

Light rail will hold off gridlock on the road

Damon Fouts
Staff Writer

We've all heard the validity of the dwindling petroleum resource and environmental impact, arguments for public transportation options such as light rail.

A third reason is becoming visibly apparent in the tri-county area and especially in Clackamas County: L.A. gridlock. They're bringing it with them as they flee the city of Angels for the land of roses. For this reason more than any other, Clackamas County needs light rail.

By the way, that wasn't a swipe at California transplants. Anyone with the foresight to escape that southern asylum are California's best and brightest. And who but members of local Native American tribes aren't transplants? Welcome, I say.

Still, Clackamas County growth is alarming. In 1995, the county's population was almost 309,000, up more than 30,000 from 1990. Metro government projects an increase of another 36,000 by 2000, and 121,000 more than 1995's population by 2015. In short, a projected county population increase of 65 percent in 25 years.

To make matters worse, many county residents are commuting to jobs outside the county. According to Scott Knappes of the Clackamas County Marketing Committee, the county has 25 percent of the region's population, but only 12 percent of the jobs.

Knappes also points out that

in two-and-one-half years, all the available land zoned industrial in Clackamas County will be developed. Obviously the county needs to build jobs next to the homes they're building.

But that's not likely to happen, especially considering what Metro government may have in store for Clackamas County. Metro Council is currently considering a proposal to add more than 22,000 acres to tri-county urban reserves.

Regardless of the final acreage, this would be land made available for residential development as population growth puts pressure on the urban growth boundary, the tri-county boundary that, for the most part, encircles residential development.

What's thrilling county developers and property owners ready to sell and scaring county and many local governments and property owners not ready to sell, is that more than half the reserves being considered lie in Clackamas County, somewhat huddled around I-205 between Sunnyside Road and the Stafford exit.

Traffic on I-205 has already been growing like Baby Huey since its inception. As the interstate was being laid from Washington state to the north, to I-5 to the south, the slide-rule gang predicted daily trips on the interstate would reach a certain number within 20 years.

They spaced freeway exits based on the projected trip count-standard procedure when build-

ing a freeway.

Daily trips topped that number in half that time. Consequently, traffic is especially snarled at peak hours at every entrance to I-205 from Sunnyside Road to the Gladstone exit. Adding thousands of acres of residentially developable land will obviously exacerbate county traffic problems.

All of this leads to one inescapable conclusion for Clackamas County commuters: at the very least, a light rail system is needed on I-205 that connects to Washington state and the north-south line along the Banfield Freeway.

The voters have already approved a line which is already funded from the Clackamas Town Center to Washington, pursuant to the approval of matching funds

from a fiscally stingy U.S. Congress. The line also needs to run into Oregon City, which is already one unfunded option under consideration.

In addition, the rail needs to be supported by expanded bus and shuttle services connecting to I-205 to help alleviate congestion along roads such as Sunnyside Road, Highway 212 to Damascus and beyond, 213, the Molalla Highway from the Park Place exit to CCC, and the Gladstone exit in both directions.

In short, a public transportation infrastructure needs to be in place when the public comes to the point where their car keys are in one hand and a bus pass is in the other and L.A. gridlock dictates that it's more convenient to pocket the keys and hop the bus.

AIDS still an epidemic

Karin Redston
Staff Writer

With Magic Johnson returning to the NBA basketball arena, the AIDS and athletes controversy has again entered into the media spotlight.

For once let's get this thing cleared up. The chances of anyone acquiring AIDS in the athletic arena is next to nil. True, if there is blood exposed by an HIV positive athlete then proper precautions should be and are followed. Most sports today follow suitable guidelines for AIDS prevention in their respective capacity.

I, for one, am glad for people like Magic Johnson who is returning to what he does best, basketball. The courage it takes for one to admit to having HIV or AIDS in our society shows the true character of a person. Let's face it, we are a truly condemning society. If someone has AIDS then it's their fault. An athlete as truly talented as Magic Johnson should not be judged by a blood born pathogen which most straight guys don't take seriously.

What is overlooked however, is the increasingly lack of concern over AIDS by the teen and twenties population. Currently, in Clackamas County, the 30-39 year age group has the highest AIDS rate. However, the 20-29 year age group is catching up. This is not HIV positive. One acquires that well before AIDS. So to put it in laymen's terms, the 20-29 year age group is more than likely acquiring HIV in their teens...and HELLO, it's not a homosexual disease...it's here for everybody.

Whether you use needles or have unsafe sex it is out there. AIDS has been around for a number of years, it just wasn't identified until 1981. My best friend was one of the first to contract it when AIDS reached epidemic proportions. He died in June.

He was lucky as he had some very good doctors who kept him alive and relatively pain free, most of the time. But my friend is like many I see today who think they are indestructible. Like speeding on a road, passing in a no passing zone on a curve, he thought AIDS would not "get" him.

It's pretty obvious he was wrong. In talking with many people who are students at CCC, I am seeing the same trend. The "I'm not gay" or "I'm not a needle user" so I won't get AIDS argument doesn't work anymore. When you sleep with someone, you are sleeping with everyone they have slept with. No one should have to remind anyone of that, but given that Valentine's Day is coming up, I hope people remember to have safe sex. Because it is better than what my friend went through for more than 12 years. It's also much better than what Magic Johnson and his family are going through right now. HIV doesn't just affect the person who is infected. HIV involves family, friends and former significant others. So play it safe, have safe sex.

Ins and outs for 1996

Lora Wahrgren, Assistant Photo Editor
Megan Friedow, Staff Writer

(Ins)

1. 94.7 fm
2. Natural look (less the better)
3. David Letterman
4. No bangs and short hair
5. Demi Moore
Chris "tommy boy" Farley
Julia Ormond
Brad Pitt
6. Platform & Airwalks
7. Natural short nails
8. 2-pac and LL Cool J
9. Punk
10. Canon
11. Daves
12. Hefeweizen
13. Boxers
14. Grinding and disco
15. Hemp jewelry
16. "Friends"
17. Laluna and The Roseland
18. Goatee, facial hair
19. Mike Caudle
20. Dallas Cowboys

(Outs)

1. 970 am
2. Porcelain mask (the joker)
3. Jay Leno
4. Long hair with big bangs
5. Sharon Stone
Jim Carrey
Kim Basinger
Keanu Reeves
6. Birkenstocks
7. Decorated and wicked
8. Dr. Dre & Snoop Dogg
9. Heavy Metal
10. Nikon
11. Camels
12. "The Beast"
13. Whitey-tighties
14. Moshing and stage diving
15. Black leather chokers
16. "Melrose Place"
17. Up Front FX and Quest
18. Grizzly Adams facial hair
19. Bill Clinton
20. Pittsburg Steelers

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