebody that's in charge, or whatever, so both sides have to really play.

CV: So how Metro is organized now differed when you were involved with it?

TC: Oh, it's about twenty times bigger.

CV: Yeah?

TC: Yeah, and I think it was more...a little bit more laid back then.

CV: Really?

TC: Yeah, because...I don't know if you have any questions about what happened later. I came back as a labor [relations manager], and then I went over to MERC [Metropolitan Exposition-Recreation Commission] as HR [Human Resources Director], so I became one of them.

CV: How did that change the dynamic for you?

TC: Well, I'll tell you what, it made me fly under the radar screen. [laughter] I was smart enough to stay out of their way. My role had changed so dramatically. I had no qualms about it; didn't feel badly about it. It was the timing. I was done being an elected person. I felt done in my heart. I didn't feel defeated. I just felt like that phase was over and now I had my Master's degree, and I focused in personnel. I had all the experience with the nurses, so I took that and I did the labor thing. Then I took the labor thing, and thanks to Ruth [Scott] in HR, who...I don't know if you've met her [to Becky]...if you know her.³² She taught me hands-on the HR piece of it, and I taught her the labor piece of it, which then made me qualified when MERC needed an HR person, and Mark [B. Williams] hired me for that.³³ So I think, all together I must have served fourteen years. That's a long time.

CV: That is a long time. In that time did you meet anyone who stuck out in your mind, or [are there any] special events that you remember specifically?

TC: Let me think it over for a bit...

³² Ruth Scott served in a number of capacities during her eleven-year career at Metro. In 2004, she was appointed as Metro's Director of Human Resources – a position she held until her retirement in September 2008.

³³ Mark B. Williams began his tenure at Metro as an attorney in 1991 before becoming General Manager of the Metropolitan Exposition-Recreation Commission (MERC) from 1996 to 2004. He also served as Metro's interim Chief Operating Officer from January 6, 2003 to April 30, 2003. After resuming his position at MERC, Mr. Williams resigned as General Manager effective October 20, 2004.

[Beginning Tape 1, Side B]

TC: The Convention Center was a big deal. And there was this poster, and Rena and I signed it. I still have it, and I got to give this speech, and I saved the speech. It's glued to the back of the poster. I haven't looked at it in years. I thought, wouldn't that be a fun thing for somebody to open up.

CV: Yeah.

TC: Yeah, in fifty years or a hundred years from now. When I was on the council, I was the only person that never wanted to serve on JPACT. JPACT was this huge thing that everybody wanted to serve on. I was the only person, and the reason I tell you this is because when I went over to the county, what did I get appointed to represent Multnomah County? JPACT! I spent five years sitting on JPACT.

CV: What was JPACT?

TC: Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation. But something always leads to something. The little piece of it that I loved was the bridges, and the county [Multnomah] was in charge of the bridges. I got to get a whole bunch of things accomplished through JPACT on the county bridges.

CV: Like what?

TC: Repairs, money...getting them included on somebody's agenda instead of every time...if you're an advocate for something, you'll at least get a little piece of it just to shut you up, if for no other reason. It's very fun. And, on the things that people consider boring, it's a real win, and most of government stuff is boring. I mean, it is details, and it is fixing things, and it is doing these things. I can't think of any special things that happened. We used to do retreats that were very helpful (I think they were at Minooka, if I remember correctly) in working together.

CV: Those were teambuilding workshops?

TC: Yeah, those were good.

CV: Then looking back, does anything stick out in your mind that you would have done differently as a councilor here?

TC: I wish I could have served before I served, so I learned all my lessons earlier. But, you know, you can't. I think I would have tried harder with Rena, although it is very interesting that she ended up being such a special friend. And I think my service on Metro made me a much better county commissioner. So it was like I got to practice. I wish I could have practiced before I got to Metro, but you can't. This is it. It is what it is.

CV: Why did you decide to end your service with Metro?

TC: I loved my job at the Nurses [Association], and I got to the point with being so busy - seriously busy - negotiating when the contracts came up is really a huge, time consuming thing. I had to either go full-time with politics or go full-time with work. I could not do them both anymore.

Rick Bauman, who was my predecessor, [he] really screwed up at the county, big time.³⁴ And I'd worked for the county, so I knew the county inside and out. I said to myself, "Well, I'm going to run for the county." That meant I had to quit Metro. I said to myself, "If that doesn't work out, that's fine. I'll be full-time with the Nurses [Association], and I'll kiss this career goodbye, and it's not meant to be." I approached it like that. It was a great campaign, mainly because [of] all my experience at Metro. I knew what I was doing by that time (seven years is a big learning time) and because I knew the county. I'd done intergovernmental relations. I'd worked for county commissioners. I wrote their affirmative action policy. I probably had five years experience at the county by then. That's how I made that decision.

CV: And then you were able to apply your years at Metro to your work with the county?

TC: You bet, you bet. And it was even better that Sharron and Gary were there. We all understood Metro, and like I said, the parks were the first things that went. Also that's how I got on JPACT, and that's how I was able to do so much work on the bridges - which at the county, nobody wanted to do. It was a stepchild, and that's another thing I learned here: that when I went to the county, I chose things to work on that other people were not interested in, so it stayed out of the spotlight. If you picked a popular item that was getting lots of [media] coverage, you just got into a giant pissing match. Every time! It would end up being in the news and everything else, so you just take your little corner of the world, and you just work your little heart out. I built the Brentwood-Darlington Community Center.³⁵

CV: Really?

TC: Yeah. It's amazing. I talked the [Portland] School District out of a piece of Joseph Lane's land. My staff wrote all the grants. None of them had ever written a grant before. I sent Darlene Carlson, Don's wife, [who] worked for me...she...see how it all fits together...she went off and wrote three grants at home. I said, "Don't you come back to work until the grants are written." Now she's a good grant writer, too. You learn it. Got everything funded...got matching everything. Nobody even knew I was doing it (hardly) at the county, and so it got built.

CV: Wow!

³⁴ Rick Bauman served on the Multnomah County Board of Commissioners from 1989 to 1992.

³⁵ The Brentwood-Darlington Community Center was the first community center built in Portland since the 1920's.

TC: Yes. We redid the Hawthorne Bridge - painted it [which was] no small deal...fixed it all up! I learned that here. You get more done if you just take your little project and you just start chipping away at it.

BS: What were some of those smaller-level projects that you honed in on at Metro? Because certainly not the landfill, certainly not the Convention Center...were there other smaller projects that you chose to be the steward of to stay out of the limelight, and get stuff done?

TC: I don't think I'd learned that lesson yet. I was more of a brawler at Metro. By the time I got to the county, I wasn't any more. Well, I was a little bit. You can't totally change your personality.

CV: Right...

TC: Now Sharron was never a brawler - never, never, never a brawler. Corky Kirkpatrick was a brawler.³⁶ Jim...he's the one I worked on the TriMet issue with... Gardner was not a brawler. Richard Devlin was not a brawler.³⁷ You've got to have a little brawl[ing], you know...a little brawling in there to get things fired up.

BS: Do you think as a woman in politics that it came a little more naturally?

TC: To brawl? [laughter]

BS: Well, as a way in. One of my interests is just how women during the '70s and '80s started aggressively going after public office. It was kind of an interesting time for women to be in [government]...

TC: I mentioned OWPC. I hesitate...you asked this question, and I love answering it, and I will answer it, but I was talking to Jeff Miller, who I worked for over there [at MERC], about feminists, feminism, and women's rights. He said, "What are you talking about?"³⁸

CV: Really?

TC: I mean, this is so old to people now that they don't realize these battles were fought, and the Oregon...do you know about the Oregon Women's Political Caucus?

CV: Not very much.

³⁶ Corky Kirkpatrick represented District 4 on the MSD Council, 1979 to 1988.

³⁷ Richard Devlin represented District 4 on the MSD Council, 1989 to 1994.

³⁸ Jeff Miller was the General Manager of the Metropolitan Exposition-Recreation Commission (MERC) from 2004 to 2006.

TC: Okay, so it was a bi-partisan group of women that formed statewide, whose goal was to elect women to office. When we started, which would have been early '70s, (does that sound right... I think early '70s), I wasn't in the original group, but I was just right behind. The original group is probably now 70-ish. The key to it was bi-partisanship, and it was back when the world was a little more bi-partisan. Republicans weren't quite so evil. The Republican women believed in abortion, for example. And we had tenets - we had four tenets. Let's see if I can remember: one was pro-choice, passing the ERA, I think those were...and electing women to office, to public office. We supported each other. It was quite a large group. It was statewide, and we marched in the ERA march and we formed a candidate school to teach women how to run for public office. I learned how to campaign at the school. Campaigners was sort of a piece of this. It wasn't just about women, but it was related, where you could learn to speak and learn to do all of those things. Now this group also becomes [a source of] life-long friendships, and when you're a member of a group like this, and you're a political science major, at one point you say to yourself, "Hell, I can do this. I can run for office!"

CV: Yeah?

TC: Yeah, and that's what we did. But we were newer then. In fact, when I ran against Drew Davis and lost before I got on Metro, it was a huge issue that I was a woman, and people asked me if I was old enough to run. I was. I know, isn't that a hoot? Knock on doors, "Are you old enough to be doing this?" Well, for one thing, I was ten years older than he was. He couldn't have been more than twenty-two or something, and I was like thirty. So, anyway, and I had kids almost that age, anyway, that was a huge issue. Also, the part of town I was from...

CV: And that's deep southeast?

TC: Deep, yeah. It was at that time. It was from [S.E.] 39th to 92nd. It's since moved. It's just moved east a little bit. When I lost, I felt like I'd been rejected by my own people.

CV: Really?

TC: Yeah, it was just a stunner for me, and it was also, really, the first thing that I'd ever lost.

BS: Do you think the fact that you are a female had any role to play in that?

TC: Oh, [a] big role. It was because I was female, because I was liberal. I was wrong on all of what the Moral Majority issues were. [I was] pro-choice, pro-gay rights. "You want those people adopting children?" I mean, oh my god, it was just huge out there...where there's a gun on every truck...gun control [and] the death penalty. I was four for four!

CV: It's a fairly conservative, or at least was a fairly conservative district at that time?

TC: Understatement. Anything east of 82nd, you know, and that was also [an] unincorporated area at that time. That's another thing at the county that we got all that incorporated, which was very controversial, but it needed to be done. You can't have big unincorporated areas. So it all did fit together. Now, Sharron was not a feminist. Sharron was a community activist who came in that way. Corky Kirkpatrick was...

BS: She was an activist?

CV: Or a feminist?

TC: Feminist, yes. Rena was not a feminist. Rena is a Democrat, but she's very conservative, and she prides herself in growing up in a man's world. She rode horses in Eastern Oregon when she was a kid. She ran the Environmental Services Department at Multnomah County, and she wasn't having any of this nonsense [taps paper where she's written OWPC]. Her dad had told her she could do anything she wanted to do, by god, and she was going to do it.

CV: And that was enough?

TC: And that was cool. And if everybody would have adopted that, we wouldn't have needed this. You know what I mean? So this was very instrumental. I'm trying to think what other women...

BS: I'm curious, who was in the leadership of getting this off the ground? You said the 70's group. Would that have included...

TC: Gretchen Kafoury, Betty Roberts, Barbara Roberts.³⁹

BS: Norma Paulus?

TC: Norma Paulus, absolutely Norma Paulus.⁴⁰

³⁹ Gretchen Kafoury helped to found Oregon NOW in 1970 and the Oregon Women's Political Caucus in 1971. She served in the Oregon Legislature as State Representative from 1977 until 1982; was elected as Multnomah County Commissioner in 1985; and served on the Portland City Council from 1991 to 1998.

Betty Roberts served in both chambers of the Oregon Legislative Assembly (State Representative from 1965 to 1969; Oregon State Senator from 1969 to 1977), but lost bids for the governor's office and the United States Senate, both in 1974. Ms. Roberts was the first woman to be appointed to the Oregon Court of Appeals (1977 to 1982) and the Oregon Supreme Court (1982 to 1986).

Barbara Roberts served in local and county government in Portland before being elected to the Oregon House of Representative in 1981. She was Oregon's first female House Majority Leader from 1983 to 1984. Ms. Roberts went on to win two terms as Oregon Secretary of State (1985 to 1991), and became the 34th Governor of Oregon (1991 to 1995).

⁴⁰ Norma Paulus began her political career by winning election to the Oregon House of Representatives in 1970, where she served until 1977. She was then elected as Oregon's first female Secretary of State in 1976, and had the added distinction of being the first woman to be elected to a statewide office in Oregon. Following her two terms as the Secretary of State (1977 to 1985), Ms. Paulus won the Republican primary for governor in May 1986, but lost to Democrat Neil Goldschmidt in the November election. She was later appointed by Governor Goldschmidt as Oregon Superintendent of Public Instruction - a post she held from 1990 to 1999.

BS: Elsa Coleman, was she influential?⁴¹

TC: No. She came later. She may have been a member, though. Mary Burrows down in Eugene... I'm missing a bunch of people.⁴²

BS: How about in the smaller, rural, eastern stretches of the state? Was it hard to recruit?

TC: You know, I don't think we had an Eastern Oregon Caucus. This was statewide, but it was mostly the [Willamette] Valley, and later we picked up the coast.

CV: You mentioned that you learned campaigning there. What other skills were emphasized with the training part in that?

TC: Nerve...just the nerve to do it. And if you couldn't get elected yourself that was fine. If you didn't want to get elected yourself, you worked on somebody else's [campaign]. Oh, Jane Cease was one.⁴³ Now, I play poker with these guys - Betty Roberts [and] Jewel Lansing was one.⁴⁴ Joyce Cohen came along later.⁴⁵

BS: Is that group still around mentoring women?

TC: No, in fact, it just disbanded.

BS: It had served its purpose then?

TC: It started to transition to a group called WIN.

CV: What is that group?

TC: Women's something [Information] Network. Its only purpose was to elect pro-choice women, and it still supports women candidates. So the contributors to this group [OWPC] also raised money [and] became contributors to this group [WIN]. But this group doesn't do things like the campaign school [funding] and all that. It's just the next generation.

⁴¹ Elsa Coleman was appointed to fill the Metro Council District 8 vacancy created by Mike Bonner's resignation on July 7, 1988. She ran for a full-term on the Metro, but was defeated by Judy Wyers in the General Election in November 1988. Ms. Coleman served as Deputy Director of Transportation at the City of Portland from 1990 to 2000, and retired from public service to run her own consulting company until her death in November 2006.

⁴² Mary McCauley Burrows served in the Oregon House of Representatives from 1973 to 1985.

⁴³ Jane Cease served in the Oregon House of Representatives from 1978 to 1983. In 1984, she was elected to the State Senate, and had the distinction of being the first woman to chair an Oregon Legislative Revenue Committee. She resigned from the Senate July 31, 1991 to accept appointment as Administrator of the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV), a position she held until 1996. Ms. Cease then served as the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) manager of the growth management unit until her retirement in 1998.

⁴⁴ Jewel Lansing served as Multnomah County auditor from 1975 to 1982, and City of Portland auditor from 1983 to 1986. She was one of the first two women elected to Multnomah County government, and was the fifth elected to Portland government. In addition, Ms. Lansing was the Democratic nominee for Treasurer of Oregon in 1976 and 1980, and narrowly lost to Republican Clay Myers in both general elections.

⁴⁵ Joyce Cohen served in the Oregon Senate from 1983 to 1993.

BS: Was Mildred Schwab in on that? ⁴⁶

TC: No. She was of the Rena [mindset], “What do you mean you can’t do anything?”

BS: You have to have both.

TC: Yeah, you have to have both.

CV: Do you see the influence of the OWPC in modern politics still? What changes do you feel actually came about from that involvement?

TC: I think of the groups that are there now, that this [one] belongs in the history groups. It had such an influence, but it’s like talking about the ‘40s. I mean this wasn’t the ‘40s, but it’s back there. It was a phase, and really I think when it started to transition was when the ERA didn’t pass.

CV: Okay, and actually, can you describe that a bit? What happened when the ERA didn’t pass...what that felt like? How that affected the politics...

TC: Probably not without crying. [laughs]

CV: Oh, no, Okay.

TC: No, no, it’s a happy...I mean, it’s a nostalgic cry. It’s not a boo-hoo-hoo cry, you know. Part of what causes this is my grandma marched in this parade with me, and she said, “Tanya, this will never happen in my lifetime, but it might happen in yours.” [tearing up] So, it’s just this huge memory. The other side tried to convince everybody that you didn’t really need the ERA, that it had served its purpose, that now everybody was equal. Ha! But, it has become true. I mean you [to Chelsea] can do a lot more things than I can, than I could’ve ever done.

CV: Right, absolutely.

TC: There’s a whole generation or two of girls that don’t even understand that they didn’t used to have the right to choose. It’s so taken for granted now. That is all of this... [OWPC and WIN]. It moved to the national level where it’s there and you cannot be against it, you cannot. Well, I mean you can, but...

BS: At your peril.

⁴⁶ Mildred Schwab served as Portland City Commissioner from 1973 to 1986. She was originally appointed to fill the vacancy created when Neil Goldschmidt was elected mayor, and was re-elected three times. Ms. Schwab had the distinction of being one of Oregon’s first women lawyers after graduating from Northwest School of Law (Lewis and Clark College) in 1939. She was part of a small group of women who succeeded in breaking the gender barrier at the City Club, and she was the first woman nominated to the Royal Rosarians, although she declined the honor. She died in Portland in 1999.

TC: Yeah, at your peril. So this was also a main tenet of the caucus - to get this passed. We were also an offshoot of NOW (National Organization of Women), and it morphed into this. This came first...Betty Friedan and all those guys came first.⁴⁷

BS: Bella Abzug...⁴⁸

TC: Shirley Chisholm...they did all of this, and then we went from there to the ERA, and then after that, the real focus was trying to get women elected.⁴⁹

CV: And how successful was that?

TC: Totally.

CV: Really?

TC: Absolutely, totally successful. I think when we started out there were three women in the [Oregon] legislature, or something like that. Now there's been hundreds. We've had a woman governor, and a secretary of state. [The Multnomah] County Commission, at one point, was all women. Women are elected and it's fun now. You look and the woman that's the head of the [Portland] school district now. [She is] not just female, but I presume gay, since she's had a lifelong partner that she talks about in the paper. So everything... gay rights was another one for the caucus...it was another tenet. So everything started to move forward. Was it because of this group? This group helped, but it was also the times. The '60s were the '60s and peace and love and all that. The '70s and the '80s was this time, and it just moved everything forward for women.

CV: How do you feel about playing a role in that?

TC: Well, you know, I remember talking to Jeff [Miller] over there [at MERC] about it, and him laughing, saying, "Ha," he says, "I came from retail. Women were always in charge of everything." I thought to myself, "I don't think I should talk about this anymore, because it's really a long time ago and nobody cares much about it." I watch my granddaughter...

⁴⁷ Betty Friedan was a leading figure in the Women's Liberation Movement in the early 1960s through the 1970s. Her 1963 book, *The Feminine Mystique*, is often credited with sparking the movement. She co-founded the National Organization for Women (NOW) in 1966, and joined other leading feminists in founding the National Women's Political Caucus in 1971. Ms. Friedan was also a strong proponent of the Equal Rights Amendment to the Constitution. She died in 2006.

⁴⁸ Bella Abzug was a lawyer, Congresswoman, social activist and a leader of the Women's Liberation Movement. She served the state of New York in the United States House of Representatives from 1971 to 1977; joined other leading feminists to found the National Women's Political Caucus; and was an outspoken advocate of liberal causes, including the Equal Rights Amendment and gay rights. She died in 1998.

⁴⁹ Shirley Chisholm was an American politician, educator and author. She represented New York's 12th Congressional District for seven terms in the U.S. House of Representatives (1969 to 1983), and became the first black woman elected to Congress. In 1969, she joined the Congressional Black Caucus as one of its founding members. In 1972, Ms. Chisholm became the first major-party black candidate for President of the United States and the first woman to run for the Democratic presidential nomination. She died in 2005.

my gosh, you know what she wanted for her birthday? For people to give toys to Doernbecher [Children's Hospital]!

CV: Really?

TC: Yeah. She's in plays at Sunset High School. She does all this stuff - things that were not open to us. So it's amazing to kind of watch the impact it's had. And these people [members of OWPC] are still all my friends.

CV: Well, and seeing the impact...is that somehow...does that make you view disappointments with a different lens at all, seeing the positive impact of the group?

TC: What do you mean by disappointments?

CV: Struggles, I guess - things that didn't turn out exactly like you wanted them [to].

TC: Nothing should ever turn out exactly like you want it to. [laughter] It's more of a team effort; otherwise, you should be ruler of the world, if you're that smart. Regrets? No. You know what I think, Chelsea? I think I played my little role, and I'm pleased with it. [I] made a lot of good friends, made a lot of good policy, did some good things, and there were big trade off's for it. Because like I said, I have a family and I'm not sure my son has still forgiven it.

CV: Really?

TC: Yeah, he's forty-two, and I think he still harbors feelings of neglect, and that was a trade-off for this time. We were trying to get out of the home and into this, when the truth lies somewhere in the middle. You've got to combine it all. You can't just say, "Well, I'm tired of this. I'm going to go do this," because, you know you have it. But on the other hand, now he's a CPA, just got his Master's in business and has four wonderful kids.

CV: So he's doing okay?

TC: Yes. So I think it is what it is, and I'm pleased with it. And I was very pleased to see when I came back here to work, the strides that had been made. You know, so you play your part at the time, and then you kind of move it forward.

CV: Did you have a question you wanted to ask? [turns to Becky]

BS: Well, I was just curious (going back a little bit) how did you interact with your constituents when you were on the council? How did you try to do outreach? What was that interaction [like]?

TC: I did a newsletter, which was the best that I could do because the district was huge and I worked full-time, so I don't think people had [time]. Mostly we had public hearings, and your constituents would come down, but there was no door-to-dooring like there

was when we ran for the legislature. And you know what I did? I took it from the standpoint of they elected me to represent them and I did that to the best of my ability, and to use my own judgment, that's what I did. Now that's a different answer than at the county, where I was there full-time and I had major interactions at the county [level] with constituents, but not here [at Metro].

CV: Well, and you say that you were elected and you just made the best decisions that you could. Did you ever run into problems then with people of your district with decisions you made? Did they ever feel you weren't representing them?

TC: No.

CV: No, really?

TC: No, nobody cared what Metro did. [laughter] Unless you screwed something up!

BS: Or if it was directly in your backyard, like maybe bridges weren't.

TC: Yes.

BS: Or the Convention Center...well who cares...

TC: Yes.

BS: There's still a little of what I call provincialism - when they don't really think too much outside of just the immediate little quad where they live.

TC: Unlike [Multnomah] County. I mean, I live on Mt. Tabor, and when they did the dog park on Mt. Tabor, the whole world, as we knew it, came to...people attacked me in the streets.

CV: Really?

TC: Oh, yeah.

BS: That was while you were at the county?

TC: Yes. It wasn't even my park, but I'd go to a meeting about something else and, man, you either want dogs in your park or you don't want dogs in your park. There's no middle road on it, so that's a silly example. No, I think the Executive Officer took the heat.

BS: Wow!

TC: Yes, like with the Johnson Creek thing, I think they...

BS: The landfill?

TC: Oh, god yeah, oh yeah, the landfill was a biggy.

CV: There was lots of heat on that?

TC: The one that we sited. Closing it actually was handled very well.

BS: That was the St. Johns [Landfill] that you're talking about?

TC: Yes, and it got neighborhood groups together to participate in it and we gave grants. I mean it was handled pretty well, I thought, not that it wasn't a little controversial. I still remember Rena had a picture on some magazine - her in a red suit, standing like this [crosses arms] (she was very heavy then) and a hardhat with the landfill in back of her. [laughs] Rena, how could you?

CV: Oh, that's funny. Is there anything else about Metro you want to discuss?

BS: I can think of a thousand questions, as one question leads to another, leads to another. One other thing...going back to the connection with constituents, and them not really knowing what Metro does and what its role is. Was there a concerted effort to try to brand the agency back then to try to get people to understand its roles and responsibilities? Because this has come up over and over.

TC: There wasn't much money.

BS: Oh, okay.

TC: And this was the big effort to brand [points to Metro logo on paper].

BS: Just the logo?

CV: The Metro...

TC: And changing it to Metro, and...

BS: I see.

TC: ...and all that. But you know, I did try to do a newsletter, and that was the only bad feedback I got - spending [on the newsletter]. They thought I spent public money, which I didn't. I spent campaign money after I'd won, and I had left over campaign money to do it.

CV: Really?

TC: Yes.

BS: That was before e-mails.

TC: That was before computers! [laughs]

BS: I mean you had no choice but to send it in hardcopy.

TC: Yes.

BS: Right.

TC: Yes. In fact, when I got to the county, my secretary gave me a computer, and I said, "I don't want that. That's why you're here." She said, "You're having this, you're going to learn to operate it, and you're going to learn to send e-mail." I said, "Okay." And I did! And thank god, because when I was done with the county, and I ran for [Portland] City Council and I lost, I ended up here [at Metro] in labor relations.⁵⁰ I couldn't have gotten that job had she not taught me to do that. And I wasn't very good, [but] on the other hand, I didn't look at it and totally panic. I guess that's something else, how everything interacts with everything else, and you never know what little tiny thing you're going to do that's going to have a huge impact on somebody's life. Just think of that...

CV: Adjusting to the computer?

TC: Yes.

CV: Is there anything else you can think of that you weren't expecting to have such a large impact?

TC: Well, I'll tell you, I sure liked running better and campaigning better for Metro and the county than the city. First of all, they get over in May. [laughs] You can make them get over in May. The City [of Portland] is a year-long race where you sit in a room about half this size [approximately 10'x12'] with a headset and a computer and raise money, and it was awful. It was awful. So then, when I lost that race, I said, "Oh." I waited for the tears to come; I waited to feel horrible; I waited to feel like my life was over; [and] I waited to figure out what I was going to do next. And you know what I did? I said I'm not going to do any civic activities until I get my job life...I had to go back to work, you know....

CV: Right.

TC: ...get my job life straightened out, and I'm just going to take a break and take a breath. Because if you look at this, this was (from the time I started my Master's degree to here) twenty years. By now my kids have left. They're gone and I'm just going to take a breather - my husband and I. I said, "Oh my god, I don't have to be at a meeting at 6:30 in the morning and 7:30 at night. I can cook dinner. I can watch a TV program." Oh! Oh! I was so excited.

CV: Yes.

⁵⁰ Ms. Collier ran against Dan Saltzman for the Portland City Council; she lost the election in November 1998.

TC: And then I went to find my job, and [asked] what do I know how to do? I know how to do labor relations, and I have an old personnel degree (we didn't even call it Human Resources), so what am I going to do? Well, you know what? People don't want to hire you if you've been elected. They're a bit afraid of you. They're afraid you're going to come in and make a fuss, and that you're going to act like you are somebody important, that you're going to boss people around, and you're not going to be a good worker.

CV: Really?

TC: Yes, it's very scary. And with all of my credentials to do labor relations, it took me six months to get hired here. Eventually what happened was, well...the electeds [MERC commissioners] didn't want to hire me because they thought that I would get in their business. I didn't want in their business. I'd already done their business, and I really did want to do the labor. I like doing labor relations. Pretty soon there was no reason not to hire me, because they couldn't find anybody with more qualifications. I came and within the first three months your guys' contracts had expired [turns to Becky] - do you remember?⁵¹

BS: Yes.

TC: You were here, weren't you?

BS: Yes.

TC: And I settled all the contracts. And it was so wonderful to have a regular job, a regular life, and I never looked back at it. I guess I got done, and I was fortunate enough to know I got done.

BS: Could you just describe a little bit about what you dealt with at MERC for the time that you were there? You were head of HR [Human Resources]...

TC: Yes, and you know, I owe Ruth [Scott] that. When I did labor relations here, and I wanted to...now at this point, I'm ten years doing labor relations and I wanted to do the whole thing, not just the labor pieces of it. If I went to MERC, I could do their labor negotiations and be their HR person and still have Ruth over here being my backup, so I couldn't get into too much trouble. And, also, when I was getting my MPA, I loved pay for performance - the idea of pay for performance. This is an idea that nobody else likes, by the way, and they had it. And I thought, "Whoa, it doesn't get any better than this." I get a chance to work on pay for performance, do all of their labor negotiations, and have Ruth, too. And so when Mark [Williams] hired me over there, we completed a comp study and adjusted people that were all out of whack; we did the pay for performance; and I did all the labor negotiations. It was great.

⁵¹ Ms. Collier tenure as Human Resources Director of the Metropolitan Exposition-Recreation Commission (MERC) was from March 27, 2000 to July 9, 2005.

BS: Pie heaven!

TC: It was. I was just in heaven, and Mark let me work for him. Normally the HR person worked for the CFO [Chief Financial Officer], which would have been David Biedermann and Brian Hinge and Cathy [Taylor] over there. But I worked directly for Mark. I said, "Why is that, Mark?" and he said, "Tanya, I wouldn't do that to anybody to assign you to work for them." [laughs] He also made the assumption that...well, and it is true...I think that you are no longer a shrinking violet once you've been through this other process, so you probably are more forthright.

You know, I would have stayed, [but] I didn't have another boss in me. When Mark left I said, "You know what...(by then I'd worked for forty years. I'd been in the workforce starting when I was seventeen years old, and I was fifty-seven, and I'd never gotten out)...it's time to retire." At this point, I had seventeen years between all of my services. I had the time at the county. I had [time] here [Metro Council and MERC], and I had my time from the city, so I cobbled together seventeen years. So...and my husband fussed at me about this. He was not ready for me to retire, but you know, on top of everything, I've always done lots of other things. I do needlework. I sew. You know, I've always had all these hobbies, and I...so when Mark went, and Jeff Miller came, Jeff called me into his office, and I said, "Oh, god. I've got to tell this new guy that I'm out of here." It's true. He came in February and called me in to plan all the HR stuff, you know, and I'm going like this [hides behind piece of paper]. I said, "Jeff, I'm giving my notice. I'm going to retire in June." He said, "What?" [laughs]

BS: How much of an overlap was there?

TC: From February to June.

BS: Oh, okay. So at least he had some benefit of...

TC: Oh, yeah, we transitioned, and that's why I gave that much notice, so we could get somebody else in there, and we could get it all sorted out.

BS: And then he left...then Jeff left.

TC: Yes, Jeff left. So I would have stayed as long as Mark was there, because I liked it, you know. I did like it. But these last two years have just been great.

CV: What have you been doing these past two years?

TC: I went to photography school. I'm taking a writing class. I took up quilting, which was a natural thing from my sewing. I still do the cross-stitch. I'm a room mother. Right back from where I started from...

CV: Where's that?

TC: For my ten-year-old granddaughter at Kelly School, which I went to. I go on field trips. I bake cookies, but you can't tell them, because they don't let homemade things come in anymore.

BS: Yes, that just cramps my style!

TC: Yes, it does mine, too. I have five grandkids. When they turn twelve, I take them on a trip - just themselves. This year my twelve-year-old and I went to San Francisco. Four years ago, the twelve-year-old and I went to New York. I take care of my husband, who enjoys it, I might add, and I never thought I'd get into that so much, you know.

BS: Can I ask what line of work he was involved with?

TC: He still is. He's only fifty-seven. I'll be sixty-one next week. I guess, no fifty-eight. He's an attorney, and he is the person in charge of the PERS [Public Employee Retirement System]. He's done all the work saving the PERS stuff. So it depends on what side of that issue you're on. But he's a labor attorney who made terrible fun of me when I moved from the labor side to the management side. [laughs]

CV: Great. Is there...well, I guess the question is how would you like to be remembered?

TC: I have no idea.

CV: Okay.

TC: Maybe though, that's a good question. Maybe it's how all of this stuff fits together, and how you cobble it all together, you know. Good person, I think. I want to be remembered as a good person.

BS: I want to ask just one more question. I should have gotten it in before Chelsea, because that's kind of our little finale.

TC: That's okay.

BS: I'm curious what you feel about the direction of Metro today compared to where it was in the late '70s [and] early '80s. Is the Agency, as a whole, going in the right direction? The more things change the more they stay the same. How do you feel about that, assuming that you're still in touch with what's going on.

TC: Well, first of all, I think forming it and letting it evolve was a very smart thing to do, and it's great that it's here. When I worked here [at MERC], I did everything I could to stay out of everything, because for all the reasons nobody wants somebody there, and I got hauled in a couple of times (like on pay for performance, where I had to meet with councilors and stuff). I think it's done what it's supposed to do. I felt like it was awfully bureaucratic when I was here (looking at it from the other side), but it was tiny when I

was here. It's big now, so you kind of expect that, I think. Not as bad as the City [of Portland], I thought, and you can't even talk about the county anymore, because the county's just so... [it has] been through such bad times, you know, [but] maybe coming out of it.

So you know, I don't know. I'm glad it's here. I'm glad it's doing its work. I'm glad it's in on the land use stuff. Garbage would never have been dealt with (as un-fun as the subject is) without Metro. None of the other governments could [do it]. The zoo was in such disarray, so it's done what it's supposed to do. It [Metro] took recycling to a whole new thing, including out into the classrooms. I can't...if I ever even looked like I was going to throw away the lid to this [points to water bottle], my granddaughter would have me, you know, really! So it's gotten assumed [engrained] into people. But...and you know being gone two years (I mean, I had two years until June when I retired), I walked in [and] I didn't even know HR had moved. I was very surprised to see that. But there sits Beejaye [Jones], right out there at the front desk.

BS: She was in HR when you were there?

TC: Yes, and you know what I'm really glad of is there's a whole new group of people that stepped up for it. When you're in the middle of it you think, "Oh my god, what's going to happen when I'm gone? The world will end." It doesn't. People stand in line and they just assume the responsibility. Was that helpful?

CV: Absolutely.

BS: Oh, yes!

CV: Is there anything else you'd like to add?

TC: No.

[End of Interview]

Names mentioned in order of interview

Hardy Myers
Marko Haggard
Rick Gustafson
Earl Blumenauer
Frank Roberts
Ron Cease
Mike Ragsdale
Richard (Dick) Waker
George Van Bergen
Jeff Blosser
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Rena Cusma
Jim Gardner
Sharron Kelley
Gary Hansen
Polly Casterline
Gladys McCoy
Bruce Etlinger
Ernie Bonner
Dan Cooper
Mike Bonner
Don Carlson
Ruth Scott
Mark B. Williams
Rick Bauman
Darlene Carlson
Corky Kirkpatrick
Richard Devlin
Jeff Miller
Drew Davis
Gretchen Kafoury
Betty Roberts
Barbara Roberts
Norma Paulus
Elsa Coleman
Mary Burrows
Jane Cease
Jewel Lansing
Joyce Cohen
Mildred Schwab
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Bella Abzug
Shirley Chisholm
David Biedermann

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