

Metroscape®

An Atlas and Mirror
of the Portland
Metropolitan
Region

Institute of Portland Metropolitan Studies, Portland State University

Summer 2018

Shifting Vistas

How Local Communities are Shaping
Growth and Managing Disinvestment

INSIDE

Whither Skamania?

Growing Vancouver

Missing Middle Housing

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On the Cover



View from Hamilton Mountain.
Photo by Sophie Turnbull-Appell.

An Atlas and Mirror of the
Portland Metropolitan Region

Metroscape®

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Greetings from the Publisher

Institute of
Portland Metropolitan Studies
Board of Directors

Greetings!

The Portland Metropolitan region is home to a great variety of communities. Over the twenty-three years of publishing *Metroscape*, the Institute of Portland Metropolitan Studies has featured dozens of local communities, providing our readers an appreciation for our region's rich diversity—rural and urban, agricultural and industrial, small and large, featuring forests and rivers.

This issue is no different. The stories in the pages that follow provide insights about places as different as Stevenson, Washington, and Happy Valley, Oregon, and issues as complex as affordable housing and resident health outcomes. The best part for us is the wide variety of people we talk with to bring you this content, including this issue's featured interview with the recently-elected Mayor of Vancouver, Anne McEnerny-Ogle.

We also strive to provide diversity in the magazine's formats. This issue of *Metroscape*, like others before it, features stories and maps, statistics and photos (most are taken by our staff and students), and is simultaneously published in print and on our web site. The web site, metroscape.imspdx.org, offers readers the opportunity to dig deeper into the people, places and issues highlighted in the current issue, and to explore how we've discussed them in the past.

Metroscape has been a labor of love for IMS and its faculty and staff for these many years, and we couldn't publish it without the dedication of the magazine's executive editor, Liza Morehead, and this year's student assistant editor, Eavan Moore. You'll find contributions from other staff and students throughout this and other issues. The interesting content is perfected by our editor, Cat McGinnis. We also benefit from the input of our editorial board, Carl Abbott, Jennifer Allen, and Lynn Valenter, who also serves as the chair of the IMS Board of Directors. And of course, nothing at IMS happens successfully without help from Emily Renfrow, our office coordinator.

Metroscape helps us to fulfill the mission of IMS: to convene regional partners, curate credible information, and conduct credible policy research to stimulate dialogue and action that address critical regional issues. We hold events that give people an opportunity to learn about our research and participate in the resulting dialogue. Read more about our recent work, sign up for events and our newsletter at www.pdx.edu/ims/.

We hope you enjoy the summer 2018 issue. As you read through the articles, share your thoughts with us. Feel free to comment at ims@pdx.edu, or discuss your observations about the articles on our Facebook page.

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Sheila Martin, Director

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Happy Valley

by Eavan Moore

When the city of Happy Valley first incorporated in 1965, it was to fend off the threat of annexation by Portland and any resulting urbanization. Since 1999, however, growth management has been a theme in Oregon's fastest-growing city, which increased its population by almost seven percent between 2016 and 2017.

The new center of Happy Valley is based on Metro's "town center" concept, a vision of mixed uses and multimodal transportation serving tens of thousands of people within a three-mile radius. City hall, which was built with LEED certification in 2008, sits directly northeast of the Happy Valley Town Center, a commercial development on SE Sunnyside Road anchored by New Seasons and served by TriMet bus 155. Townhouses and single-family homes surround both this commercial complex and a second one recently completed to its east. Zoning in the town center discourages drive-throughs and encourages construction in the "Happy Valley Style," which emphasizes pedestrian-friendly elements and draws on Craftsman, Oregon rustic, and prairie architectural styles for aesthetic inspiration.

Happy Valley's Transportation Systems Plan envisions a network of neighborhoods linked by walkable, bikable roads. As subdivisions go in, the developers build out these roads—and there are many subdivisions going in. Rock Creek Meadows added ninety-six lots north of Fred Meyer in 2014. Grand View Meadows, Pine View Meadows, and Scouter's Meadow are all under construction at the north end of the city. Another housing development next to Scouter's Mountain Nature Park will result in a total of 600 single-family homes on 223 acres over the next decade. Still another development will add about 1,200 multifamily and single-family units on the former Pleasant Valley golf course.

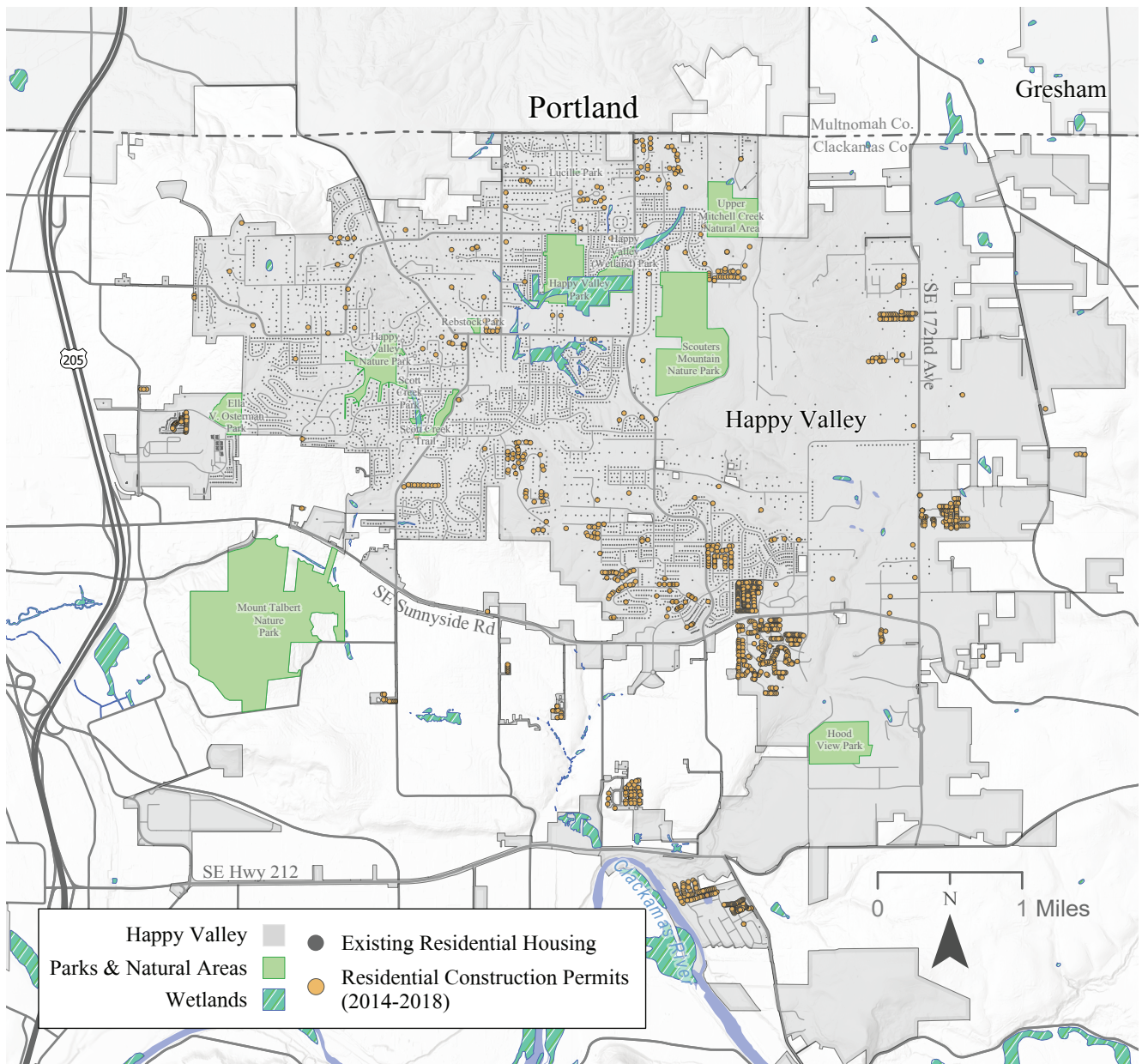
Happy Valley has grown in acreage as well as population. After Damascus ended its seven-year experiment with incorporation in 2011, the owners of more than 1,000 acres opted for annexation by Happy Valley, which as a result is now working on the Pleasant Valley/North Carver Integrated Land Use and Transportation Plan.

Density requires roads, and that poses challenges. Elected officials are interested in making major improvements to 172nd Avenue that would allow people to walk from homes to shops. The question is: Where will the money come from? Happy Valley has a relatively low property tax rate and typically relies on developers for capital improvements.

Then, too, the hilly topology is challenging for road-building. Roads and hills are a couple of the reasons Happy Valley has seen little industrial land use, though Metro's Urban Growth Management Functional Plan requires some industrial zoning. The land currently zoned for this purpose has seen no new development beyond its existing agricultural uses. Industrial zoning may complicate planning for the North Carver area, because it is far from any highway.

Very steep slopes are protected, as are wetlands; this is another facet of the city's managed growth approach. At the Rock Creek Meadows development, a large wetland has been set aside and the houses will be built on smaller lots to compensate. Slope protection means that it will be possible to enjoy some natural areas without seeing signs of the rapid development taking place all around.

Eavan Moore is a first-year student in PSU's Master of Urban and Regional Planning program and a graduate research assistant for Metroscape.





Whither Skamania?

by Eavan Moore

As long-standing financial concerns deepen in Skamania County, solutions are sought-after but thin on the ground.

When the Eagle Creek fire blazed up last summer, it made surreal viewing for residents of Skamania County, Washington, directly across the Columbia River.

“Our office is right on the river,” said Pat Albaugh, executive director of the Port of Skamania County. “You would just watch the flames shooting 300, 400 feet in the air and the trees exploding, and the whole sky’s orange. It’s apocalyptic. It was really, really weird, and mesmerizing, too.”

It was also just one of a string of recent difficulties for the county. Fire-related evacuations and road closures effectively shut down much of the Columbia Gorge, as did a winter ice storm earlier in 2017. That same year, Congress declined to renew the Secure Rural Schools (SRS) program negotiated by Senator Ron Wyden (D-OR) in 2000 to compensate for lost timber revenue. Skamania County had been receiving increasingly irregular payments under the program, which it relied on to fund basic services. A spending bill passed in March 2018 reauthorized SRS with retroactive payments for 2017, but the dollar amounts involved were not immediately clear.

Should the federal payments continue? What is needed to replace them? There’s no unanimity on either question, but there is a strong sense in Skamania that something urgently needs to change.

Commuter County

Although the county is part of the Portland-Vancouver-Hillsboro Metropolitan Statistical Area,¹ opinions are mixed over whether it has much connection with

1. Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA): A region defined for statistical purposes by the US Office of Management and Budget, consisting of at least one core urbanized area of 50,000 or more inhabitants and surrounding communities that have a high degree of economic and social integration.

urban areas. “I think we’re only lumped into that because of the US Census Bureau,” said Albaugh. “It’s an easy commute from here to Portland, but I don’t think we have a whole lot in common.”

The majority of county residents do commute to other parts of the region for work. One downside, from Skamania’s point of view, is that residents who work in another city are also going to do their shopping in that city, particularly if there are stores there that their hometown doesn’t have. If a person gets out of work, stops at Costco or Fred Meyer, fills up on gas, and makes other transactions before coming home, that’s business revenue that doesn’t make its way to the county.

The kinds of jobs that people do have changed as well. Average wages in Skamania County declined along with the timber industry in the early 1990s. Now, the Skamania Lodge resort is the largest private employer in the county. Food and beverage and tourism jobs dominate the job market, and they pay significantly less on average. They are also cyclical, adding 200 jobs in summer and shedding them each winter.

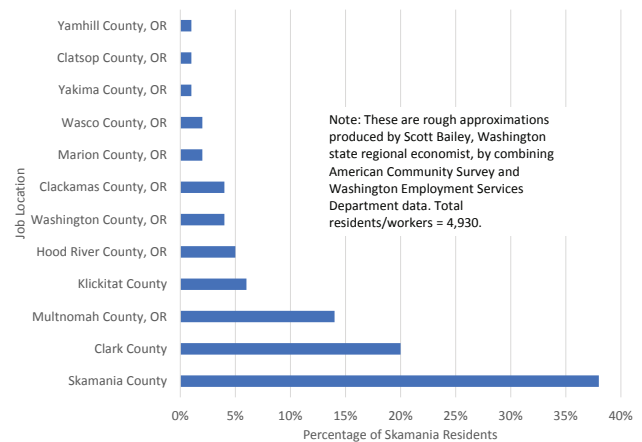
Taxes

When County Commissioner Tom Lannen wants to illustrate Skamania’s property tax position, he brings out an illustrative painted wooden stick. It marks off, with different colors, the county’s land uses. Eighty percent is Gifford Pinchot National Forest. Ten percent is private timberland. Eight percent is owned by the state. That leaves only 1.8 percent of the entire county subject to regular taxes.

“And that’s how we got the short end of the stick,” he finishes.

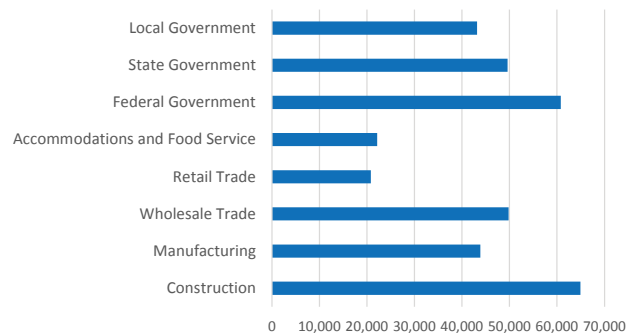
Most of those taxable areas, and most of the county’s 11,000 residents, are strung along the Columbia River in the county seat of Stevenson, the Carson unincorporated area, and the city of North Bonneville. The Port of Skamania is responsible for much of the economic activity in Stevenson and North Bonneville, where it owns 162 acres of land. Right now, the port’s tenants include a number of breweries and cider makers, including one that bottles for a few hundred niche labels sold on the West Coast.

Skamania County Commute Flows (2013)



Source: Washington State Employment Security Department

County Average Annual Wage (2016 \$)

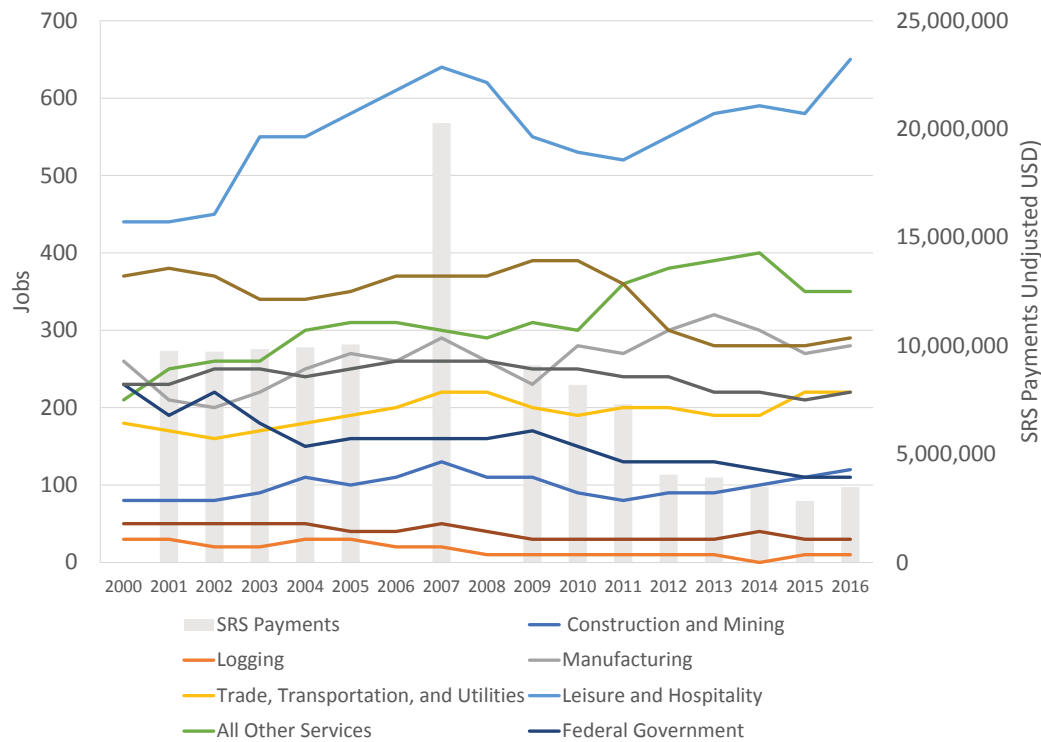


Source: Washington State Employment Security Department



County Commissioner Tom Lannen uses a stick to illustrate the county's 1.8 percent share of county tax revenues.

Employment and SRS Revenue in Skamania County, 2000–2016



Source: Office of the Washington State Treasurer

“Our tenants are mostly startups,” said Albaugh. “They come here because we have really inexpensive properties. As startups, they’re doing their best just to hang on, and last winter we had all the ice storms that pretty much shut everybody down for a few weeks. Just as they were trying to crawl out of that this last summer, then we had the Eagle Creek fires, which shut everything down for a good portion of the summer. Those have a major impact on really small businesses.”

The Columbia River Basin is also simply a difficult place to undertake new development projects, because there are many layers of oversight. A National Scenic Area overlay limits new development to urban areas. The US Army Corps of Engineers manages the Columbia River Basin. The complexities of joint oversight have slowed the port in developing a multi-million-dollar business park in North Bonneville. Since 1999, the port and city have been working on an easement to connect the park to a road owned by the Army Corps of Engineers. “The Corps helped design the business park,” said Albaugh, “now connecting to the road is pre-

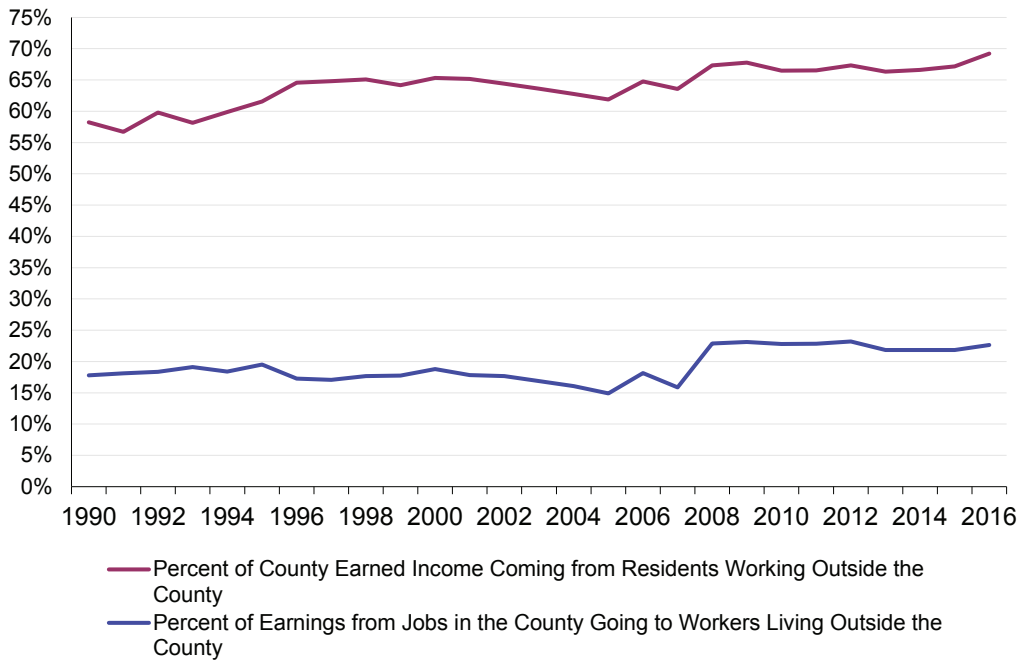
sending some challenges.” A recent draft easement lays out some next steps, he said, “and the parties are going through the rest of their processes.” The campus has sidewalks, fiber optic lines, and stormwater and sewer drains, and can open for business when the roads are connected.

Small Business in Stevenson

Tourists to Skamania are likely to pass through downtown Stevenson, a small, attractive stretch of independent businesses with mountain views in every direction. Melissa Still moved here from elsewhere in the Gorge to start Bigfoot Coffee Roasters in 2015. “I’m a traffic refugee,” she joked. She looked around, saw that Stevenson had beer and cider but no roaster, and decided to fill that niche with a coffee and souvenir shop tucked behind a gas station on Stevenson’s main drag. She was prepared for the up-and-down cycle of tourism dependency, but 2017’s ice storms and fire came as a rough surprise for a business owner still working on being able to pay her first employee.

“As startups they’re doing their best just to hang on... last winter we had all the ice storms... then we had the Eagle Creek fires....”

Skamania County: Inflation-Adjusted Earnings Flows from Cross-County Commuters



Source: Washington State Employment Security Department

Melissa Still would love to be able to train people in the art of coffee roasting—or see any new skills develop, really. She thinks young people in the county don’t know how to cope with the new economy. “They’re not techy,” she said. “That’s not a judgment. They are blue-collar working folks that were left holding the bag without timber jobs. We need our own trade school.” Alongside practical skills like carpentry and bookkeeping, she thinks Stevenson could become the craft beverage hub of the Pacific Northwest.

Why don’t larger companies land in Skamania? According to Kari Fagerness, executive director of the Skamania County Economic Development Council, it’s partly a workforce issue. “When we do get industries interested in locating here, the challenge is finding workers that are already here, or willing to move here,” she said. Local residents don’t have the desired skills; workers elsewhere can find jobs that pay at least as much closer to where they already live.

“Now, if they wanted to move out here, there’s no housing,” she added. “There’s literally no housing. If there’s a rental house that comes on the market in Stevenson, it’s gone in a day.”

Contractors are willing to build \$400,000 homes for those who can afford them, but smaller houses priced for mid-level incomes aren’t turning up. Nor are apartment buildings being developed. It’s not just about potential relocations: people already working in tourism and recreation in Skamania have difficulty finding homes there.

Fagerness has learned this from conversations with employers and house hunters, but she is now seeking funding from real estate groups for a more reliable housing needs assessment, “so we can really identify where the gap is in housing and get some projects going based on that assessment,” she said.

Safety

Government jobs are some of the best paid in the county, and county government agencies have historically depended on SRS to function. In the two years before the Stevenson-Carson school district passed its first levy in 2012, the budget was cut by \$800,000 and the district lost its elementary school librarians and counselors. The Carson middle school closed. The levy was renewed in 2015, and a further levy passed in 2017, adding \$1 million to the 2017–2018 budget

and staving off cuts to music, visual arts, theater, and sports.

One of the biggest impacts of losing SRS—on tourists and locals alike—landed in the county sheriff's department. "In the last five years, we've seen a 33 percent reduction in our patrol staff," said Sheriff Dave Brown. "Because our staffing levels are what they are, we typically only have two patrol deputies working the county at any given time. For two hours every day, no one is on duty."

On the ground, that means uniformed deputies are fitting in cases that would normally be investigated in plain clothes. It can be more difficult to interview a child sex abuse victim while in uniform, and it is impossible to do a controlled drug buy.

This situation also hampers the county's ability to meet demand for emergency services. When an emergency call comes in, a deputy trained to manage search and rescue missions either leaves patrol duties or comes in to work overtime. Six of the seven staff who left in the last five years were search and rescue coordinators. Until now, the department has used an SRS fund to cover search and rescue on national forest lands. But that money will run out by the end of June, and the annual expense budget will cover the cost. "If things go the way I think they will, the bulk of responses and the financial impact is going to be put back on our local taxpayer," said Brown.

That does not necessarily seem fair, given that it is generally not the local taxpayers needing to be rescued. "Because of the vast recreational opportunities in the county, we see upwards of one-and-one-half to two million visitors a year coming through the county," said Brown. "Those visitors generate more than ninety percent of our recreational accidents and search and rescue calls." In the first six months of 2017, Brown's emergency services department responded to thirty requests for help: eighteen "overdue person" calls, eight searches, and four accidents. Some of these calls are competing with local emergencies. Brown is reluctant to charge for rescue service, but he is not alone in thinking that visitors should be better prepared.

The Eagle Creek fire has piqued new interest in Skamania among hikers looking for alter-

native trails on the other side of the river. This annoys some locals, whose favorite secluded spots are more popular now, and has mixed potential for the local economy. On the one hand, it could mean more revenue for recreation-related businesses. On the other hand, it could put more pressure on emergency services.

Tracy Calizon, the Forest Service's community engagement staff officer for the Gifford Pinchot Forest, said that Forest Service employees had noticed an uptick in use in September 2017. Longer-term, she said, it's hard to tell what the impacts of the fire will be.

"We're anticipating that more people will know about the Gifford Pinchot National Forest as they think about other places to go," she said. Those used to the relative creature comforts of the Gorge need to be aware that Gifford Pinchot has rougher roads and fewer amenities. "I think a lot of search and rescue... comes from people getting lost or not being able to rely on their cell phone for directions or not having enough food. Eagle Creek fire or not, I would like to encourage people to always be prepared when they come to the national forest."

Timber

Brown, Lannen, and Albaugh all agree on one point: The county can and should be receiving more natural resource revenue. Under the Northwest Forest Plan, allowable timber sales by the US Forest Service are more than fifty-two million board feet a year. Over the last twenty years, the actual harvest has averaged half that—for a variety of reasons, but above all because of litigation. Between 1999 and 2002, there were almost no sales at all. The formation of forest collaboratives—multi-stakeholder working groups that meet to discuss and negotiate forest management practices—ended the period of intense litigation, but the process of working in a collaborative and putting trees up for sale is still slower than some would like.

Forest collaborative participants generally agree on the value of thinning existing plantations. More controversial is a practice commonly called a "regeneration harvest." Northwest Forest Plan co-authors Jerry

"Because our staffing levels are what they are, we typically only have two patrol deputies working the county at any given time."

“What it looks like on the ground is a clear cut, to us.”

Franklin (University of Washington) and Norm Johnson (Oregon State University) suggest that deliberate tree-felling can create space for species that are part of a healthy forest ecosystem. In its most widely proposed form, regeneration work clears a large area to mimic the effects of wildfires, landslides, and other natural events. This creates early seral habitat that supports deer, elk, and birds that prefer open spaces.

The enthusiasm for regeneration harvesting concerns conservation groups. “What it looks like on the ground is a clear cut, to us,” said Matt Little, executive director of the Cascade Forest Conservancy (known from 1985 to 2016 as the Gifford Pinchot Task Force). He sees a difference between a moderate approach as recommended by Franklin and Johnson (two-thirds clearance of a unit, with some trees left in the cleared area) and current proposals to reduce hundred-acre areas of timber by 85 percent.

Lannen supports multiple approaches to increase timber yield, including thinning and regeneration harvesting. The Forest Service has published research on the rate of new growth in the forests, called the annual increment. In the Cascades, the annual increment is around 500 million board feet a year. Lannen believes that volume makes a case for a much bigger harvest. “One of the groups that we worked with said you ought to be able to take a hundred million board feet off the forest every year to support local economies, improve multiple species' habitat, and not do anything severe as far as the covered lands for the spotted owl are concerned,” he said. “We call it the hundred million plan.”

Concerns over logging methods notwithstanding, Little agrees it is naive to think that recreation can replace timber as a sustaining economic force. “There has to be a multi-tier solution,” he said. “It has to be a combination of more thinning projects in the forest, supporting the Forest Service in their funding and projects, working with the counties to support continued [federal] funding, and trying to figure out new revenue sources.”

Fagerness said the local workforce development council was looking to address the employability of county residents, many of whom are just out of high school and unused to the working world. “We’re working with WorkSource, and People for People, which place workers,” she said. “A lot of what we’re seeing is the need for training on soft skills—how to make eye contact, and shake hands firmly, and show up on time.”

Investing for the Future

While SRS compensates counties for ongoing restrictions on federal land use, many think of it as a bridge for counties on their way to becoming self-sustaining. As the years went by and these counties continued to depend on federal payments, support for the program waned in Congress.

The disappearance of SRS has reportedly caused some new consternation in DC. Losing that funding automatically increased payments under another program called Payment-in-Lieu-of-Taxes, or PILT, which compensates counties for the untaxed federal land within their borders. About 62 percent of US counties receive PILT funds—and because the pool is a more or less fixed amount, some areas previously unaffected by the SRS issue are seeing their payments reduced.

In the face of SRS’s continued unpopularity, however, the Montana-based nonpartisan research center Headwaters Economics has proposed an alternative bridge in the form of a federal natural resource trust. There are different ways to implement it, but the general idea is that either resource revenue or federal appropriations would seed an endowment that would generate annual interest income for the counties.

“It’s not a new idea,” said Mark Haggerty, staff researcher at Headwaters. “Trusts are used by every state in the West for state lands. Any royalties and fees that states receive from timber or grazing or oil or gas, they put into a permanent fund.... We’re borrowing an idea from the states to do the same thing with federal land revenue.”

“One of the groups... said you ought to be able to take a hundred million board feet off the forest every year.”

If the fund followed the model most states use, it would distribute a fixed percentage of the ending fund balance every year, with the amount matched to the fund's growth rate. In one year, \$1 million invested in a trust could generate \$40,000.

If this is such a great idea, why hasn't it yet been implemented? One reason is that the White House Office of Management and Budget opposes any plan that would send investment income anywhere other than the federal treasury. Another reason is that permanent, consistent payments would weaken the hand of those who advocate for changes to forest management. To some, persistent county budget holes are a compelling argument for increasing the timber harvest.

In response to that argument, Haggerty asks: "What was the purpose of the payments in the first place? Was it to compensate counties for nontaxable federal land? Or was it really this promise that the Forest Service would cut down trees?"

Future Growth

As distant as Skamania County may currently feel in a cultural sense, its proximity to urban centers means that urban growth is starting to ripple out in its direction. Melissa Still remarked that her hometown of Fall City, in unincorporated King County, Washington, had rebounded from similar timber-related problems largely because of settlement by Microsoft employees and others in the tech industry.

Lannen thinks the county should be preparing for new residents. He foresees potential spillover into Stevenson-Carson from Portland, Vancouver, Hood River, and White Salmon. "Ridgefield is the fastest-growing community in the state of Washington right now," he said. "News to me, but, you know, those things happen. People are going to come this way, so I think we need to be actively thinking about it."

The idea of merging with Clark County for the sake of administrative efficiency has been raised but immediately panned. The sense in Skamania is that it would be neglected by a government based in Vancouver.

However, there may be a case for looking across other borders for solutions. "For us, the Gorge is

its own region," said Albaugh. "We more identify with the Gorge, but half the Gorge is Oregon. When we had that weather event, it would have been declared a disaster if we'd been able to combine our losses and damage with the losses across the river, but that isn't how it works."

He thinks that better transportation connections might also help Skamania County. There are two bus services in Skamania County and Hood River County, for example, but they don't connect. The Bridge of the Gods at Cascade Locks is the county's only road connection to Oregon. "If we're talking pie-in-the-sky things, I'd like to see more bridges across the Columbia River," said Albaugh.

Fundamentally, said Haggerty, the opportunities that Skamania County has to grow its economy have changed in the last couple of decades. Timber jobs will never provide the same levels of employment; automation has sharply reduced the number of people needed, even though it brought up the skill level and associated wages. "But the county's public land and the kinds of services the county provides contribute to a quality of life," he said, "that really can help it attract more businesses and more people, because of its proximity to the Portland Metro area. The local government being adequately funded is absolutely essential to their economic development opportunities."

Eavan Moore is a first-year student in PSU's Master of Urban and Regional Planning program and a graduate research assistant for Metroscape.



Periodic Atlas of the Metroscape

The Geography of Health

Analyzing the CDC's 500 Cities Dataset in the Metroscape

by Josh Ollinger

Maps by Ashley Donald & Randy Morris

Our ability to lead a fulfilling life and pursue our goals is largely shaped by our health. Although we experience these conditions such as illness and disabilities at a very personal level, factors outside of our control are often what determines our health. Known as the Social Determinants of Health, where we are born, work, live, and spend our lives is considered equally if not more important to our health status than medical care and personal health behaviors.¹ As a result, certain communities and populations disproportionately experience burdens. Identifying and increasing awareness of health disparities is an essential step toward improving the health status of all Metro-area residents.

The 500 Cities Project, a partnership between The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, CDC Foundation, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), provides surveillance data to better explore

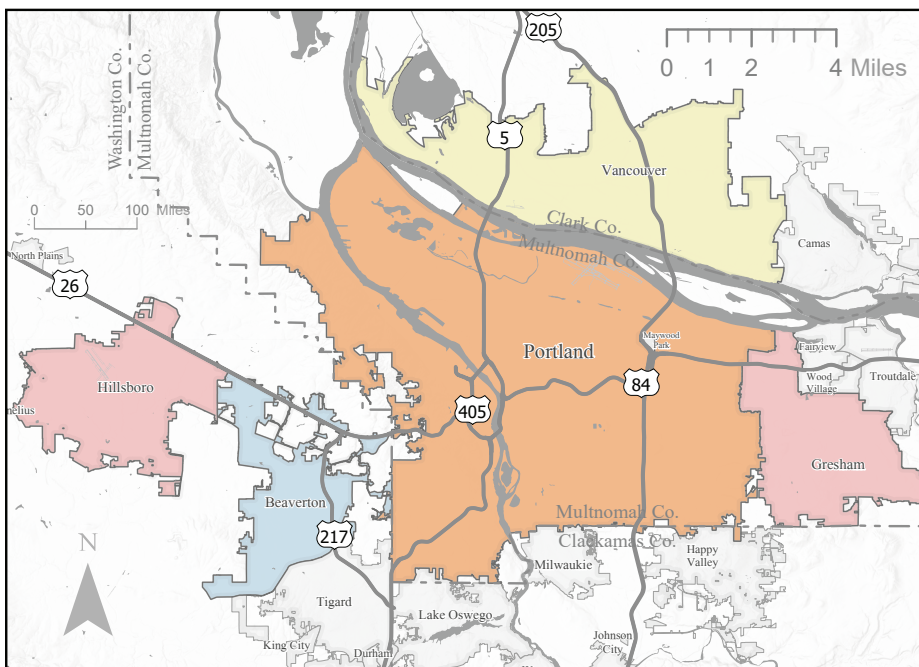


Figure 1

and visualize health disparities affecting urban residents within the United States. Using a multi-level statistical modeling framework, the project predicts individual disease risk and health behaviors, and estimates the geographic distributions of population disease burden and health behaviors.²

Here we examine six of twenty-seven available measures related to health inequity including two health outcomes, two unhealthy behaviors, and two preventative measures.

As the 500 Cities Project only covers the largest US cities, the study area within the Portland-Vancouver Metropolitan Statistical Area looks at Portland, Vancouver,

Gresham, Hillsboro, and Beaverton. Each of these six maps also includes a chart showing how the Portland-Vancouver area fares compared to a selection of cities across the country with similar economic

1. Theodore R. R. Marmor, Morris L. Barer, and Robert G. Evans, *Why Are Some People Healthy and Others Not?: The Determinants of Health of Populations (Social Institutions and Social Change)*, (New Jersey: Aldine Transaction, 1994).

2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, "Introduction: CDC Health Disparities and Inequalities Report —United States, 2013," *MMWR*, 62, Suppl.3 (2013).

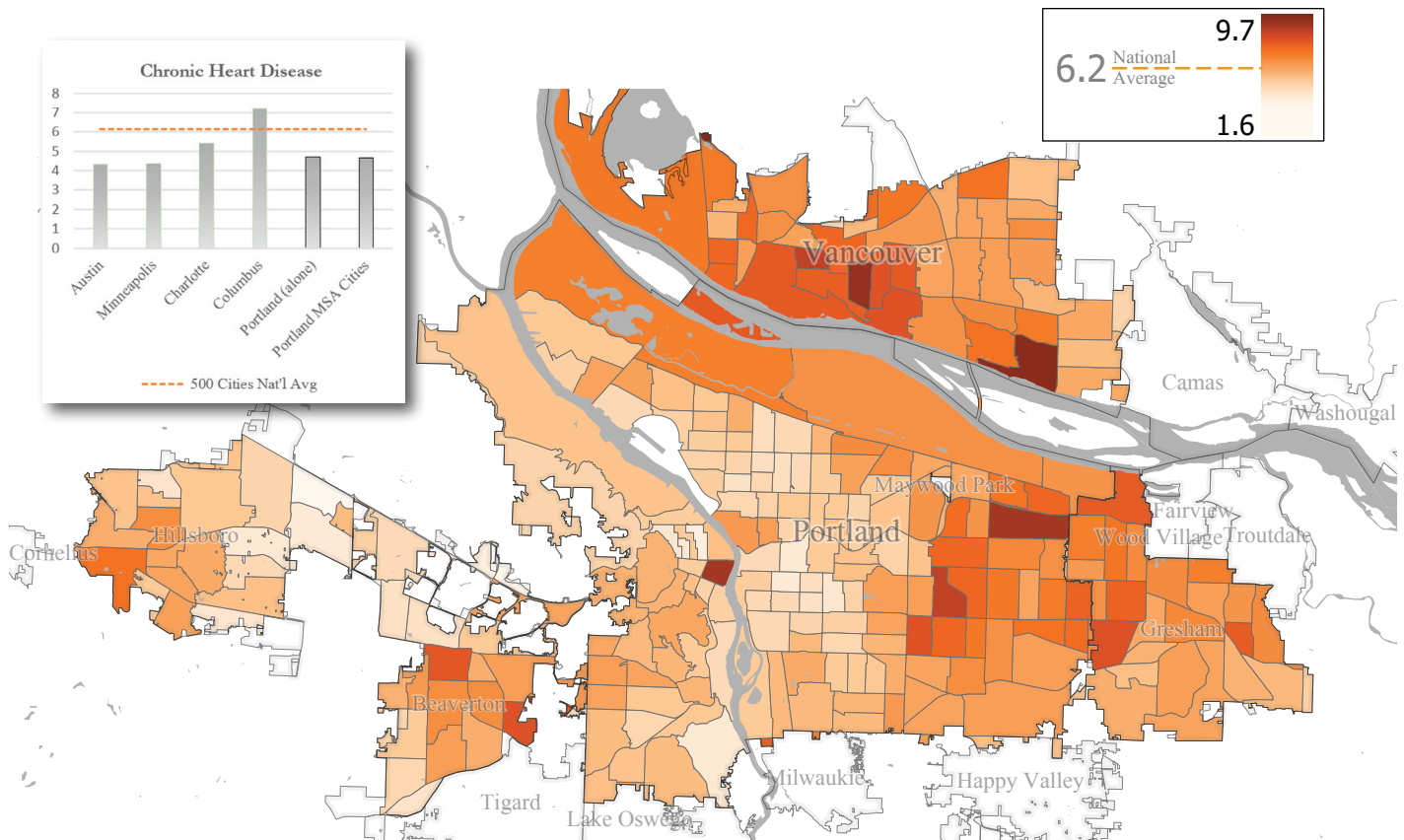


Figure 2

and demographic characteristics,³ as well as to the 500 Cities national average.

The Atlas article concludes with a Social Vulnerability Index (SVI) map, providing the reader an opportunity to compare the 500 Cities results with a map of composite scores based on demographic indicators. The SVI indicators show data at the Census tract level derived from the 2016 five-year American Community Survey, and include percent values for non-white population, unemployment, bachelor's degree attainment, home cost burden, rent cost burden, dependency (ages zero to four, and sixty-five and over), and disability.

3. Website of the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago, "Peer City Identification Tool," (n.d.), <https://www.chicagofed.org/region/community-development/data/pcit>.

Health Outcomes

Health outcomes can be thought of as "the results that matter most to patients."⁴ That is, health outcomes are the diseases and conditions that reflect our state of physical, mental, and social well-being.⁵

Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease

Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) is a chronic lung disease that is the third leading cause of death in the United States.⁶ Nearly 80 percent of COPD deaths are attributable to smoking,⁷ while other

4. Website of ICHOM, "Mission," (n.d.), <http://www.ichom.org/>.

5. R. Gibson Parrish, "Measuring Population Health Outcomes," *Preventing Chronic Disease*, 7, no. 4 (2010): A71.

6. Website of the American Lung Association, "Lung Health & Diseases," (n.d.), <http://www.lung.org/lung-health-and-diseases/lung-disease-lookup/copd/>.

7. B. Adhikari et al., "Smoking-Attributable Mortality, Years of Potential Life Lost, and Productivity Losses—United States,

risk factors include occupational exposure, ambient air pollution, and long-term severe asthma.⁸

High Blood Pressure

High blood pressure, or hypertension, is a leading contributor to critical public health issues in the United States. Approximately 20 to 30 percent of coronary heart disease (leading cause of death in U.S.) and 20 to 50 percent of strokes (fifth leading cause of death in United States) are attributable to hypertension.⁹ Leading causes of hypertension include smoking tobacco, eating foods with high

sodium intake or low potassium, physical inactivity, obesity, and excessive alcohol consumption.¹⁰

Unhealthy Behaviors

Unhealthy behaviors, or behavioral risk factors, are detrimental to an individual's physical or mental health and can lead to poor health outcomes.¹¹ Unhealthy behaviors are implicated in up to 40 percent of premature deaths in the United States.¹²

No Leisure Time Physical Activity

Physical activity during leisure time includes any activity outside of work with physical movements

2000–2004,” *JAMA*, 301, no. 6 (2009): 593–594.

8. Mannino, & Holguin, “Epidemiology and Global Impact of Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease,” *Respiratory Medicine: COPD*, 1, no. 4 (2006): 114–120.

9. Go et al., “Heart Disease and Stroke Statistics—2013 Update: A Report From the American Heart Association,” *Circulation*, 127, no. 1 (2012): E6–E245.

10. Ibid.

11. “Unhealthy Habit,” *McGraw-Hill Concise Dictionary of Modern Medicine*, (2002), <https://medical-dictionary.thefreedictionary.com/Unhealthy+Habit>.

12. Ali H. Mokdad et al., “Actual Causes of Death in the United States, 2000,” *JAMA*, 291, no. 10 (2004): 1238–1245.

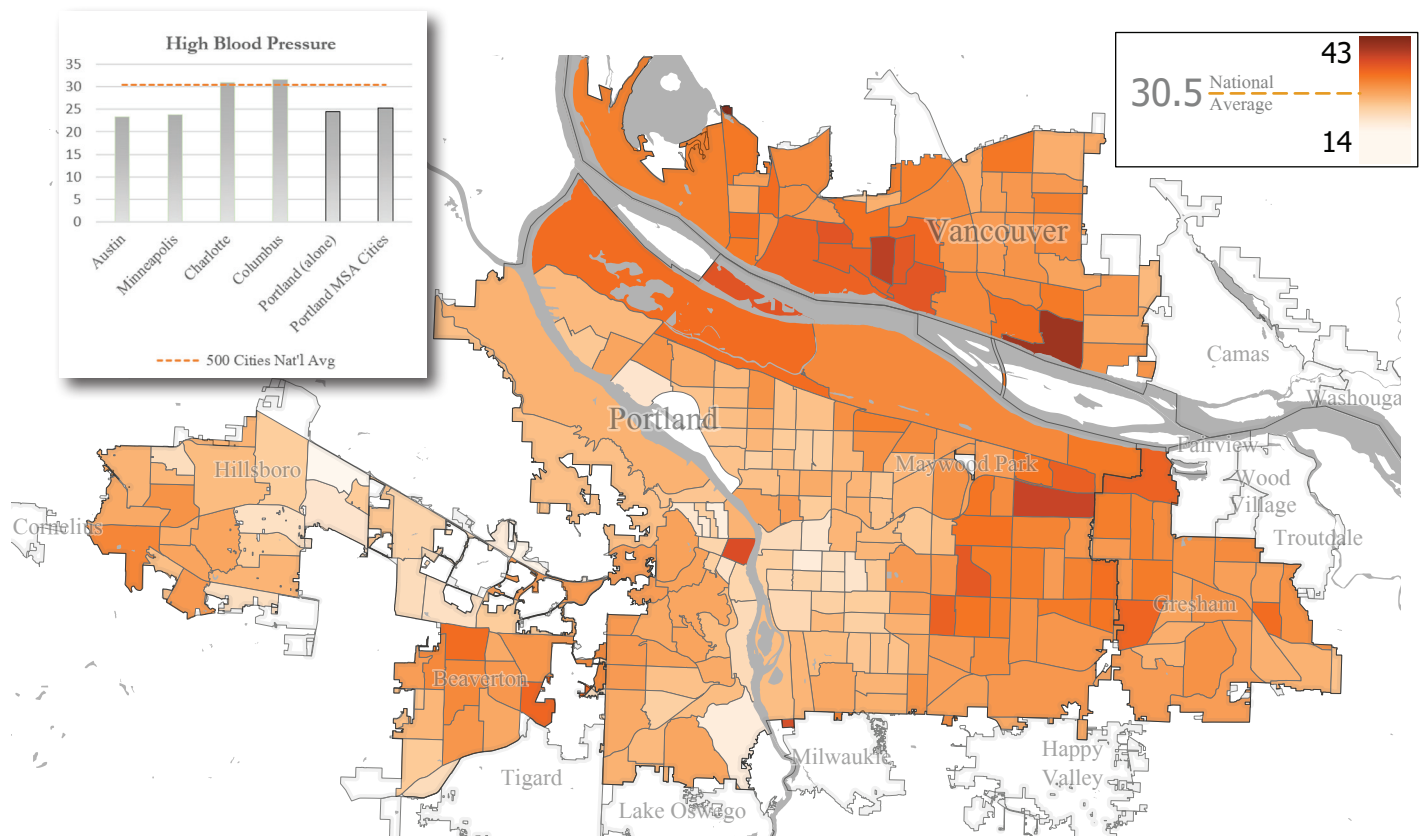


Figure 3

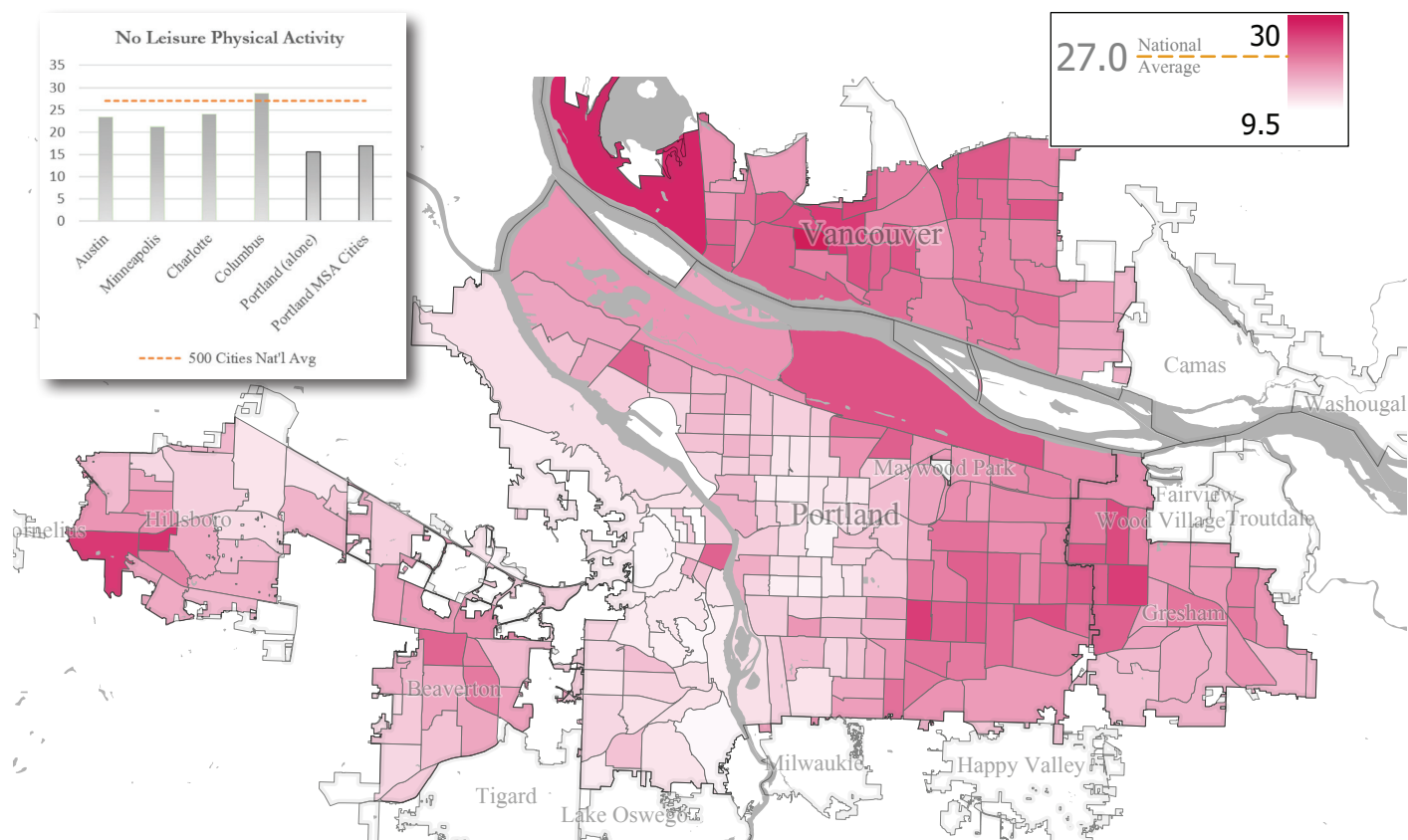


Figure 4

that improve health and quality of life such as exercise, gardening, or walking to work.¹³ An insufficient amount of physical activity is a leading risk factor for premature death due to diseases such as heart disease, cancer, stroke, and type 2 diabetes.¹⁴

Sleeping Less than Seven Hours

As defined in the 500 Cities measure, individuals experiencing insufficient sleep report usually sleeping fewer than seven hours a night.¹⁵ Insufficient sleep has been connected to reducing productivity (e.g., poor work or academic performance), can reduce an individual's

quality of life,¹⁶ and has been associated with major chronic diseases and conditions, such as diabetes, cardiovascular disease, high blood pressure, obesity, and depression.¹⁷

Prevention

Prevention is at the core of public health work.¹⁸ Public health work is largely focused on preventing poor health outcomes and unhealthy behaviors before they lead to individuals becoming sick or injured.

Lack of Health Insurance

Lack of health insurance is a major barrier to accessing health services and preventative services.¹⁹ Uninsured

13. Website of the World Health Organization, "Physical Activity," (2018) <http://www.who.int/en/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/physical-activity>.

14. United States. Department of Health Human Services, "2008 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans: Be Active, Healthy, and Happy!" ODPHP publication; no. U0036.

15. Website of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, "500 Cities: Local Data for Better Health," (2017), <https://www.cdc.gov/500cities/methodology.htm>.

16. H. R. Colten, Bruce M. Altevogt, and Institute of Medicine. Committee on Sleep Medicine Research, "Sleep Disorders and Sleep Deprivation an Unmet Public Health Problem," (Washington, DC: National Academies Press, 2004).

17. Ibid.

18. Website of the CDC Foundation, "What is Public Health?," (n.d.), <https://www.cdcfoundation.org/what-public-health>.

19. J. Weissman et al., "Delayed Access to Health Care: Risk Factors, Reasons, and Consequences," *Annals of Internal Medicine*, 114, no. 4 (1991): 325–31.

individuals are associated with poorer health status,²⁰ are more likely to be hospitalized for preventable illnesses and conditions, and can be burdened with insurmountable debt from medical bills.²¹

Papanicolaou Test

The Papanicolaou test, or Pap smear, is a screening procedure for women to detect cervical cancer. It has been estimated that increased use of the Pap smear (recommended once every three years) could lead to timely and effective treatment and ultimately the prevention of approximately 40 to 60 percent of cervical cancer deaths.²²

20. J. Weissman et al., “Delayed Access to Health Care: Risk Factors, Reasons, and Consequences,” *Annals of Internal Medicine*, 114, no. 4 (1991): 325–31.

21. Ibid.

22. “Practice Bulletin No. 131: Screening for Cervical Cancer,” *Obstetrics & Gynecology*, 120, no. 5, 1222–1238.

Social Vulnerability

The social vulnerability indicators are largely reflective of the social determinants of health—conditions in our social, economic, and physical environments that affect a wide range of health risks and outcomes.²³

Analysis

By all seven measures, the Metro area ranked healthier than the 500 Cities average. However, local tracts that are more likely to experience poor health outcomes, practice unhealthy behaviors, and are less likely to seek preventative services, are consistently concentrated in the same areas throughout the maps. The Portland-Gresham border, North Beaverton, East Hillsboro, and the downtown Portland tracts all indicate higher potential for residents to experience health dispari-

23. Website of the Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, “Social Determinants of Health,” (2018), <https://www.healthypeople.gov/2020/topics-objectives/topic/social-determinants-of-health>.

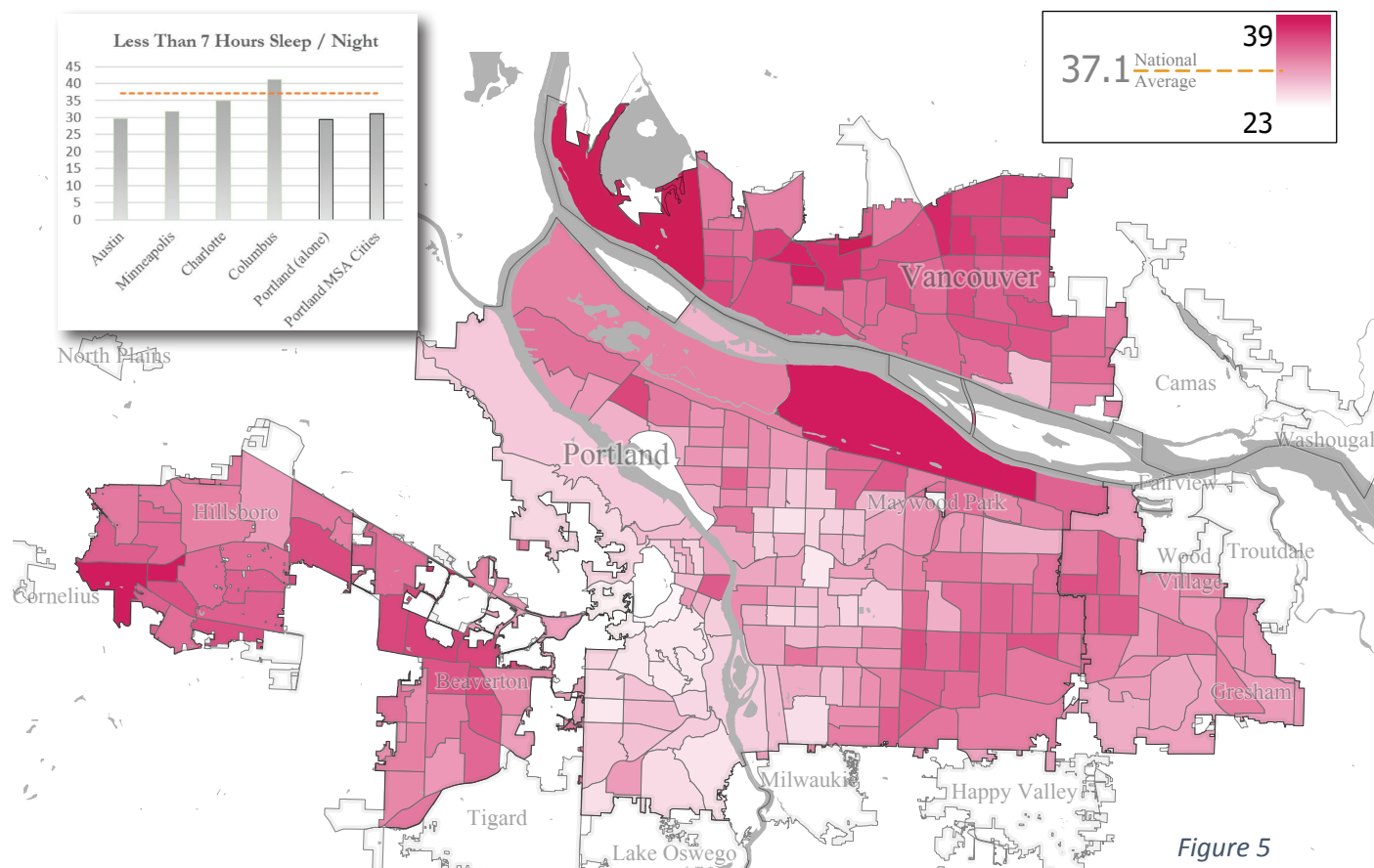


Figure 5

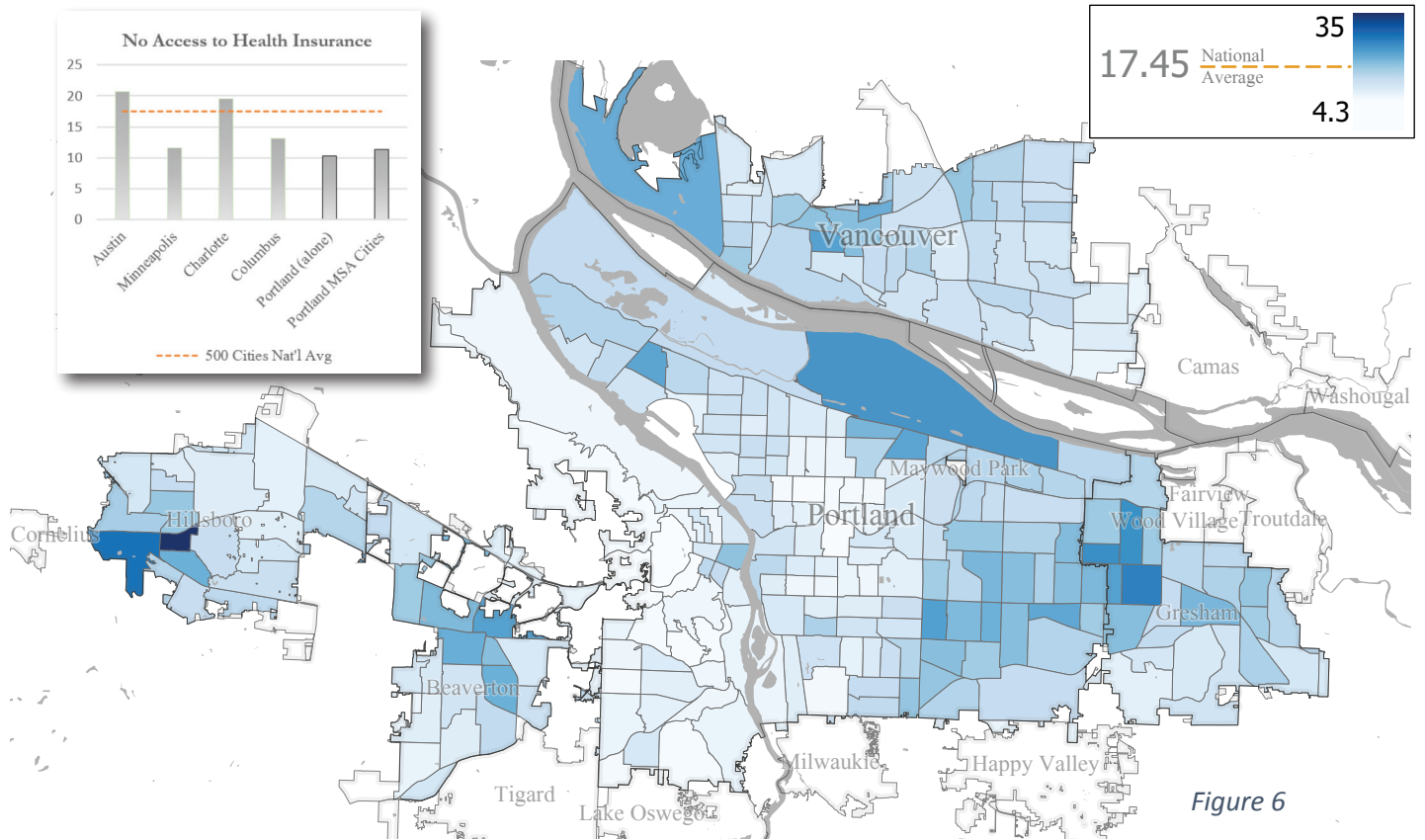


Figure 6

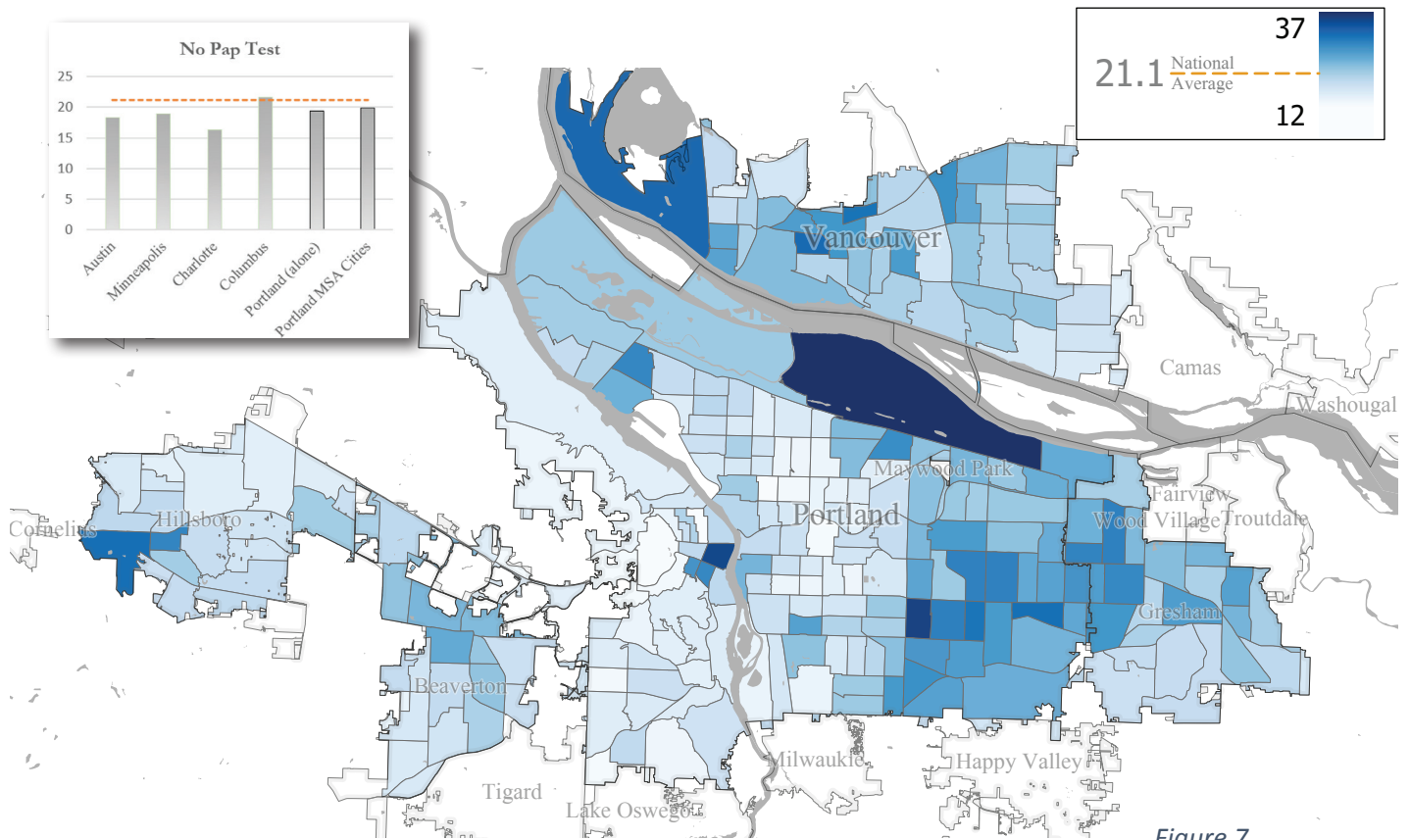


Figure 7

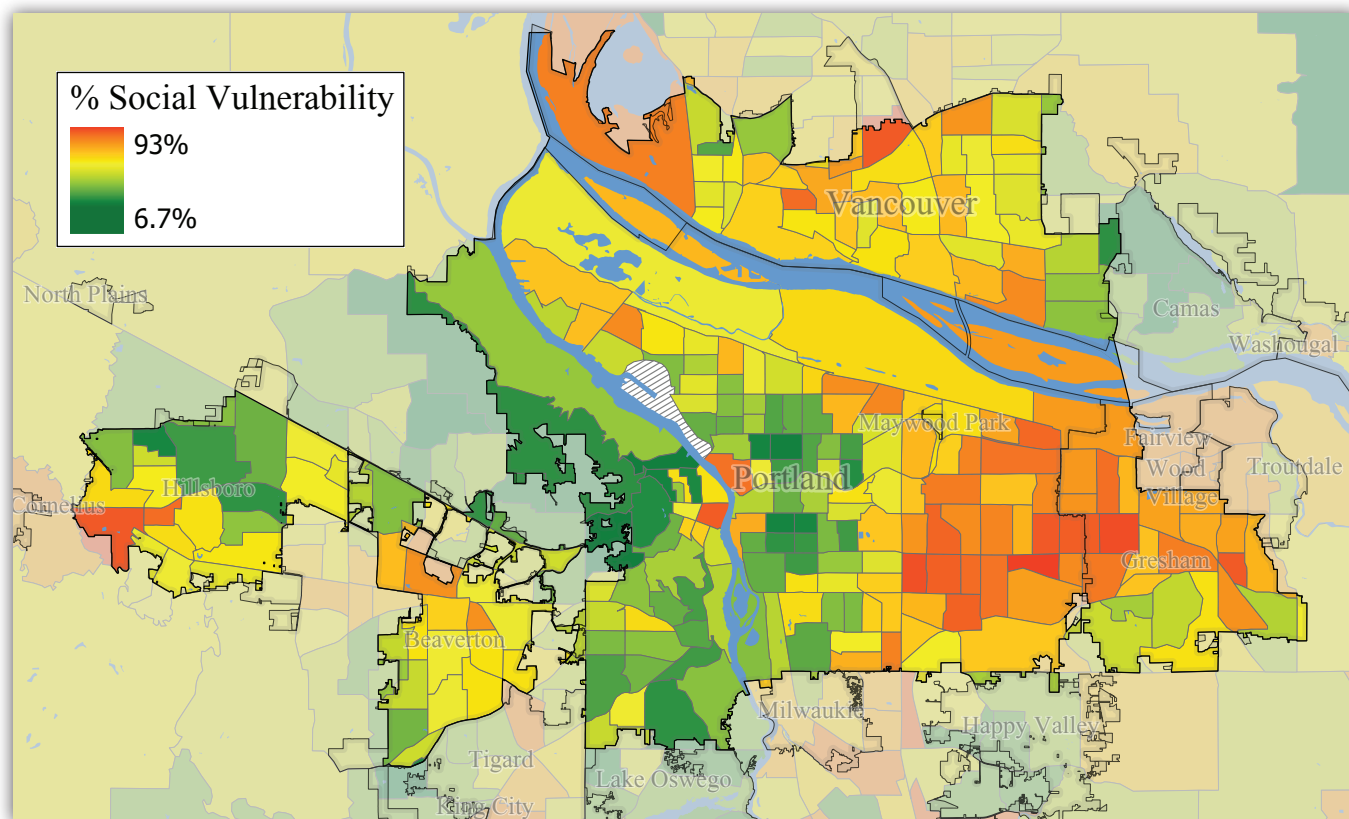


Figure 8

In 2018, IMS developed a Social Vulnerability Index, which represents a socio-demographic profile of vulnerability for local areas. The components that feed into the index come from the five-year American Community Survey (ACS):

- *Share of the dependent population (0–4 & 65 and older)*
- *Share of the population (25 and older) with a bachelor's degree or higher (negatively weighted)*
- *Share of the population that is White; not Hispanic (negatively weighted)*
- *Unemployment rate*
- *Share of the population with a disability*
- *Share of renter households that are cost-burdened (30 percent or more of income towards housing)*
- *Share of owner households that are cost-burdened (30 percent or more of income towards housing)*

For more information on our methodology visit open-data.imspdx.org. To access our social vulnerability web map, visit neighborhoodpulse.imspdx.org and search for "social vulnerability."

ties. As illustrated in the social vulnerability map, this maybe due to a number of factors such as less access to health services or experiencing poorer social, economic, or physical environmental conditions detrimental to residents' well-being.

Conclusion

The association between the concentrated health disparities and higher rates of social vulnerability are a strong indication of health inequities and warrant further exploration. Although there are limitations to the validity of spatial data, in combination with qualitative research, such as resident outreach, planners and officials can identify emerging health problems and develop targeted interventions to reduce health inequities experienced by the metro-area residents.

Growing Wisely in Vancouver, Washington

An interview with Mayor Anne McEnerny-Ogle

by Liza Morehead



In November 2017, Anne McEnerny-Ogle was elected to a four-year term as Mayor of Vancouver, Washington. Anne served on City Council from January 2014 through December 2017. She was also Vancouver's Mayor Pro Tem from January 2016 through December 2017. Anne earned a bachelor's degree in education from Southern Oregon State College and a master's degree in education from Lewis and Clark College. Anne retired after teaching thirty years in Lake Oswego Public Schools and serving as the chair of the mathematics department. During this time, she was a consultant to numerous school districts in Washington and Oregon, presented her work at state and national mathematics conferences, and served as editor and author for Oregon's state math journal. She was a college and university lecturer and continues to supervise student teachers.

LM: How has Vancouver changed since you were first elected to City Council in 2014?

AMO: One noticeably big change is the increase in people experiencing homelessness. Prior to 2014, it wasn't on our radar the way it is now. A large number of people started to lose their housing and at the same time our city began experiencing a very low vacancy rate, which only exacerbated the problem. Suddenly we were asking, what is homelessness and how do we deal with this? An increase in tent camping, the need for homeless shelters and day centers, tiny houses, accessory dwelling units—these are all issues we never faced before. We were very good at providing police, fire, streets, sidewalks, sewer, water, and parks services, but didn't know very much about homeless services. Suddenly we realized that we had to jump in and start working on this.

We put together an Affordable Housing Task Force who made a series of recommendations to council to help address homelessness and affordable housing issues. One of their recommendations was to place an Affordable Housing Fund measure on the ballot. And in November 2016, the voters passed it. The Affordable Housing Fund will provide \$6 million a year for seven years to be used to help address affordable housing and homelessness issues in our city.

Prior to 2014, our thinking had been that the county organization was solely responsible for homelessness issues in our area, but since then there has been a sea change of thought about our role in affordable housing and homelessness, and we're still working on it. It's not an easy problem and we're going to need the help of our community partners to help us address it. It's a huge issue.

LM: The affordable housing bond measure has gone into development, and new buildings are under construction, is that right?

AMO: Yes, we're excited about that. The affordable housing fund includes funding for buying, building, and preserving low-income rental housing and preventing homelessness through rental assistance and housing services. In 2017, \$4.4 million was awarded to local housing agencies for 100 affordable housing units and several housing rehab projects.

In 2015, we revised the city's camping ordinance to allow overnight camping on most publically-owned property, excluding parks. But what we want is to get all the necessary services in place that will help people with the assistance they need to transition into permanent housing. We have been using affordable housing funds to help get people into housing, and we will be considering the allocation of funds for homeless facilities this summer. I heard that Mayor Ted Wheeler made an announcement in his State of the City address that they have a new homeless shelter coming. We'll see if we can do something similar here.

LM: I've read about Vancouver's new accessory-dwelling unit (ADU) ordinance. Is that something that you expect people to embrace?

AMO: Oh yes. The recent ADU ordinance minimized restrictions to keep costs down. People now have the ability to put one ADU on their property, attached or detached, in the basement or above the garage. They don't need onsite parking. We revised the owner-occupancy piece. More and more people are considering ADUs. My hope is that ADUs stay in the affordable housing category, that they will be used for family members or rented at an affordable price, and won't become an Airbnb. I'm hoping that we don't have to write an ordinance that requires that ADUs be used only for residential purposes. Fees were reduced to encourage people to increase density and create affordable housing opportunities, not to provide income opportunities. The county is now looking at ADUs, too.

LM: You also mentioned tiny homes. Is that something you anticipate developing in Vancouver?



Construction on the Vancouver waterfront.

AMO: We've had a few nonprofit developers approach us about building tiny home villages and we'll continue working with them. We require the same infrastructure for tiny homes as for other homes, like sewer, water, everything underground. And tiny homes must sit on a foundation, not on wheels and axles. You could use that as an ADU in your backyard, but it still needs the infrastructure. We have a business in Vancouver called Blokable. They make rectangular-shaped, steel modular units that can be used for housing, which could be very beneficial for affordable housing developments.

LM: What are all the different ways that we can provide housing for people for different periods of time, or in different situations? And what is the cost difference?

AMO: The market phased out boarding-houses years ago, but now is the market ready to bring back single-room occupancy, where you share bathrooms, showers, and laundry space? And mobile home parks, maybe we also need to rethink mobile home parks in our community. A developer here asked if they could build apartments that were only 600 square feet. It was kind of shocking because that seemed much too small. Then you go to Ikea and you say, oh, it's not too small. But it was a sea change for us to think about what we allow and what we encourage. I think more developers are looking at how to build housing that's affordable, because \$1,500 a month rent is not affordable for two people and \$1,000 is not affordable for one person. People are struggling.

“There has been a sea change of thought about our role in affordable housing and homelessness.... we're going to need the help of our community partners....”

“We will continue to encourage diverse housing and transportation options in our future economic and community development planning.”

LM: The templates I’ve seen for those are still very expensive, boutique, and they’re for young professionals. I don’t know if it’s the finances that aren’t penciling in, or people just haven’t quite made it there yet. It will be interesting to see what happens.

AMO: It will be. I’ve also heard that purpose-built, modular units are still very expensive. The land is another big expense. Out in the rural areas you might find land, but then you have the transportation and parking challenges.

LM: It sounds like with all the new development downtown that’s only going to get worse.

AMO: More and more people are living in, working in, and visiting our city; they like all the amenities that an urban environment provides, and we’ll see an even greater influx of people once our new waterfront development opens. We will continue to encourage diverse housing and transportation options in our future economic and community development planning. We are also sensitive to the issues surrounding redevelopment of neighborhoods, we don’t want people being displaced or pushed out of their homes because they can’t afford to live there anymore.

LM: Any suggestions?

AMO: The city recently applied for the new Opportunity Zones Program which is a federal program designed to incentivize new business

investments in underserved communities. But we’ll have to look at any future investments through this program very carefully so that we’re not accepting great opportunities for our benefit that should be for the benefit of those that are still there.

LM: I have a question about the waterfront development, but then also all the development that’s been happening downtown. I’ve been reading about all the new building permits that have been issued....

AMO: In the past year, we’ve issued nearly 2,000 building permits citywide.

LM: And how many new restaurants are there downtown?

AMO: Forty-eight new eating or drinking establishments have opened just in downtown Vancouver in the past five years.

LM: That is remarkable.

AMO: I know! It’s very exciting.

LM: I was wondering how this will change the role that Vancouver plays in the region, and the way that people see the city.

AMO: We are the second largest city in the Vancouver-Portland metropolitan area with a population of approximately 183,000 people. About 3,000 new people are moving to Vancouver every year. Folks are coming here



Vancouver waterfront.

for a number of reasons. We have temperate weather, access to recreation, great restaurants, brew pubs and coffee shops, parks and trails, lots of trees and fresh air. Families feel comfortable here and it's a great place to raise children. And with the opening of the waterfront development, even more people will be coming here to visit our new waterfront park and the restaurants that will open there. Managing future growth has to be done carefully. We're balancing keeping our small town feel and all that people love about Vancouver, while also becoming a vibrant, urbanized city.

These are interesting times. We used to be so dependent on the federal government for lots of things. Now, not so much. Since 2014, when I joined city council, I think our council has realized that if we're going to get something done, we need to take care of it ourselves. We recently implemented new revenue sources as part of a streets funding initiative to improve our streets.

LM: I read about that. As a resident of Portland, I was very envious of the street maintenance project that's being launched.

AMO: This summer, we'll be putting about \$10.5 million into repaving and preserving streets in nearly half of Vancouver's neighborhoods. Our streets were failing fast and the dollars we had couldn't keep pace. State and federal agencies weren't going to fill that gap for us. We needed to do it ourselves, so we developed a long-term streets funding strategy to address pavement conditions, as well as improve mobility and upgrade major corridors. We prioritize every one of our projects, nail down the costs, and report back to the community each year on how much money we collect and where it's spent. It's working. Last year, 2017, was the largest on record for summer pavement work. This year will beat that. And we are gaining the critical local leverage we need to get grants for the major projects our community needs. In addition, last year we adopted a Complete Streets Policy which will guide future improvements such as more pedestrian and bike-friendly roads.



Our public sewer and water are ratepayer-funded city-owned-and-operated utilities. They pay for themselves. We don't like debt. In recent years, we've made it a policy to pay as we go and avoid debt wherever possible. As any remaining utility bonds are paid off, the funds we had used for debt go back into improving utilities.

This council has diverse backgrounds and lots of strength. They have very strong voices. They are looking for innovative ideas on how to solve our problems.

LM: Vancouver city government has a reputation as being more efficient and working better than some of the other cities in the region. What advice would you give to other local jurisdictions?

AMO: I look at our sister cities on this side of the river and I think we're doing well. It's all about teamwork and collaboration.

Helping colleagues work together is not easy, and I haven't nailed it all down completely. But it goes back to creating a level of trust. Talk to me about your concern, councilor. Tell us what you are finding. I find our dinnertime together is helpful. New councilors bring in ideas, or they've been off to a conference, listening to what's going on in the rest of the world. Go and see what Durham or Eugene or Philadelphia is doing, come back and share what you've learned. Your colleagues are a rich resource. When you're collaborating with and trusting each other, it's easy to vote in support of someone's idea. We have a great council, very diverse, young and old, parents, not parents, grandparents, different jobs. What I think it comes down to is this: is the community your focus, can I trust you, and can we work together on these issues for the good of our community?

"We're balancing keeping our small town feel... while also becoming a vibrant, urbanized city."



The West Mill Plain Extension in Vancouver, Washington. Photo by Visitor7 via Wikimedia Commons.



Salmon Run Clock Tower, Vancouver, Washington. Photo by Doug Kerr.

Finding the Middle: Overcoming Challenges to Building Missing Middle Housing

by Ryan Winterberg-Lipp

In the Portland metro area and across the state, the demographics of cities are changing. Urban populations and housing prices are rising, while household sizes are declining with an aging baby boomer generation and younger households both delaying marriage and children and having fewer children.¹ With these changing dynamics, many Portland metro communities are looking to missing middle housing types to “provide for the housing needs of citizens of the state” as called for in the Oregon Statewide Planning Goals and Guidelines. With increasing interest in missing middle housing as a way to provide more housing choices for area households while supporting inclusive, sustainable communities, what do metro area

communities need to know to position themselves for housing success?

What is Missing Middle Housing?

Increasingly, communities are looking to housing models that were prevalent in many American cities before suburban living preferences, the ease of automobile travel, prohibitive zoning, and inequitable lending practices. These communities included a mix of housing types and discrete densities interspersed with single-family homes to form a neighborhood that supported a variety of households. While evocative of many treasured, traditional neighborhoods, this diverse mix of housing types didn’t have a name until recently: missing middle housing.

Missing middle housing represents the gap between single-family housing and higher intensity multi-family and mixed-use build

1. Risa R. Proehl, “Who’s Home—A Look at Households and Housing in Oregon,” PDX Scholar (2011) http://pdxscholar.library.pdx.edu/cgi/view-content.cgi?article=1007&context=prc_pub



Source: <http://missingmiddlehousing.com/>

“Various housing types support household diversity... enabling inclusionary, vibrant communities.”

ings. These types range from duplexes, triplexes, townhouses, row houses, stacked flats, courtyard housing of various kinds, cottage clusters,² and small apartment buildings. Contextually-sensitive missing middle housing can be compatible with single-family homes and may be interspersed in neighborhoods or serve as a transition to higher-intensity or mixed-use corridors. The designers who coined the term often recommend that missing middle housing is no taller than two-and-a-half stories, ranging from two to fourteen units for compatibility with lower-intensity neighbors, while larger missing middle multi-unit buildings may be appropriate in certain contexts.³ The resulting density may support broader community desires, including walkable retail, amenities, public transportation, and increased “feet on the street.”⁴

Why Is It important?

Proponents of missing middle housing assert that the various housing types support household diversity, including income, size, age, and preferences for multigenerational living, enabling inclusionary, vibrant communities. Missing middle housing is often smaller, and therefore is generally more affordable than larger homes—both to produce and for the resident. Smaller households, those seeking to downsize, live multi-generationally near each other, or age in community would have increased options through missing middle housing. First-time home buying may additionally be more attainable, and diverse rental options embedded in communities with access to neighborhood amenities like schools and parks would be more available. Missing middle housing can also increase

2. Cottage clusters means a group of small, detached homes clustered around a central outdoor common space. Typically, some of the homes face the common space, while others face the street. The cottages are usually less than 1,000 square feet. Each cottage has its own small yard and covered porch and shares the common space. From the website We Can, “Cottage Clusters,” <http://www.wecaneugene.org/cottage-clusters/>.

3. Amanda Kolson Hurley, “Will U.S. Cities Design Their Way Out of the Affordable Housing Crisis?” Next City (blog), January 18, 2016, <https://nextcity.org/features/view/cities-affordable-housing-design-solution-missing-middle>.

density discretely without major changes in neighborhood character, conversely supporting the viability of neighborhood commercial districts, higher frequency transit service, and climate change objectives regarding the reduction of auto and fossil fuel dependency. In the Portland metro area specifically, various demographic indicators point to the growing importance of housing that meets these needs and preferences, and research at the Greater Portland Pulse’s Housing Data Hub explains these trends www.gpphousing.imspdx.org.

What’s Being Built

Regional forecasts project that the Portland MSA in Oregon alone will gain over 274,000 households by 2040, a combination of new people and individuals striking out on their own. With a need for housing for these 274,000 new households, how are communities and housing providers meeting their diversifying needs?

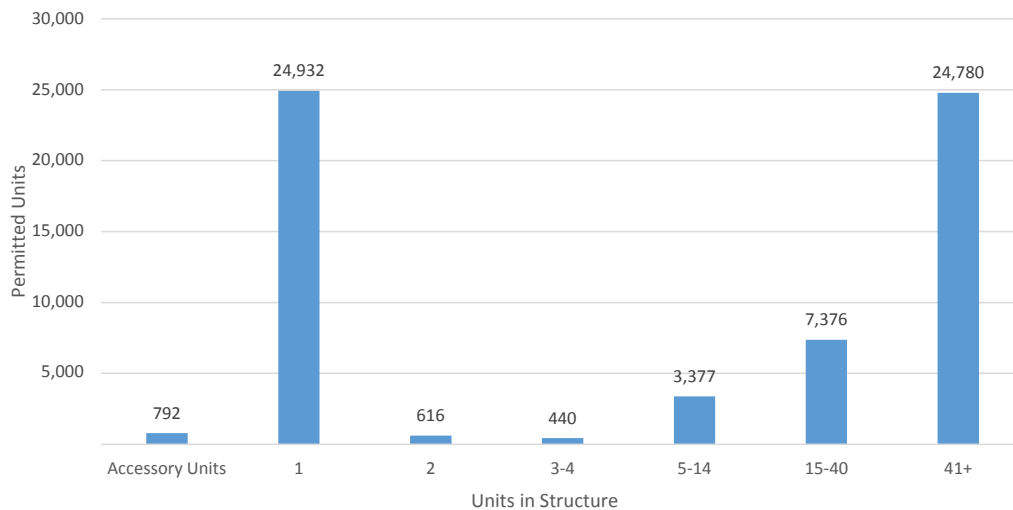
According to a study by Oregon’s Department of Environmental Quality, single-family zoning is still a dominant land use in most Oregon cities. Within the Portland Metro urban growth boundary as of December 2015, single-dwelling residential zones comprised 48 percent of all land area and 77 percent of all land area currently zoned for housing.⁵ In many metro area communities, the areas where new missing middle housing is permitted may therefore be very limited, though many areas currently zoned for single-family residential may include small-scale multi-family homes that predate zoning regulations.

From January 2010 to January 2018, roughly 62,000 housing units were permitted in

4. Robert Steuteville, “Great Idea: Missing Middle Housing,” Public Square: A CNU Journal (blog), March 22, 2017, <https://www.cnu.org/public-square/2017/03/22/great-idea-missing-middle-housing>

5. Website of Oregon.gov, Transportation and Growth Management Program, “Report: Character-Compatible, Space-Efficient Housing Options for Single-Dwelling Neighborhoods,” <http://www.oregon.gov/LCD/TGM/Pages/SpaceEfficientHousing.aspx>

Units Permitted Jan. 2010 to Jan. 2018 in Multnomah, Clackamas and Washington Counties



Source: Construction Monitor

Oregon's Clackamas, Multnomah, and Washington counties. The breakdown of these units, however, illustrates that the vast majority of the newly-built housing stock may not provide for the needs of an increasingly diverse community. Over this eight-year period, 40 percent of the permitted units were single-family, detached homes, consistent with the high prevalence of single-dwelling residential zoning. Over the same time, an equal 40 percent of permitted units were located in large buildings with forty-one or more units, generally representing high-density, urban apartments with smaller units. At the ends of the housing spectrum, the bulk of these single-family homes may be out of reach for many area households or located in far-flung neighborhoods, while many new multi-family units are generally high-end and do not meet the needs of families.

From 2010 to 2018, only 7 percent of units permitted were located in buildings defined as missing middle housing—generally considered two to fourteen units—demonstrating that the small-scale, discretely dense housing types that historically made up America's urban neighborhoods truly are missing from housing production today.

Meeting in the Middle

With housing production concentrated on the extreme ends of the density spectrum

and a growing, diverse population, many communities are looking to missing middle housing to fill the gaps in the current housing supply. For example, the Residential Infill Project undertaken by the City of Portland is seeking to balance the contextual scale of infill housing with increased housing choice to provide more missing middle housing options. In Milwaukie, the city is undertaking a "cottage cluster" housing study to understand the financial feasibility and ideal site design of small home communities. At a plan level, Hillsboro's Comprehensive Plan 2035 includes a policy to "support innovative design techniques that allow the opportunity for varied housing types, such as, but not limited to, tiny houses, cottages, courtyard housing, cooperative housing, accessory dwelling units, single story units, and extended family and multi-generational housing." Implementation of this policy recommendation could include missing middle typologies at various scales, demonstrating the relevance of missing middle housing in communities large and small across the metro area.

For communities considering missing middle housing types, what do policymakers and technical staff need to know to position their cities for success? Is the lack of missing middle housing an outcome of prohibitive zoning regulations alone, or are there other regulatory, market, and financing barriers to

creating a range of housing choices at attainable prices? While each community's experience will be unique, understanding the major pieces that must align to realize a community's housing vision is critical, and the following common elements should be part of the conversation.

Who Builds Missing Middle Housing

Missing middle housing is developed by both market-rate and affordable housing providers, and many affordable housing entities and community development corporations have developed, owned, and operated missing middle housing types—duplexes, triplexes, townhouses, row houses, and apartment flats—in the metro area for decades. The lower cost of production, ability to serve families and residents in all life phases, and location in neighborhoods make missing middle housing an important part of quality affordable housing. For-profit developers who have traditionally targeted first-time homebuyers or the workforce housing market often describe themselves as producing “attainable” housing, often in the form of missing middle typologies, but without the specific term. Notably, some developers who have traditionally constructed higher-end single-family housing are also interested in shifting to duplexes, townhouses, and row houses, because single-family development in infill locations is too expensive to be able to sell at a rate the market will support. Acknowledging both a market desire for these products, and the inability to produce single-family housing at a viable price in many communities, the development community's interest in missing middle housing is increasing across the metro area.

In infill contexts, most missing middle developers today are smaller firms. It's important for communities to understand who their housing providers are based upon this development context; larger companies are often better able to hold land longer before developing, and smaller firms are generally unable to purchase and hold land as long with high carrying costs. Entitlement challenges discussed below that add time and cost to missing middle housing projects may be felt more acutely by these small firms.

Entitlement Challenges

Housing developers widely acknowledge that there is limited available land zoned appropriately for missing middle housing in the metro area, consistent with the finding that 77 percent of land within the Urban Growth Boundary zoned for housing is limited to single unit dwellings. Zoning allowance is obviously the first hurdle in constructing missing middle housing, but simply enabling missing middle housing through other multi-family and mixed-use zoning options is not enough. While missing middle housing may not be precluded in an area zoned for mixed-use or higher-intensity multifamily uses, the corresponding market-driven high land value demands higher density development. Missing middle developers often cannot compete with other buyers for land zoned for higher intensities, because they would not be able to offer a comparable purchase price for the land while making less profit from smaller-scale development. While there are numerous technical and design elements to consider, zone districts that are specific to the desired missing middle housing types, but do not allow densities that exceed them, will be critical in implementing missing middle housing policy recommendations.

While not unique to missing middle housing development, unpredictable or protracted development and design review processes are a major impediment to housing provider's ability to deliver desired housing. Development standards that lack clarity or are open to interpretation, and lengthy review and inspection processes increase the time and cost of development, expenses that are often passed on to the owner or renter. When producing affordable or lower-cost housing, the resulting increased development timeline and cost can be especially problematic.

Development Economics Challenges

The high cost of development, including construction materials, labor, land, utilities, and development and permitting fees, is a substantial barrier to housing production. When asked about the impact of development costs, a metro-wide affordable housing provider offered that missing middle housing types have been part of the organization's portfolio

“There is limited available land zoned appropriately for missing middle housing in the metro area.”

for over twenty years; however, it is becoming increasingly difficult to build housing that meets the needs of area families with increasing development expenses in various communities. A for-profit developer stated that many downsizing seniors are surprised to see that a newly-constructed row house or duplex is no less expensive than the larger, single-family home they are hoping to leave. The high per-square foot cost of new construction presents a market acceptance challenge, this developer indicated, where missing middle housing may be challenging to sell when single family homes are comparably priced.

While developments with multiple units may often be able to leverage fixed, necessary development expenses—like a driveway, roof, or foundation, for example—developers report 5 to 7 percent increases in material costs annually and a pervasive shortage in skilled construction labor that increases cost. Contractors who are qualified to build a ten-unit project are also likely to be qualified for a forty-unit project; therefore the construction company would likely divert crews and resources to the larger job that pays more and would have greater certainty. Small-scale and especially one-off projects have challenges competing for construction labor and subcontractors.

While not isolated to missing middle housing types, both affordable and for-profit participants indicate that high fixed permit fees, impact fees, utility fees, or systems development charges increased the cost of providing housing. While appropriate development fees are certainly part of a jurisdiction-wide policy conversation regarding effective ways to provide public services and infrastructure, it's important to calibrate these exactions in a way that does not disincentivize missing middle housing.

While there is no widely-accepted best practice, fees based upon the number of units may be a disincentive to providing multiple units in a missing middle housing development. Fee structures that account for the overall size of the structure or are gradu-

ated by unit size or number of fixtures to incentivize smaller-scale housing could be considered, along with calibrating fees on a per-structure basis instead of per-unit, or waiving some fees for additional units in existing buildings. Individual fees will need to be treated differently based upon the impact they account for—transportation, parks, or water quality, for example— but exaction structures that unintentionally disincentivize missing middle housing and reuse of buildings should be identified and amended if a community wants to prioritize these housing types.

External Challenges

When units are added to existing structures, state building and fire codes may not account for the limitations of older buildings. Codes are generally oriented to new construction, but some states have adopted building codes for existing buildings to preserve the building stock and encourage reuse. For example, the City of Portland's Bureau of Planning and Sustainability commissioned an internal conversion report to explore the technical, building code, and constructability issues with adding units to existing buildings, revealing numerous safety, accessibility, seismic, and energy and building code challenges that may discourage smaller builders from taking on such projects. The engineering and architectural services necessary to account for these design challenges may be cost prohibitive and beyond the construction experience of many small-scale housing providers.

How Communities Can Set Themselves Up for Success

With an understanding of the barriers and challenges in realizing missing middle housing, what do communities need to do to create missing middle housing opportunities? First, a collaborative mentality and willingness to work with housing providers is critical to create strong partnerships and advance a common housing goal. Municipal leadership often creates this atmosphere, and aligning departments to facilitate the

“Some state building code standards may present challenges for accessible missing middle housing.”

“A collaborative mentality... is critical to create strong partnerships and advance a common housing goal.”

development process and communicate consistently manifests this mindset. For example, assigning consistent project coordinators who shepherd the development process and coordinate internally advances “one-stop shop” effective permitting structures, reducing time, expense, and risk for housing production.

Many incentives for affordable housing are tailored for higher-density multifamily projects. Identifying what support affordable housing providers need and creating tailored programs and processes will be critical for regulated affordable missing middle housing. Incentives that promote family-sized units, like density bonuses, for example, should be considered so that a range of housing choices are delivered to the market.

To increase the supply of lower-cost housing options, municipally-approved template plans, like cottage clusters, infill homes, and accessory dwelling unit prototypes can be replicated with little review and can reduce the time and expense of development while implementing the community’s vision for new housing. Form-based zoning⁶ approaches may also be appropriate for communities seeking to encourage diverse housing options while responding to different neighborhood contexts and allowing housing to adapt over time. A form-based zoning approach can provide the regulatory framework to permit specific missing middle housing types without reaching the permitted densities that result in higher intensity, multi-family development.

Solutions will look different in every community, but new construction, increasing density in existing buildings, and incremental infill development will all be important

6. Form-based zoning is a land development regulation that fosters predictable built results and a high-quality public realm by using physical form (rather than separation of uses) as the organizing principle for the code. A form-based zoning code is a regulation, not a mere guideline, adopted into city, town, or county law. A form-based code offers a powerful alternative to conventional zoning regulation. From the website of FBCI, “Form-Based Codes Defined,” <https://form-basedcodes.org/definition/>.

scenarios to consider, test, and recalibrate for. To truly realize housing choice, communities should attempt to devise regulatory systems and incentive programs that make desired missing middle housing types more profitable for developers than single family homes or high-density apartments. With a successful, predictable system in place, the homebuilding industry will adapt over time to provide more housing choices if opportunities are available, important for creating missing middle housing at a critical scale in different markets.

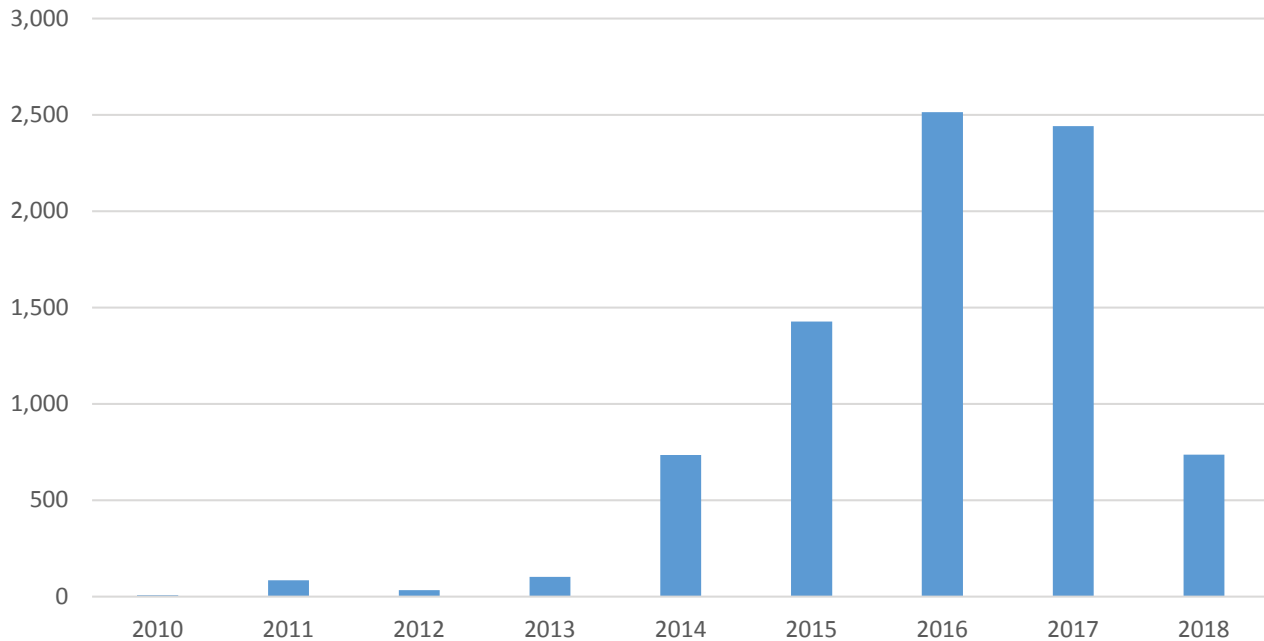
Identifying building, energy, and fire code standards within the jurisdiction’s authority that disincentivize missing middle housing, especially standards that exceed state requirements, should be considered in the context of broader missing middle housing goals. For standards outside of a community’s authority, advocating for amendments to state regulations will be important, and communities with common goals can align their lobbying efforts.

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Urban Coyotes

Coyote Sightings, Portland MSA, 2010–2018



Source: Portland Urban Coyote Project

Coyotes are an increasingly common sight in cities across the Portland region. Since 2010, more than 8,000 coyote sightings have been reported to the Portland Urban Coyote Project. As coyote sightings increase, this group of researchers at PSU is working to better understand the relationship between humans and coyotes. Founded in 2010, the Urban Coyote Project is a partnership between the Portland State University Geography Department and the Audubon Society of Portland. The project trains community scientists to report coyote sightings in the Portland metropolitan region. Coyotes are increasingly coming into the densest urban areas. Between 2014 and 2018, nine coyote sightings were reported within the I405 loop. Four of the sightings were during the day, including two within seven blocks of Portland City Hall. An increase in sightings reflects both an increase in the number of coyotes venturing into the city and an increase in awareness of the coyote project. As more people learn about the project, they are more likely to report sightings when they occur. To learn more about the project and see a point-level map of coyote sightings, visit www.portlandcoyote.com.



Photo by Connor L'Ecuyer, National Park Service.



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