

## **Mitch Rohse Interview**

Thursday, 8/06/15

INTERVIEWER: Greetings.

MITCH ROHSE: Good morning, Jim.

INTERVIEWER: My name is Jim Knight. I served for 29 years on the staff of the Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD). I retired in 2003. Today is Thursday, August 6, 2015. It is my good fortune today to speak with Mitch Rohse, who has agreed to be interviewed as part of Portland State University's Oral History Project of Oregon's Statewide Land Use Planning Program. It was my special privilege to work with Mitch at DLCD. As a close friend, he is, in my view, one of DLCD's most talented colleagues coming to the department with a background in local government planning. Mitch possess a wide range of talent and skills, including plan analysis, public speaking, outreach and informational services, assisting local governments in technical writing about land use, including Oregon's Planning Program. Mitch, in partnership with other staff on a variety of tasks and projects with me, contributed in so many ways advancing the efforts of DLCD and the Land Conservation Development Commission. Today's interview is taking place in DLCD's main office in Salem Oregon. Before starting the interview, I'd like to take this opportunity to offer several brief remarks. First, I want to express my sincere appreciation to Mitch as one of the many Oregonians whose hard work and leadership on the DLCD staff did so much to help further the successful implementation of Senate Bill 100 and the statewide planning goals. Second, for those of you who may not know, you may ask, what is an Oral History Project? In terms of this project, the overall goal is to document and preserve a record of Oregon's Land Use Program through the collecting and archiving of personal oral histories. To achieve this goal, the project's principal objectives are to generate new relevant primary source

material and historical records for research projects, publications and articles on Oregon land use planning. To identify and further understand the views, opinions and interest of the many organizations, agencies, officials and citizens who actively participated in the drafting, adoption and implantation of Oregon's land use statutes, statewide planning goals and administrative rules. To make available historical records and materials of specific interest to various state and federal agencies, tribal governments, public and private interest groups and organizations, academic institutions and the general public. To enable comparison of the current state of Oregon's Land Use Program with the views, opinions, and recollection of various participants regarding their visions and intentions behind the passage of SB 100 and its implementation. Third, we interviewers and the individuals being interviewed, referred to as narrators in this first group, and those that will follow are the projects most visible participants. However, much is owed to those behind the scene at PSU's School of Urban Studies and Planning, working in close collaboration with LCDC and DLCD, overseeing the project's many details of organization, management and funding. Four, we reserve our special thanks to Sy Adler and Kevin Pozzi at PSU and Jim Rue and Rob Halliburton at DLCD. Finally, in May 2013, DLCD held a special gathering to mark the 40th anniversary of the enactment of SB 100 and the start of Oregon's Land Use Program. I was asked, along with others to offer some remarks to commemorate this historic occasion. No, don't worry; I'm not going to delay starting today's interview by repeating my May 2013 remarks. However, here are quotes from two of the Land Use Program's most famous champions, whose words I feel are very relevant as we start this Oral History Project. First, listen to Governor Tom McCall's stirring thoughts in 1973, speaking about the people, environment and livability of the state he loved and what I'm sure he believed is the continuing challenge of land use planning in Oregon. "We're talking about more than preserving the beauty of Oregon. We're talking about the growth of Oregon and how that

growth can be accomplished in the same manner. We are talking about the economy and environment. We are talking about balance. In short, we are talking about people and the land." And the other quote is from a person I and many feel is the Land Use Program's true patriarch. This of course is Hector MacPherson. Here are his inspiring words in 1992, about the birth of the Land Use Program and its importance for Oregon's future. "No, I do not know what I was creating. I think the most remarkable thing is that we are here 20 years later, after the enactment of SB 100 in 1973 and that it has been enough of a success to last at least this long. I knew that land use was a tremendously divisive type of thing. When I got into this thing, none of the other legislators, except for Ted Hallock wanted to join me, because they didn't feel it was anything that would enhance their political stature. And of course we've had a number of times since then when I wondered if it was going to last through the next election. So I guess the most delightful thing is that it is really still here and has gotten some national recognition and is recognized, at least by some people in the State of Oregon as having been desirable. I just hope with all the uncertainty that I see out there in the future that we can progress at least as well in the future, as we have in the past. I really have some confidence that the voters are sensible to recognize the strength of a program like this." Thank you again Tom and Hector for your very moving comments. Now, let's get on with today's interview. Mitch, question number one and I can -- I guess as a process, we'll just sort of read it --

MITCH ROHSE:     Okay.

INTERVIEWER:     -- quickly and then you can respond in the way you feel you should and can and would like to, okay. You have those in front of you as well. Number one; let's begin by having you give us a brief personal background of you and your family's arrival, settlement and life in Oregon.

MITCH ROHSE: Well, before I respond to the question Jim, I want to thank you first for your laudatory introduction and I hope I can live up -- I hope the interview will live up to your high praise.

INTERVIEWER: It's up to historians to decide that.

MITCH ROHSE: As far as my family background goes, I call myself a fourth generation Oregon. That's perhaps stretching things a little bit, because my father's side of the family actually comes from eastern Washington and moved down into Oregon in later years. But his side of the family started with, as is the case in many of the western states, immigration from the Midwest to a western state and his great-grandfather I believe it is was a donation land claim rancher in eastern Washington, up around Yakima for many years. And eventually that side of the family moved into Oregon. And then my mother's side of the family was from the Portland area and also farmed in the valley, Willamette Valley for a while, and then at the early age of eight I believe it was, she and her parents went to eastern Oregon and started cattle ranching over there. So I've always had sort of one foot in the Willamette Valley and one foot in eastern Oregon. And I grew up in Willamette Valley in McMinnville and graduated from high school there, but I spent a lot of time over in eastern Oregon and have always felt a lot of allegiance to the eastern part of the state, as well as to the western part. And as far as my own personal history goes, I was born in New Mexico during World War II in 1943 because my dad was a pilot there and he flew B-29's and was training other pilots. And in the late days of World War II, his squadron was already to be shipped out to Japan in August of 1945 and had it not been for the atomic bomb bringing -- two atomic bombs bringing a sudden end of the war, he probably would have been a participate in the invasion of Japan. But in any case, he and my mom came back to McMinnville and both got jobs as journalists there at a small town paper and that's where I grew up. And my own person

experience later in life was of course, high school, college, University of Oregon. I spent two years in the Peace Corp, 1965 to 1967 and three and a half years in the air force, rather reluctantly. They had a thing called the draft in those days, which was the Vietnam area and in any case, after Peace Corp and the military, I came back and finished up my degree and got a master's in planning and began working as a local planner in 1973.

INTERVIEWER: What prompted you to look into planning or consider planning?

MITCH ROHSE: A great many of my interests and views were shaped by those two years in Peace Corp, and I was working with rural, so called primitive peoples in the jungles of Borneo and I was trying to institute government programs for community development and very simple things like building water supplies, fencing gardens to keep the monkeys and the critters out, latrines and I got interested both in land use and in how a government implements programs like that and gets a community involved. Now mind you, I'd never heard of land use planning. I had no idea what it was when I came back to the U.S. and decided to finish up my degree. I knew I had this interest in land and so I went into architecture for a year and suddenly discovered that this was this thing called land use planning and a program in it at U of O, so I got into the master's program there and got started in planning that way.

INTERVIEWER: Who were some of the professors at U of O that you maybe can recall that were instrumental in helping you plant --

MITCH ROHSE: Dick --

INTERVIEWER: -- your career?

MITCH ROHSE: Dick Ragettes (phonetic). Richard Ragettes was the department head when I was at U of O and he certainly was very instrumental in my education and interest in planning. Another fellow that was -- oh, I'm drawing a blank at his name. A professor that came in

for a year from the east coast and visiting. He was vying for department head and he was a lawyer and he ultimately did not get chosen as department head and left, but he had a very keen insight on planning law and gave me a lot of information and insights on that topic and kindled my further interest in that area.

INTERVIEWER: Was your planning thinking in terms of your future career, more from the top down, i.e., the federal government or state government or from the bottom up in terms of local government?

MITCH ROHSE: Well --

INTERVIEWER: Or maybe it hasn't gotten that far in your planning.

MITCH ROHSE: Mixed -- no, no, I actually had thought about that a great deal because when I was in Malaysia in the Peace Corp --

INTERVIEWER: Right.

MITCH ROHSE: The people I was working with were small rural villages and the Malaysian government was using some frankly, fairly heavy handed methods to modernize the nation and create a nation in effect, and they would do things like create development schemes as they called them. They would -- the federal government would bring in the equipment, the people, the money to basically bulldoze a couple of thousand acres of jungle and relocate people from subsistent style village living, onto these relocation schemes where they would be given wages, a totally unfamiliar thing to them, to harvest things like pepper and rubber --

INTERVIEWER: Wow.

MITCH ROHSE: -- on essentially a plantation. And so part of me is thinking about the heavy handedness of this and the obvious political impact on a very rural and unsophisticated people and part of me -- and I was troubled by that, and at the same time, here was a young nation

building its economy and doing some great things in terms of economics and growth and so I had a pretty good understanding after that of the balance between those two and the difficulty of maintaining --

INTERVIEWER: Right.

MITCH ROHSE: -- that balance.

INTERVIEWER: I'd like to talk more about that, but we probably should move on, but --

MITCH ROHSE: Okay.

INTERVIEWER: Number two, take a few minutes to recount your overall personal and professional, and I think you've already talked about your volunteer experience --

MITCH ROHSE: Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: -- with Oregon's Planning Program.

MITCH ROHSE: Well as I mentioned, the Peace Corp certainly shaped my interest in it.

INTERVIEWER: Right.

MITCH ROHSE: And I was fortunate enough after I got my masters in 1973 in planning, to find a job in Lane County.

INTERVIEWER: Uh-huh.

MITCH ROHSE: And I smile over that sometimes, because when I came out of school and began looking for jobs locally, I talked to a fellow at the City of Eugene who was on the planning staff there. I think he was deputy director if I recall correctly, and he -- I won't repeat his name, but he smiled at me sort of condescendingly I think and said, well, you know, a lot of people want to be planners in Oregon, but it's a small state and there aren't many opportunities here and

probably you're not going to find a job here and what you're going to have to do in effect, pay your dues and serve your apprenticeship in some other state and you'll probably have to go to the east coast and work there for a couple of years, build some experience, before you can kind of get back into the Planning Program in Oregon. And of course that was before -- that was just a few months before Senate Bill 100 kicked in. And I laugh about that, because of course, within a year or two, the Statewide Planning Program was off and running and Oregon couldn't find enough planners to --

INTERVIEWER: Right.

MITCH ROHSE: -- to even begin to get the program --

INTERVIEWER: Right.

MITCH ROHSE: -- right.

INTERVIEWER: Right.

MITCH ROHSE: So anyway, I did get a job with Lane County a few months later, worked with Lane County for a couple of years. Worked with Polk County --

INTERVIEWER: Right.

MITCH ROHSE: Was briefly Planning Director --

INTERVIEWER: Right.

MITCH ROHSE: -- in Polk County, then came to work for DLCD in 1980 as a Contract Plan Reviewer and worked at DLCD until the year 2000.

INTERVIEWER: 20 years.

MITCH ROHSE: Yes, took six months out to go backpacking and traveling around Southeast Asia and the Pacific --

INTERVIEWER: Wonderful.

MITCH ROHSE: -- with my wife Luanne, but came back to DLCD. And then in 2000 I became a Planning Consultant and worked mainly with small cities and rural counties, particularly along the Oregon Coast doing various work for them, particularly special projects sorts of things.

INTERVIEWER: More to talk about also later. Number three, I know we and our fellow citizens treasure our state's outstanding natural beauty, sights and resources that are not only beautiful, but are also critical for our state's economy. And as you look back over the last 40 years, which of the state's natural resources do you believe that the State Planning Program has been most successful in protecting? Also if you wish, please identify any area, sights and resources in your view, that the Planning Program has not done enough.

MITCH ROHSE: Well, I would start by saying that I think the Statewide Planning Program has had a considerable impact on protecting all of the state's resources and natural beauty and livability, and obviously it's had more success in some areas than others, but it's had a widespread impact throughout the state. The obvious one to point to is farmland. Certainly the --

INTERVIEWER: Right.

MITCH ROHSE: -- the Statewide Planning Goal 3 and the state laws related to exclusive farm use zoning had a tremendous impact and helped mildly to protect farmland from development. And the other perhaps unintended consequence of that, but a very valuable consequence I think is that the Farmland Goal and also the Forestland Goal brought counties into land use planning, because in 1973, prior to the Statewide Planning Program, the counties were really not doing much land use planning. They were -- Marion County for example had some one acre zoning in certain rural areas and mostly farming areas close to Salem, but in many counties there was little or no zoning at all and very little planning. So count goal three for farmland and

goal four for forestland as successes, a somewhat more modest success I think in Forestland. I think the Willamette River Greenway was a success in that the Greenway is still (unintelligible) today and effective and I'm a kayaker and I paddle on that greenway a lot, so I particularly have cause to appreciate it. The other area that I spend a lot of time at and I'm acutely aware of the impact, the successful impacts of the Statewide Planning Program, is the Oregon coast. I think the Coastal Program did a wonderful job of protecting, you know, the sandy beaches and the coastal headlands and many of the resources that we sort of take for granted on Oregon's coast.

INTERVIEWER: Do you attribute that to the Beach Bill to some extent?

MITCH ROHSE: Well certainly and I was going to qualify that remark a little bit --

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

MITCH ROHSE: -- by saying that of course the question asks about the effects of the --

INTERVIEWER: Right.

MITCH ROHSE: -- State Planning Program.

INTERVIEWER: State, right.

MITCH ROHSE: And certainly the beach was the combination of things. It was Statewide Planning Goals, it was Federal Coastal Zone Management legislation, it was the coastal - - I can't even remember the acronym now, Oregon Coastal Conservation & Development --

INTERVIEWER: OCC&DC.

MITCH ROHSE: -- Commission.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

MITCH ROHSE: Yes, yes. And so there was a combination of variables in there, but I will attribute at least some of the successes there to the statewide planning --

INTERVIEWER: Sure.

MITCH ROHSE: -- goals.

INTERVIEWER: Right.

MITCH ROHSE: And I would also say that the Columbia River Gorge has received a tremendous degree of protection, counted as a success story. We can't attribute that all to the Statewide Planning Program obviously, because federal legislation had a lot --

INTERVIEWER: Right.

MITCH ROHSE: Federal law had a lot to do with that. But again, I think the Statewide Planning Program provided kind of a platform for that to rest on or to borrow from --

INTERVIEWER: Right.

MITCH ROHSE: -- into that. So it was helpful.

INTERVIEWER: Some of the people I've talked to in interviews of course mentioned another goal --

MITCH ROHSE: Uh-huh.

INTERVIEWER: Fourteen. Your thoughts about that? Our Urban Growth Boundary Goal.

MITCH ROHSE: Well I think I shied away from 14, because the question talked about the state's outstanding natural beauty's sites and resources.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

MITCH ROHSE: And I, in my planner's mentality --

INTERVIEWER: Uh-huh, correct.

MITCH ROHSE: -- tend to think of Goal 14 as being that --

INTERVIEWER: Urban.

MITCH ROHSE: -- Urban Goal.

INTERVIEWER: Right.

MITCH ROHSE: Certain Goal 14 is a critical compliment to the Farm and Forestry Goals, because obviously if our cities were marching --

INTERVIEWER: Right.

MITCH ROHSE: -- across the landscape, eating up farmland and forestland, those resources wouldn't be as well protected as they are and the Urban Growth Boundaries have helped keep that from happening. I am troubled by the, what I think was one of the great, sort of misunderstandings about the program that revolve around, that revolves around Goal 14, and that is that it was -- it was the emphasis on boundary, and of course a lot of people today, including a lot of planners, still see the Urban Growth Boundary as a means of restricting growth and development. And I think this is a clear case where the so called tension or the real tension between economy and environment has been -- that incorrect model has influenced a lot of our thinking. To my way of thinking, Goal 14 established a supply of buildable land. It was a mandatory development goal.

INTERVIEWER: Uh-huh.

MITCH ROHSE: But what it said was, each city has to establish a 20 year supply of buildable lands and make sure it can be served by urban services and so forth and in doing so, yes it protected the farmland, but it also created a supply of buildable lands. And it -- unfortunately Goal 14 has never gotten any credit for that. It's always been seen as a restriction.

INTERVIEWER: Uh-huh.

MITCH ROHSE: But --

INTERVIEWER: You and I are sort of process people in terms of planning too and --

MITCH ROHSE: Sure.

INTERVIEWER: And I've always had a lot of fidelity to Goal Two.

MITCH ROHSE: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: In terms of just laying out the structural components of what a plan is and how it should be, you know, designed and you know, a factual base --

MITCH ROHSE: Uh-huh.

INTERVIEWER: -- and you know, consistency with implementing measures, coordination, etcetera, and do you agree with that or would you add anything to that or --

MITCH ROHSE: Well Goal Two is certainly an important one because it, on the one hand it roughs out the framework that will be used for local land use planning.

INTERVIEWER: Uh-huh.

MITCH ROHSE: These other -- the Statewide Planning Goals. So in that sense, it's certainly important. I remain somewhat disappointed in Goal Two because I don't think it laid out that framework precisely and clearly enough and of course it established that the guidelines to both Goal Two and other goals were optional or that they're mandatory and I, in a perfect world, I think Goal Two should have been much more explicit about what a local government had to do in terms of comprehensive planning and zoning. What a comprehensive plan should look like, how it should be developed and so forth. And of course the real politic at the time, dictated that the state not push too hard in requiring local governments to do this and do that.

INTERVIEWER: Right.

MITCH ROHSE: And so I think the state relaxed there and gave local governments a tremendous amount of freedom in their local planning and perhaps that was a good thing. The result however in many cases, was a really disappointing local plan. And I remember as a plan reviewer in the early 80's, seeing plans come in that, for example, had no page numbers and no

section numbers. Well how can you cite to a policy document and say this requires that or this calls for this, if you can't even point to the page that it's on or the policy number that it is. So we could have been, we the state, DLCD could have been a little more prescriptive in that area I think.

INTERVIEWER: We came out later, as you'll recall --

MITCH ROHSE: Uh-huh.

INTERVIEWER: -- with I think a fairly forceful effort to provide technical assistant through our field staff. Not exclusively certainly, but --

MITCH ROHSE: Yes, yes.

INTERVIEWER: -- they were always on the frontline so to speak and I would hope that the agency is still moving in that direction. I have lost touch with that so --

MITCH ROHSE: Well the field -- the field staff were always a critical part of the program --

INTERVIEWER: Right.

MITCH ROHSE: -- because they were the face of DLCD --

INTERVIEWER: Right.

MITCH ROHSE: -- and they were the folks on the firing line who were --

INTERVIEWER: Right.

MITCH ROHSE: -- off living in the same counties or cities that they were working with and dealing daily with local planners and local officials in the real world problems that they have and of course there was sometimes a concern that the field reps had sort of gone native as the phrase went and were too much on the side of local governments and when it came time to argue between what the state wanted and what the local government thought it should do. But again, I think that was just kind of a necessary aspect of the political situation.

INTERVIEWER: It wasn't an easy wire to walk --

MITCH ROHSE: No.

INTERVIEWER: -- you would say.

MITCH ROHSE: Heaven's no.

INTERVIEWER: Because --

MITCH ROHSE: No, no, uh-uh.

INTERVIEWER: -- you just couldn't always be in their pockets, on the other hand --

MITCH ROHSE: Right, right.

INTERVIEWER: -- you couldn't always be perceived as just, you know --

MITCH ROHSE: Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: -- it spewing out the state's lines.

MITCH ROHSE: Well, and Central Staff certainly didn't have a, you know, monopoly  
on the --

INTERVIEWER: Right.

MITCH ROHSE: -- correction division of what the plan --

INTERVIEWER: Right.

MITCH ROHSE: -- should say and there were instances I know where Central Staff  
were greatly concerned with what a field rep thought the appropriate --

INTERVIEWER: Right.

MITCH ROHSE: -- local policy should be.

INTERVIEWER: I think it's unique or not unique rather, to all organizations that --

MITCH ROHSE: Oh yes. Yes

INTERVIEWER: -- have field presence, as well as Central Staff.

MITCH ROHSE: Uh-huh, yeah, you're right.

INTERVIEWER: Okay. Question four, I think we've sort of answered that already, but anything else you wish to add about the --

MITCH ROHSE: Well let's see.

INTERVIEWER: -- the 19 goals and the ones maybe you've overlooked or --

MITCH ROHSE: Well your question also asks, which of the goals do you feel the least important and certainly I think the odds on favorite there with practically anyone you interviewed was -- is Goal 13 on the energy. And for a variety of reasons that goal was not very fully implemented and I think part of it is because it was -- the relationship between energy use and land use at the time anyway, was not clearly established and a lot of local planners who might have been perfectly comfortable and knowledgeable about the concept of say zoning farmland, had little training or knowledge of how one maximizes the conservation of energy. And partly it was lack of expertise locally and at the state level and partly I think it was a lack of clear relationship between the Energy Goal and the other land use goals (unintelligible) to that.

INTERVIEWER: We had Goal Six of course, which --

MITCH ROHSE: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: -- does include that.

MITCH ROHSE: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: The famous phrase carrying capacity.

MITCH ROHSE: Uh-huh.

INTERVIEWER: And that never really got much traction. Not that we really pushed it very hard.

MITCH ROHSE: Right.

INTERVIEWER: But you know, intellectually it makes a lot of sense, but in the real world as you're saying, it's almost impossible to conceive of a local city council or board of commissioners --

MITCH ROHSE: Well and --

INTERVIEWER: -- wrestling with that.

MITCH ROHSE: -- frankly it is kind of a squishy concept.

INTERVIEWER: Yes.

MITCH ROHSE: Carrying capacity can mean 50 different things to 50 different people.

INTERVIEWER: Right.

MITCH ROHSE: And of course it always invites the question, carrying capacity with respect to what?

INTERVIEWER: What.

MITCH ROHSE: And the goal, Goal Six didn't define that and so the default position was essentially the lowest common denominator, which is if you, local government comply with the various state programs that involved carrying state and federal programs that involved carrying capacity, you've done all that's necessary and as a result, I don't think Goal Six had very much impact.

INTERVIEWER: I think if local government complied with the state's environmental regulations, we --

MITCH ROHSE: Uh-huh.

INTERVIEWER: -- almost automatically assumed --

MITCH ROHSE: Right.

INTERVIEWER: -- that they would --

MITCH ROHSE: Right.

INTERVIEWER: -- comply with Goal Six. But --

MITCH ROHSE: Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: -- as we look forward and maybe we're jumping ahead and little bit, but the whole issue of climate change --

MITCH ROHSE: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: -- and also in conjunction with Goal 13, there may be other things to be done there certainly.

MITCH ROHSE: Well, maybe I am jumping ahead in the same way, but I do think that the goals in land use policies in general, take on a different meaning and a different urgency over time. Carrying capacity when the earth has two billion people is considerably different in my mind from carrying capacity when the earth has as it does now, seven billion people going on eight. And I think the day will come when however squishy the concept of carrying capacity will be, maybe that it will be a lot more urgent and will come to the fore in some of our goals.

INTERVIEWER: I hope it isn't too late.

MITCH ROHSE: If it isn't too late. Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: That's I think the big worry. And --

MITCH ROHSE: And it's a very legitimate worry in my estimation.

INTERVIEWER: Yes.

MITCH ROHSE: I came to the climate change issue, I would say with a pretty open mind. I mean, I think there's a tendency for people to think that, well if you're a planner or you're an environmentalist, you automatically subscribe to the area of climate change and global warming,

just as a sort of hip shot sort of thing without much thinking. And I can remember having discussions about this on the Oregon planning network with other planners about how significant this was back in the, I think that was in the '90's. And I remember just thinking, well I, you know, I think there's something here, but when I would discuss it with other people, I couldn't always articulate what that was. I since have done a lot of work in this area when I went into my consulting work I did a considerable amount of work and research on it and to me it's an inescapable fact now, but cannot be argued, even though it is being argued, and I think it will have an enormous impact on Oregon and a lot of other places too.

INTERVIEWER: Some of the research I've done says that Oregon's going to have a, you know, a population growth of a billion people, a million people, excuse me --

MITCH ROHSE: Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: -- in the next couple decades and --

MITCH ROHSE: I think that's highly possible.

INTERVIEWER: If so, how do we -- that's a --

MITCH ROHSE: Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: -- whole other set of issues.

MITCH ROHSE: Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: But where and how and all those obvious questions.

MITCH ROHSE: Well I don't know how many times my wife and I have commented when we go out to hike along the river or walk --

INTERVIEWER: Right.

MITCH ROHSE: -- along the beach over at the coast or whatever, boy thank heavens we don't have to deal with a drought --

INTERVIEWER: Right.

MITCH ROHSE: -- say, Arizona. Thank heavens we're not dealing with the wild fire threat and the droughts in California, you know. And if we think that about our state, then I have to think that there are a lot of people in other places who may look at Oregon and kind of reach the same conclusion. We are very fortunate to have an abundance of key resources like water and a climate that is not being altered as much as some are and we also are -- we've made our own good fortune to some extent, by protecting a lot of those resources. But the down side of that may be that a lot more people want to live here.

INTERVIEWER: Okay. Page two, number five --

MITCH ROHSE: I just want to say one other thing --

INTERVIEWER: Oh, sure.

MITCH ROHSE: -- when we were talking about --

INTERVIEWER: Sorry.

MITCH ROHSE: -- the goals and, you know, which ones were great --

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

MITCH ROHSE: -- which ones were --

INTERVIEWER: Right.

MITCH ROHSE: -- a little weak and didn't work as intended. Goal Five is to me a classic sort of mixed bag. On the one hand I think it was -- I think it accomplished a fair amount in protecting natural resources. On the other hand I think it fell far or -- of its intended aims, in that it had established a pretty complex planning process, almost all its own. Sort of a planning program within a planning program if you will, and when I look at some of our natural resources, I think

well Goal Five didn't do a very good job of protecting that. The good news in that area is that we have some other state and federal programs that have augmented it in many cases.

INTERVIEWER: And land ownership in Oregon --

MITCH ROHSE: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: -- over half the --

MITCH ROHSE: And land ownership, that too.

INTERVIEWER: Right, right.

MITCH ROHSE: Yes, yes. You know, when we pat ourselves on the back too enthusiastically --

INTERVIEWER: 52% (talking over).

MITCH ROHSE: -- for say, protecting the coast, I --

INTERVIEWER: Right.

MITCH ROHSE: You know, we have to remind ourselves that a great chunk of that land is federally owned.

INTERVIEWER: Right, right. Okay. We may have covered number five, which more or less asks you to talk about steps and actions with which you are familiar, that the commission of the department took to ensure that every plan had met it's -- you know, the goals and (unintelligible) and so forth. Did we do a good job, you know, in carrying that out? You and I both lived through those years, many of them and --

MITCH ROHSE: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: -- we can look back through the clear lens of history, sometimes it's a little bit cloudy, but --

MITCH ROHSE: Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: -- it was a really tough time and in many different (inaudible - 35:31) as politically, technically, financially, personnel wise, a lot of things, so --

MITCH ROHSE: Well I think the two critical processes during that stage were of course plan review --

INTERVIEWER: Right.

MITCH ROHSE: -- and the work of the field reps.

INTERVIEWER: Right.

MITCH ROHSE: And in my own case, I was a plan reviewer for about three years and some people use to disparage the job, referring to us as the green eyeshade people.

INTERVIEWER: Right.

MITCH ROHSE: But I remember thinking to myself, that it was the most wonderful planning education I can imagine, because I got to see the detailed, sometimes unbelievably detailed comprehensive plans, zoning ordinances, related policy documents of each city and county that came through my hands and that was -- there were several dozen, all the way from very small cities up to some fairly good sized counties and cities. And I regard it as a great education because you can see what the state of the art was and you can see, well this city has an innovative idea here, this county maybe isn't doing nearly as much here as it should be, you know, it's just -- it was very helpful. My disappointment in that area is that there never was a very successful way to disseminate that information widely among local planners so that we can all learn from it. And part of that again was the fear of the state sort of riding roughshod over local innovation and local planning and not being too prescriptive about how things should be done. So again, there were some tradeoffs there. But I do -- one of my greatest regrets about the Statewide Planning Program is that we accumulated this vast amount of information about land use and never really centralized

it and steadied it and disseminated it, and to this day, I don't think anyone in the state can answer the question, how many homes last year were built within an urban growth boundary, but outside city limits, within a forest zone, a farm zone and so forth. What are the patterns? What's causing those patterns of development? Are the numbers increasing/decreasing, that sort of thing? We got a partial fix on some of that with the Fireman Forest Reporting Bills which give us some information about development in those zones. But it's always been a tragedy to me that we have all of the information residing a bunch of city halls and county courthouses on building permits, land use permits and so forth and that's exactly where it's remained, is sitting in those local buildings and never has been analyzed or assessed at the state level.

INTERVIEWER: Should that have been done by our agency or by an academic institution or some other vehicle?

MITCH ROHSE: Well --

INTERVIEWER: Or maybe a combination of all three or more?

MITCH ROHSE: Again there are some political sensibilities here.

INTERVIEWER: Obviously, yeah.

MITCH ROHSE: I mean from my own perspective, having been a DLCD employee for a couple of decades, I would say here --

INTERVIEWER: Yes.

MITCH ROHSE: -- would be the logical place. Have a research arm here that collects the data. Perhaps it's only a couple or three staff, but they collect the data annually, look at it, and establish what the basic patterns are that we want to be observing and analyzing and then distribute that widely. But I know again, there was a lot of concern about the state of meddling too much in local government affairs. There was a political concern about LCDC gathering too much

information and about cities and counties being burdened with the task of reporting it, though I think it would have been a small task, and so it wasn't done. But considering that we have what at one time was the most perhaps highly doubted Statewide Planning Program in the country, we certainly have a paucity of information on exactly what its effects were on the land.

INTERVIEWER: Did our universities ever clamor for that information from us? I don't recall that explicitly.

MITCH ROHSE: I don't recall that they ever did. And I used to -- because I had been the agency's communication manager for gosh I forget, 12 or 14 years --

INTERVIEWER: Geez.

MITCH ROHSE: -- I was often out in public and dealing with public questions about the program and one of the things I ran into frequently was the notion that cities are marching across the landscape and that we need to be really concerned about cities grabbing land and that that was where the biggest impact on our farm and forestland was and it was much harder to convince people that the bigger threat in my mind is that there are a lot of dwellings being built on farmland or forestland -- I mean, this is before the Statewide Planning Program, that are in no way connected with the city and that the -- but they have a huge impact on resource management. But it's much harder to see and so there are still people I think to this day that I think that the city's expansions are the key source of losing farmland. We had some facts on that. I could have said, well last year, cities all across the state annexed 100,000 acres. There were 300,000 acres that were taken out of production because of non-farm dwellings and non-forest dwellings and other forms of development and farm zones. I couldn't say that. I never had the information.

INTERVIEWER: Uh-huh. It raises a whole bunch of issues about (talking over) --

MITCH ROHSE: Yes, indeed.

INTERVIEWER: -- built and committed and reasons, exceptions, and you remember a lot of these issues we used to go around and around about and, you know, the whole idea of evaluation.

MITCH ROHSE: Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: In essence, you're really getting at is you want to put one word on an evaluation and assessment. Not necessarily drawing overly sharp conclusions, but at least, here's the information, and we could have used it maybe ourselves --

MITCH ROHSE: Sure.

INTERVIEWER: -- in looking at regions. Now I don't know whether our administrative rules and we have a whole thick wad of them now --

MITCH ROHSE: Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: -- after all these years, whether there's gems in there that can be used to rely on to bring things out. Now maybe that's possible and we can get into periodic review in a moment if you want to, but that's a whole other discussion of where we should be getting a lot more than we are I think, and we have, I guess, small communities that are either exempt --

MITCH ROHSE: Uh-huh.

INTERVIEWER: -- or at least in a temporal sense, they're not required all the time to do it --

MITCH ROHSE: Right.

INTERVIEWER: -- but we've written them up once in a while, well gee whiz, there's a lot of things we can talk about. Your next interview maybe we'll --

MITCH ROHSE: Yeah. Well I remember what I regard as a very telling incident where I appeared on a television show with Bill Blosser who was chair of the commission, Martha, help me with the name --

INTERVIEWER: Pagel.

MITCH ROHSE: Pagel, who was the governor's advisor on natural resources at the time and myself and then Robert Liberty from 1000 Friends and a bunch of other stake holders in the program. I think the program was called Town Hall --

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

MITCH ROHSE: -- and we had a one hour discussion , a kind of no holds barred questioning, and of course directed by a moderator. And there was a representative from Central Oregon by the name of Wes Cooley --

INTERVIEWER: Uh-huh.

MITCH ROHSE: -- who was sitting directly behind me and he was railing against the Statewide Planning Program, and he said, well I'm from Central Oregon and you can't even get a building permit for a home in rural Oregon and that's just wrong. And I really struggled, I'm afraid I chickened out at the time, because when you are --

INTERVIEWER: On t.v.

MITCH ROHSE: -- a representative of a state agency, it's usually not considered wise to take on a state legislator in a public forum, but I had recently done some research on building permits and the plain fact of the matter is that in most of the eastern Oregon counties there were more building permits being issued for areas outside of urban growth boundaries than there were building permits being issued for areas inside urban growth boundaries. But that was just one of

those situations where a little more factual information that's widely disseminating could have been useful.

INTERVIEWER: We should talk about OPI at some point too, but we'll move on to question six I think.

MITCH ROHSE: Ah, yes, yes.

INTERVIEWER: Goal One is considered by many as critical to the development and implementation of the Statewide Planning Program. Is Goal One still relevant today? Why or why not? There's a lot here I realize.

MITCH ROHSE: Yeah. I'll try to be a little briefer than I have been on some of my answers. It'll be hard though, because for at least 10 or 12 years I was the agency specialist on citizen involvement. To back up a little bit, the agency staff tended to specialize in a few goals and because I was the communication's manager --

INTERVIEWER: Right.

MITCH ROHSE: -- I tended to be considered the Citizen Involvement Specialist and I was also a long time staff for the Citizen Involvement Advisory Committee, which advised LCDC on matters pertaining to citizen involvement. So I have an opinion, naturally.

INTERVIEWER: I'm not surprised.

MITCH ROHSE: Yes. And I -- and clearly Goal One is relevant. You cannot have an effective statewide program of any kind if you don't have some citizen outreach and some citizen involvement. So I would say Goal One is certainly still relevant. I don't think it's as effective as it should be today for several reasons. One is, I think that citizen involvement has never had the commitment of resources that it takes to run an effective citizen involvement program and that's true at the state level and I think it's true with most local governments. There's a widespread notion

in planning circles that the money and the resources should be devoted to research on land use say or to writing the zoning ordinance or things like that, understandably so. And there's very little acceptance of the idea that it takes a significant amount of money and time to run an effective citizen involvement program. And rarely did I see a strong enough commitment there to make a program really effective. And I'm talking here about the local level and state level. During the years that I was the Communication's Manager, there was never a line item in our budget for public outreach and communications. So I basically borrowed money where I could find it. And so yes, I think it -- Goal One is relevant. I think it's underserved. And the other thing is, I think we often pay a lot of lip service to Goal One and to citizen involvement, but when it comes right down to it, it's very inconvenient for the very people who are implementing the program and I've certainly run into this as a local planner many times. You know, the reaction is, oh my, we have to have a public hearing on that? You know. And so there's just kind of a natural reluctance if you will, to engage the public on matters that are controversial and where staff and local elected officials may get beaten up pretty badly.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think that we're now in the -- we have been some time in the computer age, that that whole subject in terms of outreach, and I don't know what the agency is doing now regarding that, but --

MITCH ROHSE: Yes, I've --

INTERVIEWER: And I --

MITCH ROHSE: I have lost touch on that too.

INTERVIEWER: I have lost touch, but it would seem to me that that's a much easier way to reach people that want to be reached.

MITCH ROHSE: Yes, yes.

INTERVIEWER: But -- and local governments can come together. Maybe we still have, you know, counsel to governments or cogs I guess we're --

MITCH ROHSE: Uh-huh.

INTERVIEWER: -- calling them and whether they have pooled resources to maybe help communities do a better job of that, I mean again, I'm speaking without any knowledge about what is going on in that respect.

MITCH ROHSE: Right.

INTERVIEWER: But --

MITCH ROHSE: Well there certainly are some communities that are doing I think a great job. But I think they're the exception to the rule.

INTERVIEWER: Right.

MITCH ROHSE: Some of the programs, we'll say the City of Corvallis, the City of Eugene are doing their -- they're far beyond anything that's required by Goal One. They're doing a good job because they think that job needs to be done.

INTERVIEWER: There's no such thing as the typical city in Oregon, is there?

MITCH ROHSE: No. No.

INTERVIEWER: I mean I -- the two that you named are fairly large obviously.

MITCH ROHSE: Yes, yes.

INTERVIEWER: And we have the typical small cities of a thousand or less and then those of us in the middle I guess.

MITCH ROHSE: Uh-huh.

INTERVIEWER: And I mean I -- there's so many ways to cut and slice and dice this issue, because counties and cities are supposed to have Citizen Involvement --

MITCH ROHSE: CCI's and --

INTERVIEWER: CCI. That's it, thank you.

MITCH ROHSE: Committee's for Citizen Involvement.

INTERVIEWER: And many of them use their planning commissions with our consent or our approval --

MITCH ROHSE: Uh-huh.

INTERVIEWER: -- because they just couldn't generate and didn't want to support or a combination of reasons an independent CCI from their standing one as a planning commission.

MITCH ROHSE: Well in many cases, they just didn't have the people.

INTERVIEWER: Right.

MITCH ROHSE: I mean you have a small community with maybe a population of 500 or a thousand people --

INTERVIEWER: Right.

MITCH ROHSE: -- and you have a City Council or a Board of Commissioners, a Planning Commission, maybe a separate CCI, a couple of school boards, a bunch of other citizen committees for other things and one of the complaints I frequently heard was, hey we'd love to have an independent CCI. We can't even get people to run for the -- or to serve on the Planning Commission, how are we going to have a separate CCI? And I think that gets back to the question of resources. As I see it, we have sort of a two tier planning system in this state for a multitude of reasons, but one of them is simply the availability of resources. You have cities like Eugene and Corvallis and Lake Oswego and a lot of the metro area cities that have big planning staffs, great citizen involvement programs and they're able to really make that stuff work. Then we have -- and I would say there are maybe 20% of the cities in Oregon are in that state, in that happy state. And

out of the two hundred and what is it, forty cities in Oregon -- so let's say 40 out of the 240 cities in Oregon are -- have the resources to do effective citizen involvement. You've got another 200 cities, the great balance of them, that are not doing an adequate job and perhaps they can't do an adequate job of citizen involvement.

INTERVIEWER: And of course, what is their charge? I mean that's --

MITCH ROHSE: Uh-huh.

INTERVIEWER: Back when we were putting -- not we, but the local governments are putting their plans together and involvement was a fairly important requirement --

MITCH ROHSE: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: -- but also a need. And now we're decades past that time and you might get people who are interested, but what's our assignment?

MITCH ROHSE: Well and I'd raise that's an interesting issue, because some people will argue quite strongly that there isn't much need for citizen involvement now, because the planning is done. So the plans are all in place, they've all been acknowledged, so --

INTERVIEWER: Right.

MITCH ROHSE: -- let's get on with the business of planning and quit going to public hearings and meetings. And in fact, I think that sentiment is widely spread among local planners. You know, the unfortunate aspect of that is that it's -- it can be sort of self-fulfilling and it's a downward spiral, because in my estimation, to the extent that planning becomes kind of a number's game, executed by technical people behind officer doors, without citizen involvement, you're inevitably headed for a program that either doesn't produce very good local plans or doesn't survive politically. And related to that is there -- there's this continuing emphasis over and over and over in legislature by special interest groups on permanent streamlining and the need to be efficient in

administering permits and reviewing plans and that sort of thing. And what that means in many cases, is less citizen involvement. And there are many people that argue for clear and objective standards with regard to most forms of planning, most questions of planning, and on its surface, clear and objective sounds wonderful and very efficient. But if you dig beneath that a little bit, what you find is, that it's a way of saving the planning for the professional planners and not involving any citizen interest groups or any interested individuals. So --

INTERVIEWER: Uh-huh. Lots of issues there. Number seven focuses on policy subjects --

MITCH ROHSE: Uh-huh.

INTERVIEWER: -- the missing or overlooked that we failed to incorporate in the goals and that's a broad topic, right, in and of itself, and of course, then and now --

MITCH ROHSE: Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: -- and what lies ahead. You know, we talked a little bit about climate change. Obviously another whole subject is the question of natural hazards.

MITCH ROHSE: Yes, yes.

INTERVIEWER: It could be seismic and what we will expect local plans to go about that, is that our task or is that the geology agency's task, is it the state government's responsibility, etcetera. I mean there is lots of questions there. I'm just wondering if anything, and we don't have a lot of time today obviously, stick out in your mind that maybe we should have done more at that time, or is there more that we should --

MITCH ROHSE: Well --

INTERVIEWER: -- now in terms of, and I use the word I guess policies and that's a, that's a funny term. Do you mean regulations? Do you mean good ideas, do you mean suggestions?

MITCH ROHSE: Yes, right. Well --

INTERVIEWER: Agreements between entities and so forth.

MITCH ROHSE: Certainly, certainly climate change is a big one and I think the consensus there would probably be that when the Statewide Planning Goals were originally written, it wasn't understood to be an issue, so it wasn't addressed.

INTERVIEWER: Right.

MITCH ROHSE: At some point it is going to need to be addressed to more than it is today. Now whether that means through another Statewide Planning Goal or through the framework that we already have, I really don't know. But clearly it's going to be a bigger and a bigger --

INTERVIEWER: Like carbon --

MITCH ROHSE: -- elephant in the living room.

INTERVIEWER: -- discharges into the, you know, into the air.

MITCH ROHSE: Yes, yes.

INTERVIEWER: Is that a state level responsibility only or should we delegate that down in some ways --

MITCH ROHSE: Yes, it is.

INTERVIEWER: -- to cities and counties. And again, now we're back to the old question of, we can't even spell the word energy or climate change in terms of -- and I'm not trying to belittle people, I'm just saying there's a lot of day to day things on their plates --

MITCH ROHSE: Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: -- and to come in with a fairly, you know, intellectualized assignments. You know, what do you need and how do you --

MITCH ROHSE: Well I think it's going to be very difficult to use local planning as the top priority in dealing with that, because I think, I simply think local planning is a broad enough tool to deal with that. I think local planning will have to be part of a multifaceted process in dealing with that. So, you know, if the question is, is this a federal, a state or a local problem, the answer is, yes, it's all of the above. The local component of it I think will be relatively smaller than the state or federal component, but they'll all be significant and when of my contracts in the last few years when I was consulting was writing the book, "Cool Planning" which was about what cities and counties could be doing to deal with global warming issues and there are some things they could be doing, but in and of itself, that's not going to keep the planet from --

INTERVIEWER: Are you familiar with any, either work that you did as a consultant or others about citing solar rays or windfarms in farm zones or forest zones?

MITCH ROHSE: I didn't do any work in that area.

INTERVIEWER: And I'm just wondering --

MITCH ROHSE: I know very little about it.

INTERVIEWER: -- whether our own rules here, and I'm sort of going outside the discussion --

MITCH ROHSE: Good question.

INTERVIEWER: -- today, but --

MITCH ROHSE: Good question.

INTERVIEWER: -- should that be something that should be required to be done with local review? I wouldn't think so, but--

MITCH ROHSE: Super siding of --

INTERVIEWER: It gets tricky real fast.

MITCH ROHSE: Oh, you bet it does.

INTERVIEWER: And not only --

MITCH ROHSE: Yes, indeed.

INTERVIEWER: -- technically, but also politically.

MITCH ROHSE: Uh-huh, yeah.

INTERVIEWER: And some farmers might say, we don't want those so and so things out here because of whatever, you know, and --

MITCH ROHSE: Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: Of course another --

MITCH ROHSE: Well, and there's --

INTERVIEWER: -- big issue is water. We haven't even talked about the water yet.

But that's --

MITCH ROHSE: -- the well water and --

INTERVIEWER: Yes, yes.

MITCH ROHSE: The other thing too is the hazards --

INTERVIEWER: Right.

MITCH ROHSE: -- aspect of it.

INTERVIEWER: Right.

MITCH ROHSE: You can do your best to prevent climate change and global warming, but then at some point, assuming that it continues on its current trajectory, we also have to start dealing with how we respond to the issues that are created, not the obvious. A target there for an Oregon planner is Goal Seven, what can we do with goal seven, and the key language there that I don't think has been implemented very well, at least in some jurisdictions is, you know, providing appropriate safeguards against hazards like costal erosion and landslides. More definitely is going to be done there. Let me jump away from that, because I think that's a very obvious one that almost everyone would agree on. There is one area that I think is little understood or seen in the planning program and I think is a big issue and I call it the big disconnect, and it has to do with Goal 14. Right at the moment I think Oregon's -- one of the most critical problems in Oregon's Planning Program is that we have two sets of policies that are diametrically opposed. On one hand we have Goal 14, which says cities shall create urban growth boundaries and we shall direct our urban growth and expansions into these urban growth areas and that's where the future housing and the industry and the commerce will be located and we'll protect our rural resources, farmland, forestland, and the coastland. You know, great, grand idea. In almost direct opposition to that, we have a set of annexation laws that date back to gosh probably the early 1900's, long before there was a Statewide Planning Program and they have been designed apparently, maybe unintentionally, to thwart city annexation and there also is a very active political group in Oregon communities for a voice in annexation, so it's been quite effective in the legislature in convincing people that cities are essentially bad and that if a city wants to annex land, say out here in hazeville in Salem, in an area that's outside city limits, inside the urban growth boundary, that when the city wants to do that, it's a bad thing. So on the one hand, Salem has policies in Goal 14 related areas, saying that's where you should grow. We have a set of annexation laws saying, we're going to make it as hard

for you to grow there as we possibly can and having been the interim Planning Director for the City of Salem for six months, back in, I guess it was 2005, I ran into this issue in spades and it's very frustrating, because a lot of the people who are making -- who want to make it difficult for cities to expand, are very supportive of the Statewide Planning Program and they're just suspicious of urban growth generally, and my concern about that is that if we don't allow for urban growth or growth somewhere, it's going to bubble up in farm and forestlands or it's going to drive up the cost of things like urban housing and those costs are a very real problem, particularly in our metropolitan areas.

INTERVIEWER: Yes, yes.

MITCH ROHSE: So that, if I could make a plea with the legislature, it would be quit making it difficult to annex land, when we're telling cities that they should be able to do that, as long as it's inside the Urban Growth Boundary. And the big (unintelligible) cry has been -- part of the reason for this is political and it's seen as a usurpation of the rights of the people who are just outside city limits and inside the Urban Growth Boundary. That the big bad city with thousands of votes will be able to override what those people with a few hundred votes can do. And my reaction to that is, we had a planning process, a lot of citizen involvement that established, where the city was going to grow and so forth and so on, where we did extend the sewers and water and so forth and now to argue that they shouldn't be able to annex because of that political concern, really overlooks the fact that the question has already been asked and answered.

INTERVIEWER: I see a guest opinion in the paper coming from you soon, huh?

MITCH ROHSE: Yes, yes.

INTERVIEWER: But you know I --

MITCH ROHSE: Any day now.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah. The question that begs itself I guess is, what's the forum for that? You say the legislature. This is jumping ahead a little bit, but our legislature now, in my opinion, probably would not approve Senate Bill 100 today. I could be wrong on that and I would hope I'm wrong, but let's put it this way, there's a lot of factualism, there's a lot of lack of coming together and Senate Bill 100 was passed by, in the end, by fairly strong majorities in both houses.

MITCH ROHSE: Yes, yes.

INTERVIEWER: But today I'm very skeptical of whether that would --

MITCH ROHSE: Well I think that's one of your --

INTERVIEWER: Yeah, it's near the end.

MITCH ROHSE: -- questions coming up and I, I guess we could tackle that right now.

I think my short answer is, probably not.

INTERVIEWER: Pass.

MITCH ROHSE: Probably would not be -- the current legislature and political system would not enable a Senate Bill 100 to be passed. And part of that is just this horrible contentiousness and bickering that has manifested itself most notably at the level of congress, but extends in the local politics and state politics too. It took a certain element of trust and compromise and willingness to work across the aisle to get Senate Bill 100 passed and I don't see much of that today. I think the other political factor that enters into this, is the horrible tendency that we have and which seems to be exacerbating itself, is to privatize gain and socialize loss and what I mean by that is the idea of compensation. You know, if we're going to impose any kind of additional regulation on anybody, then somehow we have to pay them to comply with the law. Well, if you want to have strong planning laws or any kind of law, then the first step is to decide how much you're going to have to pay people to adhere to the law. That's a pretty big barrier to ever

implementing a new law and we saw that with Measure 37 and subsequently Measure 49 and I'll give you a good example from my own backyard literally. I live near the west city limits of Salem, and just to the south of me about 100 feet away is the city limits line and the Urban Growth Boundary line, they are congruent there and beyond that is a 150 acre farm. It used to be a Christmas tree farm until very recently. The owner of that decided -- well, the farmer who leases the land and manages it, decided recently they wanted to get out of the Christmas tree business, so he came in with an excavator and knocked down all of the Christmas trees. Somewhere between 100,000 and 200,000 of them --

INTERVIEWER: Geez.

MITCH ROHSE: -- stacked them in big piles and planted wheat. And they did a burn one day a few months ago, waited until the wind was from the southwest from some strange reason and just inundated the area with smoke, and really dense acrid smoke for the whole day and I think they got some complaints and they backed away from it, so now they're going to wait until September, until the Christmas trees have dried and will burn better.

INTERVIEWER: Yes.

MITCH ROHSE: Okay, point being, the farmer burns the trees because that's cheap. That's the cheapest way to get rid of the trees. The community, Salem, us, the neighbors, we bear the cost of that in terms of the smoke. It could be a very real health hazard for some people, and there are no laws prohibiting that now. If the legislature were to pass a law that says burning of agricultural waste other than grass is now prohibited, uh, there would immediately be a cry from the farmers for compensation for the loss of that, you know, cost effective agricultural. And if that type of compensation were to be required, the law will never pass.

INTERVIEWER: Right, right. So, the whole issue of balance again.

MITCH ROHSE: Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: Really, and --

MITCH ROHSE: Well, and I think -- I think the idea of compensation has definitely taken hold. I think it's a widely spread notion that that's the fair thing to do and that's going to become a widely spread notion of fairness then. I think the ability to pass any kind of new legislation in almost area of public concern is greatly limited and --

INTERVIEWER: Question nine talks about state interest versus local interest. We sort of talked a lot about that this morning. Do those terms have any relevancy anymore? We see where state interests are very, very pronounced and often, you know, significant, but also there's a push back too and I'm --

MITCH ROHSE: Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: -- wondering whether that whole, what's the word I'm looking? Not dichotomy, but that relationship between those two terms has any bearing in --

MITCH ROHSE: Uh-huh.

INTERVIEWER: -- in our world, land use world, in terms of -- and maybe it's more of an intellectual exercise in planning courses and stuff, but out in the real world, you don't really hear that very much.

MITCH ROHSE: Well my sketchy notes here in response to that question, start by saying the legislature's enactment of this be one hundred and so forth. They established an appropriate balance, but they haven't maintained it and I think it's precisely because of that push-back that you're talking about and I'll give you some examples. There were numerous bills for example to exempt, oh anywhere from six to eight or ten rural counties, the so called pioneer counties from SB 100 on the grounds that they, you know, that the -- implementing -- that the

Statewide Planning Program was too burdensome and it was a case of the state's interest being forced upon the local governments and because of that type of pushback, we have a system today that exempts counties from many of the Statewide Planning Goals and when I say it exempts, it doesn't mean they can repeal their farm and forest legislation, but it means they don't have to do any further planning in the --

INTERVIEWER: Right.

MITCH ROHSE: -- any area, particularly with say Goal Five and that's one case where the pushback has weakened the program and definitely swung the balance more toward local governments. Another case in point, periodic review. One of the saddest days in the program in my estimation, was in the late 90's, when the legislature passed a number of laws, essentially exempting smaller governments from periodic review and the sad part about that is that we put such an enormous amount of -- we, including those local governments, put an enormous amount of energy and resources and time and political capital and money into building these comprehensive local plans and without periodic review, they sit there on a shelf and they go stale and eventually become pretty much meaningless. And --

INTERVIEWER: And the data becomes way out of --

MITCH ROHSE: Oh, yeah. Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah, right.

MITCH ROHSE: And I got into this very much when I was -- when I started doing consulting in 2000, because I'd go to local, particularly small towns where I would find that they wanted to maybe update their plan or they had a -- in one case they had a proposal for a big rezoning, to allow a Costco to come into the town and I'd find that here it was the year 2000 or 2001 or '02 or '03 and the plan would be based on 1960's population data, 1960 census, you know,

or '70's census and I'd look in vain for policies or information in the plan about some of the contemporary issues and it simply wasn't there. And by exempting those jurisdictions from periodic review, the plans really have lost much of their force and effect. One of the more amusing moments I had with that, was when I went to a small city and I was given a contract of a few thousand dollars to update their plan. It was a grant from DLCD to the city to update their plan and they hire me, and I went to the city manager there and worked with him and to do this and I discovered that they -- that the plan was not in digital format. It was an old plan that had been adopted in the 70's I think and they didn't have it on disk or on a computer or anything, it was all just on paper. And since I had to revise or propose revisions to a number of sections in the plan, I took it upon myself, outside of the terms of the grant, to key in the whole thing. Rewrite -- I mean type out the whole plan as it existed, plus my whole reforms, to make one comprehensive document that was in digital form. And I patted myself on the back after being such a generous fellow and handed them that draft, with the passages where I had proposed changes --

INTERVIEWER: Right.

MITCH ROHSE: -- and marked and gave it to the city manager and he complained to the field representative and to DLCD that I was trying to jam a bunch of stuff down their throat that the city just couldn't live with. And he said we can't do this stuff. And I had to inform them that the part you're talking about is your adoptive comprehensive plan. It's your acknowledged plan. It's what you've had on the books for the last 28 years.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah, but that raises the whole issue about local officials not keeping up to what their documents say and we have new people come into office and they --

MITCH ROHSE: Sure.

INTERVIEWER: -- don't know and no one's told them.

MITCH ROHSE: Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: So --

MITCH ROHSE: And if you don't have periodic review and you don't have some way of kind of drawing their attention to it periodically, that it's not going to be used in many cases.

INTERVIEWER: That gets back to the whole thing about educating local officials about --

MITCH ROHSE: Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: -- what this is all about and why it's necessary. It's not just an empty exercise --

MITCH ROHSE: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: -- frankly, and that's --

MITCH ROHSE: Well I think DLCD puts an effort into and money into developing an online training program for planning commissioners.

INTERVIEWER: Good.

MITCH ROHSE: And I've lost sight of it. I don't know how that fared or if indeed it was ever brought to fruition, but it was certainly an effort that I applauded and the idea was each city and county could enroll their planning commissioners online through this course and for no charge, and then as each commissioner completed the course at his or her own pace, they would become certified as, you know, certified local planning officials and that would help them with various approval processes and DLCD's program and maybe help them get further grants and I don't know how that fared.

INTERVIEWER: I don't know. So that's -- well we're almost out of time here. Are there some other things you'd like to cover that we haven't really talked about? You can see the

questions and you've already made tons of notes, so don't lose that, you'll have to maybe turn that into the archive people, but somethings that maybe we should focus on a little bit?

MITCH ROHSE: Well just one note on question 12 where you ask about the things, convergents of factors in 1973. In fact, I certainly think those four factors that you've mentioned, vision, leadership, federal money and luck were critical factors. The other thing I would add and I think maybe you were kind of getting here, the writer of the questions was getting at this with the phrase federal money, I would add federal legislation. In the '70's, the Coastal Zone Management Act, the Clean Water Act, you know, the Environmental Policy Act, the Endangered Species Act, all of those national pieces of legislation came together to cause, I think, a tremendous ground swell of planning and land use and resource management types of programs to be implemented at the state level, and I think it really helped Oregon's Statewide Planning Program get off the ground, particularly the Coastal Zone Management Program and funding, so that was a critical factor.

INTERVIEWER: You own property on the coast and we have an adopted Coastal Zone Management Program and the coastal goals I think are drafted in such a way is much more specific and detailed than --

MITCH ROHSE: Oh yes.

INTERVIEWER: -- Measure 15 or the 14 --

MITCH ROHSE: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: And are there some things that we should learn there in terms of one, do they have application, not in and of a geographic sense, but in terms of format or approach for the rest of the state? I don't know, maybe not, but -- and then implementation, you know, are there some lessons that can be learned and applied from the coast elsewhere?

MITCH ROHSE: Uh-huh.

INTERVIEWER: And I would think the answer is probably yes and should be yes, but I don't know whether -- what's your thought of --

MITCH ROHSE: Well, I think the answer is yes and quite frankly, the federal government had the political clout and the money --

INTERVIEWER: Right.

MITCH ROHSE: -- and the expertise to write some very detailed standards for implementing the Coastal Zone Management Act --

INTERVIEWER: Right.

MITCH ROHSE: -- and that's reflected in our coastal goals.

INTERVIEWER: Right.

MITCH ROHSE: I think the Oregon goals, if you will, Goals One through Fifteen were written much more broadly, because the state didn't have the political power or the expertise to write detailed goals, specified, you know, that used numbers for setbacks and things like that, that level of specificity. The one exception to that area is probably the biggest success story, which is Goal Three, protection of farm lane.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

MITCH ROHSE: We already had some statutes and we got more statutes and there's probably more --

INTERVIEWER: And taxation laws too, --

MITCH ROHSE: -- detail.

INTERVIEWER: -- by the way.

MITCH ROHSE: Huh?

INTERVIEWER: And a few zoning.

MITCH ROHSE: I'm sorry?

INTERVIEWER: (unintelligible)

MITCH ROHSE: Yeah, yeah.

INTERVIEWER: Another huge step I think in building Goal Three.

MITCH ROHSE: I remember when Governor Atiyeh came to DLCDC's offices in 1982 and sort of chastised us for being nitpickers.

INTERVIEWER: Pickers, yeah.

MITCH ROHSE: And I realized that that was political theater at the time and I certainly don't begrudge the Governor, the statement was probably something he had to do, but I remember thinking at the time, I wish I had had the time and the intestinal fortitude perhaps, to say Governor, you know what the most successful goal we have is, it's Goal Three and it's the most specific goal and it lays out in great detail what's required of the local governments.

INTERVIEWER: And the rules that go with the goal.

MITCH ROHSE: Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah, right.

MITCH ROHSE: Yeah, and we have very little latitude as staff to do anything there. We have to imply the law as it's written. Now, what's the least effective goal? Goal 13, written in very broad language, gives staff tremendous power if we want to nitpick and I think the phrasing in the goal is something about energy conservation to the maximum extent possible or practicable.

INTERVIEWER: Practicable.

MITCH ROHSE: Practicable.

INTERVIEWER: That funny word.

MITCH ROHSE: And I mean if you want a goal that would enable staff to nitpick and be a well, kind of planning police, boy there was a goal that was ready made for it. Have we ever had any controversy where appeals or anything else would ever set back a city or county's plan because it didn't comply with Goal 13? Nah --

INTERVIEWER: Of course not, no.

MITCH ROHSE: -- because we knew we couldn't do it. You know, we didn't want to do it. Have we ever had anything send back for Goal Three? Well --

INTERVIEWER: Who hasn't been sent back.

MITCH ROHSE: Yeah. Appeals and, you know, two, three, four acknowledgement reviews and so on. So --

INTERVIEWER: Let me ask, because we have about five minutes left.

MITCH ROHSE: Okay.

INTERVIEWER: Two questions. One, take a couple minutes and think ahead about the program and the challenges it faces and you know, I'm not saying we're going to solve those or numerate them in any great detail. And the other one is, any thoughts about the oral history project and how we should use the information that we're collecting. Not in any -- it's not an orchestrated effort. It's we're talking to a range of people, staff, as well as others on the outside and I'm just wondering, are there some thoughts -- and maybe we could talk later, you and I, about somehow going through when they're all nicely reviewed and so forth, but they'll be some themes and issues that maybe will surface in some of those interviews that might have some bearing on our future.

MITCH ROHSE: Uh-huh.

INTERVIEWER: It's a lot in three minutes.

MITCH ROHSE: Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: We're not going to make it now.

MITCH ROHSE: With regard to the first question about the future of the program, I --

INTERVIEWER: And I gave you that list of the ten challenges.

MITCH ROHSE: Yeah, yeah.

INTERVIEWER: It was a rough beginning.

MITCH ROHSE: I think the program has declined somewhat in its effectiveness over the years --

INTERVIEWER: Declined.

MITCH ROHSE: -- and there may be a good reason for that. Maybe the initial push to get farmland protected and forestland protected. And we got local comprehensive --

INTERVIEWER: We're done.

MITCH ROHSE: -- plans adopted and all of that. Maybe that was a time for great energy and expenditure and political capital and so forth and the big push and maybe it is time to coast along a little bit. My fear is that it is coasting along a little bit too much and I would almost describe it as moribund with a few exceptions and I would like to see a little more energy injected to back into it.

INTERVIEWER: Where would you point the finger to get that rectified?

MITCH ROHSE: Counties.

INTERVIEWER: Counties? I mean --

MITCH ROHSE: Rural issues. Goal Five.

INTERVIEWER: -- we should do more?

MITCH ROHSE: Natural habits.

INTERVIEWER: We should expect more from them --

MITCH ROHSE: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: -- on those things, and so they're going to say, give us some money and give us the training or you know, information and show me where it's written down that we have to do this.

MITCH ROHSE: Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: Those three things I think are the -- no surprise there. But --

MITCH ROHSE: Yeah. And some of the issues, the changing issues that we talked about, particularly climate change and perhaps a big increase in migration, those could very well rekindle some interest and expand the scope of the Planning Program, and if that happens, fine. I think it's a very salutary effect. Others would disagree, but I've heard people refer to the early days of the Planning Program a sort of Camelot for planners and there's some truth to that I think. It was a pretty heady time. We had a --

INTERVIEWER: It was post goal, or SB 10 too I think.

MITCH ROHSE: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: It was a view that, you know, SB 10 was not well written or thought through. It did get things going --

MITCH ROHSE: Yeah, yeah.

INTERVIEWER: -- but should there be a subsequent Senate Bill 100? No, I don't think so. But should there be some thinking about the law itself and you've got to be careful walking on those grounds, but --

MITCH ROHSE: Well, witness --

INTERVIEWER: You know, that's --

MITCH ROHSE: -- the big look.

INTERVIEWER: The big look, that's right. Right. That's right.

MITCH ROHSE: Which turned out to be kind of a small glimpse.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah, yeah, but you know, get some people. Let's get around the table and think about some of these things and what --

MITCH ROHSE: Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: -- form would that take or be and these are things that we're not going to, you know, answer --

MITCH ROHSE: Well, in the '70's I think it was federal legislation too that prompted --

INTERVIEWER: Right.

MITCH ROHSE: -- a lot of that exploration and I think maybe in the 2000's, 2020 or whatever, it may be external forces again. Perhaps things like drought and climate change that will do that.

INTERVIEWER: But how do we gain consensus? That's the thing.

MITCH ROHSE: Well, we never had consensus before.

INTERVIEWER: We didn't before. These are tough questions.

MITCH ROHSE: Oh, yes, yes indeed.

INTERVIEWER: And our generation, as you can hear this morning in fact, about some of our other colleagues or soon to be, not on the shelf, but you know, out of the organization and --

MITCH ROHSE: Uh-huh.

INTERVIEWER: -- what's the future --

MITCH ROHSE: Well I think overall there's the -- across the nation, not just in Oregon, there has become among a lot of people, a sort of great questioning and reservation about whether government has a role in these things or at least --

INTERVIEWER: You can hear that tonight on television --

MITCH ROHSE: -- the extent.

INTERVIEWER: -- at six o'clock.

MITCH ROHSE: Yeah, really.

INTERVIEWER: I'm sorry to inject that note of whatever that's called, but --

MITCH ROHSE: Oh, it's a -- you know, it's just a disenchantment with government and I understand to some extent, I lived through the Nixon years too and I got sent to Vietnam against my will, in an unjust war. So Government definitely makes mistakes, but my question for the skeptics is if it's not government that we're going to use to deal with climate change or drought or the spread of wild fire or whatever, you know, what's plan B, what's the alternative? And I guess if you want to get into the discussion of the market taking care of all of those things, I'll be happy to bend your ear for a half an hour on that.

INTERVIEWER: That's your next interview my friend.

MITCH ROHSE: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: Thank you so much for your time and your ideas and --

MITCH ROHSE: Thank you, Jim.

INTERVIEWER: -- planting a lot of seeds about further discussions and --

MITCH ROHSE: Well I appreciate the --

INTERVIEWER: -- we may want to get together with --

MITCH ROHSE: -- opportunity.

INTERVIEWER: -- some others and just sort of have a quiet off the record round table and kick some things around.

MITCH ROHSE: And that would be --

INTERVIEWER: I don't think we're doing that much anymore.

MITCH ROHSE: -- fine. Yes, I think that would be very helpful.

INTERVIEWER: OPI is no longer happening.

MITCH ROHSE: I don't know.

INTERVIEWER: I think we can say that the interview is closed.

MITCH ROHSE: Okay.