

Clinton market study newsletter – January 2016

The Port of South Whidbey initiated this Clinton market study in November 2015 to determine existing development conditions, the opportunities the community has to offer, and how best to realize them. The Port's consultant team has completed the following tasks since then.

Focus group workshops

Focus group workshops were completed in November with 32 representatives from Clinton's 1) business, 2) property owner, 3) residents, 4) Clinton Community Council, and 5) public agencies including Island County Commissioner and Community Development Department, Island Transit, WSDOT, South Whidbey Park & Recreation District, and South Whidbey Water District.

Workshop participants identified the following issues and opportunities they would like to see addressed in the final market report and recommendations (see Appendix A on the Port's website for complete comments):

- Promote the vibrant entrepreneurial spirit in the area
- Create a community identity
- Create a gathering place for friends to meet
- Address ferry traffic issues and opportunities
- Create opportunities for new business
- Manage ferry traffic needs to the community's benefit
- Improve utility services to the area
- Resolve solutions to sewer/septic services for new development in Clinton
- Initiate the corridor enhancement planning project for SR-525
- Initiate a subarea planning process for Clinton in 2017
- Increase housing opportunities
- Improve transit connections on both ends of the ferry
- Improve highway corridor appearances
- Expand local transit services
- Solve senior citizen health and housing needs
- Encourage younger couples to move into the area

Public surveys

Public internet surveys are currently underway with Clinton's 1) business owners, 2) property owners, 3) residents, and 4) Island County tourists. As of 19 January, 5 business owners, 26 property owner, 328 resident, and 18 visitor surveys have been completed.

The surveys will continue to be accessible on the Port website until there are no more surveys completed.

Population

Washington State Office of Financial Management (OFM) expects Island County's number of deaths will gradually surpass the number of births as the county's resident population ages beyond child bearing and middle family households for the period 2010 to 2040 (see Appendix B on the Port's website).

Island County will continue to increase in population from net migration, particularly in older, empty nester age groups as a result of the overall aging of the population and the county's unique attraction for older age groups.

The Clinton Census Designated Place (CDP) continued to attract younger child bearing and rearing households. Clinton's future age composition may depend on the unique age attractions the community creates.

Socioeconomic characteristics

The US Bureau of the Census initiated the American Community Survey (ACS) to provide current information on an annual basis. The ACS is based on annual random statistical sampling of minor civil divisions that are collated over a multiple years span to provide an accurate projection of socioeconomic conditions and trends. The most current ACS survey includes the years 2009-2013 (see Appendix C on the Port's website).

Clinton is located in the Clinton census designated place (CDP) composed generally of the developed area in and around Clinton proper generally correlating with the Rural Area

of Intense Development (RAID) defined by Island County.

Clinton CDP socioeconomic statistics were compared with socioeconomic characteristics for the United States, Washington State, Puget Sound (King, Kitsap, Pierce, and Snohomish Counties, Island County, South Whidbey (Freeland, Langley, and Clinton).

The Clinton CDP has accumulated an older and aging population in nonfamily and empty-nester households, in base industry employments, with high house values, with high family and per capita incomes, in detached single-family housing units, with self employment, working at home that are primarily Caucasian, English speaking.

Clinton's future socioeconomic characteristics will depend on the unique attractions the community retains and/or develops in the future.

Retail potential

Washington State Department of Revenue (DOR) collects retail sales taxes on all retail sales conducted in Washington State. DOR collects retail sales data by municipal jurisdiction since the retail sales tax is shared between state and local jurisdictions. In Island County, DOR data is available for 2014 retail sales for Oak Harbor, Coupeville, Langley, and by inference unincorporated Island County (see Appendix D on the Port's website).

Potential retail sales were derived for South Whidbey for 2010 and 2035 by correlating ACS population totals and projections with the retail sales per capita estimates for Bainbridge Island (Winslow - the closest comparable developed retail area served by ferry) and the retail sales per square foot for specialty and neighborhood shopping centers (the closest store type comparable).

Clinton - has recruited a number of auto service, sales, and repair, a limited menu restaurant, a convenience store, drinking establishment, and newly opened crafts store oriented primarily to local resident consumers.

Depending on Clinton's development strategy, Clinton could recruit art and artist live/work,

specialty sporting goods such as bike, hike, birdwatching, kayaking outfitting, specialty clothing, and specialty foods and beverages including brewery, wine tasting, and coffee houses.

However, Clinton will need to create a central place or focus that is walkable between stores and activities typical of Langley and Coupeville if it is to attract locals as well as commuter and visitor consumers.

Development concept

In order to create a central and engaging focus that can vitalize the community's opportunities, Clinton will need to:

- Calm and organize traffic on SR-525, possibly utilizing roundabouts,
- Complete a basic road grid that provides access across and between both sides of the highway,
- Define new infill development opportunities for potential mixed-use retail and housing projects, and
- Resolve a method of providing sewer service to new development, possibly using a community septic drain field.

Some initial concepts have been proposed and will be presented for public review and comment once they have been properly vetted with WSDOT, Washington Department of Ecology (DOE), and potentially affected Clinton business and property owners.

Review the Port of South Whidbey website at www.portofsouthwhidbey.com or contact Angi Mozer, Port of South Whidbey Executive Director at 360-331-5494 or execdir@portofsouthwhidbey.com if you have any questions about the contents of this newsletter or future market study events.