



# METROPOLITAN BRIEFING BOOK

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2005

Presented by the Institute of Portland Metropolitan Studies  
College of Urban & Public Affairs  
Portland State University

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## INSTITUTE OF PORTLAND METROPOLITAN STUDIES

The Institute of Portland Metropolitan studies was created to better connect the resources of higher education to the issues and needs of the six-county, bi-state Portland Vancouver metropolitan area (Clackamas, Clark, Columbia, Multnomah, Washington and Yamhill counties). If you are not already familiar with the Institute, please take a look at our mission statement and a roster of the IMS board members at the end of this publication. If you would like to read further about our projects and initiatives or download additional copies of this publication, please visit our web site: [www.upa.pdx.edu/IMS/](http://www.upa.pdx.edu/IMS/). Or call us directly at 503-725-5170.

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## INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the fifth edition of the Metropolitan Briefing Book!

The Institute of Portland Metropolitan Studies (IMS) was created to connect the resources of higher education to the issues and needs in the six-county, bi-state Portland-Vancouver metropolitan area (Clackamas, Clark, Columbia, Multnomah, Washington, and Yamhill Counties). We have included the IMS mission statement and roster of IMS board members in this publication to give readers a clear sense of who we are and how we serve the region. You can find out about all of our initiatives and download additional copies of this publication from our web site: [www.upa.edu/IMS/](http://www.upa.edu/IMS/).

The theme for this edition of the Metropolitan Briefing Book is “Portland at the Crossroads.” We chose this theme because the region is emerging from the recession, and we are observing changes in many of the factors that influence the everyday experiences of region’s citizens. Although we have become used to a certain pace of change, recessions tend to accelerate transformations, particularly those affecting the economy. Thus, the citizens of the Portland-Vancouver region find themselves adapting to changing expectations at work, learning to communicate with different kinds of people in their neighborhoods and workplaces, and dealing with a shifting array of social and economic challenges.

The nature and intensity of the challenges that people face daily influence their sense of urgency about issues confronting our leaders and citizens. To provide a better understanding of the priorities of our citizens and leaders, Craig Wollner and Deborah Elliott summarize the results of the 2005 Critical Issues Survey. The survey reveals an unusual agreement among citizens and leaders that the most important issue facing our region is the creation of jobs and the health of our economy.

In our second essay, Sheila Martin and Amy Vander Vliet shed light on the recent performance of the region’s economy using stereo vision—examining the region’s industries as well as its occupations. The region’s strength in manufacturing led the growth of the 1990s, but as manufacturing continues to fall as a percentage of the U.S. economy, the Portland region’s business leaders continuously face the challenge of identifying the markets and technologies in which we have a competitive advantage that is difficult to replicate. That competitive advantage is increasingly contained in the unique talents of our workforce. Martin and Vander Vliet demonstrate the need for continuous innovation by citing the stories of two local companies that have survived challenges due to technological and market changes.



Shifting demographics are a very visible sign of change in our region. Barry Edmonston and Masud Hasan of the Population Research Center review the components of demographic change and provide a picture of the region's residents over the next two decades. Portland's population growth has exceeded growth for the United States, but that differential has declined over time. People continue to move to the region in disproportionate numbers, and like much of the rest of the nation, the region is becoming more ethnically diverse.

Unlike much of the rest of the nation, the Portland-Vancouver metropolitan area is gaining population in the critical demographic group that Joe Cortright calls "The Young and the Restless." His essay on the influence and importance of this group points out that the competition for this talent will become even more intense. We must protect our ability to attract and retain these workers as an important asset to the region's economy. Cortright suggests that initiatives for attracting and retaining the young and the restless should be a key component of our economic development strategy.

Economic, demographic, and social changes inevitably result in an assessment of whether these changes have been "fair." John Provo and Jill Fuglister discuss in their essay the history of equity considerations in planning in the Portland Region. Using the Regional Affordable Housing Strategy as an example, the authors discuss the political dimensions of equity and the importance of finding a common language for debating alternative aspects of fairness in planning.

Finally, we confront one of the changes most visible to many citizens: the increasing congestion of our highways. To the average citizen, traffic congestion is primarily an inconvenience that robs us of valuable time. But this congestion actually is indicative of problems with important implications for our economy and for our ability to take advantage of new opportunities for trade as the world emerges from recession. Eric Jessup illustrates the importance of freight mobility on our economy and analyzes the critical issues facing leaders as they allocate resources among the many urgent transportation infrastructure needs.

We hope this 2005 Briefing Book stimulates discussion among our leaders and citizens about these important issues. Please visit our web site at [www.upa.edu/IMS/](http://www.upa.edu/IMS/) or call us to find out about other publications, initiatives, and events related to these and other issues facing the Portland-Vancouver metropolitan region. We also want to hear from you about how we can make this publication better in the future. Our thanks go to our contributors for their excellent work, and to Beth Dillon and Meg Merrick whose assistance has made this publication possible.

Sheila A. Martin



Director, Institute of Portland Metropolitan Studies

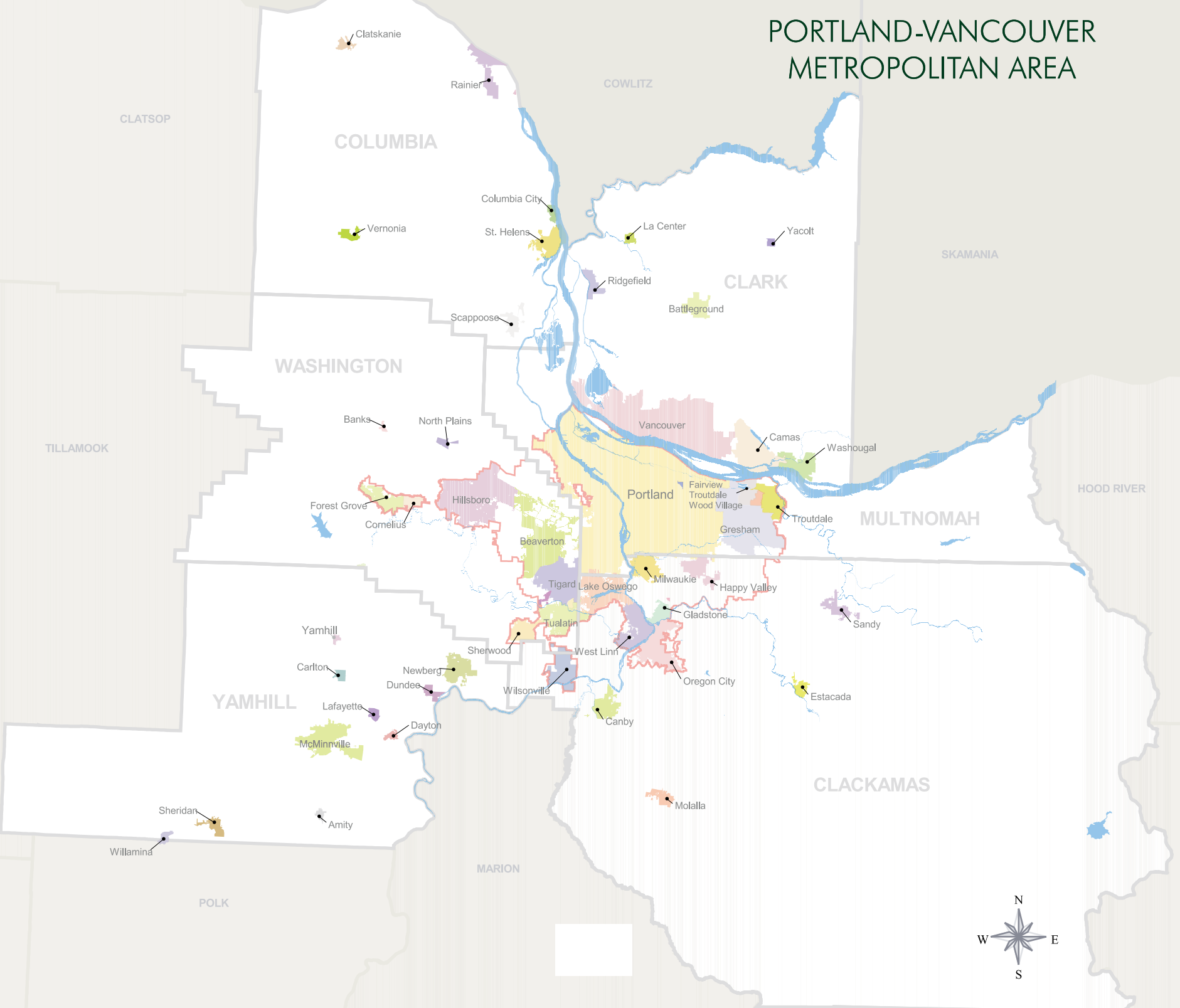
Craig Wollner



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# PORTLAND-VANCOUVER METROPOLITAN AREA



Critical Issues 2005 . . . . .	1
Portland's Regional Economy: The Dynamics of Change . . . . .	5
Population Outlook for the Portland Vancouver Metropolitan Area . . . . .	17
Talent, Place, and Prosperity: Metro Portland's Changing Labor Market and Economic Outlook . . . . .	27
Environment, Economy, and Equity: Can We Find a Language for Fairness in Regional Planning? . . . . .	35
Trade, Transportation, and Freight Mobility: Invest Now or Pay Later? . . . . .	45