

Note: This transcript was edited for accuracy, clarity, and legibility by Jim Knight and Kevin Pozzi in August of 2015.

Note: Jim Ross, while active for decades in Oregon land use issues, faces health challenges that make recall of these memories difficult. Please read with this consideration in mind.

Jim Ross Interview
Monday 6/15/15

INTERVIEWER: Greetings. 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 Monday, June 15, 2015. It's my good fortune to speak with Jim Ross, who has agreed to be interviewed as part of Portland State University's Oral History Project of Oregon's statewide land use planning program. Among his various career positions, Jim is a former director of DLCD. Today's interview is taking place in Jim's home in Bend, 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 Jim and the many other Oregonians whose vision, leadership and involvement did so much to make the enactment and implementation of Senate Bill 100 possible.

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's land use planning;

- Identify further and understand the views, opinions and interests of the many organizations, agencies, officials and citizens who actively participated in the drafting, adoption

and implementation of Oregon land use statutes, statewide planning goals and administrative rules;

-Make available historical records and materials of specific interests to various local, state, and federal agencies, tribal governments, public and private interest groups, and organizations, academic institutions, and the general public;

-And enable the comparison of the current state of Oregon's land use program with the views, opinions and recollections of various participants regarding their visions and their intentions behind the passage of Senate Bill 100 and its implementation.

Third, we interviewers and the individual being interviewed (referred to as narrators) in this first group and those in the months ahead are the project's most visible participants. However, much is owed to those behind the scene and PSU's College of Urban and Public Affairs working in collaborations with LCDC and DLCD, overseeing the project's many details of organization, management and funding. Four, who deserve our special thanks, are 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 Senate Bill 100 and the start of Oregon's land use planning program. I was asked, along with others, to offer some remarks to commemorate this brief historical occasion.

No, don't worry, I'm not going to delay getting to today's interview by repeating my May 13, 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, here are 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 a 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 the environment. We are talking about balance. In short, we are talking about the people and the land.

And the other quote is from the person I feel is the land use program's true patriarch. This of course is Hector MacPherson. Here are his inspiring words expressed in 1992 about the birth of the land use program and its importance for Oregon's future.

No, I did not know what I was creating. I think the most memorable thing is that we were here, 20 years later, after the enactment of Senate Bill 100, in 1973, and that has been through -- and has been enough of a success to last at least this long. I knew that land use was a tremendously divisive 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 really is still here and that it's gotten some national recognition, and it's 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.

Jim, you have those questions right here in front of you, so you can follow along. *Question number one*, why don't we begin by having you give us a brief personal background of you and your family's arrival, settlement and life in Oregon.

INTERVIEWER: Here's the question right here. We're not looking for a long answer, just a brief summary.

JIM ROSS: Well, my great grandfather came to the Oregon coast in 1850. And the donation land claim that he settled on is still in the family.

INTERVIEWER: What else can you tell us about your family since then? Your parents and grandparents and so forth? Where you were born and raised?

JIM ROSS: I was born Marshfield, Oregon.

INTERVIEWER: Where is that near?

JIM ROSS: That's the present day Coos Bay.

INTERVIEWER: OK.

INTERVIEWER: What was the family business?

JIM ROSS: The family business varied. In 1851 they went from what's now Coos Bay to Roseburg, by going up the...

INTERVIEWER: Umpqua?

JIM ROSS: Going up the...

INTERVIEWER: Coos River?

JIM ROSS: No. They went up the north spit, that's where the Coos River empties into the ocean, and they went as to what's now Reedsport and they headed inland and followed the Umpqua River to Roseburg where they bought 50 cows and they drove them back to Coos Bay to the Ross Dairy Farm.

INTERVIEWER: Your father, what did he do?

JIM ROSS: He was a dairy farmer.

INTERVIEWER: Also?

JIM ROSS: Yes. My father became allergic to cow hair in his older years and the boys had to take over.

INTERVIEWER: Were you one of the boys that had to take over?

JIM ROSS: I was one of the boys that he wanted to take it over. But I didn't want to milk cows the rest of my life. I milked my share, but I don't think Karen, my wife, wanted to be a dairy farmer's wife.

INTERVIEWER: Was that one of her conditions for marrying you?

JIM ROSS: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: How did Ross Inlet get named?

JIM ROSS: Well, that's...

INTERVIEWER: Another story, huh? (Chuckling)

JIM ROSS: Yes. There was a lot of land in my family.

INTERVIEWER: OK. Why don't we move on to Question number two. OK. Next, take a few minutes to recount your overall personal, professional and/or voluntary experience and relationship with Oregon's statewide land use program? Here's the question right there. Just take a few minutes.

INTERVIEWER: After college you went into what? What was your first position?

JIM ROSS: My first position was in Curry County.

INTERVIEWER: Curry County?

JIM ROSS: As a county extension agent working for Oregon State University.

INTERVIEWER: OK. How long were you there, roughly?

JIM ROSS: I was there two years.

INTERVIEWER: Two years, and then?

JIM ROSS: Then I moved. Karen and I and our, uh just --

FEMALE VOICE: Six-week old child.

JIM ROSS: Just Karen -- Karen and I. Tim wasn't born yet.

FEMALE VOICE: Um hmm.

INTERVIEWER: So you went from the extension service to... what was your next step?

JIM ROSS: My next step was with the extension service in Salem.

INTERVIEWER: In Salem?

JIM ROSS: Yes. While there I became involved with a project that Oregon State University Extension Service started to help small towns and cities. And that was my first baptism into planning, because we would help small communities under 2,500 population.

INTERVIEWER: How long were you there in Salem with the Extension Service?

JIM ROSS: Well, let's see. I went to Salem in 1967.

INTERVIEWER: OK.

JIM ROSS: And the small towns and cities project ran for about three years.

INTERVIEWER: So, you're up to about 1970 now.

JIM ROSS: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: And then was OCC&DC next on your list?

JIM ROSS: No.

INTERVIEWER: No?

JIM ROSS: Next, I was hired by the Marion And Polk County Local Government Boundary Commission.

INTERVIEWER: That's right. I think I read that someplace.

JIM ROSS: And the purpose of the Boundary Commission was to provide oversight for...

INTERVIEWER: Special districts and cities, right, and so forth?

JIM ROSS: Cities and counties and special districts.

INTERVIEWER: So, dealing a lot with the boundary issues?

JIM ROSS: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: OK. And then after that, OCC&DC came after the boundary commission?

JIM ROSS: Yes. That was interesting. It was a case of being in the right place.

INTERVIEWER: The right place and what?

JIM ROSS: No, I better explain that.

INTERVIEWER: OK.

JIM ROSS: It was the State legislature in 19...?

INTERVIEWER: '71? '72?

JIM ROSS: Oh, it was '70 -- '72.

INTERVIEWER: OK.

JIM ROSS: The legislature created the Coastal commission.

INTERVIEWER: Coastal commission.

JIM ROSS: Coastal commission, which was made up of 30 members.

INTERVIEWER: That's crazy.

JIM ROSS: It was.

INTERVIEWER: We had seven members on LCDC as you know.

JIM ROSS: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: Thirty?

JIM ROSS: Thirty.

INTERVIEWER: And you were in charge of that?

JIM ROSS: Yes. And it was made up of eight port commissioners.

INTERVIEWER: Local governments, ports, other...

JIM ROSS: Cities.

INTERVIEWER: Cities. So, then there was the merger of the two organizations, DLCD and OCC&DC, right?

JIM ROSS: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: That was what, in 1973?

JIM ROSS: No. It was 1975.

INTERVIEWER: '75. OK.

JIM ROSS: I have to give you a little bit of background on the make-up of the OCC&DC commission, because there were eight port commissioners and eight city council members and eight county commissioners.

INTERVIEWER: That's 24.

JIM ROSS: And six governor's appointees.

INTERVIEWER: That's 30. Right.

JIM ROSS: Yes. And, I give you that background because it took a lot to work for those commission members.

INTERVIEWER: That was really your first getting involved with land use in a direct way, wasn't it? With the coastal commission? Would you say so?

JIM ROSS: Yes, you could say that.

INTERVIEWER: And then you came over to us, sort of speak, or we merged in 1975?

JIM ROSS: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: The legislature directed that to happen, right?

JIM ROSS: More than that. Yes, the legislature's charge was that the coastal commission was to draw up a natural resource management plan for the Oregon coast and we did. And we were to turn it in by the first of April.

INTERVIEWER: What year?

JIM ROSS: 1975.

INTERVIEWER: 1975?

JIM ROSS: 1975. And we did.

INTERVIEWER: OK. Well, that's -- that's a good beginning, I think. Why don't we move on to Question three. As Oregonians, I know we and our fellow citizens treasure our state's outstanding natural beauty, sites and resources that are not only beautiful, but also critical for our state's economy. 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 areas, sites, and resources in your view that the planning program has not done enough?

JIM ROSS: Well, I think that the program has done a lot to protect our natural resources.

INTERVIEWER: Which ones do you think in particular?

JIM ROSS: I think it also has not done as much as we had hoped.

INTERVIEWER: So, where are we -- where have we succeeded do you think, specifically?

JIM ROSS: I think we've succeeded -- I think we've done a remarkable job.

INTERVIEWER: In what? Where?

JIM ROSS: In protecting agriculture lands and...

INTERVIEWER: There you go. And what else?

JIM ROSS: And forest land.

INTERVIEWER: Forest land. Right.

JIM ROSS: And our estuaries.

INTERVIEWER: Are there some areas...?

JIM ROSS: And shore lands.

INTERVIEWER: Have we fallen down in some other areas, do you think, or not?

JIM ROSS: I think we have.

INTERVIEWER: Have we?

JIM ROSS: I think that the LCDC, with a lot of support from a number of other players, has done a remarkable job.

INTERVIEWER: Good. All right. Why don't we build on that and look at Question four. LCDC has adopted, as you know, 19 statewide planning goals. Which of these goals do you believe have been the most important for the accomplishments for the state land use program? Which of the goals do you feel has been the least important and why?

JIM ROSS: Hmm. Yes.

INTERVIEWER: I think you just mentioned two areas -- ag and forest.

JIM ROSS: Hmm.

INTERVIEWER: That would be what, Goal Three?

JIM ROSS: And Four.

INTERVIEWER: And Four. Are there some other goals that we haven't done very much with that you think we should be doing more? That's what the last part of this seeks to get at.

INTERVIEWER: And if you don't know or can't remember we can go on.

JIM ROSS: No, that's -- let's give this its due.

INTERVIEWER: OK. All right. Want to turn the page? Question five.

JIM ROSS: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: Senate Bill 100, passed in 1973, created a framework for land use planning in Oregon. In overseeing the land use program describe the steps and actions, with which you are familiar that LCDC and DLCD took to ensure that every city and county's comprehensive plan and implementing ordinances fully complied with Senate Bill 100 and the statewide planning goals.

INTERVIEWER: What did we do right, in terms of making sure that would happen? No thoughts on that or? That was...

JIM ROSS: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: That was the acknowledgment process.

JIM ROSS: Say that again?

INTERVIEWER: That was the acknowledgment process.

JIM ROSS: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: It took us 10 years to get that job done.

FEMALE VOICE: Jim? Is it OK if I talk?

INTERVIEWER: Briefly.

FEMALE VOICE: I think it will help Jim if you paraphrase the questions for him.

INTERVIEWER: OK.

FEMALE VOICE: Also, it'll help him if you speak slowly.

INTERVIEWER: All right.

FEMALE VOICE: Because he feels like he needs to read the questions.

INTERVIEWER: OK. What made it work, I believe, in getting the acknowledgement job done, was a lot of hard work by staff and the commission.

INTERVIEWER: Jim, why don't I move on to Question number six.

JIM ROSS: What about these long pauses between my answers?

INTERVIEWER: Hmm?

JIM ROSS: Will they be edited out?

INTERVIEWER: Yes, they will. Let's do number six. OK?

JIM ROSS: OK.

INTERVIEWER: Goal one, citizen involvement, 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?

JIM ROSS: It is still relevant today.

INTERVIEWER: And why do you think so?

JIM ROSS: Because if it hadn't have been for the big push on the public input program.

INTERVIEWER: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: Both at the local level? Right?

JIM ROSS: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: And at the -- at the commission level? Right?

JIM ROSS: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: OK. So, you think it's still needed today?

JIM ROSS: You bet.

INTERVIEWER: OK. Let's do Question seven.

JIM ROSS: You -- you can't walk away from the citizen involvement aspect of this program.

INTERVIEWER: Right.

JIM ROSS: You've got to --

INTERVIEWER: Got to have it. Correct.

JIM ROSS: You got to have it and you've got to keep at it.

INTERVIEWER: In my opinion then, of course, I guess I shouldn't be offering opinions, but that's why Goal 1 is number one.

JIM ROSS: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: There are 18 goals after that.

JIM ROSS: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: But the first goal is citizen involvement.

JIM ROSS: Is the most important.

INTERVIEWER: OK. Let's move on to Question seven. Are there any land use policies that are missing or were overlooked that the commission failed to incorporate in the statewide goals? So, you're looking back and saying did we miss something that we didn't include or adopt or are we pretty well set? In terms of subjects?

JIM ROSS: I think it's probably all-encompassing enough.

INTERVIEWER: Enough?

JIM ROSS: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: OK. All right. Question eight. It's kind of a long-winded one, but in 1974, LCDC and its staff, DLCD, undertook an unprecedented statewide public outreach and involvement effort engaging thousands of Oregonians in helping the commission draft and adopt the first 14 statewide planning goals. How effective do you think this extensive outreach process was and do you believe it was worth doing?

JIM ROSS: Oh, yes.

INTERVIEWER: How at all did this outreach affect your thinking and views about the scope and content of the planning goals 1-14? This is in 1974 that this happened.

JIM ROSS: Yes. This is what we were just talking about?

INTERVIEWER: Right. Goal one.

JIM ROSS: And it was critical to the development and implementation of the statewide planning program.

INTERVIEWER: That's why we took the program out to people.

JIM ROSS: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: What we were purposing to do.

JIM ROSS: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: We didn't just sit -- sit in Salem. We took the program out.

JIM ROSS: It put a face on the...

INTERVIEWER: The commission. Right?

JIM ROSS: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: And the staff. And going out allowed the people to express their opinions.

JIM ROSS: And their opinions had value.

INTERVIEWER: Great value. So, it's a big plus, you're saying now?

JIM ROSS: Yes. And it's -- it's still relevant today.

INTERVIEWER: OK.

JIM ROSS: It's still relevant because it will always be relevant.

INTERVIEWER: If we support it?

JIM ROSS: If we support it.

INTERVIEWER: Good.

INTERVIEWER: OK. Question nine. Kind of a complicated one, but it's important. Stepping back, do you think that the legislature's enactment of Senate Bill 100, and subsequent statutory actions and the state goals adopted by LCDC have established and maintained an appropriate and workable balance between state and local governments' land use interests and values? If you can, give us any examples demonstrating that this balance has been successful and/or whether the balance has not -- not been achieved? So, there's state control and local control, have we struck a good balance between those two or not, in your opinion?

JIM ROSS: That's number nine?

INTERVIEWER: Number nine. Take your time.

JIM ROSS: Hmm.

INTERVIEWER: Have any thoughts on that or...?

JIM ROSS: Yes. I think I do. Probably the first thing I'd do is take the pencil out of -- and I say this jokingly, but take the pencil out of the editor's hand and --

INTERVIEWER: Do you think we have a right balance, today, between state and local control?

JIM ROSS: Yes, I do.

INTERVIEWER: OK. I remember in some of my research, L.B. told people when drafting SBIOO and getting it passed, said we have to have a program that plans from the bottom up, not the top down.

JIM ROSS: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: And what he meant by that is that the planning be done locally, but it still had to meet the state requirements.

JIM ROSS: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: And I think we've tried to strike a balance there.

JIM ROSS: I think we have.

INTERVIEWER: Some would say LCDC went way too far, others might say, no, you didn't go far enough. But on the whole, I think we have a pretty good balance... but you think we have done that?

JIM ROSS: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: OK.

JIM ROSS: I do.

INTERVIEWER: OK. That's good.

JIM ROSS: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: Question 10, that's on the next page, page three.

JIM ROSS: I'm there.

INTERVIEWER: From an overall standpoint, how would you compare Oregon's land use program in 2015 with the program that was approved when Senate Bill 100 was enacted in 1973? Do you have any thoughts about that?

JIM ROSS: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think we've kept faith with the program as it was designed or...?

JIM ROSS: Oh, yes.

INTERVIEWER: Have we gone too far?

JIM ROSS: No, I don't think so.

INTERVIEWER: We haven't. So, we've more or less, in your judgment, I don't want to put words in your mouth, but you're saying that, uh, we've more or less are on target with the program?

JIM ROSS: You bet.

INTERVIEWER: OK. Here's an interesting question, number 11. Do you think that Senate Bill 100 could be approved today by the Oregon legislature? Please explain why or why not?

JIM ROSS: Oh, boy. That's meaty one.

INTERVIEWER: It's just asking you for your opinion and your thoughts about that.

JIM ROSS: I think it's possible.

INTERVIEWER: Just possible. OK.

JIM ROSS: It would take extreme dedication of some --

INTERVIEWER: Leaders.

JIM ROSS: Leaders and statesmen to pull it off. There aren't many Tom McCall's or Ted Hallock's or L.B. Day's.

INTERVIEWER: Or Hector MacPherson's.

JIM ROSS: Or Hector MacPherson's.

INTERVIEWER: Good enough.

JIM ROSS: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: Number 12. Some Oregon land use observers believe that the approval of Senate Bill 100 in 1973 was due to the convergence of four key factors; vision, leadership, federal money and luck.

JIM ROSS: Yes. (Chuckling)

INTERVIEWER: Please explain whether you agree or disagree with this statement and whether there are other factors that you believe were critical to the passage of Senate Bill 100?

JIM ROSS: Where are we?

INTERVIEWER: We are now resuming interviewing Jim Ross and we're on Question 12, which asks him to comment on the factors that affected the passage of Senate Bill 100 and whether they're factors other than vision, leadership, federal money and luck. And if you say there wasn't anything that's fine.

JIM ROSS: I don't know that I would say luck. I don't think that we have anything to apologize for.

INTERVIEWER: What about the other ideas? Vision and leadership?

JIM ROSS: Oh, yes.

INTERVIEWER: And we had some very powerful personalities, didn't we?

JIM ROSS: Yes. Federal money.

INTERVIEWER: I guess there was some money that came along that helped us run the agency for a while.

JIM ROSS: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: And then later on we had federal money from the Office of Coastal and Resource Management from Washington.

JIM ROSS: Yes. And we had OCRM money long before that.

INTERVIEWER: Right. Before -- Yes. Right.

JIM ROSS: And we were -- we were pretty confident in getting it.

INTERVIEWER: Yes, you were.

JIM ROSS: Yes, we were.

INTERVIEWER: OK. Let's go on to what I call optional topics. And you're not obliged to answer any of these, if you choose not to, but you can see what they are. Question one, if you think you want to answer is to discuss the meaning of the term "livability" as it relates to Oregon's land use program. In other words, what does land use mean in terms of livability in Oregon? Governor McCall used that term a lot, livability.

JIM ROSS: Yes. He did.

INTERVIEWER: A lot of different ways of looking at the term. Do you have any thoughts about that?

JIM ROSS: Yes, but I don't know why -- whether I can articulate them.

INTERVIEWER: Are we better off today with the program than not livability-wise?

JIM ROSS: I don't know. I'm bothered -- I'm bothered quite a bit with how the fish that got away.

INTERVIEWER: The fish that got away?

JIM ROSS: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: What do you mean by fish?

JIM ROSS: Well, we -- we started out with Goal 3.

INTERVIEWER: Yes.

JIM ROSS: And they're the substantive goals.

INTERVIEWER: Right.

INTERVIEWER: Probably one of the most important goals is one that affects the livability of all of us, Goal 14.

JIM ROSS: Oh, Yes.

INTERVIEWER: Right?

JIM ROSS: Yes. Urban growth boundaries.

INTERVIEWER: Every city, like the very small communities in Wheeler County, all the way up to Portland, the metro region, has a UGB. If you think about that in terms of the nation, no other state in our country that I know of has UGB's around all of its cities.

JIM ROSS: No.

INTERVIEWER: That's a huge accomplishment.

JIM ROSS: Yes, it is.

INTERVIEWER: And has it helped our livability?

JIM ROSS: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: That's what this question's getting you to think about.

JIM ROSS: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: The coastal goals, the four coastal goals.

JIM ROSS: Um hmm.

INTERVIEWER: It's a tremendous achievement in terms of Oregon's coastal livability. And you were involved with that a lot.

JIM ROSS: Yes, it was a great run.

INTERVIEWER: It was. And it's still going. The materials I brought for you to look at will give you some ideas of what they're thinking about for the future. But this is just asking, you know, does livability mean that people are happy or what?

JIM ROSS: Maybe.

INTERVIEWER: Yes. Question number two. Do you have any thoughts about the establishment and actions of the land use watchdog group known as 1000 Friends of Oregon?

JIM ROSS: Yes, I do.

INTERVIEWER: What are your thoughts? Remember the people that worked there, Henry Richmond?

JIM ROSS: I remember them well. They were on my case the whole time.

INTERVIEWER: Bob Stacey? Dick Benner for a while.

JIM ROSS: Dick Benner. Yes.

INTERVIEWER: Yes.

JIM ROSS: Then there was Robert Liberty.

INTERVIEWER: Robert Liberty. Right.

JIM ROSS: I always thought that Robert Liberty was the most brilliant mind they had in their ranks.

INTERVIEWER: OK.

INTERVIEWER: Was it important to the State Land program to have a group like that out there?

JIM ROSS: Oh, yes. You had to have somebody out there pushing on the other end.

INTERVIEWER: That's important for you to say that. I mean, I want you to, if you can, explain that a little bit more.

JIM ROSS: Yes. We had to have a balance.

INTERVIEWER: A balance.

JIM ROSS: And in order to have that balance we had to have opposing forces. And while I disliked some of the - do I want to say tactics? I don't know. We had to have some group of people that were pushing back, because it's only through that push back that we could get to the middle ground, where we needed to be.

INTERVIEWER: Well thought. And of course 1000 Friends was involved at the community level, county commissions and city councils. They were involved with us in our work at the commission level.

JIM ROSS: Um hmm.

INTERVIEWER: And then they were also involved politically in the legislature.

JIM ROSS: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: And all those, you know, can be argued about, but as you're saying, it was good that we had them to help strike a balance?

JIM ROSS: Uh, I'm thinking we had to have them.

INTERVIEWER: Had to have them. That's good -- good wording. OK.

JIM ROSS: And is Henry Richmond one of the narrators?

INTERVIEWER: Yes, he is. He's been interviewed already. Remember Jim Sitzman?

JIM ROSS: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: He interviewed Henry the other day. And Dick Benner's been interviewed already.

JIM ROSS: Dick Benner was a good man.

INTERVIEWER: Well, I've served a lot of directors and he and you are right up there.

JIM ROSS: Yes, but I'll never forget my last day on the job, when I left DLCD, you know what I'm talking about?

INTERVIEWER: Not specifically.

JIM ROSS: Robert Liberty -- Robert Liberty, Yes. I thought maybe I had singled out the wrong guy for a minute, but Robert Liberty came up to my secretary and told Donna that they were going to ask the commission to fire me. I had already resigned. I was going with Stan Long to SAIF (State Accident Insurance Fund).

INTERVIEWER: OK. This won't be easy. Question number three is asking you to think about the future. Based on the last 40 years, what are your thoughts about the future of Oregon's land use program?

JIM ROSS: The past four years or 40 years?

INTERVIEWER: 40 years.

JIM ROSS: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: Based upon the last 40 years, what are your thoughts about the future of the program, if you have any?

JIM ROSS: Well, I have to be positive.

INTERVIEWER: Are there some things that you want to see done or not done or changed?

JIM ROSS: I'd like to see the program take a little stronger role in disallowing partitioning. I think they've gone back. They've peddled backwards. I haven't followed it very close.

INTERVIEWER: Yep.

JIM ROSS: But I sense it. They're not keeping the sideboards up on the truck.

INTERVIEWER: OK. So, more should be done in terms of regulation, at least in terms of partitioning?

JIM ROSS: I think a golden opportunity was missed somewhere back there when the program was ripe and new and it was an opportunity lost and I see in reading through the goals they didn't lose it completely.

INTERVIEWER: I think, for example, Goal 16 was a marvelous achievement. It applies to our estuaries on the coast and places them into one of four categories. You know what they are.

JIM ROSS: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: Goal 16 provides the basis for planning our estuaries.

JIM ROSS: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: But to have those goals -- that goal lay out those four categories, all the way from development, like Astoria or Newport or Coos Bay, down to, you know, Nestucca and some of the -- the natural ones. To just have a plan for all of those is tremendous. So, how we can protect those investments?

JIM ROSS: Yes. We already set the rule.

INTERVIEWER: Anyway. While we have some things yet to be done, but, you know, you're really happy with what's been accomplished, I think? I don't want to put words in your mouth, but, do you think that, you know, we've done a pretty good job and what you're saying is we ought to be tougher on certain aspects?

JIM ROSS: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: OK.

JIM ROSS: I think there was a golden opportunity lost --

INTERVIEWER: OK.

JIM ROSS: The commission could have struck a deal. That sounds terrible doesn't it?
Struck a deal?

INTERVIEWER: Reached a decision. OK. All of the policies of the commission were having to compromise to some extent.

JIM ROSS: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: You know that as well as I do. Even when as far back as on the coastal commission.

JIM ROSS: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: You know the one side or the other couldn't have it all. You had to find a middle?

JIM ROSS: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: And that takes some skill. Let's look at Question number four. If you can, give us your assessment of Oregon's politics regarding the creation, implementation and future of Oregon's land use program. If you don't want to answer that, that's fine, it's just asking you to make a comment, if you have one, about Oregon's politics.

JIM ROSS: I have a brief one.

INTERVIEWER: A brief one.

JIM ROSS: I'm not good at brevity. All right. Briefly give us your assessment of Oregon's policy -- politics regarding the creation, implementation and future of Oregon's land use program. I don't know enough about the politics anymore.

INTERVIEWER: Right.

JIM ROSS: I can drum up some kind of an answer there but I don't think I want to.

INTERVIEWER: OK. If you look back to the beginning, the politics then were to get something done.

JIM ROSS: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: And we -- remember we had before Senate Bill 100, we had Senate Bill 10?

JIM ROSS: I didn't think we were ever going to get to that. That's where I started when going -- going through this stuff. I started with -- why isn't anybody starting at the beginning? The beginning was in 1969. And it was important that we look back and get --

INTERVIEWER: Let's move on and then we can talk about that in a minute here. I wrote Question number six. To carry out our statewide outreach effort for Oregon's land use program, what must be done to clearly communicate to Oregonians about what the program does, why is it being done, and why doing it is so important? Do you have any ideas about how to do a better job in that way in 2015?

INTERVIEWER: And if you don't have anything to say on that, that's fine.

JIM ROSS: I can't imagine I wouldn't have something to say.

INTERVIEWER: OK.

JIM ROSS: But -- we're on Question six?

INTERVIEWER: We are. We don't have to stay on it if you want to move on.

JIM ROSS: Keep going.

INTERVIEWER: We just need to reach out to people and what -- how do we do that and why and how do we convince people we're doing the right thing? Those aren't easy issues by any means. As you know, or may have heard, the projections are that the state, over the next 20 years or so, is going to get another million people.

JIM ROSS: Oh, boy. That's going to be tough.

INTERVIEWER: And where are they going to live? What are they going to do in terms of jobs and recreation and...

JIM ROSS: Yes. Where -- where -- where?

INTERVIEWER: You know and how do we keep urban growth boundaries reasonable? You can't make them too tight. You can't make them huge. Those are very important issues.

JIM ROSS: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: And how do we explain to people what we've done? A lot of people, this generation, your -- your son's generation, and my son's generation, haven't been told much about the program.

JIM ROSS: No.

INTERVIEWER: Is that a bad thing or a good thing? I think it needs to be done. Maybe you do too?

JIM ROSS: Yes, I do.

INTERVIEWER: But how do we go about doing that? And what's the message?

JIM ROSS: Kick them in the seat of the pants.

INTERVIEWER: And what's the message?

JIM ROSS: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: Not easy questions to answer.

JIM ROSS: Say that again?

INTERVIEWER: They're not easy questions to answer.

JIM ROSS: No. They're not.

INTERVIEWER: But we need to get on top of it.

JIM ROSS: Yes, we do. And my son is pretty well indoctrinated on...

INTERVIEWER: Yes.

JIM ROSS: What needs to be done.

INTERVIEWER: Yes. I'm not pointing him out specifically. I'm just saying his generation and my son's generation, the same more or less.

JIM ROSS: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: And they're growing up to be citizens of Oregon. They are citizens. How do we reach out to them and to their families?

JIM ROSS: Yes. There's a lot of people.

INTERVIEWER: Hard questions, but -- and, you know, but who's going to do it and how do we do it? So, maybe if we do some notes after we're through today, you can put some thoughts down too on some of those. It's totally up --

JIM ROSS: Yes. I think I'd like to.

INTERVIEWER: It's up to you.

JIM ROSS: Yes. I'd like to.

INTERVIEWER: OK.

JIM ROSS: All right.

INTERVIEWER: I guess we're getting close to wrapping this up. As you look ahead, are there any other questions you want to look at here, say from number seven down to ten? Which one sticks out to you or do you have anything else you'd like to add about the oral history of the program? Are we going about it correctly?

JIM ROSS: Yes. I think so.

INTERVIEWER: We're trying to.

INTERVIEWER: And when I say "we", it's Portland State managing it, but, you know, lots of other people are engaged and for going back to people like yourself and asking some --

some hard questions. How have we done? What up ahead? What -- what should we have done differently? Those kinds of things. Not easy.

JIM ROSS: No, but it's...

INTERVIEWER: It's got to be done.

JIM ROSS: Yes. I think we can do it. We can clone ourselves and go back to work.

INTERVIEWER: (Chuckling) Some would say yes and other people would say no.

JIM ROSS: (Chuckling) I'm still sore at Robert Liberty.

INTERVIEWER: Well, maybe some day you'll have a reconciliation? Maybe?

JIM ROSS: Maybe?

INTERVIEWER: Maybe. I think the last question is, maybe what we've been getting at, for a lot of our questions is that, how do we build trust in the Oregon land use program? Trust by the people of Oregon.

JIM ROSS: There's a lot of one-on-one.

INTERVIEWER: Should we have mass meetings again or is there a different way to communicate to people?

JIM ROSS: There probably are different ways. It's a different time.

INTERVIEWER: Different time.

JIM ROSS: But I wouldn't back away from the one-on-ones that we had for the better part of a year, and, it worked and it could work again, providing you went at it with the same zeal as we did.

INTERVIEWER: And I think leadership is important.

JIM ROSS: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: Who -- who's leading the charge sort of speak?

JIM ROSS: Who's the director now?

INTERVIEWER: Jim Rue, R-U-E.

JIM ROSS: Oh, Yes. I saw that.

INTERVIEWER: He -- his -- you know, some of those documents he has some -- some things he said in there.

JIM ROSS: Yes. I thought it strangely familiar with Ross. Rue and Ross. Jim Rue and Jim Ross. It'd be easy to get that one mixed up.

INTERVIEWER: Arnold Cogan is still with us, first director.

JIM ROSS: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: Hal Brauner is still living.

JIM ROSS: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: Sadly, Wes Kvarsten is gone now.

JIM ROSS: Yes. I was in Mexico when he died and it made me sad. I got a hold of Eric, his son, when I got back and he was taking it well, but he had a heart attack didn't he?

INTERVIEWER: I think something like that.

JIM ROSS: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: Do you have any closing thoughts about what we've talked about today or anything else you'd like to add?

JIM ROSS: Yes, I'd like to...

INTERVIEWER: Not necessarily grit and tear, but, you know, any other thoughts? If not, you can, you know, you can put some thoughts down and send them along.

JIM ROSS: I could tell you some good stories about my great grandfather that'd add some color too.

INTERVIEWER: I bet it would. Maybe it's your turn to write a book now?

JIM ROSS: I kept all my pocket calendars. I've got every meeting I've ever had in that box around the corner. And whether I'll ever do with it, I don't know, but I've got it there.

INTERVIEWER: Well, you know, the idea of donating your files to Portland State, I think is an idea. I'm not trying to tell you what to do. I'm just suggesting that's a possibility. If you...

JIM ROSS: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: If you choose to do it.

JIM ROSS: I could do it.

INTERVIEWER: And you can contact them or -- or Karen can help you if you wanted to do that. That's about it for today, I think.

JIM ROSS: What's next?

INTERVIEWER: I think basically we're done for today. And I'll explain that in a moment. But, thank you, again for the time you've taken today.

JIM ROSS: My pleasure.

INTERVIEWER: Well -- Jim, it's so good to see you again after all these years. We've worked together a long time, I, and other staff people, and so forth.

JIM ROSS: We have done that.

INTERVIEWER: We have done that. Thanks again.

(Concluded)