

*Grays Harbor
Council of Governments*



www.ghcog.org

What is a COG?

A Council of Governments (COG) is a public organization encompassing a multi-jurisdictional regional community.

A COG serves the local governments and the citizens in the region by dealing with issues and needs that cross city, town, county, and even state boundaries.

Why do we have GHCOG?

Founded in 1960, the GHCOG is one of the oldest COGs in Washington State.

GHCOG exists due to a basic commitment by a representative group of people to protect and enhance the economy, environment, and quality of life for the citizens of Grays Harbor County.

GHCOG Purpose

The Grays Harbor Council of Governments, through its member governments, provides the framework for developing visions and goals, for identifying issues and solving common problems, and for mobilizing diverse community interests.

Mission

Coordinate and cultivate projects of regional significance.

Interact with member entities to provide technical assistance in special projects.

Voice and address needs of the Grays Harbor region in statewide and multi-county policy and planning development.

Inform members and the general public about available resources.

Communicate to member entities essential information such as mandates, policies and programs that affect local progress.

GHCOG Members

- City of Aberdeen
- City of Cosmopolis
- City of Elma
- City of Hoquiam
- City of McCleary
- City of Montesano
- City of Ocean Shores
- City of Oakville
- City of Westport
- Grays Harbor County
- Grays Harbor P.D.A
- Grays Harbor P.U.D.
- Grays Harbor Transit
- Port of Grays Harbor
- Quinault Indian Nation
- Timberland Regional Library
- Columbia-Pacific R.C. & E.D.D.

GHCOG past 45+ Years

Though inter-governmental coordination, the GHCOG has been a key player in expediting a number of projects and planning efforts in Grays Harbor County.

1960s

❖ Working through the Overall Economic Development Program GHCOG spearheaded numerous studies, funding and planning efforts which culminated in the construction of the Wynoochee Dam and the construction of the only deep-draft navigable channel on the Washington Coast .

❖ A wide variety of interest groups were brought together to resolve issues related to the proposed freeway route in East County, the present day HWY 12.

GHCOG past 45+ Years (cont.)

1970s

- ❖ GHCOG published a County Water Quality Plan that qualified the area for EPA water grants leading to many new sewer projects.
- ❖ GHCOG members developed the Grays Harbor Transit Authority.
- ❖ GHCOG staff testified on behalf of local governments to secure impact fees for the siting of the WPPSS plant, \$2 million for East County cities and \$1 million for Aberdeen and Hoquiam.

GHCOG past 45+ Years (cont.)

1980s

- ❖ GHCOG and Grays Harbor Tourism worked together on the GHO 80s program that promoted economic development and led to the creation of the Economic Development Council.
- ❖ GHCOG delivered a \$2.5 million Community Development Block Grant to the City of Aberdeen enabling the continuation of the city's Neighborhood Housing Assistance Program.
- ❖ Work on the Grays Harbor Estuary Management Plan (GHEMP) which started in the late 70s continued. The GHEMP was one of the first multi-jurisdictional water resource conservation plans in Washington State.

GHCOG past 45+ Years (cont.)

1990s forward

- ❖ Park planning services available to members allows them to be eligible for State outdoor recreation funding.
- ❖ Since 1993 GHCOG has programmed over \$8 million in STP funding for construction projects, examples include downtown revitalization projects in Elma and Cosmopolis.
- ❖ During the 90's the GHCOG applied for and was granted almost \$20,000 to cover the cost of critical areas planning for its members.
- ❖ GHCOG invested seven years of work and secured millions of dollars in grant funding (including \$15 million in operating capital) to convert the WPPSS site into the Satsop Development Park and create the Public Development Authority.

GHCOG Services

- ❖ Intergovernmental Coordination and provides a forum for Regional Problem Solving
- ❖ Provides State Data Center services by accumulating and disseminating the latest census, economic, labor, flood plain and transportation statistics.
- ❖ Offers custom map creation and maintains local zoning and other service area maps.
- ❖ Provides technical assistance for community oriented planning efforts.

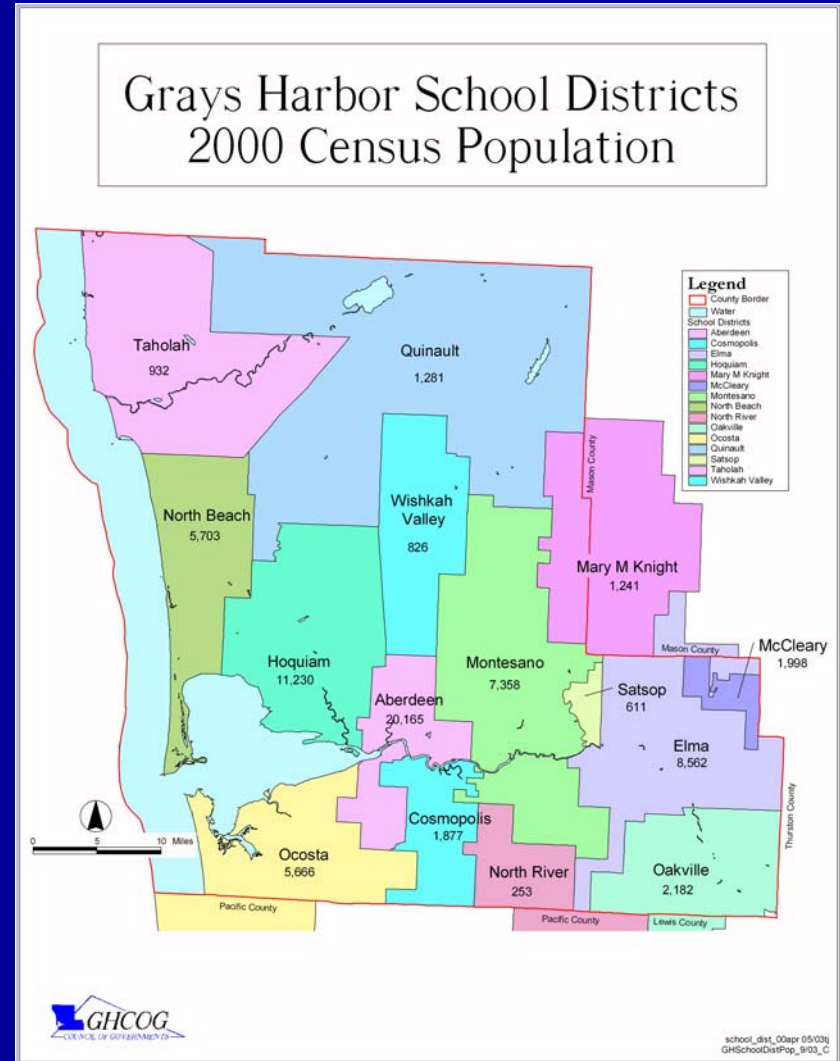
GHCOG Services (cont.)

- ❖ Offers assistance in the research of grant sources and funding opportunities. Supports grant development efforts by supplying data and writing assistance.
- ❖ Develops, maintains, and updates County-wide transportation plans.
- ❖ Coordinates County-wide transportation plans with state and federal plans to maintain funding eligibility.
- ❖ Administers the Surface Transportation Program which provides transportation funding directly to our communities.

GHCOG Data Center

Census data is one of the most common data requests GHCOG receives. Data can be retrieved for a variety of census geographies.

The GHCOG web site - www.ghcog.org – has an abundance of demographic data readily available.



Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Why is being part of a COG important?

A: The GHCOG provides a forum for regional problem solving. Working together with one unified voice, members are heard and responded to by State and Federal Legislatures as a cohesive group, not individuals with differing and competing interests.

GHCOG – Regional Problem Solving



GHCOG Director, Vicki Cummings, explains regional transportation needs to Senator Patty Murray during a recent visit to Grays Harbor.

Frequently Asked Questions (cont.)

Q: Are there other COGs in Washington?

A: Yes, there are several in Washington and thousands across the United States and around the world. As Washington has a bottom up governmental framework, COGs (or regional planning agencies) are formed by local governments who share interests and needs, not by the State Government. Much of the State is not in a COG. Grays Harbor COG was one of the first formed in Washington State, 1960.

Frequently Asked Questions (cont.)

Q: How is GHCOG funded?

A: GHCOG receives dues from its members and Federal Transportation grants funds.

Frequently Asked Questions (cont.)

Q: Are services available to non-members?

A: Yes. As a State Data Center, census and other readily available information are free. Mapping services are available for a fee as time and resources allow.

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