

Rex Burkholder

Metro Council District 5 News

[JPACT picks five projects for transportation money from 'Opportunity fund'](#)

December 14, 2012 4:14 PM

A regional transportation funding committee unanimously supported a \$33.8 million plan they say will spur economic development across the Portland region.

The plan calls for the \$33.8 million in transportation funds to be used on five projects in the region, including road projects in Clackamas and Hillsboro, a new road in Troutdale, a road widening in Wood Village and pedestrian improvements in East Portland.

Provided the proposals continue to meet certain criteria, they'll receive cash from the so-called Regional Economic Opportunity Fund, a one-time distribution from the Regional Flexible Funds in that starts in 2016. That money was the result of a change of the way the federal government distributes transportation money.

Members of the Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation voted unanimously Thursday morning to support the allocation; committee member Nina DeConcini, the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality's representative on the committee, abstained.

Under the approved plan, an even distribution – about \$8.3 million – of the money would go toward freeway projects in Clackamas and Washington counties and pedestrian improvements in Portland.

The Sunrise Corridor project is a new connector between Interstate 205 and highways 212 and 224 near Happy Valley, and the request to JPACT called for funding for road improvements associated with that project. Similarly, the Washington County request called for money to help pay for

road improvements associated with the reconstruction of the U.S. 26 interchange with Brookwood Parkway.

The pedestrian project, East Portland in Motion, identified dozens of potential pedestrian access improvements in that city east of 82nd Avenue. The plan was presented at JPACT by the Portland City Council and TriMet. (*See disclosure below*)

A Port of Portland was recommended for \$8 million to improve access to the Troutdale Reynolds Industrial Park by building a new access road around the east side of Troutdale Airport.

Another \$1 million was tabbed for widening of Northeast 238th Avenue in Wood Village, a key part of the recently-adopted East Metro Connections Plan.

[View details about the projects \(PDF\)](#)

Lake Oswego City Councilor Donna Jordan said the decision represented true regional thinking.

"The idea that we were all coming together with a focus on economic development, on jobs, on creating a better life for the region by this kind of investment, everyone was supportive of it," Jordan said. "Knowing this is possibly a one-time opportunity, and being able to bring so much leverage into the region... was extremely important."

Jason Tell, director of the Oregon Department of Transportation's Portland region, said the regional fund designation adds to money put forth by local and federal agencies for those projects.

"It's remarkable, fantastic work," Tell said.

Clackamas County Commissioner Ann Lininger was similarly complementary of the process.

"Everyone was willing to exercise some moderation and self restraint so we could all get to a place that was going to be better for every jurisdiction," she said. "There are some skeptics who don't think that ever happens, and I'm here to tell you that today, it's happening in a bipartisan way so we can create jobs across these communities."

But Metro Councilor Rex Burkholder, a former JPACT chair at his

last meeting on the committee as an elected official at the regional government, warned the committee to avoid the style of cash distribution that decided how the \$33.8 million would be spent.

The money was essentially earmarked by JPACT and its members in the last four months, bypassing the usual long vetting for Regional Flexible Funds allocations.

"This kind of rushed itself through," Burkholder said before his vote in favor of the proposal. "How we make these decisions is just as important as the decisions we make."

Metro News editor Nick Christensen can be reached at nick.christensen@oregonmetro.gov or 503-813-7583. Follow Metro on Twitter [@oregonmetro](https://twitter.com/oregonmetro).

Note: *An earlier version of this story mischaracterized JPACT's action on Thursday. While a plan for distributing the money was adopted, no money was awarded by JPACT. The specific requests in Hillsboro and Clackamas were for road projects related to nearby freeway interchange reconstruction projects, but did not directly fund freeway interchange projects. This version has been corrected.*

Disclosure: *This story's writer is also the chair of the Lents Neighborhood Association, which was consulted in setting funding priorities for East Portland in Motion. The writer has not been involved with the plan since 2011 and has had no involvement in the plan's fundraising efforts.*

See also:

[Transportation panel speeds up selection of projects intended to boost economy](#) (Nov. 8, 2012)

[JPACT will focus on jobs for additional \\$38 million in transportation funds](#) (Oct. 11, 2012)

[Transportation panel says focus investments on 'jobs, jobs, jobs'](#) (Sept. 14, 2012)

[Learn more about JPACT](#)

[Find out about Regional Flexible Funds](#)

[Metro, City of Portland protect Columbia Slough wetland](#)

[as new natural area](#)

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Metro and the City of Portland teamed up this week to protect 54 acres of wildlife habitat near the Columbia Slough in Northeast Portland. The acquisition is a partnership among Metro, the Portland Bureau of Environmental Services and Portland Parks & Recreation, which will manage the site as a natural area.

Nestled next to Broadmoor Golf Course, the new natural area features sensitive wetland habitat and wildlife that depends on it. More than 170 species of birds including kingfishers, owls and great blue herons use the area, in addition to deer, bats and amphibians. A trails plan for the Columbia Slough calls for a future pathway to wind along the new property, bringing walkers, runners and cyclists up close with nature.

"This wetland area along the Columbia Slough is a rare remnant of Columbia River floodplain," said Portland Environmental Services director Dean Marriott. "Preserving it will protect a significant natural resource and help improve water quality in the slough."

The \$530,400 purchase price was split three ways among Metro's voter-approved 2006 natural areas bond measure, Portland's local allocation from that bond measure and Environmental Services' Grey to Green initiative. This new natural area, managed by Portland Parks & Recreation, is located east of Northeast 33rd Drive, near Portland International Airport.

"Now we can protect even more valuable wetlands – preserving them for wildlife, and providing another place for people to appreciate nature in Portland," said Portland Parks & Recreation Director Mike Abbaté. "Being good stewards of this region for the next generation is at the core of who we are as Portland

Parks & Recreation."

Voters across the region approved a \$227 million bond measure in 2006 to protect water quality, wildlife habitat and opportunities to enjoy nature. Metro buys land in 27 areas, selected for their high-quality habitat and ability to make a difference.

The Columbia Slough is one of the most expansive focal points of the bond measure, with wetlands and slow-moving channels stretching 19 miles from Fairview Lake on the east to Kelley Point Park in North Portland on the west. It's also one of the most urban areas, dotted with warehouses, neighborhoods and major thoroughfares.

"What sets it apart is that you are surrounded by urbanized areas," said Metro Councilor Rex Burkholder, who has represented this part of the region for 12 years. "Yet there you are, and you've got eagles and herons and otters."

The once-degraded slough is returning to health bit by bit, with a concerted effort by nonprofit groups, public agencies and residents. Metro and the City have collaborated to purchase four new natural areas in the slough watershed, including the latest addition. Metro also has secured rights to build nearly three miles of the Marine Drive and Columbia Slough trail networks, where significant gaps force visitors onto the street.

"It will slowly recover over time, because we're going to help clean it up," said Burkholder, who will be recognized by the Columbia Slough Watershed Council in February for his leadership. "Giving access to people to something right in their back yards is so amazingly special."

[Learn more about Metro Natural Areas](#)

[Metro Council sends \\$1.6 million promissory note to North Portland](#)

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Long-term, maximum benefits to local residents envisioned for use of funds

The Metro Council late last week approved a resolution to spend the remaining \$1.6 million in the North Portland enhancement

fund by 2018 on a local trail and select neighborhood improvement projects proposed by the community. The council's unanimous vote supported the recommendation of a committee comprised of North Portland residents that administers the fund.

"The deadline gives us the discipline and flexibility to sunset the fund," said Councilor Rex Burkholder, whose district includes North Portland and who chairs the grant committee. "The community needs help now; it's time to start making hard choices."

Established in 1985 by an act of the Oregon Legislature, Metro's North Portland enhancement grant program is a mitigation fund to compensate the community affected by the now-closed St. Johns Landfill. Funds were generated from a 50-cent surcharge imposed on each ton of garbage disposed of at the landfill. Interest generated on the fund – more than \$2.2 million – has supported 465 local improvement projects that directly benefit residents or neighborhoods around the landfill, including Arbor Lodge, Cathedral Park, Kenton, Overlook, Portsmouth, St. Johns and University Park.

The committee's request echoed input and advice about the future of the grant program gathered from local residents, service providers and stakeholders by the committee in the summer and fall of 2012. Committee members addressed the council, explaining how they generated the recommendation and circumstances that called for changes.

"Every year we've struggled with significant impacts on the fund," said Cece Hughley Noel, a representative from Portsmouth on Metro's committee since 2009. "We've been nickel-and-dimeing our way to address issues in our community."

Shawn DeCarlo, a representative from St. Johns on Metro's committee, said, "People had varying opinions about how to spend the remaining fund balance, but they spoke in unison about the local community continuing to be the primary beneficiary of the remaining funds. On this they were unequivocal."

But Shelley Oylear, a past grant recipient and former chair of the Overlook Neighborhood Association, said that the original intent

of protecting the funds in perpetuity was not considered.

"Not having those dollars available in the future is really disappointing," she said.

The sentiment was not lost on Council President Tom Hughes.

"It's difficult because we've gotten a lot of mileage out of this fund," Hughes said.

According to DeCarlo, the committee wants to leverage remaining funds to create long-term, maximum benefits.

"We want to explore approaches that will allow us to accomplish this," he added.

The committee will solicit advice from local grant-making professionals and others when it meets again beginning in early 2013. At that time it will consider what portion of the remaining fund will be dedicated to grant awards for future neighborhood improvement projects and the amount to dedicate to North Portland Greenway trail project costs. The trail is a regional project that will knit together bike and pedestrian infrastructure from Pier Park to Smith and Bybee Wetlands and Kelley Point Park. Thousands of North Portland residents live in close proximity to planned improvements.

[Learn more about the North Portland grant program](#)

[Kitzhaber meets with Hughes, Burkholder to talk Columbia River Crossing](#)

December 7, 2012 2:29 PM

With a budget debate looming, Gov. John Kitzhaber met with Metro officials Friday to talk about Oregon's share of funding for the Columbia River Crossing.

Kitzhaber has earmarked \$450 million in his proposed budget for the project, less than the \$590 million that is Oregon's share of the project's costs. The discussion with Metro Council President Tom Hughes and Councilor Rex Burkholder centered around ways to trim that \$140 million from the project, if the Legislature doesn't fund the whole amount.

"We were told it (\$450 million) was a placeholder more than anything else," Hughes said. "The local preferred option is what

we're supporting and we will go to the Legislature along with the partners and advocate for the full project."

Burkholder said the Metro Council, the governor and the business community all agree it's their top transportation project. That could lead the Legislature to fund the whole amount.

"As the governor said, the difference between \$450 (million) and \$590 (million) – it's between \$35 (million) and \$38 million a year in debt service," Burkholder said. "The political lifting is the same."

Burkholder said Kitzhaber asked for Metro's input on how the project could be scaled down if it's not fully funded.

The Metro delegation told the governor that community members want to make sure that parts of the project essential to area residents aren't dropped from the project, Burkholder said.

Hughes emphasized that Metro doesn't necessarily want to scale back the project. But he said some changes in phasing and footprint of the project, including changing some of the interim solutions for access to Hayden Island, could achieve the \$140 million in cost savings.

But if the project could be done for less money, without interim solutions and with a smaller footprint, why isn't that Plan A to begin with?

"I think because the total purpose of the project may not be completely met by the other alternative," Hughes said. "To get what you need out of the project requires the full project. The stuff we supported it for requires the full project. But if it's not going to be possible, what are the alternatives?"

Hughes said he's optimistic the Legislature will fund the project, and that both he and Kitzhaber were frustrated by the duration of the planning process.

"I hate the amount of time it's taking us to do it," Hughes said.

A spokesman for the governor's office had no comment on the meeting.

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See also:

[Sticker shock?](#) (Aug. 9, 2011)

[More than cost at play in Columbia River Crossing design](#) (Feb. 14, 2011)

[Camp takes kids on animal odyssey from tropics to arctic](#)

December 7, 2012 2:27 PM



The Oregon Zoo's winter break camp program - running Dec. 18-21, Dec. 27-28, and Jan. 2-4 - will include guided tours of the zoo, art projects, games and special visits from animals that campers can touch. Games, crafts and stories with zoo-animal themes add to the daily experiences.

"Each of our camps offers something different to fit our campers' interests," said Jennifer Whitener, the zoo's camps and classes supervisor. "Kids will get to explore different eco-regions and discover how the animals that live there have adapted to survive and thrive in the winter."

- At Polar Prowl camp (Dec. 18 and Jan. 2), kids will discover how mountain goats, tigers, polar bears and sea otters adapt to live in their icy and extreme habitats.
- Winter Safari (Dec. 19 and Jan. 3) sends campers on a trek through the Predators of the Serengeti exhibit to learn how the zoo cares for our warm-weather animals during the Northwest winters.
- The Great Northwest Cold Rush (Dec. 20 and Jan. 4) brings

campers to the glacier-fed streams of the Great Northwest exhibit to discover how bald eagles, salmon and cougars survive the winter.

- Short Days/Long Nights (Dec. 21), held on the shortest day of the year, lets kids discover which animals like the day and which prefer the night.
- Tropics Trek (Dec. 27) transports campers from a cold Oregon winter to the tropics of Asia, where elephants, sun bears and orangutans have adapted to warm weather.
- South for the Winter (Dec. 28) lets campers explore the wild wonders of South America, from the caiman-teeming waters of the Amazon to cool Peruvian coastline where Humboldt penguins dwell.

Each day of camp includes age-appropriate crafts, songs, stories, snacks, an animal visitor and zoo tour, all surrounding a zoo animal theme.

The zoo encourages parents to check their campers' school break schedules before registering for camp. Some themes repeat to give children in school districts with different break schedules a chance to join the fun.

[Learn more about Oregon Zoo day camps](#)

[Visit the zoo](#)

[Glendoveer management contract finalized with CourseCo](#)

December 7, 2012 2:25 PM



It's a rare commodity in East Portland that families have used for generations. A place where a round of golf is affordable and where you can escape from a hectic day to a beautiful natural area and find some quiet and calm... Ask the community what makes the Glendoveer Golf Course and Tennis Center such a special gem in East Portland and these are some of the comments you'll hear. As CourseCo, a leading West Coast golf operator, stands poised to take over the management of the regionally-owned property, its priority is to keep it that way.

Metro finalized a five-year operations contract with CourseCo today. The contract takes effect in January 2013.

"CourseCo is committed to Metro's vision for making Glendoveer a leader in its class while maintaining an affordable venue for golf and tennis," said CourseCo owner Tom Isaak. "We will provide the highest level of customer service and continue the partnerships Metro has developed with the community."

What can visitors expect after the new contract begins? While the 242-acre site will continue to offer two golf courses, a driving range, pro shop, tennis center and fitness trail, CourseCo intends to make an immediate and positive impact at Glendoveer.

"Users are going to see increased maintenance of the facility and new equipment," Isaak explained. "High quality playing conditions will be consistently delivered because that is what

patrons pay for and expect." The company will also focus on increasing youth programs and venues for competitive play."

"Metro is excited for CourseCo to bring their experience in municipal golf course management to Glendoveer," said Metro Councilor Shirley Craddick, whose district includes eastern Multnomah County. "We will continue to take a more active role in managing the facility and work closely with the new operator on maintenance issues and improvements to the property."

About \$331,000 is set aside in the regional government's upcoming budget for improvements to Glendoveer, including accessibility upgrades to bathrooms and construction of a new cart barn. Other improvements include repairs to the roof on the tennis center and new carpet and a fresh coat of MetroPaint in the clubhouse. Improvements are scheduled to be completed in 2013.

[Learn more about Glendoveer](#)

[What's BRT? A ride around Las Vegas on its bus rapid transit system](#)

December 7, 2012 2:23 PM



PHOTOS BY NICK CHRISTENSEN / METRO NEWS

Riders board a bus rapid transit, or BRT, bus in downtown

Las Vegas last month. Las Vegas has launched eight BRT lines in the past decade.

Reporting from Las Vegas

Last week, a [Portland Tribune editorial](#) hailed bus rapid transit, or BRT, as a rising option for future commutes.

SLIDESHOW:

It's been pushed by Rep. Jaime Herrera Beutler, R-Wash., as an alternative mass transit mode for the Columbia River Crossing. And recently, Metro launched two studies of BRT to see if it could work as a transit line along two corridors.

What's the fuss about this bus? Last month, Metro News took a ride around on one of the country's most extensive BRT systems, operated by [RTC Transit](#) in Las Vegas. Its eight BRT lines, all launched in the last decade, run the gamut of what planners describe when they talk about bus rapid transit.

At the boarding point

On the northeast edge of the city, near Nellis Air Force Base, the start of this desert city's MAX line – a BRT bus along Las Vegas Boulevard – would look familiar to most rail-riding Portlanders.

A raised curb allows for easy, quick boarding of the bus. The platform's shelter features a curved look that hardly resembles a typical bus stop.

The station has its own ticket vending machine, taking cash and credit cards and offering short-term and long-term transit passes.

Really, the only things that makes this bus stop look different from a stop on Portland's MAX are the ashtray and the bright, warm rays of sunshine beating down on in it in November. Both are ubiquitous in Southern Nevada.



In Las Vegas, the MAX is a bus – a bus rapid transit service through the city's northeast quadrant.

When the bus pulls in at 8:35 a.m., about a half-dozen people board. If any of them didn't have a transit pass, they're in luck – the bus has a ticket machine on board, so riders can pay their fare if they board at a stop that doesn't have a ticket machine.

This saves time: The bus driver doesn't have to serve as a fare enforcement officer and can focus on keeping the bus moving, and riders don't queue at the entrance waiting for everyone to buy a ticket.

A few stops into its run into downtown Las Vegas, a fare inspector comes aboard. One of the dozen-or-so riders has to go buy a ticket at the on-board ticket machine, with the fare inspector booting one couple for not paying their fare.

Along the line

The ride is smoother than a typical local-service bus, and somewhat quieter. But it's clearly not light rail – riders can still feel some of the bumps in the road, and the realities of navigating city streets – sharp right turns, dips in the road, drivers cutting off the bus – keep this particular BRT line from having the same level of riding comfort as rail.

Inside, sunlights on the roof add to a more airy feel on the bus. An automated voice reads out stops and nearby destinations. Seats face forwards, backwards and sideways, including on top of wheel wells.

The bus stops about every half-mile on the northern two-thirds of the line, a six-mile stretch of strip malls and desert lots on

the city's older northeast side. Through most of this, it runs in its own lane, converted from the shoulder of four-lane Las Vegas Boulevard.

After its stop at the Jerry's Nugget casino, it runs nonstop for the next two miles to downtown Las Vegas, picking up riders at Fremont Street before rolling into the Bonneville Transit Center.

Heavy investment, heavy use

Las Vegas' [Bonneville Transit Center](#) is the equivalent of Portland's transit mall, all in one stop. The city's local service buses mostly operate in a grid, one mile apart, but most of the city's eight BRT lines converge here.

The transit center was built to LEED-Platinum standards, was funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act and features bike lockers and a bike repair station for downtown residents looking to connect to destinations outside the city core.

The most heavily-used BRT line connecting to the Bonneville Transit Center is the Strip-Downtown Express, or SDX, which connects through the city's resort and business district.



Las Vegas' SDX BRT line has nearly 16,000 daily riders.

In downtown, the SDX features what one might call Cadillac BRT – a dedicated lane separated from regular traffic by a median, traffic lights along the line that change to let buses through quickly, plus all of the features already seen on the MAX line like raised boarding platforms and widely-spaced stops.

The SDX bus that pulls into Bonneville is jam-packed, with riders standing in the aisles and in the extended bus'

"accordion" section. It's 72 degrees outside on Nov. 23, and the air conditioning is blasting refreshingly cold air onto riders.

If the Bonneville Transit Center is Las Vegas' equivalent of Portland's transit mall, the SDX might be compared to Portland's light rail Blue Line. It connects with 21 of the city's 32 local-service bus lines, plus all of the BRT lines and the Las Vegas Monorail, a privately-funded transit line that connects some of the hotels on the Strip.

Its ridership reflects its utility: In September, the SDX carried nearly 16,000 riders daily, 9.2 percent of RTC Transit's overall ridership.

New line rises

Las Vegas' newest BRT line is the Sahara Express, a \$40.4 million project pitched as an expansion of a rapid transit service designed with speed in mind. The bus project included new shelters, landscaping and conversion of the six-lane boulevard's shoulders into dedicated bus lanes.

The SX line travels the length of the city, about 15 miles from a \$1 billion "locals casino" near Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area on the west to the working-class suburb of Sunrise Manor on the east.



RTC Transit in Las Vegas uses double-decker buses for its Sahara Express BRT route.

The Sahara Express had some of the features of BRT, but lacked many of the amenities that put the "rapid" in bus rapid transit. Sure, the ride is a bit more comfortable, it runs in its own lane, and the views from the double-decker bus' top level are nice.

But RTC Transit only reduced the Sahara Express' stops from four per mile to three per mile, and while transit signal priority was part of the upgrades, bus riders often sat alongside car drivers at red lights.

Plus, with the bus traveling in what had once been a breakdown and right turn lane, drivers turning right or stopping in the lane for no apparent reason slowed down the commute.

Riders reactions

The lack of improvement over regular service wasn't lost on Dennis Drake, who was on his way to the end of the line, at the Red Rock Resort.

"This ain't express, this is the regular Sahara route. They just call it express," he said. "An express bus has limited stops."

Tabatha Thomas was on her way from the UNLV area, near the Resort Corridor, to the far western suburbs, about 12 miles away. She said it was inconvenient, and usually carpools with friends to get where she's going.

"I don't like how long it takes to get from place to place," she said. "I pay good money to ride this bus."

What would it take for her to use it more often?

"Maybe if they had it running more often," she said.

Rod Horsley didn't mind the waits, but said the line wasn't for everyone. He said there are things that he likes better about the new BRT service, particularly boarding.

"If you've got a ticket, you don't have to swipe it – you just jump on," Horsley said. "I'm happy. This is the best route in the city, as far as I'm concerned."

He said the buses are on time more often during the day, and run more frequently than they used to at night. (Las Vegas offers 24-hour transit service, and the SX runs every hour in the pre-dawn hours.)

Still, he said the system wasn't perfect.

"If you've got to make it every day, unless you live – if you work

right off Sahara, like 100 yards or a quarter mile, it'd be great," Horsley said. But, he said, if a rider has to transfer or travel along distance, they "might as well get two jobs and buy a car" because of the length of time it takes to get around.

Applying to Portland

Las Vegas' eight BRT lines run the gamut of what can be called BRT service. They vary based on the type of communities they serve, the type of services they offer, and what destinations they connect to.

Their ridership numbers also vary widely. A route that connects to the suburb of Henderson and two colleges carries about 3,700 passengers a day; two of the suburban lines average fewer than 1,000 riders daily.



The Sahara Express BRT line in Las Vegas runs along a six-lane boulevard and has more than 10,000 riders a day.

The Sahara Express has more than 10,000 riders a day, an increase of 2,500 per day from the non-BRT service that predated it - but comparable to the ridership on regular-service buses that run on parallel routes connecting the suburbs to the Las Vegas Strip.

By comparison, TriMet's 4-Division Street bus from downtown Portland to Gresham carries about 9,100 passengers daily. TriMet's MAX Yellow Line averaged 16,400 riders daily last October, the lowest ridership of the Portland region's four light rail lines.

TriMet reports about 208,000 bus boardings daily and another 125,600 light rail riders.

BRT has enabled Las Vegas to build the bones of a relatively comprehensive transit network in just eight years. About one-fifth of Las Vegas' transit ridership is on those BRT lines.

The lines are also less expensive to build – Las Vegas' MAX line cost an inflation-adjusted \$3.18 million per mile, and the Sahara Express, which featured miles of landscaping improvements, came in at about \$3.75 million per mile.

By comparison, the Portland–Milwaukie Light Rail line costs about \$180 million per mile, not including the costs of building the new bridge over the Willamette.

That low cost and flexibility is why Metro planners are cautiously optimistic as they get set for transit studies of the Powell–Division Corridor from downtown Portland to Gresham, and the Southwest Corridor from Portland to Tigard, Tualatin and Sherwood.

A preliminary look at BRT on the Powell–Division corridor is expected to start in 2013. Early studies of BRT and light rail for the Southwest Corridor are underway.

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See also:

[Committee votes to look at light rail and bus rapid transit for part of Southwest Corridor study](#) (Oct. 22, 2012)

[Metro eyeing quicker, cheaper process for review of Powell–Division transit corridor](#) (May 17, 2012)

More links:

[Wall Street Journal: "The commute of the future: To get riders, buses try to be more like trains; skip red lights" \(Sept. 28, 2012\)](#)

[Learn more about the Southwest Corridor](#)

[View a map of the Powell–Division corridor](#)

[Metro Council zeroes in on tax rate for potential natural areas levy](#)

December 7, 2012 2:21 PM

Metro Councilors on Tuesday put a dollar figure on a potential levy to fund maintenance at the Portland region's parks and natural areas.

The councilors gave a unanimous thumbs-up to a tax rate of 9.6 cents per \$1,000 of assessed valuation for the potential levy. They're scheduled to decide later this month whether to put the levy on the May 2013 ballot.

Their non-binding decision to shoot for 9.6 cents per \$1,000 came after a lengthy report on compression, a quirk of Oregon's property tax system that could limit how much Metro collects on a potential levy.

Statewide property tax laws passed in the 1990s limit the amount of money governments can collect for operating expenses, including the levy Metro is proposing for natural areas maintenance, with the limit based on a property's real market value.

In some parts of the region, those values have plummeted in the last few years, causing compression to limit the amount of money governments can collect for levies. That's why some property owners have seen their property tax bills decrease, even as their assessed value – also set by a formula from the 1990s tax laws – has increased.

Brian Kennedy, a finance manager at Metro, said a rough look at the region's property taxes indicates Metro would raise a little more than \$1 million annually for each cent of a levy, if voters approve it and it starts being collected in 2013.

If compression goes away – which can be prompted by an increase in properties' real market values – that number could be higher.

"Part of what you have to think about with compression is what you think is going to happen with real estate values," said Metro chief operating officer Martha Bennett.

Compression could also become less of a factor if the state implements tax reform. But Councilor Barbara Roberts, Oregon's governor from 1991–95, didn't seem optimistic.

"When we finish at the state level with health care reform, PERS

reform and education reform, maybe somebody will get around to tax reform," she said.

Metro Council President Tom Hughes said he felt like 9.6 cents per \$1,000 rate was probably ideal.

"That means the median household of \$200,000 value would pay \$19.20 a year," Hughes said.

The 9.6 cents per \$1,000 number was less than the 10 to 12 cents recommended by an advisory panel convened earlier this year.

The council is scheduled to decide whether to send the levy to the voters at its Dec. 18 meeting.

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See also:

[Council could vote Dec. 18 whether to send natural areas levy to voters](#) (Nov. 27, 2012)

[Advisory committee recommends levy vote, but urges long-term thinking](#) (July 24, 2012)

[Give the gift of experiences at a Metro park](#)

December 7, 2012 2:19 PM



Metro parks passes for 2013 are a useful and thoughtful holiday gift. A pass offers users year-long access to Metro's Oxbow and Blue Lake regional parks, Chinook Landing Marine Park and the M. James Gleason Boat Ramp.

From Oxbow Regional Park, home to mink, beaver, salmon, elk, black bear and cougar, to Metro's Blue Lake Regional Park, host

to a new world-class, gold-level disc golf course, the pass provides a variety of outdoor options for families and explorers.

Since Metro's boat ramps no longer accept cash, an annual pass makes it easier to connect with nature. The 67-acre Chinook Landing Marine Park, adjacent to Blue Lake Regional Park on Marine Drive, has six launching lanes on the Columbia River, and is the largest public boating facility in Oregon. The park offers picnic and viewing areas, wetland and wildlife habitat, disabled-accessible docks, restrooms and a seasonal river patrol station.

The M. James Gleason Memorial Boat Ramp, located at Northeast 43rd Avenue and Marine Drive, is another convenient public boat launch on the Columbia River, minutes from downtown Portland. Amenities include launch lanes, boarding docks, restrooms, river maps and a river patrol office.

Metro's annual parks passes are valid from the time of purchase through Dec. 31, 2013. Purchase passes online, over the phone, 503-665-4995 option 0 or at Blue Lake and Oxbow park offices. Passes cost \$40 for the year. Senior passes cost \$30. For information about passes, call 503-665-4995 option 0.

[Purchase a pass online](#)

[Learn more about Metro parks](#)

[Elephant calf ownership arrangement seems routine, Hughes says](#)

December 7, 2012 2:16 PM

Metro Council President Tom Hughes said Tuesday the ownership arrangement for the Oregon Zoo's elephant calf seems routine, and expressed support for zoo officials in the wake of questions about the new addition's future.

"Zoo management are the most competent people," Hughes said in an interview Tuesday morning. "We have one of the best-run zoos in the country."

The elephant calf, born last week to zoo-owned elephant Rose-Tu, was sired by Tusko, an elephant owned by [Have Trunk Will Travel](#), a California-based elephant rental outfit.

[The Oregonian mentioned the ownership arrangement in 2011](#) and [again earlier this year](#), and the Seattle Times detailed it Monday night as part of a series of stories looking at elephant breeding and management in the United States. According to the Seattle Times, the calf, as the second-born offspring of Tusko at the Oregon Zoo, would be property of Have Trunk Will Travel.

The [Seattle Times story](#), coming days after the calf's birth, prompted an outcry Tuesday morning as the prospect was raised that the calf would not stay at Washington Park. Oregon Zoo director Kim Smith sent an e-mail to Metro councilors and hosted a press conference Tuesday.

Smith, in her press conference and in a statement, said the calf would not leave the zoo. She said the zoo had already been negotiating on the calf's future when the Seattle Times published its story.

"Negotiations are ongoing for Oregon Zoo ownership of Rose-Tu's latest calf," she said. "We are committed to our vision and negotiations were initiated prior to the birth of this latest calf."

Her memo said the arrangement was routine.

"This contract is representative of standard agreements in the zoo industry," she said. "While it may not be widely understood by the public, many animals live out their lives in the care of people who are other than their legal owners."

Hughes said he first heard about the ownership arrangement from Smith's memo, but thought the arrangement sounded routine.

"I think it is so common a practice amongst, not just the Portland zoo, but amongst zoos nationwide that they never gave it a thought," the Metro Council President said. "I think they don't believe it really had much to do with the final disposition of the animal."

He said he did not think the Metro Council needed to take a further look at animal ownership at the zoo.

"We have trained professionals that have operated zoos for a

long time," Hughes said. "My understanding is that this is not an unusual circumstance – that we have a number of animals that are owned by other folk that stay at the zoo for their entire lives."

Metro News editor Nick Christensen can be reached at nick.christensen@oregonmetro.gov or 503-813-7583. Follow Metro on Twitter [@oregonmetro](https://twitter.com/oregonmetro).

Note: *The Oregonian also mentioned the ownership agreement earlier this year. This story has been updated to a link to that article.*

[Transportation expert puts pedestrians on pedestal](#)

November 30, 2012 4:28 PM

To national transportation expert Ian Lockwood, pedestrians are the center of the universe.

"Originally, people thought that earth was the center of the solar system, but the calculations never made sense," said Lockwood, as he pointed to an illustrated PowerPoint presentation Wednesday night. "When we finally put the sun in the center, everything started to make sense. If you replace the earth with a car and the sun with a pedestrian, it's the same story."

Lockwood, a transportation engineer with a focus in livable communities, brought this idea of a pedestrian-centric city to packed audience on Nov. 28, including members of the Metro Policy Advisory Committee. Pinpointing the birth of automobiles as the negative turning point in city planning, Lockwood illustrated how cities can reclaim an environment where pedestrians and multi-modal transit options reign.

To get there, he said, mainstream laws and funding sources must shift their focus from modern transportation planning to traditional.

"Look at Detroit," Lockwood said. "It's an example of a city that embraced modernism early on, pushing its population to the suburbs and focusing on fast, car-centric arterials."

Detroit, he said, lost its vibrancy and culture with the modernist push, leaving traditional downtown housing structures empty and social nodes abandoned. As a visual metaphor, Lockwood

displayed a photo of an ornate theatre, the Michigan, home to many social galas and screenings in the early 1900s. Now, it lays gutted in downtown Detroit, used as a deteriorating parking garage.

As another example, Lockwood featured a main arterial street in Savannah, Ga. On one end, the transportation and land use layout featured traditional styles – or that of cities prior to the introduction of the car. For example, Savannah has lower traffic speeds, many mixed-use buildings, narrower connected streets and comfortable sidewalks. At the other end of the street, miles south, big box stores and speeding cars took precedent – forgettable zone.

"What we're seeing is everyone in major cities favoring the traditional layout of walkable, livable streets," Lockwood said. "It's the laws, rules, and funding sources that love the modern designs. Or at least are built on it."

To cure this disconnect, Lockwood said, cities must focus on rewarding shorter trips, a key player in traditional planning.

"We currently reward long trips, giving commuters the priority rather than the local communities they drive through," he said. "Smaller trips to boost your local economy and society should be the focus."

From Lockwood's brief stay in Portland, he said he saw the Southwest Corridor as an example of a arterial being put to good use. Focusing on the smaller communities that it connects, rather than simply ushering drivers through, is the corridor's greatest asset, according to Lockwood.

"There's no excuse in any city to have cars be the priority," Lockwood said. "It's time we go back in time to a city where pedestrians and city life thrive."

[Oregon Zoo elephant delivers second calf – it's a girl!](#)

November 30, 2012 4:05 PM



Newest member of zoo's elephant herd is born at 2:17 a.m. on Nov. 30

The long wait is over. Rose-Tu, an 18-year-old Asian elephant, gave birth to a 300-pound female calf at the Oregon Zoo at 2:17 a.m. on Friday, Nov. 30.

"We're all delighted at the arrival of Rose-Tu's new calf," said Kim Smith, Oregon Zoo director. "The calf is beautiful, healthy, tall and very vigorous. As soon as she hit the ground - before she was even out of the amniotic sac - she was wiggling. And she's vocalizing loudly. The first time we heard her, the sound was so deep and loud that we thought it was Shine. She's definitely got a great set of pipes, and it looks like she's going to be a real pistol."

Smith said Rose-Tu is doing well after more than 30 hours of labor and more than 21 months of pregnancy, thanks to a daily exercise regimen that has kept her in top shape. Zoo staff and much of the surrounding community had been on baby watch since Nov. 25, when Rose-Tu's progesterone levels dropped to near zero, indicating labor should begin soon. Rose-Tu entered early labor in the afternoon of Nov. 28 and began showing signs of active labor around midnight last night.

Immediately following the birth, the zoo's animal-care staff took the calf aside to clean it and perform a quick veterinary checkup, and they are now working to reintroduce the mother and calf.

"Rose is doing considerably better this time around," Smith said. "When Samudra was born, it was four days before she would even let him come near her, so we're much farther along this time. We're starting to see motherly behavior from Rose, and the calf is already nursing a bit. These are great signs that the mother-calf bond will be a strong one. Our animal-care staff is working hard to help the two along, and things are progressing every minute."

"Our keepers and veterinary staff have put an extraordinary amount of work and care into helping Rose-Tu bring her baby into the world," Smith added. "The time spent training and preparing has paid off, and the outcome is exactly the one we'd hoped for: Rose is safe and healthy, and she has a beautiful newborn calf. Now that the baby's here, we're all excited to watch her bond with Rose-Tu and take her place in the herd."

It might still take a little time before the new baby is ready for visitors though.

"The main thing determining that will be the strength of the bond between Rose-Tu and the calf," said Bob Lee, the zoo's elephant curator. "Rose should allow the calf to nurse regularly, sleep, play and generally act like a calf without trying to stop it and control its movements. Then we'll determine whether she's calm and comfortable with staff around. And finally, we want to make sure the calf has had a chance to bond with the rest of the herd."

Now that elephant keepers know the calf is a girl, they'll choose a short list of possible names and the zoo's elephant fans will have a chance to vote online, the same way they helped name big brother Samudra in 2008. Keep an eye on oregonzoo.org for more information.

The Oregon Zoo is recognized worldwide for its successful breeding program for Asian elephants, which has now spanned five decades. Counting the new calf, 28 elephants have been born at the zoo, beginning with Packy in 1962. The zoo's efforts have helped significantly expand understanding of elephant reproduction.

Rose-Tu became pregnant in late February 2011 by Tusko, the 40-year-old bull who also had sired Samudra. Throughout her pregnancy, keepers monitored Rose-Tu's health and led her

through exercises to facilitate a healthy birth.

The elephants at the zoo live in a matriarchal herd, as elephants do in the wild. The Oregon Zoo is poised to begin construction in 2013 on Elephant Lands, an expansion of the elephant habitat that will quadruple the elephants' space and dramatically enhance their experiences and daily routines.

The Association of Zoos and Aquariums' Species Survival Plan for Asian elephants recommended that Rose-Tu be bred with Tusko. The AZA, of which the Oregon Zoo is an accredited member, strives to maintain a sustainable population of the endangered elephants in North America. Currently, birth rates are lower than necessary to do so. With few bulls and low birth rates — combined with an aging female population — the North American elephant population is at of risk becoming extinct.

The Oregon Zoo's central role in the AZA's Species Survival Plan for Asian elephants has earned it an international reputation for its research and commitment to helping this endangered species. Asian elephants are considered highly endangered in their range countries, threatened by habitat loss and conflict with humans. Perhaps fewer than 40,000 elephants remain in fragmented populations from India to Borneo.

Through the International Elephant Foundation, the Oregon Zoo supports conservation projects that preserve elephant range habitat and reduce conflict with humans.

[Visit the Oregon Zoo](#)

[Oregon Convention Center hotel votes pushed back to 2013](#)

November 30, 2012 4:04 PM



A rendering of one of four proposals by Mortenson

Development. This proposal calls for one large hotel to be built north of the Oregon Convention Center.

The Metro Council is unlikely to vote this year on a proposed finance package for construction of a hotel near the Oregon Convention Center, after the regional government's staff asked for more time to negotiate with the project's developers.

Metro, Multnomah County and the Portland Development Commission have been negotiating for a month with the developers, a consortium including Mortensen Development and Hyatt hotels, over the scope and cost of the project.

In the agenda for next Tuesday's Metro Council work session, staffers say they've made progress in the negotiations, including agreeing to focus on building one 600-room hotel across from the Oregon Convention Center, instead of building two hotels that would total 600 rooms.

But the staff report said the lengthy labor negotiations between the developers and UNITE HERE, the union hoping to represent workers at the hotel, pushed back the window for negotiations between the local governments and the developers.

"Staff continues to work diligently to reduce the funding gap while maintaining the project principles of minimum public investment and risk," the report says.

"We set an aggressive timeline to get this project to term sheets by December and we're just not there yet," said Metro Council President Tom Hughes in a statement. "We'll conduct our due diligence for the sake of the public and we'll provide opportunities for the public to weigh in."

The delay likely means that any decisions on the hotel will be voted on by the two new members of the Portland City Council and three new Metro councilors set to take office after Jan. 1.

In an interview Thursday afternoon, Hughes said he is scheduled to meet with Portland Mayor-elect Charlie Hales on Dec. 10 to talk about the hotel and other issues.

"The idea is to do it at a pace that allows us to assure the new councilors coming on board to the Portland City Council that the project we're proposing is a sound project," he said.

At the work session next week, councilors will hear from a consultant who studied the potential economic impact of building a hotel near the Oregon Convention Center. Metro visitor venues director Teri Dresler said she has not seen the consultant's report, which is scheduled for release on Tuesday.

According to a Metro staff report, the Hyatt project would cost between \$157 million and \$200 million, depending on the site chosen for the project.

These negotiations are the latest phase of a years-long effort to attract a developer to build a hotel adjacent to the Oregon Convention Center, with the hopes that the availability of a large block of hotel rooms would encourage more national conventions to book the center.

Metro News editor Nick Christensen can be reached at nick.christensen@oregonmetro.gov or 503-813-7583. Follow Metro on Twitter [@oregonmetro](https://twitter.com/oregonmetro).

See also:

[Union, developers reach labor agreement on convention center hotel; more negotiations ahead on project](#) (Nov. 1, 2012)

[Metro Council signs off, and negotiations can start with Hyatt](#) (Sept. 13, 2012)

[PDC agrees to enter negotiations with Hyatt for convention center hotel](#) (Sept. 4, 2012)

[Advisory committee says Hyatt proposal should move forward, provided union issues are resolved](#) (Sept. 4, 2012)

[Metro saves more resources as it progresses on sustainability goals](#)

November 30, 2012 4:02 PM



Today Metro announced its

progress toward sustainability goals in internal operations. Metro's second report shows a year of results reaching key objectives in its Sustainability Plan, highlighted with success stories and strategies for further improvement.

[Read the report](#)

As a regional government committed to promoting environmental stewardship, and policies that help create and maintain healthy and livable communities, Metro is working to reduce its own ecological footprint and to be a good steward of public resources.

"Sustainable practices just make sense," said Metro Chief Operating Officer Martha Bennett. "Reducing our impact on the environment conserves energy, supports healthy ecosystems and saves money."

The report details progress in Metro's five goal areas related to operating more sustainably: reducing carbon emissions, choosing nontoxic products, preventing waste, conserving water and enhancing habitat.

Recent accomplishments at Metro facilities and venues:

- The Metro Central Household Hazardous Waste facility in Northwest Portland installed a 2,665-square-foot ecoroof.
- The Oregon Zoo won the Green Award from the Association of Zoos and Aquariums for significantly reducing the environmental impact of day-to-day operations over the past 21 years.
- PCPA's Arlene Schnitzer Concert Hall switched to LED lighting, which uses 85 percent less energy.
- The Oregon Convention Center hosted a "zero waste" summer concert series, recycling or composting 79 percent of its waste.
- Metropolitan Exposition and Recreation Commission (MERC) venues caterer pacificwild won a second place Portland BEST Award for local food purchasing, which puts \$1.8 million into the local economy each year.
- The Portland Expo Center more than tripled its recycling and

composting in two years.

To learn about Metro's sustainability program, contact Metro Sustainability Coordinator Molly Chidsey at Molly.Chidsey@oregonmetro.gov or 503-797-1690, or visit www.oregonmetro.gov/greenmetro

Burkholder honored with award from pedestrian advocates

November 26, 2012 12:12 PM



Metro Councilor Rex Burkholder was honored with a Weston Award from Oregon Walks on Saturday, recognizing his many years of active transportation leadership, advocacy and on-going emphasis on equity and social justice in transportation planning. The award was presented at the second annual Weston Award fundraising event on Nov. 10 in Portland, and honors the people who have helped make Portland a safer, healthier place to walk. Burkholder was one of four Weston Award honorees; others included Lidwien Rahman, Mark Edlen and Teresa Soto.

The awards are sponsored by [Oregon Walks, formerly the Willamette Pedestrian Coalition](#).

As Metro Councilor, former chair and current member of the Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation, Burkholder has consistently championed active transportation in the Regional Transportation Plan, transportation project selection and funding, and regional land use decision-making. Burkholder is credited with starting the bicycle revolution in Portland as a founder and policy director of the Bicycle Transportation

Alliance, helping to make it one of Oregon's most active grassroots organizations.

"Our work here is about basic freedoms," Burkholder said reflecting on his many years of pedestrian and bicycle advocacy to the standing-room-only crowd of advocates and elected officials, including the evening's emcee, Portland Mayor Sam Adams. Accepting the award, Burkholder said his guiding mission over the years has been to "make it so our most vulnerable – our children, honored citizens and those with no choice – have the freedom and ability to explore and enjoy our city as much as anyone else."

Burkholder first joined the Metro Council in 2001, hoping to use his energy, skills and knowledge gained as a community activist to help create a sustainable region. Now in his third and final term, he is proud of the progress Metro has made towards this goal. For example, he sponsored and now leads Metro's Regional Climate Action Strategy, working with regional businesses, governments and residents to combat climate change. He has also secured funding to support region-wide conservation education for youth.

As a community activist for the past 20 years, he was a founding trustee of the nationally recognized Coalition for a Livable Future, which unites more than 50 citizen groups on the issue of sustainability. As a parent-volunteer, Burkholder helped establish the Northeast Community School, an innovative, diverse charter school in Portland. He has been honored as the 1998 Most Effective Citizen Advocate in the metro region by 1000 Friends of Oregon and as a 1999 founder of a New Northwest by Sustainable Northwest.

[Learn more about Councilor Burkholder](#)

[Learn more about the Weston Awards](#)

[**Regional leaders tackle ways to develop hundreds of acres of brownfields**](#)

November 26, 2012 12:08 PM

It's easy to picture places like the old aluminum factory in Troutdale as an industrial site needing years of environmental cleanup.

After all, it's kind of a given that many factories will pollute, right? Even the most carefully constructed industrial operation will inevitably have a spill of some kind, or maybe employees and visitors will track chemicals out on the soles of their shoes.

That shuttered paper mill or shipyard may be the obvious example of a brownfield, a place at high risk for soil or water contamination because of decades of industrial use.

But stop and look around next time you go to the store. That gas station on the corner?

It's a brownfield – a property where expansion or re-development is complicated by possible or actual contamination.

The dry cleaners using decades-old equipment to clean your jacket?

That could be a brownfield, too.

Turns out, there are hundreds of small brownfields across the region, on parcels that cover 885 acres that might be hard to re-develop without some serious mitigation.

That's the equivalent of two Oswego Lakes or 26 Washington Squares, all of which are immediately flagged for study of possible contamination before new businesses can start developing.

In many cases, there's no obvious party responsible to fix whatever mess was left behind. And with voters ultimately responsible for policies that require brownfields to be mitigated before development, the public might end up with the role of getting those sites ready for rebirth.

That was the topic of discussion at last week's meeting of the Metro Policy Advisory Committee, where leaders from around the Portland region discussed ways to approach those parcels that sit in limbo.

A presentation at that MPAC meeting said the region has more than 6,000 acres of brownfields, an area a little larger than Oregon City. Those range from the small commercial lots to operating factories to former industrial operations now used for offices and stores.

The presentation suggested three ways the public could spur property owners to clean up the parcels: Tax credits for brownfield remediation costs, abatement of property taxes for the initial years of a brownfield project and a change to the way owners of polluted properties are taxed.

It also put out a few other ideas for discussion: A public entity charged with cleaning up or redeveloping brownfields, a regional fund to pay for brownfield cleanup, more streamlined grants for cleanup and establishment of a group to make it easier for developers to streamline brownfield cleanup, and to find grants to pay for it.

The need for more collaboration and assistance seemed to resonate around the MPAC table.

"The City of Portland is very interested in redeveloping brownfields, particularly in areas needing equity attention," said Commissioner Amanda Fritz.

But some of the funding concepts may not be as easy as they seem, warned Troutdale City Councilor Norm Thomas. He was concerned about urban renewal-type concepts to pay for brownfield mitigation.

"It's not that they're a bad idea, it's got a 20 to 30 year payback, so before we see revenue coming into the city to pay for other things, you've got to pay that off," Thomas said.

The presentation also suggested looking in to increased flexibility of what could be built on a brownfield.

That idea seemed to resonate with Bob Grover, the MPAC citizen representative from Washington County. He said that while some brownfields have serious contamination that needs to be mitigated, that might not be the case for all brownfields.

"Some of that stuff is maybe not quite so bad, and maybe we just need to say, some of the regulatory flexibility is we wish it wasn't there, but it's there, and can we develop on top of it and limit somebody's long-term liability and put it under a parking lot?" Grover said. "Sometimes we're trying to make the world perfect, and we'll never make it.

"Sometimes we treat everything as though it's cancer, and it's

just a scratch," Grover said.

The Metro Council is set to discuss brownfield issues in the next couple of months.

Metro News editor Nick Christensen can be reached at nick.christensen@oregonmetro.gov or 503-813-7583. Follow Metro on Twitter [@oregonmetro](https://twitter.com/oregonmetro).

[Visit DEQ's brownfields program website](#)

[Learn more about Metro's brownfields recycling programs](#)

[Smith and Bybee Lakes re-open to the public](#)

November 26, 2012 12:06 PM



Coordinated response and recovery efforts at Smith and Bybee Wetlands Natural Area limited the impact of a recent disease outbreak of avian botulism – saving the lives of thousands of migratory birds.

The lakes were closed to the public during the outbreak, which is now over. Avian botulism does not present a health risk for humans and, due to the completion of protection efforts, the lakes are open for paddlers to enjoy once again.

Avian botulism is a natural toxin often present in wetlands. However, the lengthy period without rain this summer, combined with warm fall temperatures, contributed to an unusually high level of the toxin. Even healthy, adult birds that would normally survive exposure to this type of botulism were affected. The concentration is now at a normal and safe level for

the many birds that use these wetlands at this time of year.

During the past eight weeks, Metro collaborated with the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, the U.S. Department of Agriculture Wildlife Services division, the Port of Portland and the Audubon Society of Portland to remove approximately 3,000 dead or dying birds, mostly green-winged teal ducks.

Since birds spending even a short time on the lakes were affected, Metro and its partners diverted healthy birds away from the area using air cannons and auditory frightening devices provided by the Port of Portland and the Department of Agriculture. Without action to move the birds off the lakes, it was anticipated that thousands more would have died, including several species with declining populations.

"In over 30 years of working with wildlife, this was by far the most impressive effort of cooperation and collaboration among regional wildlife conservation partners I have ever experienced," said Katy Weil, a senior analyst at Metro who managed the day-to-day recovery efforts. "It takes very special people to bury so many once-healthy birds, find innovative ways to contain and treat the live ones that could be treated, travel through thigh-high heavy mud while wearing chest waders in 90-degree weather - all while using large, ear-protecting head gear as air cannons fired around everyone every three to five minutes."

The Audubon Society of Portland accepted sick birds and provided supportive care while the botulism worked its way out of the birds' systems. More than 100 recovered birds have been released back into the wild on Sauvie Island and were able to continue their migration.

"The rehabilitation effort was very intensive. After the animals came in to the center, they received fluids and were force fed up to five times a day. We recruited an extra staff member and three extra volunteers a day to help. All in all we had about an 80 percent success rate," said Lacey Campbell, Audubon Wildlife Care Center operations manager, who helped treat and lead the long term care for the birds.

Watch Metro park ranger Kristina Prosser release birds into the wild

[Learn more about Smith and Bybee Wetlands](#)

[Metro seeks culture of inclusion through adoption of diversity action plan](#)

November 26, 2012 12:04 PM

The Portland metropolitan region is changing.

Latino, Asian/Pacific Islander, African American and other non-white populations in the Portland region increased by roughly 55 percent in the decade ending in 2010.

As communities become more diverse, so does the need to create an inclusive workplace culture and engagement practices connecting the public to decision-making processes.

Metro's response to the growing diversity across region began in 2005 with the formation of a diversity action team to better understand individual and group differences within its workforce and to cultivate a culture of inclusivity at Metro's multiple work sites throughout the region.

That response was formalized on Nov. 15 with the adoption by Metro Council of a Diversity Action Plan for Metro's 1,554 employees.

The plan identifies goals, strategies and actions to increase diversity and cultural competence at Metro in four key areas: internal awareness and diversity sensitivity, employee recruitment and retention, committee membership and public involvement and procurement.

The path to the final adoption of the plan included a survey in 2010 of Metro employees to collect feedback on issues of diversity, a series of diversity town halls held in the spring of 2011 for employees, a rigorous review process of the draft plan with 25 different employee groups within Metro, and review of the plan by diverse community leaders. The draft plan was

adapted to reflect the input from employees and community members.

[Read the results of the diversity survey](#)

In February 2012, Metro hired its first diversity program manager, Bill Tolbert, demonstrating the commitment of Metro leadership to creating a workforce and workplace culture reflective of the changing region.

Metro Councilor Rex Burkholder sponsored the resolution that called for the adoption of the plan by Metro Council. The final vote was unanimous.

"In adopting this plan, we are assuming the responsibility for maintaining this as a living document," said Burkholder. "(The plan) brings greater accountability to our decisions, our interactions, and how we convene the region to better serve our communities."

[View the adopted Diversity Action Plan](#)

[The eating season: Make the most of that edible holiday abundance](#)

November 16, 2012 2:12 PM



It's easy to splurge on something that comes only once a year. When friends and family gather to enjoy a favorite holiday, you want it to be special, not sparse. And those special meals of traditional recipes and family favorites often lead to leftovers – some say the leftovers are the best part.

Be sure all those leftovers end up in a belly and not in the garbage or your compost. It can be heart-breaking to toss out overripe stuffing, along with that hard-earned turkey everyone finally got sick of. When the food coma wears off and you get around to cleaning up after the meal, a little planning can help

you make the most of those delicious remnants:

- **Clean up quickly:** The sooner leftovers get into the fridge, the longer they'll last.
- **Freeze half:** Savor some of that green bean casserole in a couple of weeks rather than trying to scarf it all down in a few days.
- **Anticipate food fatigue:** It tastes good now, but after a couple of days, you and your family may not be able to face another dollop of cranberries. In addition to freezing, consider making soup or using recipes that transform your holiday favorites into different meals.

[Find T-Day leftover recipes](#)

- **Send meals home with your guests:** Make it easy to share the leftover wealth by saving reusable containers like yogurt tubs or asking your guests to bring their own.
- **Feed a neighbor:** Is there someone in your neighborhood who didn't cook at home this year and might enjoy a plate of leftovers?

Caterers can cut down on food waste, too – and help reduce hunger at the same time

In the season of food, area restaurants and caterers are also amping up. As volume increases for those special holiday parties, don't let surplus food end up in the garbage. Instead, make sure it helps to feed someone who needs it. Ask your caterer to join hundreds of other Portland-area caterers, restaurants and food service companies in fighting hunger and reducing waste through Metro's Fork It Over! food donation program.

[Find out more about Fork It Over!](#)

[Find other ways to reduce waste this holiday season](#)

[Find resources to help you save money at the grocery store](#)

[**Expanding natural areas expands benefits for wildlife and people, oversight committee reports**](#)

November 16, 2012 2:11 PM

Benefits for wildlife and people are multiplying as Metro

continues to invest a 2006 bond measure in natural areas across the region, an independent citizen oversight committee reported Thursday.

Metro has spent 62 percent of the \$227.4 million that voters set aside, but has already met its goal of protecting 4,000 acres of high-quality habitat across the region, according to the latest report from the Natural Areas Program Performance Oversight Committee. New analysis shows that as Metro natural areas expand, water quality and wildlife habitat improve more dramatically than they would on individual parcels of land.

The committee is charged with giving the Metro Council and the region an outside review of how Metro invests the natural areas bond measure. Its 17 members, who bring expertise in business and the environment, focused this year's report on the big picture.

"We wondered what the cumulative effects would be," said outgoing committee Chair Linda Craig, an accountant who has been active with the Audubon Society of Portland. "Now that we're six years or so into the program, we can say, 'Is there something greater here that's happening for the region than just the individual parcel acquisition?'"

The report concluded that Metro is "in a strong position for the coming years." As of June, Metro had spent 64 percent of the \$168.4 million designated to protect regional natural areas. The 4,000 acres purchased span the region's rivers, forests, savannas and wetlands, and feature many of the area's rarest plants and animals.

Of 27 "target areas" where Metro buys land, 17 have reached the halfway point toward acreage goals. At the committee's urging, Metro staff analyzed how well each target area is meeting bond measure goals such as improving water quality, making connections for wildlife and creating opportunities for people to enjoy nature - and found that the natural areas make a bigger difference in clusters than they would individually.

The committee asked Metro to stay on top of a handful of target areas where little progress has been made, and to undertake an even broader analysis: determining how well the entire 4,000-acre-and-counting portfolio of land meets bond measure goals.

Meanwhile cities, counties and park districts have spent about 70 percent of the \$44 million targeted toward local projects, and Metro has awarded 44 percent of the \$15 million available for Nature in Neighborhoods community grants. The oversight committee praised Metro's work to better evaluate both programs, and asked for further analysis of how well projects are serving their communities.

The committee also lauded a new database that makes it easier to track program results, as well as revamped guidelines for initial restoration work on new natural areas.

Metro councilors thanked Craig for her service and welcomed a new chair, Drake Butsch of First American Title. Councilors said they rely on the oversight committee to monitor and improve the Natural Areas Program.

"You've created a structure that gives me assurity, and gives the public assurity," said Councilor Rex Burkholder, "that we're doing a good job with their money."

[Read the oversight committee's report](#)

[Learn more about Metro's Natural Areas Program](#)

[**Metro Council OKs new Ringside Steakhouse contract at Glendoveer**](#)

November 16, 2012 2:09 PM

The Metro Council confirmed today that the Ringside Steakhouse - an eastside institution since 1979 - will continue operations at the Glendoveer Golf Course and Tennis Center.

The new 10-year lease includes an option for extensions ensuring that the Ringside can remain an anchor tenant at Glendoveer for many years to come.

"The Ringside is proud to have been a part of the eastside community since 1979," said Ringside Steakhouse partner Craig Peterson, "We are thankful that Metro has given us the opportunity to continue operating at the Glendoveer Golf and Tennis Center."

"Community feedback from public meetings and an Opt In survey last spring told us that the Ringside Steakhouse is an

important amenity and a destination in itself at Glendoveer," said Metro Councilor Shirley Craddick, whose district includes Glendoveer. "We are pleased to continue our relationship with this fine restaurant."

Metro staff has started working on improvements to the restaurant's building including a new roof, paint outside and infrastructure upgrades. The coffee shop, currently operated by the restaurant, will move to the clubhouse later this year.

About \$331,000 is set aside in the regional government's upcoming budget for improvements to Glendoveer, including accessibility upgrades to bathrooms, construction of a new cart barn and design and engineering for a new water tower. Other improvements include a new roof on the tennis center and new carpet and a fresh coat of MetroPaint in the clubhouse.

Those improvements are scheduled to be completed in 2013.

[Visit Glendoveer Golf Course and Fitness Trail](#)

[Transportation panel speeds up selection of projects intended to boost economy](#)

November 9, 2012 10:52 AM

With local agencies clamoring for transportation funding, regional leaders approved an expedited process for selecting projects eligible for \$34 million in federal funds on Thursday. Instead of following a local staff recommendation for projects to be nominated, evaluated and selected through September, members of the Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation decided to try to pick projects by January.

On the heels of [JPACT's Oct. 11 meeting](#), when the committee voted on what types of transportation projects would be eligible for this pot of money, labeled the Regional Economic Opportunity Fund, this meeting aimed to solidify the project nomination criteria.

A recommendation from Metro and the Transportation Policy Alternatives Committee suggested that three county coordinating committees, the City of Portland, TriMet and the Port of Portland each nominate up to two transportation projects totaling \$10 million by March, leaving JPACT with as much as \$60 million of projects to eventually slim down to \$34

million by September. However, an amendment first suggested by TriMet General Manager Neil McFarlane at Thursday's meeting called for the agencies to narrow their choices down to a list of strictly \$34 million in projects off the bat by January.

[Learn more about JPACT](#)

Washington County Commissioner Roy Rogers pushed for a December deadline, prompting Metro Councilor Shirley Craddick's question: "How does one month make a difference?"

"Business doesn't work on the same time frame as us," Rogers said. "It would be helpful for us to show that we're serious by moving quickly. It's not about us, it's a business process."

Clackamas County Commissioner Ann Lininger echoed Rogers' reasoning.

"I know right now that businesses are being courted to go to other states for help," Lininger said. "We need to signal to our local businesses right away that their needs will be met here."

While the amendment passed with a January deadline, Metro staff stressed the importance of public input. Robin McArthur, director of planning and development at Metro, said that in order for the amendment to work, agencies must be "committed to public engagement between now and January."

But Bill Wyatt, executive director of the Port of Portland, argued that most agencies have already had their fair share of public comment to push the process along.

"These projects didn't just fall out of the sky, it's been a very thoughtful development process," Wyatt said.

The discussion centered on regional flexible funds, a pool of federal transportation dollars that are controlled by metropolitan planning organizations, such as Metro for the Portland area.

[Learn more about regional flexible funding](#)

Now that the target for potential projects has been narrowed to \$34 million, it's expected that the six local entities would propose fewer, less pricey projects by the deadline. Based on Thursday's discussion, it appears JPACT is likely to receive four

project nominations by January totaling \$34 million: one from each of the county coordinating committees and one joint application from Portland and TriMet.

Although community groups didn't speak at Thursday's meeting, their emailed comments shared a similar belief: consistency.

Ron Carley, executive director of the Coalition for a Livable Future, wrote that JPACT "adopts these criteria and apply them to all of the \$33.8 million being allocated," an idea in line with views from the Bicycle Transportation Alliance.

"We ask the Policy Report be amended to explicably say that ALL projects must be scored under the criteria," wrote Rob Sadowsky, the BTA's executive director. "We believe that it is the responsibly of JPACT, Metro staff and community partners to ensure that projects are selected through a fair process."

[October debut for three transit-oriented development projects in Portland region](#)

November 9, 2012 10:50 AM



View from the rooftop common area at Central Eastside Lofts in the Lower Burnside area.

The first new housing development constructed in the Lower Burnside area in nearly two decades.

The rehabilitation of a shuttered hotel in Portland's Old Town/Chinatown into a college for oriental medicine that is helping revitalize the neighborhood.

A mixed-use student housing development that adds more than 980 beds to the Portland State University campus to meet the needs of a rapidly growing student community.

Three projects in three corners of the Portland region – Northeast, Northwest and Southwest – opened in October with investment from Metro's Transit-Oriented Development Program.

Metro's TOD program provides incentives, primarily in the form of modest funding grants, to private developers to build mixed-use, higher density housing and retail projects near transit.

Central Eastside Lofts



Reclaimed wood from the apartment buildings that previously occupied the site is used for shelving and other interior design features.

Central Eastside Lofts, located on the corner of Northeast Couch Street and Sixth Avenue in the Lower Burnside area, was still an active construction site at the end of the first week of October, despite seven signed leases and an Oct. 20 target date for the first tenant move-in.

The four- and five-story market rate housing development offers 70 units of studios and one- and two-bedroom

apartments and lofts, plus 10 ground floor retail/offices spaces.

"The development is a flagship for the area," said Josh Ring, construction supervisor for the project with Bremik Construction. "Everyone – architects and developers – is watching to see how it rents out."

The project started four years ago but was sidelined for two by the impact of the recession. "I started to turn a partially torn down apartment building into a new development and woke up one day to find it had become much more expensive than I anticipated," said Brad Fowler, project developer with Fowler/Andrews LLC. "(Metro) stepped in and helped bridge the gap."

The development, located just a half block from the new Eastside Portland Streetcar line on Grand Avenue, is anticipated to increase transit ridership and generate more than \$500,000 in fare revenues over the next 30 years.

Metro's TOD program invested \$300,000 in the project that is estimated to create more than 100 jobs and spur approximately \$17 million in total spending in the three-county Portland region during and after construction. Today, Central Eastside Lofts has 12 of the 70 residential units rented and two of the 10 commercial spaces leased to a hair salon and an art gallery.



The Oregon College of Oriental Medicine occupies the 100-year-old Globe Hotel building, refurbished to LEED Gold building standards.

Oregon College of Oriental Medicine

To ensure the building's ability to attract positive Qi – energy – into the space, a specialist in the Chinese art of feng shui reviewed the renovation designs for the 100-year-old building.

So it naturally follows that the grand opening of the Oregon College of Oriental Medicine should start with dancing dragons and a Great Compassion Qigong Ceremony.

Formerly the Globe Hotel and the Import Plaza at different points in its history, the proximity of the new home of the OCOM at 88 NW Davis St. in Old Town/Chinatown to the Mercy Corp education center and University of Oregon's White Stag Block creates a teaming education hub within a two-block radius.

The grand opening marked the conclusion of a year-long process of renovating the structure – including reusing 75 percent of existing walls, floors and wood – to a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Gold certification standard. Building features that encourage walking and bike commutes by students and clinic practitioners include covered bike storage, changing rooms and showers.

The new school location will accommodate the college's 60 full-time and 95 part-time program staff and faculty, and 265 full-time graduate students. Within steps of both bus and light rail lines, the project is expected to generate 164 additional trips per day and nearly 60,000 additional trips per year, resulting in \$2.3 million in additional fare revenues over the next 30 years.

In addition to housing master- and doctoral-level graduate programs in oriental medicine, the college treats patients at clinics on campus and in the community, bringing an affordable health care option to the neighborhood's underserved and aging population.

Metro invested \$170,000 in the project.



The student beds-per-acre ratio at University Pointe is 85 percent greater than other recent student housing construction.

University Pointe at College Station

Adding 900-plus beds to Portland State University's inventory of student housing boosts PSU's capacity to meet the needs of a growing campus and makes University Pointe at College Station the highest density project in Metro's TOD program portfolio.

By providing \$500,000 in funding to offset demolition costs of existing structures on the site, Metro helped clear the way for a private firm, American Campus Communities, to develop the property.

University Pointe leveraged more than \$120 million in spending in the region during and after construction. The project supported more than 700 jobs including those created from construction activity, by workers spending locally earned wages, and as a result of new resident spending after construction.

"University Pointe brings together a remarkable set of assets," said Metro Councilor Barbara Roberts after the opening. "Fabulous students, a beautiful new building, the environmental commitment the building demonstrates, light rail and bus stops, and over 1,300 parking spaces for bicycles. It demonstrates what it means to have vision and a commitment to long range

planning."

The project, located between Southwest Fifth and Sixth avenues and Jackson and College streets, helps support the university's goal to transition from a largely commuter campus to a more balanced and traditional campus. However, residents don't have to attend school to live in the development.

The 16-story high rise includes approximately 283 apartments, 15,000 square feet of ground floor commercial space, two new Yellow and Green Line MAX stations, 1,337 parking spaces for bikes, but no off-street parking for cars.

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[Union, developers reach labor agreement on convention center hotel; more negotiations ahead on project](#)

November 2, 2012 4:52 PM

Metro officials say they now can proceed to negotiations with a consortium hoping to build a hotel across the street from the Oregon Convention Center, after a labor peace agreement was reached.

Metro Council President Tom Hughes said at Thursday's council meeting the agreement was reached Tuesday.



A rendering of one of four proposals by Mortenson Development. This proposal calls for one large hotel to be built north of the Oregon Convention Center.

The four-party agreement included representatives from [UNITE HERE](#) Local 8, which represents hotel workers in Seattle and Portland, and the companies collaborating to pursue the hotel

project, which would add as many as 600 hotel rooms near the convention center. The negotiations for the labor peace agreement took about six weeks.

UNITE HERE has been locked in a worldwide dispute with Hyatt, the proposed hotel's owner, about union representation at most of its properties. But elected officials overseeing the planning of the convention center hotel stressed earlier this year that any hotel operator would need to reach a deal to have a labor peace agreement.

UNITE HERE senior researcher Nischit Hegde said the agreement ensures there won't be any economic actions or boycotts against the hotel when it opens.

"It's an opportunity for folks to decide, without intimidation, whether or not they want to join a union," Hegde said of the labor peace agreement.

Hegde said the hotel workers' union will now step back until the project is completed.

"Once the thing gets built, we don't have any say in who gets hired," she said. "Our direct work on this hotel will really start again once the hotel is opened."

That is expected in late 2015, according to the [Mortenson Development](#) proposal. Mortenson is proposing to build the hotel project.

Metro representatives stressed that the deal doesn't mean the hotel would be a union property, but it does spell out the process under which the hotel's union status will be decided. Messages to Hyatt's local public relations firm, left at 4:15 p.m., were not immediately returned.

The agreement gives Metro, the Portland Development Commission and Multnomah County the green light to begin negotiations with Mortenson, which is proposing to build as many as 600 hotel rooms and sell the property to Hyatt to operate as a Hyatt Regency-branded facility.

The key piece for the public partners to now negotiate: Money.

In exchange for guaranteeing that hotel rooms will be available for future conventions, and building a hotel near the convention

center instead of somewhere else in Portland, the government partners pushing the project would have to offer some cash up front to get those concessions.

Hyatt's initial proposal called for those incentives to be \$10 million to \$23 million. The hotel chain's proposal also calls for local room taxes from the property's rooms to be rebated back to the property for 30 years, which Mortenson estimated would bankroll \$111 million of the property's development costs.

"This project will create several hundred very good temporary construction jobs and about 450 good paying family-wage hotel jobs, so I'm really pleased they've gotten that labor peace agreement that ensures that will happen," Hughes said at Thursday's council meeting.

If the parties reach an agreement on public financing, it would have to be approved by the Portland City Council, Portland Development Commission and the Metro Council. The Multnomah County Commission could also need to sign off on some of the project's financials if they involve county taxes, such as the room tax.

"We see it as an opportunity for really good middle class jobs, and we're excited about it," Hegde said.

Metro News editor Nick Christensen can be reached at nick.christensen@oregonmetro.gov or 503-813-7583. Follow Metro on Twitter [@oregonmetro](https://twitter.com/oregonmetro).

See also:

[Metro Council signs off, and negotiations can start with Hyatt](#) (Sept. 13, 2012)

[PDC agrees to enter negotiations with Hyatt for convention center hotel](#) (Sept. 4, 2012)

[Advisory committee says Hyatt proposal should move forward, provided union issues are resolved](#) (Sept. 4, 2012)

[Finalists for convention center hotel proposal could be announced next month](#) (July 12, 2012)

[Metro's Nature University is now accepting applications for early 2013](#)

November 2, 2012 4:51 PM

If you love nature, enjoy working with children and have access to personal transportation, consider becoming a volunteer naturalist by attending Metro's Nature University. Nature University is a 12-week training course that starts people along the path of becoming naturalists and teachers. Students are introduced to time-honored techniques of nature observation and principles of discovery learning, and learn about common wildlife and plants, the ecology of wetlands and ancient forests, and effective teaching techniques. At Nature University, students receive the training needed to become a qualified and confident Metro volunteer naturalist.

Nature University students learn the importance of careful observation and the use of field guides, skills that can be applied in a lifelong process of learning and sharing with others. No special experience is required, but a background in natural history and biology and working with groups is helpful. Metro is accepting applications through **Nov. 5, 2012. Don't delay!**

Watch a video testimonial from Deborah Stokes, Nature University graduate.

Free training and resources include:

- first Aid/CPR training
- opportunities for continuing education and training on various natural history topics
- fees waived for attending Metro classes
- annual Metro parks pass (\$40 value)
- ongoing guidance and support from Metro staff naturalists

[Learn more about Nature University and download an application](#)

[Learn more about the Oregon Zoo's premier conservation education program](#)

[Learn more about Metro parks](#)

[Find hundreds of nature activities, paddle trips, bike rides, bird walks, volunteer ventures and natural gardening workshops offered all around the region](#)

[Purchase an annual parks pass](#)

[Zoo-assisted study to search Cascades for wolverines](#)

November 2, 2012 4:44 PM

Biologists seek first photo evidence of species in western Oregon

Some will tell you it's a pygmy variety of bear. To others, it's a superhero with fierce sideburns. On the spectrum of enigmatic beasts, it's only slightly less mysterious than a sasquatch. But the wolverine is a very real animal, and biologists want to know whether the species is living in Oregon's Cascade Mountains.



"Everyone agrees that the wilderness around the Three Sisters, Mount Washington and Mount Jefferson contain wolverine habitat," said Jamie McFadden, biologist and project leader with Oregon Wildlife. "But there's never been any photographic evidence of them from that area."

The wolverine – a 40-pound, tough-as-nails member of the weasel family – is naturally uncommon throughout its range. Between 1921 and 2000, fewer than 10 verified sightings were recorded in Oregon.

McFadden hopes her remote camera-trap survey, an Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife project funded in part by the Oregon Zoo's Future for Wildlife grant program, will yield the first documentation of this rare creature in Oregon's Cascade Range.

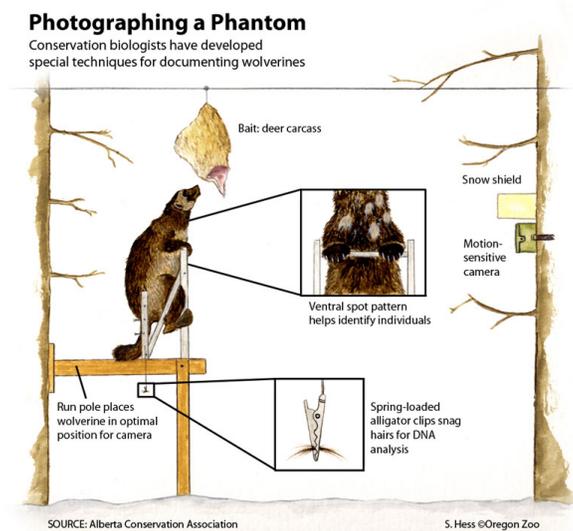
"The wolverine has a state status as threatened, and it's a federal candidate under the Endangered Species Act," McFadden said. "We're hoping this study will help inform state and federal wildlife management agencies for decisions about wolverine and forest carnivore conservation efforts."

Nobody knows whether wolverines breed in Oregon, but in

2008, one was camera-trapped in Northern California. DNA from a hair sample it left behind suggested the animal was from Idaho.

Then, in 2011, biologist Audrey Magoun captured Oregon's first wolverine photos during her camera-trap survey in the northeast corner of the state. DNA from one those animals also suggested an Idaho lineage.

"Are the wolverines using Oregon as a dispersal corridor, or do some actually live here?" McFadden asked. "That's one question that we're trying to answer."



[Enlarge](#)

Adult male wolverines lay claim to a home range of about 350 square miles – the equivalent of two people occupying all of Washington County. Young animals in search of their home turf cover even more ground.

"We radio-collared one sub-adult in Montana that roamed an area of about 14,300 square miles," Magoun said.

That wandering spirit makes wolverines hard to find. To see them, biologists turn to camera surveillance.

"We now have a pretty sophisticated camera-trap system," McFadden said. "We can coax a wolverine into taking a picture of itself while striking a certain pose that reveals its identity and

sex – and even, if it's a female, whether it's lactating during the spring months."

A lactating female means kits are nearby, and finding one is the only way scientists can prove that Oregon has home-grown wolverines. But capturing photos of any wolverine – lactating or not – is a challenging affair.

"It involves snowshoeing uphill through miles of dangerous avalanche country while wearing a heavy backpack," Magoun said. "Wolverines don't make it easy. That's probably why they've lasted so long."

First, McFadden and her team members will find a spot with two trees spread about 10 feet apart. They'll run a cable to which they attach the bait – typically a slab of road-killed deer.

"An animal carcass is like a dream come true for scavenging wolverines," McFadden said. "When we see a road-killed deer, we often pick it up. This requires a special permit from ODFW."

Because wolverines are extremely tenacious, the team must drill a hole through a bone in the carcass to use as the attachment point.

That also helps keep other predators, such as black bears, from pulling it down prematurely.

The team then installs a platform just tall enough for a wolverine to climb and access the bait. When it reaches up, it exposes the unique pattern of cream-colored spots on its chin and chest – a sort of wolverine fingerprint.

Aiming at the whole setup is a camera that takes a picture whenever it detects movement.

The system can also reveal a wandering wolverine's hometown. The furry beast must squeeze through a gauntlet of spring-loaded hair-snag clips in order to reach the bait.

"If a viable hair sample is collected, the DNA can be compared against a library to determine whether a wolverine may have come from Idaho or Washington or elsewhere," McFadden said.

McFadden and her project team began deploying camera traps in October and plan to check them every three to six weeks. If

any wolverines are photographed, those cameras will be checked more frequently.

"This is a particularly exciting and important project," said Dr. David Shepherdson, deputy conservation manager with the Oregon Zoo. "Managing for carnivores provides wildlife linkages between habitats that can be used by other species."

McFadden also hopes her camera traps will collect critical data on other sensitive species, such as American marten and montane red fox. Even if she finds no wolverines, she will have successfully conducted the first systematic photographic wolverine survey in Oregon's Cascades.

"Nobody thought we'd find them in the Wallowas, but we did," Magoun said. "If Jamie finds wolverines in the Cascades, so close to a large human population, it will be way bigger news."

This project is a partnership of the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Oregon Wildlife, the Oregon Zoo, The Wolverine Foundation and others.

[Visit the Oregon Zoo](#)

[A personal message from Councilor Burkholder: My last newsletter!](#)

November 1, 2012 6:00 AM

Whew! It was almost 12 years ago that I took my first oath of office as Metro Councilor from District 5. Now I've reached my 12-year, three-term limit and I want to say goodbye and thank you. I've had a great time representing you and working to make this an even better place to live. And to make [Metro](#) a better agency, providing great service to the more than 5 million people we touch every year through the [Oregon Zoo](#), the [Oregon Convention Center](#), our parks, solid waste services and more.

I ran for office because I saw how transportation profoundly affects our lives—for good and sometimes bad. I was Policy Director of the [Bicycle Transportation Alliance](#) before filing for office and thought that being elected to Metro would expand my ability to help our region become a more sustainable, affordable, safer and friendlier place to live. I love to ride my bike. Besides being good for my own personal mental and

physical health, I knew that communities where people feel safe on the street—whether walking, biking or driving—are just plain better places to live.

As a member of the [Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation](#) (chair for six years) and many other state and regional transportation committees, I was able to make good things happen. Now, when I look around the region I see new bike lanes, new light rail lines and new sidewalks. I look at the [Census numbers](#) that show that people are walking and cycling more than they have in decades. We are also slimmer and healthier because of this. And we have more money in our pockets to spend on things that really count.

While transportation planning can seem wonkish and removed from daily life, what we build and where we build it makes a difference. Done right, it can further our shared values—caring for our families, promoting good health, supporting active, vital neighborhoods and keeping our air and water clean. At Metro, I was able to change how this region chooses transportation projects, creating a [principled process](#) based on clear, equitable and shared outcomes rather than politics. In fact, Congress just enacted a new transportation bill that requires every region in the country to use this “[performance-based](#)” planning we pioneered!

I think it is something in my Midwestern upbringing that caused me to look hard at how Metro worked and put the same principles of transparency, accountability and innovation into place. In my short time here, we implemented changes to Metro's structure to better professionalize management, strengthen the agency's financial foundation, improve results and enhance accountability. We also made fundamental changes in how we ran the Oregon Zoo as well as the Oregon Convention Center, Expo and Portland Center for Performing Arts. We also overhauled our [budget processes](#), winning awards for transparency and ease of understanding from national groups and praises every year from the [Tax Supervising and Conservation Commission](#), a citizen group charged with overseeing the budgets of all governments in Multnomah County. Our [two AAA bond ratings](#)—best in the State—are testimony to the hard work of Metro staff and the attentiveness of the Council to good financial management practices.

I'm also proud of my efforts that:

- banned smoking on all Metro properties;
- convinced voters to reject a [ballot measure](#) (Measure 26-11 in 2002) that would have destroyed this region's ability to plan for growth;
- brought together many conservation educators in the region to coordinate and expand their work together, resulting in Metro re-thinking its own outreach on issues like recycling, habitat protection and smart commuting. Another great result is a new \$10M [Regional Conservation Education center](#) to be built at the Oregon Zoo;
- kept [Outdoor School](#) programs operating for kids throughout the region with a small fee on waste placed in landfills;
- re-directed [hundreds of millions](#) of dollars to making our communities safer places for our families to walk and bike;
- made preparing for and helping prevent [climate change](#) a key part of our growth management and transportation work;
- changed the conversation about growth in this region to one about [community aspirations and opportunity](#) ("what do we want to be when we grow up") instead of about government mandates;
- helped launch [The Intertwine](#), a new regional organization bringing nonprofits and businesses together to protect our nature and encourage citizens to enjoy it more;
- brought together for the first time, elected leaders from the [other five metropolitan areas in Oregon](#) to work together to solve the challenges of urban growth and transportation;
- led Metro's efforts to [engage an increasingly diverse community](#) through new hiring and engagement practices, leading to a substantial commitment to new equity strategies, and
- provided a voice to citizens who had an idea, or a concern, from toxic substances in the air, to coal trains, to getting [MetroPaint](#) for a community project.

I am still amazed by all the opportunities that have been part of my Metro experience, whether planting trees along I-205 with [Friends of Trees](#) (4 times!) or speaking in Quito, Guadalajara, or

Malaysia on the “Portland Story.” I am thankful for the recognition I’ve received for this work, although I owe my success to many. I was asked to be a Global Ambassador for [Ciclovía](#) (very popular in Latin American cities, think [Sunday Parkways](#) with up to 1 million people every week!), was named the “Most Effective Elected Official of 2012” by the [Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations](#) and a “Special Friend of Conservation Education” by the [Environmental Education Association of Oregon](#) for my work on Outdoor School. I also got to go to Europe to study how cities there are creating [Low Carbon Economies](#) with funding from the [German Marshall Fund](#). Cool Stuff! And much fun!

If we are to keep this place a good one—for living, working, raising a family—we must continue to work hard. We face many challenges, not least the disturbingly wide gap between those that have and those that don’t. I will keep working on these issues as Citizen Rex. I urge you to pick an issue and do what you can to change this world for the better.

Thanks again for the opportunity to work for you!

[**Transportation fund aims to boost economy, make more equitable access to jobs**](#)

October 26, 2012 12:30 PM

The Portland area could invest \$34 million in transportation projects that create jobs, make safer streets and improve access to jobs for low-income and minority communities.

Those are some of the primary criteria proposed to guide regional investment in a new Regional Economic Opportunity Fund. The fund is the invention of regional elected officials and transportation agency leaders who serve on the Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation, a panel that, along with the Metro Council, controls federal transportation investments in the region.

[See also: JPACT will focus on jobs for additional \\$38 million in transportation funds](#) (Oct. 11, 2012)

Metro planners have turned the general guidance from JPACT into a proposal on how specifically to judge whether a project is worthy of funding. The proposal’s criteria will be aired for their

first public discussion on Friday at the Transportation Policy Alternatives Committee, comprised mainly of transportation planners from cities and counties across the region.

A final decision on the criteria expected at the Nov. 8 JPACT meeting, which subsequently has to be affirmed by the Metro Council. In December, Metro staff will publish evaluation measures, the specific ways the criteria will be measured.

Comment on the funding formula

JPACT takes public comment on the Flexible Funds criteria and measures. The public can email comments on the criteria by noon Nov. 7 to trans@oregonmetro.gov for inclusion in Nov. 8 JPACT meeting materials. Draft criteria are available in the [packet for the Oct. 26 TPAC meeting](#) and a revised draft will be available Nov. 1 in the [packet for the Nov. 8 JPACT meeting](#). In November, Metro will offer a public comment opportunity on draft evaluation measures for the criteria, which staff will finalize in early December.

The \$34 million is part of a three-year pool of federal programs, known as regional flexible funds, which are expected to provide about \$94 million to the region in 2016–18. Though the funds overall make up only 4 percent of regionwide transportation investments, they attract considerable attention because they can be spent on a wide variety of local projects. Over about 15 years, flexible funds provided about half the financing for the regional trails used for recreation and bicycle commuting. The funds also have financed road projects that unlock freight bottlenecks and provide safe pedestrian crossings.

In the last funding cycle for the program, regional leaders in 2011 approved several projects that could nurture the economy and improve transportation access for low-income and minority communities. A \$1.5 million project in Forest Grove will improve truck and bicycle access at the intersection of Highway 8 and Highway 47, which serves two key freight routes. A \$3.2 million project in Portland will provide safe pedestrian crossings and sidewalk improvements to Southeast Foster Road, from Southeast 50th to Southeast 84th Avenue, where Metro's data shows a higher than average concentration of minority, low-income and elderly populations.

Advocacy groups have recently taken aim at the program. Some called for more investment in active transportation – infrastructure that makes it safer to bike walk or take public transit. Others pushed for more road improvements near industrial sites where new businesses could take root.

[Transportation panel says focus investments on 'jobs, jobs, jobs'](#)
(Sept. 14, 2012)

In addition to the \$34 million for the new economic fund, JPACT has directed staff to split another \$35 million between two categories it created in 2011: 75 percent for active transportation/ complete streets and 25 percent for green economy/freight. The criteria for those programs is anticipated to be largely the same as the region used when it made funding decisions on those programs last year.

The economic opportunity fund was previously expected to have \$38 million to invest, but recent estimates from federal and state officials have revised that figure to \$34 million.

[Learn more about the Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation](#)

[Learn more about Regional Flexible Funding](#)

[Learn more about Metro's role as the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Portland region](#)

[Rain gardens protect rivers and streams](#)

October 26, 2012 12:01 PM

Drizzles got you down? Make the most of the season by creating a rain garden in your yard. It'll help protect rivers and streams from polluted storm water, and add a beautiful feature to your yard. Metro natural gardening expert Carl Grimm shared top rain garden tips today on KATU's AM Northwest.

So what is a rain garden?

- It's a sunken garden bed that catches and filters runoff from roofs, driveways or other hard surfaces. It keeps polluted water out of our storm-water system, instead helping clean it and replenish our groundwater supplies.
- Planted with beautiful native plants, it adds habitat for

birds, bees, butterflies and other beneficial insects, and thrives without chemical fertilizers or pesticides.

- Rain gardens help make rivers and streams healthier for you and for fish.

What are the essentials of building a rain garden?

- Plan carefully. You'll need a site that's not too steep, that drains well, and that does not slope into your foundation or your neighbor's property. You'll also need to calculate the size of the garden to make sure it can handle the amount of water draining into it. Not every site is suitable. Consult your city, county or storm water utility to be sure.
- Dig, plant and mulch. Once you have a plan checked out by your local jurisdiction, you can get to work digging the sunken area and mounding up the edges. Work some compost into the soil, plant your native plants and spread some mulch. The plants and mulch help filter pollutants from the water. A stone or splash block at the downspout outflow helps prevent erosion.
- Disconnect your downspout . Be sure your downspout outflow is 2 to 3 feet from the foundation (or 5 feet if you have a basement), and cap the drain it went into.
- Monitor and maintain. Always check to see that your rain garden is draining well – it should not be full for more than two days. Typically after a few years you'll need to thin out the plants, and amend and mulch the soil.

Seek the help of an expert

Rain gardens can be fairly tricky to design and install. Contact your city, county, soil and water conservation district, or storm water utility first; many offer free site visits, financial incentives, plans and other resources.

Get a free copy of the Oregon Rain Garden Guide by calling Metro at 503-234-3000.

[Learn more about natural gardening](#)

Local approvals and resources

Contact your city, county or storm water utility:

- [Washington County Clean Water Services](#)
- [Gresham](#)
- [East Multnomah Soil and Water Conservation District](#)
- [West Multnomah Soil and Water Conservation District](#)
- [Clackamas Soil and Water Conservation District](#)
- [City of Portland](#)
- [Oregon Tilth Organic Land Care practitioners](#)

[Waste recovery reaches new highs in 2011](#)

October 26, 2012 11:59 AM

Oregonians are throwing away less trash than ever before, according to a new state report.

The report, from the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality, said the state recovered more than half of the municipal waste generated in 2011, while reducing per-capita waste disposal to the lowest amount recorded in the past 20 years.

The report ranks the Portland area third-best in the state, recovering 59.3 percent of municipal waste in 2011. The region trailed Eugene and Salem last year.

That rate is up from 42 percent in 1996, 54.9 percent in 2007 and 57.9 percent in 2010.

Metro waste reduction supervisor Meg Lynch couldn't be happier with the news, particularly considering the state's economy.

"This shows that in spite of the fact that the economy is still suffering, the region and state is very committed to recycling," Lynch said.

While recycling and reuse may seem a staple of frugality, Lynch said that people are more likely to buy less, rather than reuse more, during an economic downturn.

"Luckily, recycling is one of our state ethics. It's what we do," she said. "This is reflected in the report."

On the Metro level, Lynch said electronics, paint, paper and scrap metal disposal and recovery have become more common in the past year. While Metro had a goal to reach a 64 percent reduction rate by 2009, the economy threw a wrench in the pre-economic downturn plan. Lynch said that regardless,

Metro's waste facility is 1.5 percent closer to that goal after 2011.

"It's nothing but good news here," Lynch said.

Alex Zielinski can be reached at alex.zielinski@oregonmetro.gov or 503-813-7538. Follow Metro on Twitter [@oregonmetro](https://twitter.com/oregonmetro).

[Oregon Zoo to host howlin' good time](#)

October 26, 2012 11:57 AM



Trick-or-treaters can fill their bags with goodies and learn about wildlife Oct. 27-28, during Howloween at the Oregon Zoo, presented by Sterling Bank. The event runs from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. and is free with zoo admission.

In keeping with the zoo's mission, Howloween aims to be educational as well as fun. An intriguing scavenger hunt directs trick-or-treaters to easily accessible activity stations throughout the zoo. Activities are themed to teach kids about animals around the zoo, and their habitats and adaptations. Goodie bags filled with candy and prizes will be given out for completed hunts at the zoo's exit.

As part of Green Halloween — a nationwide initiative to make Halloween healthier and more eco-friendly — some of the zoo's goodie-bag treats are being provided by Stretch Island Fruits and Larabar.

Additional support for Howloween is provided by FedEx in association with the Safe Kids Coalition. Volunteers from FedEx will be at the zoo Saturday, Oct. 27, reminding children and

adults to be safe and seen on Halloween. FedEx will provide reflective giveaways to increase children's visibility during evening hours and present safety tips for parents and drivers.

Throughout the weekend, visitors can watch the zoo's enrichment team provide animals with holiday-themed treats like pumpkins stuffed with snacks. Enrichment items such as pumpkins help keep the zoo's animals mentally and physically stimulated.

[Learn more about Howloween](#)

[Portland pedals to another successful 2012 Bike Commute Challenge](#)

October 19, 2012 4:53 PM



Portland area resident's dedication to being America's No. 1 bike city shined in September as they logged more than 1.25 million miles in the 2012 Bike Commute Challenge. During the month, 11,745 cyclists from 1,395 teams logged their trips to and from work during the challenge; a friendly competition between work sites to encourage people to bike to work.

Metro is proud to sponsor this effort that supports clean air and healthy communities with a Regional Travel Options grant.

Please join us in congratulating the 2012 BTA's Bike Commute Challenge Winners...

Business & Non-Profits

- 1 employee: HoltzReport, Dr. Jeffrey D Sher, Kohles Bioengineering, The Copy Center at Camera Graphics, Willamette Pedestrian Coalition, Boont Rocks!, Pedal PT - All 100%

- 2–4 employees: Glad Rags – 100%
- 5–24 employee: Cast Iron Coding – 100%
- 25–99 employees: WSI – 90.95%
- 100–499 employees: SERA Architects – 53.04%
- 500–plus employees Wieden + Kennedy – 14.18%

Public Agencies

- 1–24 employees: Commissioner Saltzman’s Office – 56.39%
- 25–99 employee: U.S Geological Survey Portland – 37.57%
- 100–499 employees: Portland Bureau of planning and Sustainability – 32.69%
- 500–plus employees: Oregon Department of Environmental Quality – 11.20%

Bike Shops

- 1–8 employees: Metropolis Cycle Repair – 96.50%
- 9–15 employees: Bike Gallery – Downtown – 96.45%
- 16–plus employees: Bike Gallery – Operations/Warehouse – 47.64%

Other Awards

- Most New Riders: Daimler Trucking – 45 new riders
- Brian Reynolds Distance Award: Jeff Capizzi, Portland State Office Building – 1,524.1 miles
- Brad Buchanan Team Captain of the Year: Paula Funatake of NWEA

Fun facts about biking

- Half of all trips in the U.S. could be replaced with a 20–minute bike ride.
- Households that walk and bike as the primary modes of travel save an average of \$694 per month.
- Biking helps decrease your risk for cancer, heart disease, obesity and diabetes.
- Replacing a car trip with a bike trip helps keep the air in our neighborhoods clean.
- The region has more than 600 miles of on–street bike routes and 235 miles of off–street trails.

[Find out more about the Bike Commute Challenge](#)

[Check out Metro's Bike There! map to find the safest route to work](#)

[Find out more about Metro grants available to fund projects that promote biking, walking and transit](#)

[Make this month Walktober with the Willamette Pedestrian Coalition](#)

October 19, 2012 4:51 PM



It's Walktober! Spearheaded by the Willamette Pedestrian Coalition and sponsored in part by Metro, this three-week celebration through the end of October encourages discovering your surroundings on foot.

Leading up to Halloween – the best walking holiday of the year – the coalition is hosting organized walks and encouraging others to organize their own group walks through an open calendar. The calendar enables anyone to create, post, and lead a walk. The (mostly) free walks range from nature walks, bilingual park tours, knit-bombing expeditions, and pub-crawls.

The Willamette Pedestrian Coalition is a 501(c)(3) non-profit advocacy organization dedicated to promoting walking and making the conditions for walking safe, convenient and attractive throughout the Portland metropolitan region.

[Learn more and start your own walk](#)

[Salmon coming home to Oxbow Regional Park](#)

October 12, 2012 5:20 PM

Want to witness the region's most beloved creatures in their epic journey through the rivers? Promise, there's nothing fishy here – it's just salmon season! This fall, Chinook salmon will complete their remarkable journey from the Pacific Ocean to the Sandy River, returning to their spawning grounds to start another

generation of wild Oregon salmon. Join Metro at Oxbow Regional Park for a front row seat to one of nature's most amazing and fascinating events – the salmon homecoming. Metro naturalists will be on hand at the river's edge to help spot spawning salmon and interpret their behavior and life cycle for two weekends from 11 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. on Oct. 13, 14, 20 and 21.

Once salmon have matured at sea, they undergo drastic physical changes to leave salt water for their freshwater journey home. This is a fish on a mission! With a nose like a GPS unit, salmon use their sense of smell to guide them back to the very river or stream that was their original place of birth. The run up the river can be exhausting, requiring them to navigate hundreds of miles upstream against strong currents, over waterfalls and through rapids. Once they make it to the finish line, intense competition begins as their spawning ritual unfolds. Come see for yourself!

Oxbow Regional Park offers many opportunities for families to connect directly with nature. If you're not hooked by salmon – take part in a rafting trip on the Sandy River on Oct. 20, join Metro in a guided tour of a salmon restoration project at Happy Creek on Oct. 14, or learn about fungus in a mushroom class on Oct. 20, exploring Oxbow's ancient forest.

[Find out more about Salmon homecoming](#)

[Want to learn more about other native Pacific Northwest animals? Go to the Oregon Zoo Cascade exhibit](#)

[Learn about Metro's Oxbow Regional Park](#)

[**JPACT will focus on jobs for additional \\$38 million in transportation funds**](#)

October 12, 2012 5:18 PM

Sticking with a September plea for spending money on "jobs, jobs, jobs," the region's transportation purse string holders approved a multi-million dollar funding package Thursday, rebuffing last-ditch efforts to change an staff-recommended funding formula.

The formula, put forward after a September discussion at the Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation, set aside

\$37.8 million from 2016–18 for transportation projects that meet specific criteria as part of a so-called Regional Economic Opportunity Fund.

[Learn more about JPACT](#)



Portland Mayor Sam Adams, left, listens as Washington County Commissioner Roy Rogers, right, talks about transportation funding at the Oct. 11, 2012 JPACT meeting.

Another \$26 million would be spent on active transportation projects for cyclists and pedestrians, with \$8.7 million set aside for freight transportation projects. That money was expected all along, but the \$37.8 million is a new pot of cash, mostly from the federal government, for regional leaders to spend.

Both the active transportation and freight funding streams will see more money per year than they get now, but cycling advocates grew concerned that the 75 percent share for their projects, agreed to in 2010, was being watered down.

"It is unacceptable to the BTA (Bicycle Transportation Alliance) to consider overturning our current policy commitment to spending 75 percent of the total funds on active transportation and complete streets projects and 25 percent on freight projects," wrote alliance advocacy director Gerik Kransky in an action alert earlier this month.

Under the BTA's proposal, \$54 million would have been set aside for bike and pedestrian projects from 2016–18, instead of the \$26 million already allotted.

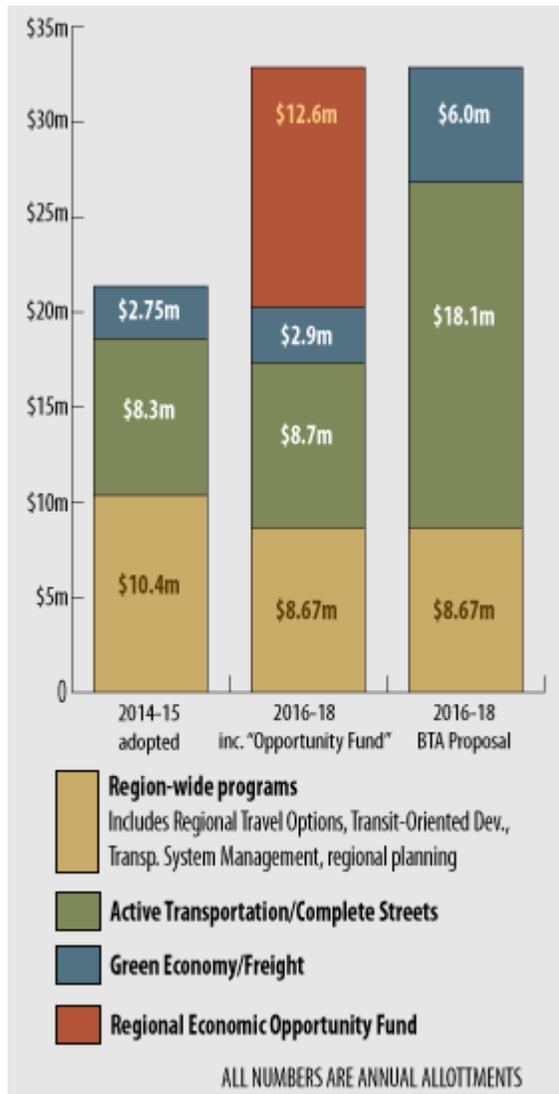
[See also: Transportation panel says focus investments on 'jobs, jobs, jobs'](#) (Sept. 14, 2012)

Suburban representatives to JPACT, meanwhile, were facing their own challenges, particularly the pushback against projects

perceived to benefit the urban Portland lifestyle and not suburban commuters.

JPACT funding scenarios

JPACT agreed to spend 75 percent of about \$11 million a year in discretionary funding for 2014–15 on active transportation projects. The committee met Thursday to discuss how to spend an extra \$12.6 million a year in discretionary money from 2016–18.



Clackamas County Commissioner Ann Lininger said her county needed to stay at the regional planning table in order to have a sustainable region that protects farmland, forest land and open spaces and invest in regional transportation systems.

"We recently made the decision to support transit investments because we have a commitment to our regional partners," Lininger said. "You know it has not been easy."

She went on to say the previously-agreed package, called Option 3, will help to increase access to industrial areas, and help create jobs in the suburbs.

"I think we absolutely need to go to Option 3 to keep our regional team in tact, now and in the future," Lininger said.

JPACT was not scheduled to discuss whether to go back to the 75-25 formula or to adopt the \$37.8 million opportunity fund. The official point of Thursday's discussion was what criteria to use to decide what projects would qualify for the opportunity fund.

Jason Tell, the director of the Portland region for the Oregon Department of Transportation, pushed for \$27 million of the money to be split between three projects - roads near the Interstate 84 interchange in Troutdale and near the U.S. 26 interchange at Brookwood Parkway in Hillsboro, plus money roads near an initial phase of the Sunrise Corridor, a freeway and trail from Interstate 205 to Damascus. The remainder would adopt the 75-25 percent split.

But Tell's proposal got limited support at the table, and drew rebukes from some, including TriMet general manager Neil McFarlane.

"When we start picking one for each county, this begins to feel to me like regional sub-allocation," McFarlane said. "That's a concern. That's not what the federal government established a MPO (metropolitan planning organization) to do. I think it's a slippery slope."

Metro Councilor Rex Burkholder said the funding selection process should remain open around the region.

"Based on what I see here, the three projects would certainly qualify," Burkholder said. "Are they the only projects we should consider for a big hunk of money? I don't know that. Let's go through the process here."

Still, Tell continued to push for the earmark option.

"I don't think this is an opportunity to write you a check," responded Metro Councilor Carlotta, who chairs JPACT.

Where the committee didn't seem too interested in earmarking money for specific projects, JPACT members did respond to calls to add environmental justice factors to the selection criteria for the \$37.8 million.

Cynthia Gomez was one of a handful of members of the public to offer opinions on the funding formula.

"Latino community members are looking for Metro to do the right thing," she said. "Our community seeks transportation justice."

Her comments at times mirrored a letter from Jonathan Ostar, director of OPAL, an environmental justice advocacy group.

"Without sound demographic analysis to ensure that investments are not only distributively equitable across race and socioeconomic lines but are also meeting the prioritized needs of our underserved communities, we will continue to miss the boat on environmental justice," Ostar wrote.

Portland Mayor Sam Adams, before voting in favor of the formula, called for as much as possible to be spent on safety projects.

"I'm passionate any remaining money be devoted to safety, especially safety for vulnerable transportation users," Adams said. "The carnage - it's too bloody, all over the region."

The committee adopted environmental justice, equity and safety considerations as factors for selecting projects to be eligible for the \$37.8 million. It also said the projects should be ranked on their ability to serve identified transportation corridors and improve safety.

Those joint factors recommended by Metro's transportation planners, including criteria used for federal grants, recommendations from the Community Investment Initiative, recommendations from the Greater Portland Export Plan and impact on the Regional Industrial Site Readiness Project.

At the request of ODOT's Tell and Washington County Commissioner Roy Rogers, the committee called for the

selection process to be expedited.

After those criteria were spelled out, the committee voted unanimously (with one abstention) in favor of the new formula.

Metro News editor Nick Christensen can be reached at nick.christensen@oregonmetro.gov or 503-813-7583. Follow Metro on Twitter [@oregonmetro](https://twitter.com/oregonmetro).

Note: *An earlier version of this story mischaracterized JPACT's September discussion on the \$38 million. JPACT did not vote to endorse a funding formula at its September meeting; members verbally said they prefer the \$38 million to be spent on jobs. Staff then took the verbal communications of JPACT members and translated that into a funding proposal, voted on at the Oct. 11, 2012 JPACT meeting.*

An earlier version of this story also said ODOT's request was for freeway interchange improvements. An ODOT spokesman said late Thursday the money would go toward roads near those interchanges.

This version has been corrected.

[Metro events, October 3-9: Get to know your plants](#)

October 5, 2012 2:41 PM

This week, get familiar with the region's plant life. With activities like discovering ancient mushrooms in Oxbow Park, you'll quickly become an expert on the area's diverse flora. The best part is, most of the events are low-cost or free, and registration can be completed online. Follow the links below for more information.

[Honeybee Hikes](#)

10-11 a.m., Wednesday, Oct. 3
Leach Botanical Garden, Portland

[Get friendly with plant families](#)

1-3:30 p.m., Sunday, Oct. 7
Cooper Mountain Nature Park, Beaverton
Advanced registration required

[Ancient forest mushrooms class](#)

2-4 p.m., Sunday, Oct. 7

Oxbow Regional Park, Gresham
Advance registration required

More things to do brought to you by GreenScene

Metro GreenScene provides a calendar of free and low-cost nature activities, gardening workshops and volunteer ventures offered all around the region by Metro and other partner organizations.

[View the online calendar](#)

[Visit the Intertwine's calendar](#)

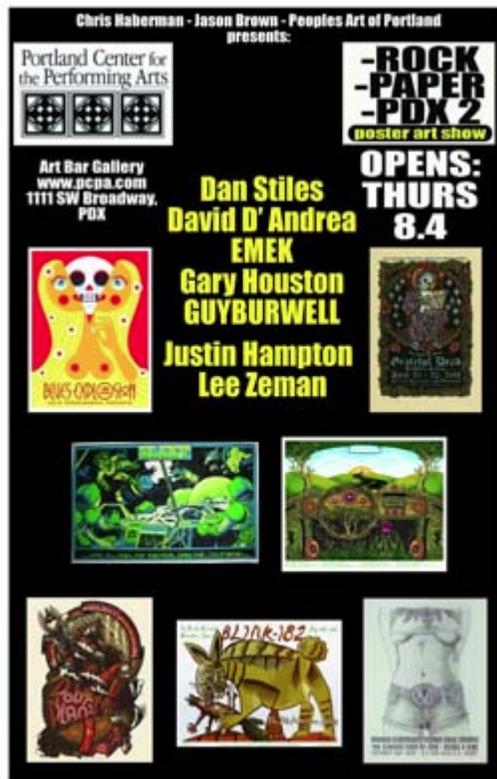
[Visit the GreenScene page](#)

[Follow on Facebook](#)

[Follow on Twitter](#)

[Rock Paper PDX exhibit returns to Portland Center for the Performing Arts for First Thursday](#)

October 5, 2012 2:40 PM



Rock Paper PDX, presented by

the Peoples Art of Portland Gallery, will return for a month-long exhibit of rock music poster art beginning with a First Thursday reception in Antoinette Hatfield Hall on Oct. 4, 2012, from 5:30 – 8:30 p.m.

Seven local artists, all recognized leaders in the music industry for their poster graphic design and imagery supporting national acts, will showcase their work. A wide range of styles and craftsmanship will be displayed, from hand-drawn 1960s-era psychedelic posters to album covers for modern bands such as Radiohead and Pearl Jam.

The artists on exhibit are Dan Stiles, David D'Andrea, EMEK, Gary Houston, Guy Burwell, Justin Hampton and Lee Zeman.

"The Rock Paper PDX exhibit is expected to be another smashing success," said Robyn Williams, executive director of the Portland Center for the Performing Arts. "Their show was wildly popular last year and we're thrilled they are returning for another run."

"Opening our venue to local artists such as those with the Peoples Art of Portland is important to our overall mission of increasing access to and interest in the local arts scene," Williams said.

Rock Paper PDX begins October 4 and runs through the 31st in the main floor lobby of Antoinette Hatfield Hall, located at 1111 SW Broadway St. in Portland.

[Learn more about the Peoples Art of Portland Gallery](#)

[**Public invited to GLEAN inspiration during last days of local art exhibit**](#)

September 28, 2012 5:08 PM

Even the most passionate recycling enthusiast can get a shade greener this weekend by visiting an environmental art exhibit that showcases ways to create more and waste less. GLEAN runs through Sunday, Sept. 30 at Disjecta Contemporary Art Center of Portland.

The collection was created by five local artists using trash salvaged from garbage delivered to the Metro Central Transfer Station in Northwest Portland. The works range from sculpture

to mixed media assemblage to wearable art.

Gallery hours: noon to 6 p.m. Thursday through Sunday

Location: Disjecta, 8371 N. Interstate Ave., Portland

Cost: free

The project is a public, private, nonprofit partnership between Metro, the regional government that guides the region's garbage and recycling system; Recology, an employee-owned company that manages resource recovery facilities; and Cracked Pots, an environmental arts group that manages the program. Now in its second year, GLEAN takes its inspiration from Recology San Francisco's renowned artist in residence program.

[Find out more about GLEAN](#)

[Metro seeks applicants for four community member seats on influential transportation committee](#)

September 26, 2012 4:23 PM

Metro's Transportation Policy Alternatives Committee, or TPAC, is seeking volunteers interested in transportation issues to serve on the panel starting January 2013. There are four community-member positions up for appointment.

TPAC is an advisory committee that reviews regional plans and federally funded transportation projects across the three-county Portland area. It advises local and regional leaders on transportation spending priorities as well as policies related to transportation, such as efforts to curb greenhouse gas emissions and create communities with easy access to public transit. It also recommends needs and opportunities for involving the public in transportation matters.

[See TPAC application information and application form \(online and PDF options\)](#)

An essential responsibility of TPAC is to advise the Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation, JPACT, a panel of elected officials and transportation agency executives that controls federal transportation spending in the Portland area. TPAC also advises the Metro Council, which reviews and must approve all major JPACT actions.

TPAC is comprised of 15 professional transportation staff appointed by area cities, counties and government agencies, and six at-large community members. Metro seeks residents for appointment this year who can bring expertise in the following areas related to transportation planning:

- the transportation needs of low income and minority communities, commonly referred to as environmental justice concerns;
- economic development, the economy, small business or freight movement;
- the needs of underserved communities such as the elderly and disabled and youth;
- health, air quality, and climate change connections to transportation.

Three positions are for appointment to a two-year term. A fourth position would fill one year left of a term, resulting from a vacancy. All would have the potential for appointment to a second term.

Community members of the committee are often members of nongovernmental organizations that have members who are concerned with particular transportation modes or a set of issues that relate to transportation. Though an affiliation with such a group is not required, Metro seeks community members who can demonstrate that they can help inform the community about upcoming transportation projects and decision points. Applicants who work as consultants for firms doing business with the local government agencies represented on the committee will need to demonstrate in their applications and interview materials that they have community interests beyond their professional interest in the committee's work.

Community members of TPAC are selected through an application, interview and appointment process. Metro council members who serve on JPACT and Metro staff will conduct interviews and recommend candidates for the Metro council president to nominate. Candidates nominated by the council president must be confirmed by the Metro council.

All applicants should be able to attend regular meetings that take place on weekdays during normal working hours. The committee meets from 9:30 a.m. to noon on the final Friday of each month, though additional special meetings are sometimes

called.

Metro seeks diverse representation on all its advisory committees. Women and minorities are strongly encouraged to apply.

Visit www.oregonmetro.gov/tpac to submit your application online, or download the form and mail it completed to Metro Council Office, Attn. Kelsey Newell, 600 NE Grand Ave., Portland, OR 97232. Applications are due at Metro by 5 p.m. on Oct. 19, 2012.

For more information on the application process, call Kelsey Newell, 503-797-1916. For more information on TPAC roles and responsibilities, call Dylan Rivera, 503-797-1551. Hearing impaired may call TDD 503-797-1804.

[Learn more about TPAC, including bylaws, a member roster and meeting agendas](#)

[Learn more about the Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation](#)

[Learn more about Metro's role as the metropolitan planning organization for the region](#)

[Councilors unanimously call for thorough examination of coal's impacts](#)

September 21, 2012 2:51 PM

Metro councilors voted unanimously Thursday to call on the federal government to study the impacts of coal exports on the Portland region, in advance of proposals to export the fuel from the West Coast.

More than 20 people testified at Thursday's council meeting, the vast majority of whom supported Metro's request for further study of coal transport. Many called on Metro to go further with its resolution.

The coal resolution was sponsored by Councilor Rex Burkholder, who said earlier this week that his primary concern was the potential impact coal trains would have on the region's traffic.

[See also: Coal resolution set for Thursday's council meeting](#)
(Sept. 20, 2012)

Coal export, said Friends of the Columbia Gorge field organizer Sam Lockhart, would turn the Columbia River Gorge "into the coal chute of the nation." She said each car of coal can lose up to a ton of cargo as dust and debris during transport.

[Read Burkholder's resolution \(PDF\)](#)

But Union Pacific representative Brock Nelson said rail transport is the safest, most environmentally responsible way of moving freight in the U.S. He called on the council to reject Burkholder's resolution.

"It is clear that the issue of exporting coal has become an energized, emotional subject in Portland and in the Pacific Northwest region," Nelson said. "Wherever you stand on the issue of exporting coal for energy production, Union Pacific would ask that when it comes to the topic of rail transport of any commodity - including coal - you look at the facts."

While the resolution called for just that, it was clear that Metro councilors were trending against coal in general. Councilor Barbara Roberts harkened back to her time on the Columbia River Gorge Commission in discussing why she was supporting the resolution, saying she was shocked to think about coal trains rolling through that scenic area.

She said she hopes the federal government "will do a more thorough job of examination than we have seen them do in places like Hanford."

Councilor Carl Hosticka went beyond research and on to principles.

"Regardless of what the impacts are, I don't think we should be enabling the further use of coal on the planet," Hosticka said.

Councilor Carlotta Collette lauded efforts in East Asia to move away from heavily polluting energy sources, and suggested the Portland region has a role in those efforts.

"For the region to facilitate it (the use of coal) by letting it come through here would be a huge mistake," Collette said. "I don't know how huge. I don't know how bad the impacts are. I want to know what they are, and I want to have them quantified."

Metro News editor Nick Christensen can be reached at

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Celebrate the Willamette River and North Portland this weekend with Metro

September 21, 2012 2:48 PM

This Sunday, Sept. 23, join Metro at RiverFest. Now in its fifth year, the weekend event offers a family-friendly chance to get out and explore the river: take a tour, clean-up the riverbank, view river spectacles and enjoy live music.

In addition to the river's history and environment, learn about Metro's voter-approved Natural Areas programs and grant support for projects in North Portland. Help shape decisions about future investments in the community. Tell Metro what you think; take a short survey at the event.

[Learn more about RiverFest, including a calendar of events](#)

Metro transportation panel says build projects that create jobs, leverage private money

September 14, 2012 9:50 AM

Transportation panel says focus investments on 'jobs, jobs, jobs'

With an unexpected \$37 million to spend on transportation for three years, a Metro committee said the region should use the money to help boost the sputtering local economy.

"Everything today is about jobs, jobs, jobs," said Washington County Commissioner Roy Rogers.

Rogers and other members of the [Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation](#) weighed options for how to invest the funds at a meeting on Thursday. The money is part of a program known locally as regional flexible funding, a relatively small pool of transportation money the federal government sends to metropolitan planning organizations across the nation, including Metro.

Some of the money is already designated to help pay for recent MAX light rail extensions. Some of it is expected to fund regionwide programs that finance high-tech road improvements, transit oriented housing developments and

public education tools that help people bike, walk and use public transit.

But the flexible funds can be spent on nearly anything transportation related, so they attract a lot of attention. Two years ago, the regional leaders on the committee were deeply divided over how to prioritize part of the program for capital improvements. In a split vote, they approved spending 75 percent on active transportation – biking, pedestrian and public transit access – and 25 percent on green economy and freight projects.

The \$37 million comes from additional money allocated by Congress to the federal program and a decision to allocate the funding over three years instead of two, as was previously the pattern.

The overall three-year program is forecast to have \$146.6 million available from 2015 to 2018. In addition to the \$37 million, the proposal assumes \$26.1 million for active transportation and \$8.7 million for green economy freight, along the same 75–25 percent split as approved in 2010.

Many seemed reluctant to go back and have the tough 75–25 percent conversation over again. Metro staff suggested three options for how to spend the \$37 million: Option 1, invest using the same 75–25 percent split the region did in 2010; Option 2, split the money by different percentages; Option 3, invest in those two categories and some new project categories.

Portland Mayor Sam Adams couldn't attend the meeting, but sent a letter saying the city prefers Option 1. The letter said he wanted to give the program more time for the region to judge the impact of the projects funded using the 75–25 split.

Rogers said he'd like to reverse the 75–25 split, giving the larger share to freight.

Metro Councilor Kathryn Harrington said the council is open to a variety of options. Harrington said she thought there would be interest in adding money to the active transportation and green economy/freight categories, since many worthy local projects were not approved in recent years for lack of funds.

Overall, Option 3 carried the day on Thursday.

"We need to focus our transportation resources on investments that are going to create significant jobs benefits and economic opportunity benefits," Clackamas County Commissioner Ann Lininger said. "This money could be a lynchpin that takes these projects from the drawing board to implementation."

The private sector has invested energy into the [Community Investment Initiative](#), Lininger said, so that effort should have a role in helping make sure the flexible funds projects help with economic development.

Option 3 also won support from Rogers and Multnomah County Commissioner Diane McKeel.

Based on Thursday's discussion, Metro staff said they would develop a proposal for JPACT to discuss in October. Staff said the proposal would attempt to address economic opportunity, take a system wide approach, leverage private sector investments and consider corridor safety. Staff said they also would consider the criteria in a federal program known as TIGER, Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery.

The committee is expected to vote to finalize the program in November and local agencies are expected to submit project applications to Metro by Feb. 15.

[Learn more about Regional flexible funding](#)

[Learn more about the projects approved in December 2011 for the last flexible fund cycle](#)

[Learn about Metro's role as the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Portland area](#)

See also:

[Metro Council applauds collaboration, equity in allocation of transportation projects](#) (Dec. 19, 2011)

[Equity concern on Portland Bike Sharing program overshadows flexible funding decision](#) (Dec. 8, 2011)

[Oregon Zoo wins three national awards for conservation, environmental efforts](#)

September 14, 2012 9:48 AM

Zoo is honored by peers at national gathering of zoos, aquariums



The Oregon Zoo received three prestigious awards from colleagues at zoos and aquariums across the country Wednesday – two for conservation work on behalf of imperiled Northwest species plus a special Green Award for environmental efforts in its day-to-day operations. The awards were announced in Phoenix Wednesday at the Association of Zoos and Aquariums' annual conference.

"These awards are like the Oscars of zoos and aquariums," said zoo director Kim Smith. "They not only recognize the Oregon Zoo's commitment to wildlife and the environment, but show that we have earned the respect of our peers in the zoo and aquarium world. We are very, very proud."

The zoo, along with its conservation partners at the Woodland Park Zoo and Northwest Trek, earned top honors in the association's North American Conservation Awards category for the collaborative Oregon spotted frog reintroduction project. The award recognizes exceptional efforts toward regional habitat preservation, species restoration and support of biodiversity.

The Oregon Zoo and Woodland Park Zoo took home a second North American Conservation Award, for the significant achievement of their cooperative Oregon silverspot butterfly captive rearing program.

"Oregon spotted frogs are disappearing from the wild at an alarming rate," Smith said. "Along with our conservation partners, we hope to boost the Pacific Northwest's spotted frog population and reverse the damage done by loss of habitat, invasive predators and the chytrid fungus. Butterflies like the Oregon silverspot pollinate plants, so ensuring their survival helps protect entire ecosystems. It's gratifying to know that the zoo and its conservation partners have made significant strides in the recovery of these species."

[Learn more about the zoo's recovery efforts](#)

The Oregon Zoo was also honored with the association's Green Award, recognizing "significant achievement" in reducing the environmental impact of its day-to-day operations.

In 1991, the zoo became one of the first Association of Zoos and Aquariums institutions to establish an in-house "Green Team" - a group of staff members that reviews programs and operations with an eye toward sustainability and conservation. The zoo has since expanded its recycling and composting programs to the point where nearly 80 percent of all solid waste is diverted from landfills. New animal habitats, a veterinary medical center and a new education center all are guided by a 20-year master plan that aims to reduce the zoo's environmental impact while increasing awareness among visitors.

"If we want a better future for wildlife, it's crucial for us to conserve natural resources now and make sure all of our operations are environmentally sustainable," Smith said. "It makes sense for the zoo to walk the walk, and be a model of green operations in the community."

[Visit the Oregon Zoo](#)

[GLEAN art exhibit opens Friday, Sept. 14; challenges ideas about consumption, waste](#)

September 14, 2012 9:46 AM

Artists have used found objects in their work for a very long time; it's nothing new. They're accustomed to inspiration arriving in familiar, but unexpected packages: dog food labels, cigarette foil, curtains, socks, window screening, bicycle tire tubes, a scrapbook dating back to the early 1900s that

documents the story of a young bride. Their skills lie in uncovering a facet of popular culture and drawing conclusions about it to help us understand it more thoroughly.

GLEAN, an unique environmental education program, gives Portland area artists access to a steady stream of discarded materials at the Metro Central transfer station, a stipend and an exhibit to showcase their works. The opening reception for GLEAN is from 6 to 9 p.m. Friday, Sept. 14 at Disjecta Contemporary Art Center in North Portland at 8371 N. Interstate Ave. The exhibit remains at Disjecta through the end of September.

The goal of GLEAN is to get people to think about their consumption habits, consider new and innovative ways to conserve resources, and initiate a larger conversation about the waste we generate. Now in its second year, the program is a collaboration between Metro, the regional government that guides the region's garbage and recycling system; Recology, an employee-owned company that manages resource recovery facilities; and Cracked Pots, an environmental arts group that manages the program.

The artists, selected by a jury of arts and environmental professionals, include Andrew Auble, Chandra Glaeseman, Greg Hanson, Jennifer LaMastra and Sarah Wolf Newlands. Reflecting the diversity of talent in the Portland region's creative class, the group consists of instructors at area art schools, graduates of well-known universities and an art therapist. They are award winning professionals whose works have been in solo and group shows - locally and nationally.

Their work ranges from sculpture to mixed media assemblage to wearable art. They use modern and archaic forms, altering the commonplace into non-traditional and sometimes formal compositions.

Those who visit the exhibit will have an opportunity to nominate their favorite piece by each of the five artists shown. The results of the People's Choice Awards will be posted on Metro's website after the show comes down.

Take a look behind the scenes at the GLEAN exhibit, watch the artists sift through trash at the Metro Central transfer station, visit their studios, and learn more about what you can do to

create more and waste less at Metro's website at www.oregonmetro.gov/glean. For more information, contact Amy Wilson (503) 278-0725.

[Learn more about GLEAN](#)

[Metro Council signs off, and negotiations can start with Hyatt](#)

September 14, 2012 9:44 AM

Regional officials got a green light Thursday to start negotiations with a team led by Mortenson Development, which hopes to build one or two hotels near the Oregon Convention Center.



A rendering of one of four proposals by Mortenson Development. This proposal calls for two hotels to be built north of the Oregon Convention Center.



A rendering of one of four proposals by Mortenson Development. This proposal calls for one large hotel to be built north of the Oregon Convention Center.

The Metro Council voted 6-0 Thursday to authorize its staff to talk to Mortenson, which proposes building 600 Hyatt-branded rooms across the street from the Metro-owned center. The council would still have to approve any agreement reached with

the developers.

About a dozen people spoke in favor of the proposal at Thursday's meeting, saying it would bring jobs, conventions and maybe even an NBA All-Star Game to the Rose City if it was built.

But downtown hoteliers continued to express their desire that the project have protections for the current hotel market.

Proponents of building a hotel at the convention center – a project that has been talked about for decades – argue it will help Portland attract more large conventions to the area. Regional officials say a public subsidy would be required to convince a hotel owner to keep rooms available for big conventions.

Hyatt's proposal calls for a subsidy of \$10 million to \$23 million, depending on which of the four Hyatt proposals is selected. It also calls for a 30-year rebate of most room taxes; Willamette Week recently estimated that could be worth \$111 million to the hotel's owners.

Scott Cruickshank, the Oregon Convention Center's executive director, said several convention operators have told him they will not come to Portland or return until it is built. Meanwhile, he said, about 2,000 hotel rooms are under construction adjacent to the Neal Kocurek Memorial Austin Convention Center in Texas and 700 rooms are planned adjacent to the Spokane Convention Center.

"Spokane will quickly become one of our greatest competitors," Cruickshank said.

Sarah Mensah, chief operating officer of the Portland Trail Blazers, said the city's hotel situation is one of the reasons Portland has never hosted an NBA All-Star Game.

"Many conventions are primed for Portland and they need a convention center hotel to get here. I have seen this ... as it relates to working to the NBA to try to bring an All-Star Game to Portland," she said. "To this date, we have not been able to put a viable proposal in front of the NBA because we do not have a convention center hotel."

As he did Wednesday before the Portland Development Commission, attorney Tim Ramis spoke on behalf of downtown hotel operators, calling for more study of the proposal and a room rate floor.

"See what's really happening in terms of our competition across the country," Ramis said. "Are we really in a period where there's an expanding market, or is the direction the opposite? That's an important question before you make this investment."

Metro Councilor Carl Hosticka also wanted to know more, but was ready to proceed with negotiations. He said a public subsidy could be appropriate under the right circumstances.

"I will be looking, as we go through this, to compare the size of the subsidy and shape of the subsidy to the public benefit that will come from the hotel," Hosticka said. "I appreciate the testimony from people who say we have to be very careful in scrutinizing and assessing the public benefit. If it turns out that the benefit exceeds the investment from the public, I'd be happy to support it as it goes forward."

Councilor Barbara Roberts said Metro's vote was all about a closer look at the project.

"What this next step is about is taking the time to get it right," she said.

Councilor Rex Burkholder was excused from Thursday's meeting.

Metro News editor Nick Christensen can be reached at nick.christensen@oregonmetro.gov or 503-813-7583. Follow Metro on Twitter [@oregonmetro](https://twitter.com/oregonmetro).

Note: An earlier version of this story did not include specifics about the public subsidies requested by the developers. This version has been updated.

See also:

[PDC agrees to enter negotiations with Hyatt for convention center hotel](#) (Sept. 4, 2012)

[Advisory committee says Hyatt proposal should move forward, provided union issues are resolved](#) (Sept. 4, 2012)

[Finalists for convention center hotel proposal could be announced next month](#) (July 12, 2012)
[Metro Council will hear proposals for privately funding convention center hotel](#) (April 26, 2012)

[PDC agrees to enter negotiations with Hyatt for convention center hotel](#)

September 14, 2012 9:42 AM

Portland's main urban renewal board voted Wednesday to enter negotiations with developers proposing to build 600 hotel rooms near the Oregon Convention Center.



A rendering of one of four proposals by Mortenson Development. This proposal calls for two hotels to be built north of the Oregon Convention Center.



A rendering of one of four proposals by Mortenson Development. This proposal calls for one large hotel to be built north of the Oregon Convention Center.

The Portland Development Commission, which oversees urban renewal efforts in that city, voted 4-0 Wednesday to OK negotiations with [Mortenson Development](#), the lead group proposing one or two Hyatt-branded hotels near the OCC.

Metro is leading efforts to bring more hotel rooms to the area

around the convention center, in an effort to lure larger, national conventions to the Metro-owned facility. Officials hope to trade a public subsidy for a commitment to keep hundreds of hotel rooms available for big conventions.

Hyatt's proposal calls for a subsidy of \$10 million to \$23 million, depending on which of the four Hyatt proposals is selected. It also calls for a 30-year rebate of most room taxes; Willamette Week recently estimated that could be worth \$111 million to the hotel's owners.

Development commission members had little to say about the Hyatt proposal, and PDC staff emphasized that the PDC board would still have to vote on any financing package and land sales that were proposed after negotiations with Hyatt and Mortenson.

[Read Metro's staff report on the selection process](#) (PDF)

But attorney Tim Ramis, a lawyer representing several downtown Portland hotels including the Hilton, Westin and Benson, urged the PDC to be cautious and mindful of past mistakes. He specifically pointed to the PDC's involvement in paying for The Nines hotel in downtown Portland, saying poor market conditions caused The Nines to offer room rates so low it hurt other downtown hotels.

Ramis asked that the PDC, in its resolution, "provide assurance that the mistakes of the past are understood and will not be repeated." He asked that any hotel have a rate floor so the Hyatt would not undercut other hotels. He also asked the PDC require a 60-day period between the unveiling of a term sheet and the vote of the proposal at the Metro Council.

PDC Chair Scott Andrews disagreed with Ramis' assessment of The Nines' rates, and no members of the commission tried to insert Ramis' proposed amendments into the resolution.

"We're a long way from authorizing any public funds in any large way," Andrews said. "I'm comfortable we've answered enough of the questions at this point that we can move forward to the next step."

Five members of the public, including Ramis, addressed commissioners Wednesday. One of the five was Nischit Hegde,

speaking on behalf of [UNITE HERE](#) Local 8, which represents hotel workers in Seattle and Portland. UNITE HERE has been engaged in a public, nationwide feud with Hyatt over labor practices, and both Metro and the PDC have indicated that they won't support the Hyatt proposal without labor involvement.

"We believe this project can bring more business into the city if it's done right," Hegde said. "We understand that things to date have been thought out, process-wise, very well. As the process enters the next phase, we'll continue to engage to ensure that this project is good for the city, Metro, hotel workers and tourists."

The Metro Council is scheduled to vote on authorizing negotiations at its Thursday meeting.

Metro News editor Nick Christensen can be reached at nick.christensen@oregonmetro.gov or 503-813-7583. Follow Metro on Twitter [@oregonmetro](#).

See also:

[Advisory committee says Hyatt proposal should move forward, provided union issues are resolved](#) (Sept. 4, 2012)

[Finalists for convention center hotel proposal could be announced next month](#) (July 12, 2012)

[Metro Council will hear proposals for privately funding convention center hotel](#) (April 26, 2012)

[Hughes: Time to restart convention center hotel discussion](#) (Feb. 23, 2011)

[Advisory committee says Hyatt proposal should move forward, provided union issues are resolved](#)

September 14, 2012 9:39 AM

A consortium including the hotel chain Hyatt appears to be the big winner in the search for a company to develop a hotel near the Oregon Convention Center, with an advisory committee recommending the group proceed to negotiations with regional leaders.



A rendering of one of four proposals by Mortenson Development. This proposal calls for two hotels to be built north of the Oregon Convention Center.



A rendering of one of four proposals by Mortenson Development. This proposal calls for one large hotel to be built north of the Oregon Convention Center.

The group, led by [Mortenson Development](#), proposes building two Hyatt-branded hotels on land owned by the [Schlesinger Companies](#) just north of the Oregon Convention Center on NE Holladay Street. The group also offered an alternative plan for building the hotels on the Oregon Convention Center Plaza, east of the center.

The Hyatt proposal isn't an instant winner – the committee merely recommended that regional leaders proceed to negotiating a final proposal with Mortenson Development, with the goal of opening the hotel by late 2015.

In its proposal, the Mortenson team says it has private financing available to build its project, and asks for two subsidies: A one-time, \$10.3 million payment from taxpayers and a waiver of local hotel room occupancy taxes.

In return, the development group would guarantee that there would be rooms available at the hotel for large conventions

seeking to hold a show in Portland. The request from taxpayers could rise to \$36.1 million if the hotel is sited east of the center, instead of north.

[Read Metro's staff report on the selection process](#) (PDF)

An advisory team, assembled by Metro and consisting of tourism industry officials, unanimously recommended the Mortenson proposal move forward. The Metro Council would have to sign off on any deal before it becomes official.

Teri Dresler, director of Metro's visitor venues, was on the advisory committee. She said the committee coalesced around Hyatt after its last meeting, when the group reviewed answers from developers to a round of follow-up questions.

"It wasn't until we got into that meeting where people really gave Mortenson and Hyatt the thumbs-up," she said. "They really set themselves apart by doing a lot of work up front. It gave the team a lot of confidence that we could meet our goals. They agreed to meet all of the public goals, and I think the stability of their financing was a real solid aspect."

The labor peace piece

The selection of the Hyatt-flagged group is a little surprising given the company's history with labor unions and Portland politicians' reluctance to cross organized labor. [UNITE HERE](#), a nationwide union of 265,000 members that includes hotel workers, has called for a worldwide boycott of Hyatt hotels, calling the chain "the worst hotel employer in America."

Metro leaders think they can avoid that controversy with a labor peace agreement, which a staff report says would be signed before any formal negotiations took place.

Because of the sensitivity of negotiations, representatives from Metro and UNITE HERE were reluctant to speak on the record about the organized labor aspect of the proposal. They did, however, provide information on background. Representatives from Hyatt did not respond to requests for comment.

Metro staffers describe a labor peace agreement as a way to simplify the process of determining whether a shop will be union. Instead of going through an often-contentious procedure

dictated by federal protocols, the process essentially is streamlined after a card-check and generally favors union organizers – if they can get a majority of employees to agree to be represented.

A UNITE HERE representative said that union represents Hyatt workers in 14 cities in North America, with workers in three of those cities working without a contract. The Hyatt hotels with union-represented workers are exempt from the global boycott, the representative said.

The UNITE HERE representative said non-union housekeepers are responsible for cleaning as many as 30 rooms a day, double the workload of union workers. She also pointed to a class action suit filed on behalf of Hyatt workers in Indianapolis, alleging wage and hour violations at 10 Indiana hotels, including Hyatt-branded hotels.

Roy Jay, one of the committee members, said the region would benefit in convention recruitment if the facility is union-operated.

"It's real clear to me we would have to have a union-operated facility, not just during construction," he said.

Proposal details

Hyatt's primary proposal calls for the construction of a 420-room [Hyatt Regency](#) hotel and an adjacent 181-room [Hyatt Place](#) hotel on the lots north of the Oregon Convention Center along Holladay Street. Mortenson would build the hotel; Hyatt would buy it from Mortenson upon completion in late 2015.

Another option proposed by Mortenson was for one 600-room Hyatt Regency hotel instead of two hotels.

The publicly financed portion of the project – in exchange for Hyatt keeping 500 rooms available for booking by large conventions – would likely come from a combination of cash from the Portland Development Commission and from Metro. About \$8 million of the \$10 million requested has been identified so far; the publicly-financed amount could change as a result of negotiations.

Specific sources of funding have not yet been identified, but

Portland's [Oregon Convention Center Urban Renewal District](#) is likely to be tapped for part of the money.

According to a Metro staff report, the Hyatt project would cost between \$157 million and \$200 million, depending on the site chosen for the project.

One other group, led by Lloyd District developer Langley Investment Properties working with Sheraton hotels, pitched a proposal to Metro.

While the Langley proposal called for less public financing – an \$8 million loan with a 4 percent interest rate, plus a 60-year land lease with \$200,000 annual rent payments – committee members had questions about Langley's ability to finance the project in a timely manner.

"It was very speculative," Dresler said, "and Mortenson was very solid."

Langley's proposal called for construction of a hotel at the Martin Luther King, Jr. Plaza on the northeast corner of the Oregon Convention Center.

Why we're here

Metro has been trying for years to attract a developer to build a hotel adjacent to the Oregon Convention Center, with the hopes that the availability of a large block of hotel rooms would encourage more national conventions to book the center.

But previous efforts have faltered, in part because of widespread opposition to the amount of public investment proposed for the private development – some proposals called for more than \$80 million of public money to be put towards construction of a convention center hotel.

The Metro Council is scheduled to discuss the hotel proposals at a work session this afternoon; the Portland Development Commission is set to vote on selecting a favored developer to negotiate with on Sept. 12, with the Metro Council set to vote on the same topic the next day.

"This is only Round 1 of 15 rounds," Jay said. "This is a heavyweight championship, and everybody's got to win. They

(the developers) have to win, we have to win and I'm sure there's going to be some negotiations that make sure that the people of this region are going to win."

Metro News editor Nick Christensen can be reached at nick.christensen@oregonmetro.gov or 503-813-7583. Follow Metro on Twitter [@oregonmetro](https://twitter.com/oregonmetro).

Clarification: An earlier version of this story omitted a mention to Mortenson's option for one 600 room hotel. This version has been updated.

See also:

[Finalists for convention center hotel proposal could be announced next month](#) (July 12, 2012)

[Metro Council will hear proposals for privately funding convention center hotel](#) (April 26, 2012)

[Hughes: Time to restart convention center hotel discussion](#) (Feb. 23, 2011)

[Convention center hotel discussion shifts to private sector, smaller incentives](#) (Jan. 18, 2012)

[Opt In panelists offer surprising responses in trash survey](#)

August 27, 2012 9:14 AM



A study of the region's trash system is still in its formative stages, but panelists in a recent [Opt In](#) survey had some clear messages for Metro's solid waste planners.

Panelists in the July survey said protecting health and the environment were the most important factors in planning how to manage the region's trash; they clearly said they didn't want garbage anywhere near them.

The survey was also notable for panelists' answers to a question that wasn't explicitly asked – how they feel about Portland's year-old garbage pickup schedule. Hundreds of respondents called for that city to return to weekly pickup of garbage.

The compost switch

Metro does not regulate individual cities' garbage pickup schedules. The calls for weekly pickup came in open-ended answers on the survey; neither Metro nor DHM Research, the public opinion research firm that coordinates Opt In, tracked specifically how many open-ended responses called for weekly pickup to return.

Metro News estimates two-thirds of the 433 Multnomah County panelists who answered open-ended questions called for weekly pickup to return.

The region's trash, recycling and composting system is overseen by Metro's Parks and Environmental Services Department. Its director, Paul Slyman, said that while Portland's trash pickup schedule isn't in his department's purview, Metro can't ignore the feedback it receives. Slyman attended two focus groups about solid waste before the survey was conducted.

"What we heard in both the focus groups as well as the Opt In survey is people are frustrated with the new systems," Slyman said.

How frustrated?

"I don't like the change to garbage pick up to every other week," said one Multnomah County woman. "My household doesn't generate very much garbage and we already composted, but we have a dog – just one, only 40 pounds, but still having dog poop in my can for 2 weeks is yucky, especially in the summer."

Dogs and diapers were a recurring theme in the survey's open-ended answers. Calls for a return to weekly pickup crossed party and demographic lines.

The pushback in Portland could serve as a warning for Metro as it moves forward in its Solid Waste Roadmap study, analyzing how the waste stream could be managed before the expiration of trash management contracts in 2020. But Slyman pointed to a

key difference in the efforts: The solid waste work is aimed at what happens to garbage after consumers push their trash bins to the curb; composting hits people in their kitchen.

To bury or to burn

One of Slyman's main takeaways from the survey, and from focus groups, was that the region's residents seem relatively comfortable with the concept of using waste to make electricity.

The survey's 3,526 respondents were asked to rate how they felt about three options for managing the region's trash: Keeping things the same, prioritizing waste-to-energy or using small-scale, local facilities to dispose of trash.

On a scale of 1 to 3, with 1 being most preferable, respondents gave burning garbage for energy a 1.7 rating. Small-scale facilities got a 2.1 rating, and keeping things the same scored 2.2.

Slyman said he was amazed by how supportive people were of "doing something with our garbage other than putting it in a very sophisticated hole in the ground." That came from the focus group participants, as well.

"They were surprised to learn that we weren't," he said. "People that have moved from other parts of the country, people who have lived overseas know that garbage is used to generate energy in those places and so the three out of four people that felt the advantages outweigh the disadvantages of recovering energy was very surprising to us, and it told us we need to think about that fourth 'R.'"

The fourth 'R' Slyman refers to is recovery – after reducing, reusing and recycling. He isn't pulling that out of thin air: Oregon law dictates that waste planners are supposed to try to cleanly and safely extract energy from trash before they send it off to a landfill.

The best-known waste-to-energy facility nearby is in Brooks, just off Interstate 5 near Salem, where 550 tons of garbage daily are turned into 13 megawatts of electricity annually – enough juice to power the city of Woodburn.

"It makes practical sense to increase energy production and at

the same time reduce landfill use," said a Republican Opt In survey participant from Clackamas County. "Yes, it will be costly, but all new procedures have initial costs."

"Ninety percent less garbage to bury is awesome," wrote one Multnomah County woman who identified as a Democrat.

Not in my backyard

If the panelists and focus group members said they weren't fond of trucking trash 150 miles each way to Arlington, they were just as clear that they didn't want their trash handled anywhere near their homes.

Panelists were asked to rate eight values for Metro to consider as it moves forward with the trash study. Disposing garbage close to where it's generated ranked dead last, averaging a 6 on a scale of 1–8. Shortly ahead of that was creating local jobs, scoring a 5.8.

By comparison, "protect people's health" scored a 2.8 and "protecting the environment" rated 3.0. Waste-to-energy scored 4.0.

"That was very true in the focus groups, too," Slyman said. "People said 'I think we should manage this locally. But I live in West Linn – put it in Hillsboro.' And the reverse was true – if I live in Hillsboro, and I think it should be managed locally but not here, put it in West Linn."

Even if landfills remain a key part of the trash system after 2020, the Columbia Ridge landfill near Arlington may not be the default answer. Several landfills have opened or are in the planning phases south of Interstate 84 between The Dalles and Arlington, offering an alternative to the 300-mile roundtrip to bury the trash.

Panel overwhelmingly white, educated

While Metro officials say the Opt In survey provides significantly more feedback than they would otherwise receive through open houses or public testimony, it also continues to struggle to match the region's diversity.

Only five percent of the panelists identified as ethnic minorities;

about 22 percent of the Portland region's residents are people of color. Seventy-eight percent of the survey's respondents had graduated college, more than double the population of college graduates in the region. Fifty-seven percent of respondents identified as Democrats, who account for about 42 percent of the region's registered voters.

Metro communications director Jim Middaugh said Metro is still hearing from more minorities through Opt In than it would through traditional outreach.

"We're not where we need to be or we want to be," Middaugh said. "It's less important how the overall population of the panel compares (to the region) than it is that we're hearing from more of all the different groups of people in our region. We'll continue to work to encourage a more diverse set of people to join the panel and take the surveys."

Metro News editor Nick Christensen can be reached at nick.christensen@oregonmetro.gov or 503-813-7583. Follow Metro on Twitter [@oregonmetro](https://twitter.com/oregonmetro).

See also:

[Don't ignore the dirty MURFs as solid waste project moves forward](#) (May 4, 2012)

[No clear paths on Metro's solid waste roadmap](#) (Jan. 12, 2011)

[Council mulls scope of proposed natural areas levy](#)

August 27, 2012 9:12 AM

Metro councilors seemed to agree last week that the regional government is not quite ready to ask the voters for a property tax levy to pay for natural areas maintenance.

They didn't have a united voice behind their reasons for hesitance, but they all felt that late autumn would be an appropriate time to consider sending a measure to the ballot.

Why the slow pace?

Metro staffers have been pushing the council for an education campaign, raising awareness of the funding shortfall in the natural areas and parks programs. A levy could raise an additional \$8 million annually for maintenance at Metro's

natural areas and parks, more than doubling the current budget for upkeep of the properties.

Such a levy would cost the average owner of a home with an assessed value of \$200,000 between \$16 and \$24 a year, depending on the amount of the levy proposed by the council.

The Metro Council's receptiveness to putting a levy on the ballot might be affected by polling done at the end of the education campaign.

Councilors also had questions at their Thursday work session about funding priorities if a levy is pursued. Councilor Kathryn Harrington wanted assurances that the levy would not focus exclusively on historically disadvantaged populations, but also on those communities that are presently disadvantaged.

A recommendation from an advisory committee called for Metro to "be intentional in designing the levy projects to address barriers that affect historically disadvantaged communities in the use and benefits of Metro's natural areas."

"I have a concern that the focus will just be on the historically disadvantaged, so as time goes by, our current disadvantaged would fall further and further behind," Harrington said.

Councilor Barbara Roberts said the levy should also specifically address an aging population.

"One of the things we ought to look at is the possibility of moving toward some kind of transportation opportunity for these natural spaces, and for the parks, so older people who couldn't climb to the top of a mountain or to a waterfall could get out into nature," she said.

The expansion of the agenda seemed to concern Metro Councilor Shirley Craddick – particularly after the advisory committee emphasized that Metro should only use the five-year operating levy as a stop-gap as it seeks a permanent solution to pay for natural areas maintenance.

She said the levy is a relatively small amount of money for a short period of time, and said short-term success will influence Metro's ability to find a long-term solution.

"I'm hearing a lot of great ideas," she said. "I'm concerned we're

way overstating what this levy might be able to do for us. We need to pull back and have one or two goals and have a clear message and accomplish that."

Metro News editor Nick Christensen can be reached at nick.christensen@oregonmetro.gov or 503-813-7583. Follow Metro on Twitter [@oregonmetro](https://twitter.com/oregonmetro).

See also:

[Decision on natural areas levy might not come until after November elections](#) (Aug. 15, 2012)

[Advisory committee recommends levy vote, but urges long-term thinking](#) (July 24, 2012)

[Opt In panelists want habitat improved at natural areas, but cool to improving access](#)(June 15, 2012)

[Polling says region's voters could support natural areas levy](#) (April 10, 2012)

[Metro inks deal with Miller for distribution of recycled paint across Pacific Northwest](#)

August 17, 2012 2:38 PM



From left, Metro deputy chief operating officer Scott Robinson and Metro Councilor Shirley Craddick talk to Miller Paint CEO Steve Dearborn. At right is Jim Quinn, manager of Metro's Hazardous Waste Program.

For years, Metro's recycled paint has been the top source of recycled paint in the Portland region.

MetroPaint's new deal with Miller Paint Company, though, prepares it to lead the way in a broader "region" – the Pacific Northwest.

At a signing ceremony Aug. 15, Miller Paint CEO Steve Dearborn and Metro deputy chief operating officer Scott Robinson inked a deal that guarantees Miller will buy at least 40,000 gallons of recycled paint from Metro each year through 2017.

That means that recycled MetroPaint will be available at 50 Miller Paint outlets, from Ashland to Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, as well as at MetroPaint's Swan Island processing center.

Miller has been retailing MetroPaint since 2009, selling the recycled colors at its outlets as well as some Fred Meyer stores. Jim Quinn, manager of Metro's Hazardous Waste Program, said the additional availability was key in selling the recycled products.

For MetroPaint's first 10 years, the paint was only sold at Swan Island.

"We eventually realized that having this one point of sale here wasn't quite cutting it," Quinn said. "Now that we're carrying it for a lot of retail outlets throughout Portland and the Northwest, it has made a difference."

In some regards, the paint that's being sold by Miller Paint is on its second go-round in the stores – 19 percent of the paint that comes into MetroPaint for recycling is Miller Paint.

"It's, first of all, the right thing to do," said Dearborn, Miller Paint's CEO. "From our standpoint as a retailer, it's been a positive addition to our line, and the colors work. For the customers who are looking for recycled paint, it's been good."

MetroPaint took in 328,000 gallons of recycled paint in the last fiscal year and sold about 44 percent of that as MetroPaint. Nearly \$1 million in paint was sold in the last fiscal year, about a quarter of that through Miller Paint.

More could be distributed, Quinn said, but "to some extent our supply is the limiting factor. Even though we've boosted our supply with this new PaintCare system, and the paint is flowing more, there is still a limiting factor for certain colors - white in particular."

More than 100 hazardous waste collection stations in Oregon send paint to MetroPaint for processing. Quinn said about 15 percent of that is waste that can't be reprocessed. Another large percentage doesn't match with any of MetroPaint's color palette and is sent overseas.

"To be recycling this much paint is amazing," said Shirley Craddick, a Metro councilor who was at Wednesday's signing ceremony. "We should be so proud that we're not taking all this to a landfill, and it can be reused."

The contract calls for Miller Paint to increase its purchases of MetroPaint to 50,000 gallons by 2017. Metro sells the recycled paint to Miller Paint at about half the consumer retail price.

Metro News editor Nick Christensen can be reached at nick.christensen@oregonmetro.gov or 503-813-7583. Follow Metro on Twitter [@oregonmetro](https://twitter.com/oregonmetro).

Note: An earlier version of this story misidentified the volume of Miller Paint brought to MetroPaint. About 19 percent of the paint recycled by Metro originates from Miller Paint. This version has been corrected.

[Visit MetroPaint](#)

[Learn more about PaintCare](#)

[Find a Miller Paint store](#)

More from Metro News:

[Paint recycling starts with a flurry, and on track to make a profit](#)
(March 31, 2011)

[Thomas Mapfumo, legendary 'Lion of Zimbabwe,' to play Oregon Zoo Aug. 22](#)

August 17, 2012 2:36 PM

A local celebration gains an international flair next week, as Afropop superstar Thomas Mapfumo helps the Oregon Zoo close out its popular Sunset at the Zoo series on Wednesday, Aug. 22.

Mapfumo, known as the "Lion of Zimbabwe," is one of the most revered musicians in the world. The 67-year-old now makes his home in Eugene and continues to tour, playing his inspirational chimurenga music to fans across the world.

Sunset at the Zoo, an expansion of the zoo's traditional Wednesday concerts, provides a festival atmosphere for friends and family with live music from local artists, regional food and drink options, activities for all ages — plus a chance to get to know animals that are most active during twilight hours.

In addition to Mapfumo, the event will feature the eco-conscious folk-reggae of Austin Farrell, a "Wild Life Live" bird show, a performance of "Little Bugs, Big World" by the Dragon Theater puppet company, and some advanced hula-hooper from the Mayor of Hooperville. Guests can also participate in face-painting, crafts and games, self-guided night hikes, animal talks and bat-house building.

Sunset at the Zoo starts at 5 p.m. and is free with regular zoo admission after 4 p.m. Zoo members at the Plus level and above are guaranteed free entrance; all other visitors may purchase tickets at the zoo gate. Gates close at 8 p.m.

[Learn more about Sunset at the Zoo](#)

[See past videos of the Sunset at the Zoo performances](#)

[Metro grants enhance TriMet's trip-planning tools](#)

August 10, 2012 1:48 PM



More than 5.5 million trips were planned last year using TriMet's tools. Thanks to new online trip

planner, these tools just got better. Riders can now combine transit, biking, walking and car-sharing trips in a single itinerary.

The open-source tool is the first of its kind produced by a U.S. transit agency. TriMet and OpenTripPlanner were recognized by the White House as Champions of Change touting how "open government technology transforms the way we travel."

What's so special about this new tool? The trip planner features the ability to customize routes by travel mode. For example, users can now plan biking and taking transit or create a route that combines walking with Zipcar. Because the tool uses OpenStreetMap, a Wikipedia-like map, TriMet will have an easier time keeping bike routes and walking paths updated.

The tool features robust biking information. It offers suggestions for the quickest, flattest and safest routes. The interactive preference chart allows users to see various route options based on their biking preferences.

TriMet riders aren't the only one who will benefit from the new tool. Because it uses open source software and open data, the trip planner was less expensive to develop and the technology can be used by other agencies worldwide. The tool also allows for future inclusion of other transit systems, such as C-TRAN.

The tool was developed with two Metro Regional Travel Options grants totaling nearly \$164,000. RTO grants support projects that reduce the number of people driving alone, improve air quality and address community health issues. Metro will be accepting grant applications during fall 2012 for the new grant cycle.

[Learn more about grant opportunities](#)

[Plan a TriMet trip with the new tool](#)

[Find ways to get around the region without a car](#)

[**Future of the Portland region shaped by diversity, says Pastor**](#)

August 10, 2012 1:46 PM



"A sustainable planet will require sustainable policies and that's going to require sustainable politics and a conversation," said Manuel Pastor, an expert on economic and social equity.

It hit the front page of the New York Times in May 2012, but some version of the headline appeared in most metropolitan papers and online newsrooms across the country.

According to the 2010 census, the majority of children being born in the United States today are children of color.

The tipping point, the census revealed, arrived in a 12-month period ending July 2011, when births of non-Hispanic whites accounted for 49.6 percent of all births in the United States, while the combined total of Hispanic, African-American, Asian and mixed race births rose to just over 50 percent.

Looking forward, for the nation to succeed, asserts Manuel Pastor, Ph.D., nationally recognized economic and social equity expert, these children must succeed.

Diversity and equity as factors for prosperity

Addressing a Metro Council Chamber packed with about 150 representatives from area chambers of commerce, community-based organizations, research universities, local governments, and the general public, Pastor led a 90-minute

conversation about what success as a more racially and ethnically diverse nation – and region – looks like.

"America's tomorrow is a young Latina trying to learn science," Pastor said. "It's a young Asian/Pacific Islander interested in art, it's a young African-American, it's also young whites... it's a changing demographic, not just in United States but also in Oregon."

Pastor shared census data indicating that in Oregon, Latinos, Asian/Pacific Islanders, African Americans and other non-white youth populations experienced a growth rate increase of roughly 43 percent in the decade ending in 2010. The growth rate for non-Hispanic white youth actually dropped by 13 percent for the same period.

Using a combination of demographic data storytelling and humor, Pastor built the case for the changing demographics and issues of equity and inclusion as critical factors for a strong economy – specifically, he said, by looking at what's happening at the regional level.

"Some of the work that we've been doing has been looking at the relationship between inequality and economic growth in regions," Pastor said. "What we've been finding out is that those regions that do a better job of reducing income inequalities, that do a better job of reducing racial segregation, that do a better job of targeting the reduction of poverty, actually grow more rapidly and more sustainably over time."

Investing in a younger, more diverse majority

In his presentation, "Looking Forward: Linking prosperity, inclusion and sustainability in metropolitan America," Pastor interpreted the data represented in line graphs and bar charts using real time stories from other regions across the country, decades of research, and his own family history.

Pastor's father came to the United States as an undocumented immigrant in 1930s. When given the choice of being deported or joining the U.S. Army to fight in World War II, he went to war and came back with the benefits of the G.I. Bill that helped him go to college and buy a home.

"My father's generation was called the Greatest Generation, but

it got great through public investment," Pastor said.

Returning to the data, Pastor noted for the audience the median age for Latinos in the United States is 27 but for non-Hispanic whites, it's 42.

"Forty-two to 27," Pastor said. "It's a generation gap... and it has real consequences in terms of public politics and public policy."

Generation gap drives investment

In areas where the generation gap is the biggest, Pastor said, public investment in future generations and human capital is the lowest.

The demographic gap for Portland, he pointed out, is greater than it is for the country as a whole, because of a slightly younger white population but a much younger Latino population than the national median ages.

"We are not going to get there in terms of trying to figure out how to get that investment spending up by changing demography," Pastor said. "We're going to get there by changing the story and changing the connections between generations."

Changing the story to put equity at the center of policymaking and politics starts with coming together around shared data, insists Pastor, best done at the regional level.

"We think that metropolitan levels are an important place to do that because they are places where people come face to face, race to race, place to place in conversation," Pastor said. "If you don't pay attention to poverty, you may wind up seeing it drag down your entire metropolitan region."

Starting a face-to-face conversation

Gathered in a regional center to hear Pastor speak, the diverse-cross section of audience members started the conversation at the first break with Pastor's direction to "find someone you haven't met before and just talk to them about what was striking about what you've just heard, and what was missing."

"It's going to be really important to continue to work with the

African-American population in Portland," said attendee Dwayne Johnson, president of Ideal Portland, a nonprofit organization promoting equitable access for entrepreneurs of color to the 21st century innovation economy.

"(The data for Portland shows) African-Americans are a smaller part of the total population," Johnson said. "As other populations continue to grow, it's going to become harder for them to participate in economic development of the region."

Pastor's bar chart for changing demographics in Oregon indicated that for the years 1990 to 2010, the African-American population remained constant at 2 percent of the total population. In contrast, the Latino population for the same time period grew from 4 percent to 12 percent, a 200 percent increase.

Pastor's case studies demonstrating the more equitable a community, the more sustainable and resilient the region, prompted an observation about inclusion from audience member KaRin R. Johnson, deputy director of the Multnomah County Health Department.

"Everything we do in sustainability is about sustaining life yet I often feel that people of color and vulnerable populations are often left out of the sustainability equation," she said. "So often in sustainability we tend to focus on things - bikes, cars and plastic but we neglect the human aspect."

Pastor closed with a call for a new style of leadership that moves beyond interest-based arguments to values-based arguments.

"A sustainable planet will require sustainable policies and that's going to require sustainable politics, and a conversation," Pastor said, "a bigger and broader and rounder conversation by all of us about how we craft a better future for Portland, for Oregon and for America."

[View Pastor's presentation](#)

[Listen to presentation](#)

Peggy Morell can be reached at 503-797-1542 or peggy.morell@oregonmetro.gov. Follow Metro on Twitter [@oregonmetro](#).

Note: An earlier version of this story incorrectly reported demographic data from Pastor's presentation. Non-white youth populations experienced 43 percent growth in the decade from 2000–2010. This version has been updated.

[Metro events, August 8–14: Old time music, jazz and cemetery tours](#)

August 10, 2012 1:44 PM

Get in touch with music in the outdoors this week with Rick Meyers' old time music at Oxbow Regional Park and a conversation at Cooper Mountain about jazz and your community. The best part is, most of the events are low-cost or free, and registration can be completed online. Follow the links below for more information.

[Honeybee Hikes](#)

10–11 a.m., Wednesday, Aug. 8
Leach Botanical Garden, Portland

[Around the campfire at Oxbow: Rick Meyers' old time music](#)

8–9 p.m., Friday, Aug. 10
Oxbow Regional Park, Gresham

[Lone Fir Pioneer Cemetery walking tour](#)

10–12:30 a.m., Saturday, Aug. 11
Lone Fir Pioneer Cemetery, Portland

[The Art of the Possible: Jazz and Community-Building](#)

1–2:30 p.m., Saturday, Aug. 11
Cooper Mountain Nature Park, Beaverton

[Animal activities at Blue Lake](#)

1–5 p.m., Sunday, Aug. 12
Blue Lake Regional Park, Fairview

[Preschool Story and Stroll](#)

10–11:15 a.m., Monday, Aug. 13
Tryon Creek Nature Center, Portland
Advanced registration required

[Creature Feature: Sensational Seeds](#)

10–11 a.m., Tuesday, Aug. 14
Tualatin Hills Nature Park Interpretive Center, Beaverton
Advanced registration required

More things to do brought to you by GreenScene

Metro GreenScene provides a comprehensive calendar of free and low-cost nature activities, gardening workshops, volunteer ventures and community events offered all around the region by Metro and dozens of other organizations.

[View the online calendar?](#)

[Visit the GreenScene page?](#)

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[Metro expands Clear Creek natural area, creating gateway for future visitors](#)

August 3, 2012 11:51 AM



Beyond Oregon City and Carver, nestled among Christmas tree farms, Metro's Clear Creek natural area serves as a 520-acre haven for wildlife. But, until last week, it lacked an entrance that would allow visitors to explore the landscape.

That's why Metro purchased 61 acres along Springwater Road, which could someday serve as a gateway to the natural area. On a clear day, visitors can see Mount Hood from the property, which includes a historical farmhouse. This new addition also builds on Metro's work to preserve habitat at Clear Creek; it features a seasonal headwater stream, a forested area and a large field that could be restored to prairie habitat.

[View a map of Clear Creek](#)

Named for the creek that snakes through Clear Creek Canyon, the newly expanded natural area is home to endangered coho and Chinook salmon, as well as deer, coyote, beaver and otter. Brilliant purple camas blooms in the spring; fungi can be found in the fall. Extensive restoration has improved the health of the natural area, where continued work could support salmon and prairie habitat.

Metro began protecting land in the area with a voter-approved 1995 bond measure, which targeted Clear Creek as a place for people to enjoy nature. Last week's \$1.05 million addition, funded by a follow-up 2006 bond measure, makes that vision a real possibility.

For now, Metro is focusing on habitat restoration while providing opportunities to visit through volunteer projects and a partnership with nearby Springwater Environmental Sciences School.

[Learn more about Metro's Clear Creek natural area](#)

[Metro events, August 2-7: Get outside!](#)

August 3, 2012 11:50 AM

Get to know your natural surroundings this week by hiking Mount Talbert, learning about native bees or finding out where your local food comes from. The best part is, most of the events are low-cost or free, and registration can be completed online. Follow the links below for more information.

[Water wonders at Blue Lake](#)

1-5 p.m., Friday, Aug. 3
Blue Lake Regional Park, Fairview

[Dirt to Dinner: From the farm to your table](#)

10 a.m.–4 p.m., Saturday, Aug. 4
OMSI Front Plaza, Portland

[Around the Campfire at Oxbow: Margaret Eng](#)

8–9 p.m., Saturday, Aug. 4
Oxbow Regional Park, Gresham

[Mount Talbert's hidden beauty](#)

10 a.m.–1 p.m., Sunday, Aug. 5
Mount Talbert Nature Park, Clackamas
Advance registration required

[Native bees to the rescue](#)

1–3 p.m., Sunday, Aug. 5
Cooper Mountain Nature Park, Beaverton
Advance registration required

[Preschool Story and Stroll](#)

10–11:15 a.m., Monday, Aug. 6
Tryon Creek Nature Center, Portland

[Vamonos: Cornelius Night Out](#)

5:30–8 p.m., Tuesday, Aug. 7
Harleman Park, Cornelius

More things to do brought to you by GreenScene

Metro GreenScene provides a comprehensive calendar of free and low-cost nature activities, gardening workshops, volunteer ventures and community events offered all around the region by Metro and dozens of other organizations.

[View the online calendar](#)

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[North Portland grants target community programs](#)

August 3, 2012 11:48 AM

Earlier this month, the Metro Council awarded \$15,000 in grant money to five North Portland community projects.

Issued through Metro's 27-year-old North Portland Enhancement Grant Program, initially created to compensate the community affected by the now-closed St. Johns Landfill, this year's grants target a wide array of programs - ranging from an after-school chess club to a home weatherization team. However, the role each allocation of money plays in the organizations varies, due to the different nature of each program. So how exactly are this year's funds expanding organizations and impacting their community?

The impact is immeasurable, said Metro grants program spokeswoman Karen Blauer.

"It's amazing how much you can do with so little and impact so many," Blauer said. "We're just here to incubate these programs, but their legacy is in the community's hands."

Impact Northwest's Urban Opportunities illustrates this process. Championed by Polly Bangs, Urban Opportunities steers low-income children towards stable employment opportunities through resume-building volunteer experience, job interview training and general confidence building activities.

"All the kids that go through the program come out with long-term solutions," Bangs said. "Making them feel like active participants in their community encourages them to give back for the rest of their lives and gives them the confidence needed to pursue lifelong careers. There's no end date."

The enhancement grant money will only further expand Bangs' efforts. With the \$4,250 boost, Urban Opportunities will help prepare 25 Roosevelt High School students for career tracks and enter them into the program's internship program, placing students behind the pink counter of Voodoo Doughnuts van or at a vegetable-laden booth at St. Johns Farmers Market.

Bangs has now reached the point where younger siblings of

students once involved in her program are eagerly signing up to participate.

"I'm starting to see the more long-term outcomes of the program," she said. "It's coming full circle."

This year, Blauer said, the annual grant money has reached an all-time low because of the recession, with \$15,000 divided among five organizations. But the shortage of money hasn't lessened the growth of these programs.

Emily Moser of Oregon Partnership's Lines for Life, a Portland nonprofit providing peer-to-peer youth counseling, says the \$4,250 allocation will pay to train teen volunteers to run the YouthLine, a counseling service where volunteers talk to other teens who are seeking guidance, support or just a person to talk to.

"It could be stress over a bad grade they got in school, or it could be really serious," Moser said. "Either way, these kids can help each other out."

Now that the St. Johns Landfill is long closed – and well down the path toward being reopened as a park– the initial purpose of this grant program has faded.

So how much longer will Metro keep it up? Blauer says it's hard to know. Its future ultimately lies in the hands of the Metro Council.

"We're reaching a really important stage where this community liability, a dump, has actually turned into an asset," Blauer said. "The initial issue of environmental equity is gone, but the community is still doing great things with these funds. Either way, we've helped them grow."

Alex Zielinski can be reached at alex.zielinski@oregonmetro.gov or 503-813-7538. Follow Metro on Twitter [@oregonmetro](https://twitter.com/oregonmetro).

[See all of the recipients of this year's North Portland enhancement grant](#)

[Learn more about Metro's community enhancement grants](#)

[Metro Council excited about some, underwhelmed with other ideas from Community Investment Initiative](#)

July 27, 2012 12:29 PM

The Community Investment Initiative faced its most thorough review this week, as both the Metro Council and Metro Policy Advisory Committee were updated on that nascent project.

Some of the initiative's proposals, like a regional study of a road fee based on how many miles drivers travel, landed with a thud. Others, like a regional look at streamlining infrastructure funding, were met with enthusiasm.

Thursday was the first time the Metro Council met at length to discuss the Community Investment Initiative, born in 2010 as a way to address a \$45 billion shortfall in infrastructure funding across the Portland region.

The initiative is a group of private-sector leaders tasked with developing plans to spark the region's economy and address infrastructure funding. They say the region has a \$45 billion shortfall in infrastructure funding in the coming decades.

[Visit the Community Investment Initiative's website](#)

Metro has been providing staff support to the initiative, but its Leadership Council have been left to address problems with little input from Metro's elected officials. No Leadership Council members were at Thursday's Metro Council work session.

The initiative's proposals generated pointed discussion as Metro councilors decided how much the regional government should be involved with the efforts' studies and endeavors.

George is a winner

The initiative's biggest focus has been on streamlining infrastructure funding, a so-called Regional Infrastructure Enterprise, an entity that had been nicknamed "George" for lack of a better term during the initiative's early discussions.

George's mission is to help important infrastructure projects around the region obtain funding at the lowest long-term cost to taxpayers, whether that's through more agreeable bond rates, public-private partnerships or simply refining traditional funding methods.

"To me, this is the highest priority," said Metro Councilor Kathryn Harrington. "But it's going to take more active involvement from us. I'd like to see us moving forward with this."

Many questions remain on the enterprise – George – before it's fully cooked. Chief among them is governance, ensuring that George helps with projects in a way that's responsible to the taxpayers of the region.

"There's concern that it's going to choose the projects to invest in," said Councilor Rex Burkholder. "That gets into, 'Who has the right to do that?'"

But, he said, that's a conversation for another day.

"Let's keep going," he said. "Of course it's going to develop."

Transportation tactics

Metro councilors agreed with the initiative that the selection and construction of transportation projects was an important priority. Councilor Carl Hosticka said he thought one project in particular would pave the way for the initiative to get more involved in transportation funding.

"The Columbia River Crossing is going to provide most of the energy that gets this thing started," Hosticka said. "I think the reality of politics in Salem is that people will start tacking their things onto it."

"We'll see how much freight the CRC can carry," he said, referring to legislative pork as much as cargo trucks.

Avoiding redundancy

To varying degrees, councilors said they didn't want Metro involved in projects being handled by other entities. The notion of a regional vehicle miles traveled pilot study, taxing drivers based on how far they travel instead of how much gas they use, is best left to other bodies, councilors said.

Also landing with a thud was a comprehensive look at streamlining cities' permitting processes to encourage development. While councilors seemed to agree that it's

important to get land within the urban growth boundary ready for development, there was hesitation to look at that through the lens of permitting.

The initiative's reasoning for pushing for simplifying the development processes was straightforward: The fewer hoops a developer has to jump through to build on a property, the more likely that developer is to invest in a project. But Metro Councilor Barbara Roberts said that's a responsibility that should be addressed at a local level, not at the regional level.

"I would not like to see a single hour of Metro staff time spent looking at how the permitting process works in the cities," Roberts said. Earlier, she said the initiative was free to tackle the issue itself – if it paid for its own research.

"It seems funny if we would have any of our staff involved in worrying about the permitting process," she said. She was joined by Burkholder in trepidation about the permitting issue.

Metro councilors also backed away from a recommendation to look at funding college and university education in the Portland region. That doesn't mean the initiative can't study those topics, but it does mean members of the initiative's Leadership Council will have a harder time selling the Metro Council on funding that research.

About the money

To a degree, Thursday's work session was about funding – how much money does Metro want to put into the initiative's work going forward. Metro chief operating officer Martha Bennett said the discussion would lead to the initiative coming back to the Metro Council with a proposal for funding more work.

But where money was, for the most part, on the sidelines Thursday, it was front-and-center as two CII Leadership Council members briefed the Metro Policy Advisory Committee on Wednesday night.

Some members of MPAC, a committee of regional policy leaders, repeatedly asked CII Leadership Council members Karen Williams and Tom Imeson where the money would come from for projects.

"It's not bringing by itself a pot of money. It's not solving every funding problem," Imeson said. "The hope is it can help solve some of those."

The increase in conversation about the initiative is part of a "journey of exploration," Harrington said.

"We're doing a great job of asking questions and bending your minds in different ways and trying to explore examples that we can relate to," she said. "I appreciate the work of the Leadership Council in accepting this challenge from us and bringing us new ideas – ones that we may not be comfortable with – but enabling us to go on this journey."

Metro News editor Nick Christensen can be reached at nick.christensen@oregonmetro.gov or 503-813-7583. Follow Metro on Twitter [@oregonmetro](https://twitter.com/oregonmetro).

See also:

[Investment Initiative lays out its plan to spark region's economy, primarily through infrastructure \(June 7, 2012\)](#)

[Advisory committee recommends levy vote, but urges long-term thinking](#)

July 27, 2012 8:53 AM

Is 10 cents enough? Is five years a start?

Those are the two main questions left unanswered by an advisory committee, convened by Metro, charged with looking at a proposal to ask voters for a property tax hike to pay for improvements at the region's natural areas and parks.

The committee, meeting for the third time Tuesday, endorsed a draft letter saying a five-year property tax levy for natural areas maintenance "is a reasonable first step in addressing a longer-term problem."

[Read about the panel](#)

The problem, as Metro and committee members see it, is a shortfall in funding to pay for maintenance at Metro's 16,000 acres of natural areas and parks, most acquired after voters approved bond measures in 1995 and 2006.

Committee members said an initial idea from Metro staff of a property tax levy of 10 cents per \$1,000 of assessed value – \$20 a year for the owner of a home assessed at \$200,000 – was not ambitious enough. Every cent in a levy would generate about \$1 million for natural areas maintenance.

Instead, the draft letter says Metro should look at a levy of 10 to 12 cents, and poll on whether to go higher than that.

"Metro should consider a larger request and the panel suggests that the final amount align with any additional polling results and whether or not a strong campaign can be organized," said the letter, which is directed toward Metro chief operating officer Martha Bennett.

The levy, which can fund projects for only five years before it has to go before the voters again, should not be considered a permanent solution, committee members said.

"The panel recommends carefully prioritizing spending to maximize effectiveness and be sensitive to the 'sixth-year challenge,' or what happens in the years after the levy is complete," it said.

The panel recommended that Metro convene another group to work on a long-term, regional solution.

Most of the discussion Tuesday morning focused around the equity piece of the letter, and how to address issues of equitable access to the region's natural areas without alienating likely voters.

"Equity does not mean equality," said Marcelo Bonta, executive director, Center for Diversity & the Environment. "Looking at the past, who's been disadvantaged and who's been advantaged – equity is a way to remedy some of that."

But John Griffiths, a board member at the Tualatin Hills Park & Recreation District, said equity can be perceived as a loaded word.

"We're trying to pass a measure...we're not called to address social justice issues or try to correct history to the extent that people believe there's inequity," he said. "The thing I don't want to see this measure come down to is a debate about social

justice. I want to see it be about land and opening it up to all people."

Bonta pointed out that social justice and equity don't have to be big, drawn-out items. For example, he said, acknowledging that Metro's natural areas are considered ceded lands by many of the region's Native Americans could go a long way.

After the group seemed headed for an impasse, it was Bennett who suggested language for their letter to her.

"Metro should be intentional in designing levy projects to address barriers that affect historically underserved communities," Bennett proposed as language for addressing equity in the natural areas. The committee endorsed her proposal.

The committee is set to deliver its findings to the Metro Council on Aug. 16.

Metro News editor Nick Christensen can be reached at nick.christensen@oregonmetro.gov or 503-813-7583. Follow Metro on Twitter [@oregonmetro](https://twitter.com/oregonmetro).

Note: *An earlier version of this story was not precise about the property tax impacts of the potential levy; it did not specify that the cost would be \$20 a year on a home with an assessed value of \$200,000. This version has been corrected.*

See also:

[Opt In panelists want habitat improved at natural areas, but cool to improving access](#) (June 15, 2012)

[Polling says region's voters could support natural areas levy](#) (April 10, 2012)

[More specifics discussed about natural areas tax levy proposal](#) (Feb. 7, 2012)

[Manuel Pastor counts equity, inclusion as key factors for a prosperous region](#)

July 27, 2012 8:51 AM



Manuel Pastor, director of the Program for Environmental and Regional Equity at the University of Southern California, will speak at the Metro Regional Center on July 30.

Looking Forward: Linking prosperity, inclusion and sustainability in metropolitan America

5 to 6:30 p.m. Monday, July 30

Metro Regional Center, council chamber, 600 NE Grand Ave.,
Portland

The more equitable the community, the more sustainable and resilient the region, asserts Manuel Pastor, a national expert on environmental and regional equity.

Making the connection between inclusion and regional prosperity is the focus of Pastor's visit to the Portland region on Monday, July 30 at the Metro Regional Center.

Defining equity as access to the economy and civic engagement, Pastor makes a lively and compelling business case for equity as an economic driver.

Using regional and national demographic trends and case studies from across the country, Pastor offers a framework for developing a shared understanding of regional challenges and possible solutions among diverse constituencies. Pastor is the director of the Program for Environmental and Regional Equity at the [University of Southern California](#).

This presentation is free of charge.

[Learn more about this event and get directions](#)

[Learn more about Manuel Pastor](#)

[Workshop urges cleaner air, water in addition to carbon reduction](#)

July 27, 2012 8:48 AM

As regional partners work together to curb greenhouse gas emissions, care should also be taken to improve clean air, clean water and protect low-income residents.

And how we implement policies to reach those goals could be most important of all.

Those were some of the initial conclusions of environmental experts and stakeholder groups that participated in a workshop at Metro this week. Convened as part of the regional government's Climate Smart Communities scenarios project, participants discussed how public transit, mixed use development and encouraging more hybrid cars could effectively create a greener community.

Chips Janger, with Clackamas County Urban Green, said he found connections between the climate change project and his own community's advocacy for the Portland-Milwaukie Light Rail Project and a redesign of McLoughlin Boulevard.

"We're trying to find ways to build a future without greenhouse gas," Janger said. "So all of the things we talked about here today all contribute to that. That's why it's exciting."

For an event convened around climate change and the environment, there was hardly any talk of global warming science or icebergs. Instead, for four hours, activists, planners and experts explored the soup-to-nuts connections of land use, transportation and the natural environment.

In small group discussions, they plotted steps from policy to outcome. For example, if you increase mixed use neighborhoods, then you've increased the number of jobs and services within easy reach of households, reduced land consumption and - with green building standards - increased access to nature and preserved healthy soils for farms and forests.

Access to nature?

Maybe, said Sean Penrith of the Earth Advantage Institute, a green building nonprofit – if the buildings are built with designs that provide street level landscaping and easy connections to green space.

Access to nature could go both ways, group members agreed.

"If the number one contributor to greenhouse gases is transportation, and number two is buildings, then both of those need to go hand in hand," Penrith said later.

Another group discussed the potential effects of cleaner fuels and more efficient cars, such as gas–electric hybrids.

Efforts that increase green power and reduce carbon emissions could produce cleaner water, healthier soil and protect native species, said Tia Henderson, of Upstream Public Health.

"All three of these would contribute to resiliency and potentially to our aquifer health," she said.

On the other hand, the group couldn't find a link between high tech cars and access to nature – at least not a positive one.

"I don't know what access to nature means when it's over here," said Angus Duncan, chair of the Oregon Global Warming Commission. "If a vehicle costs you less to drive, you're more likely to use it ... We improve access to nature, then we destroy it."

The potential to raise gas taxes or charge mileage–based fees also raised questions, especially about how the potential revenue might be used. Could it help improve public transit for low income residents? Or build roads that increase driving and pollution and potentially carbon emissions?

"Its outcomes are going to depend on how it's done," said Chris Hagerbaumer, of the Oregon Environmental Council. "You've got to do it right to get the right outcomes."

Metro Councilor Rex Burkholder said the agency wants to focus on more than just reducing emissions of greenhouse gases.

"What does a successful region look like through the lens of the

environment?" he asked the gathering. "It helps with our larger mission of creating a sustainable place that's a great place to live and will be a great place to live for many, many years."

The event was co-sponsored by the Oregon Environmental Council and 1000 Friends of Oregon.

More workshops – focused on equity/environmental justice issues and business – and a summit are planned for the scenarios project later this year.

Dylan Rivera can be reached at 503-797-1551 or dylan.rivera@oregonmetro.gov. Follow Metro on Twitter, [@oregonmetro](https://twitter.com/oregonmetro).

[Learn more about the Climate Smart Communities Scenarios Project](#)

[Subscribe to an email list for updates on the scenarios project](#)

[Saturday program will serve as tribute to women's suffrage pioneers](#)

July 20, 2012 11:48 AM

It's been 100 years since Oregon women won the right to vote, but the women behind the movement have been anything but forgotten.

On Saturday, Lone Fir Pioneer Cemetery will host "Suffragists Among Us," a tribute and dedication to Portland's women who fought for their right to vote at the turn of the century. The event will specifically shine a light on Hattie Redmond, an African-American suffragist who helped lead the 1912 campaign that won equal voting rights for Oregon women.

"She was unique for her time," said Janice Dilg, project director of Century of Action, the Oregon women's suffrage history organization behind the event. "Reaching across racial and ethnic lines, especially back then, was not easy. She deserves recognition."

Dilg says that Redmond's story was largely unknown until a few years ago, when historians and genealogists found records of her political involvement at the forefront of the suffrage movement. Now, her efforts will be acknowledged at the place

of her burial.

While Redmond was buried in the Lone Fir Pioneer Cemetery, her grave remains unmarked. Saturday's event includes a headstone dedication ceremony for Redmond – finally marking her gravesite.

Along with this dedication, the event will feature presentations by Oregon politicians, illustrating the monumental work of these suffragists by reading historic speeches by past leaders. Metro Councilor Rex Burkholder plans on representing former Portland Mayor Harry Lane – a strong supporter of women's suffrage – by dressing up in period costume and reciting one of Lane's speeches on suffrage while standing on his gravesite.

"The history of Lone Fir is amazing," Burkholder said. "It's important to bring this history to life."

Metro Councilor Barbra Roberts, who will also be sharing a speech by Portland suffragist Esther Lovejoy at Saturday's event, says that the region's pioneer cemeteries will be featuring more events based on the historic figures buried in them. Within a few years, she said, Lone Fir will host events recognizing the [Chinese workers and mental health patients buried there](#).

"Pioneer cemeteries remind us of our past and help us celebrate our past," Roberts said. "The more you understand about these cemeteries, the more you understand about Oregon's history in general. It's about the people."

Alex Zielinski can be reached at alex.zielinski@oregonmetro.gov or 503-813-7538. Follow Metro on Twitter [@oregonmetro](#).

[Metro news archives: Pioneer cemeteries](#)

[Find out more about Suffragists Among Us](#)

[Learn about Lone Fir Pioneer Cemetery events](#)

[Metro events, July 18-24: Bike rides and Oregon history](#)

July 20, 2012 11:45 AM

Looking for adventure this week? Hop on a bike and pedal between Southwest Portland parks or travel back in time to learn about the region's historic women's suffrage movement at Lone Fir Pioneer Cemetery. The best part is, most of the events are

low-cost or free, and registration can be completed online. Follow the links below for more information.

[Honeybee hikes](#)

10–11 a.m., Wednesday, July 18
Leach Botanical Garden in Portland

[Wild About Cooper Mountain: Rambling Raccoons](#)

1–3 p.m., Thursday, July 19
Cooper Mountain Nature Park in Beaverton
Note: Advanced registration required

[Around the campfire at Oxbow: Kate Power and Steve Einhorn](#)

8:30–9:30 p.m., Friday, July 20
Oxbow Regional Park near Gresham

[Vamonos: Celebrate Hillsboro](#)

9 a.m. – 5 p.m., Saturday, July 21
Hillsboro Civic Center

[Century of Action at Lone Fir](#)

1–3 p.m., Saturday, July 21
Lone Fir Pioneer Cemetery in Portland

[Portland Sunday Parkways – Southwest](#)

11:00 a.m. – 4 p.m., Sunday, July 22
Southwest Portland

[Twilight Tuesday at Cooper Mountain](#)

7–9:30 p.m., Tuesday, July 24
Cooper Mountain Nature Park in Beaverton
Note: Advanced registration required

More things to do brought to you by GreenScene

Metro GreenScene provides a comprehensive calendar of free

and low-cost nature activities, gardening workshops, volunteer ventures and community events offered all around the region by Metro and dozens of other organizations.

[View the online calendar](#)
[Visit the GreenScene page](#)
[Follow on Facebook](#)
[Follow on Twitter](#)

[**A personal message from Councilor Burkholder on pioneers, equity and fun summer events**](#)

July 13, 2012 4:07 PM

Titanic sinks on maiden voyage, US invades Cuba (for the third time), Arizona and New Mexico become states, Red Sox win the World Series, Amundsen beats Scott to South Pole, women win the right to vote in Oregon. Whew! 1912 was a very busy year.

Join me at Lone Fir Cemetery on [Saturday, July 21](#), to honor the work of women in Oregon to secure full voting rights. Why Lone Fir Cemetery? Many of Portland's leaders are buried there, including leaders of the woman's suffrage movement, Esther Lovejoy and Martha Dalton. This event will also honor a surprise resident, African American suffragette leader, Hattie Redmond. The [Friends of Lone Fir Cemetery](#) have raised funds to erect a proper headstone for this pioneer of women's and African American rights. Yours truly will play the part of Mayor, Senator and founder of the Rose Festival—Harry Lane.

Yet, like the women warriors of 1912, we are still struggling to ensure that everyone has the chance to lead a good life, raise their children in safety, get a good education and prosper. In 2008, this region adopted a set of [Regional Values](#), including Equity. To be honest, equity isn't always easy to translate into policy and programs. But, working with many partners in the community, we've been able to integrate equity concerns into many of our efforts--from increasing hiring and contracting with women and minority-owned businesses as part of projects like the upgrading of the [Oregon Zoo](#) to planning efforts like [Climate Smart Communities](#) and the [Community Investment Initiative](#).

Why is this important? It might surprise you to know that there is considerable research showing that societies that have less

income inequality have stronger economies. In short, each of us prospers when all of us prosper. A couple of recent books lay out a strong case for equity as an economic boon: [The Spirit Level](#), by Richard Wilkinson and Kate Pickett, and [Just Growth](#) by Manuel Pastor. Dr. Pastor is a frequent visitor to our region and will return on Monday, July 30, for a free [presentation](#) on how equity is key to prosperity and sustainability. The presentation begins at 5 p.m. in the Metro Council Chamber, located at 600 NE Grand Ave. in Portland. Please join me there.

Other cool stuff happening this summer at Metro:

[GreenScene](#)

Around the campfire series at Oxbow
Lone Fir Cemetery walking tour
Weekly honeybee hikes and ladybug walks
All sorts of birding adventures

[Music on Main Street](#) – Each Wednesday from July 11 through Aug. 29, 5 to 7 p.m.

This free summer series showcases popular local musicians and will feature an eclectic collection of music – from Afrobeat to Rockabilly, these bands will have you up on your feet and dancing on Main Street.

[Plazapalooza](#) – Each Thursday from July 12 through Aug. 30, 5 to 7 p.m.

From Pepe & the Bottle Blondes to The Stolen Sweets, something for every music lover

[Wanted: Oregonians who are passionate about public involvement](#)

July 13, 2012 2:58 PM

Metro is seeking volunteers to serve on the regional government's new Public Engagement Review Committee. The committee will meet twice a year and serve as a key component of Metro's ongoing efforts to develop and implement successful public engagement processes.

The review committee will include at least three at-large community members along with three individuals from local community organizations, either staff or board members. The committee will also include one public involvement staff

member from Clackamas, Multnomah and Washington counties.

In selecting Public Engagement Review Committee members, the Metro Council seeks a mix of representatives who demonstrate:

- a commitment to community involvement
- skills, knowledge or experience that support the public engagement principles adopted by Metro
- an ability to represent the geographic and demographic diversity of the region.

The deadline for applications is 5 p.m. Friday, Aug. 24.

[Learn more about applying](#)

The Public Engagement Review Committee is part of a multi-track strategy to ensure that Metro's public involvement is effective, reaches diverse audiences and harnesses emerging best practices. In addition to the committee, Metro will convene public involvement peer group learning sessions, hold an annual stakeholder summit, conduct online surveys and develop an annual report of Metro's public involvement practices.

The updated public engagement review process was [adopted by the Metro Council in May](#) following a two-year process to replace the Metro Committee for Citizen Involvement that previously oversaw the agency's public engagement activity.

[Metro Council sends North Portland \\$15,000 to help address community's needs](#)

July 13, 2012 2:56 PM

Residents and members of community organizations in North Portland got an influx of funds this week when the Metro Council approved \$15,000 in grants for community projects.

The regional government earmarked funds for five improvement projects. Awards will benefit young children with after-school educational programs and job skills training and internships for high school students, provide weatherization and safety repairs for isolated seniors and disabled residents, support a food pantry serving hundreds of families, and offer a teen-to-teen crisis intervention and support hotline.

"Services for families and maintaining our community's

infrastructure are essential to the quality of life that attracted us to our neighborhoods in the first place," said Metro Councilor Rex Burkholder, chair of the Metro Central grant selection committee and whose district includes Northwest and North Portland. "This investment of the public's money supports a diverse network of service providers that keeps our community vibrant and strong."

The North Portland enhancement grant program was established in 1985 by an act of the Oregon Legislature, which created a mitigation fund to compensate the community affected by the now-closed St. Johns Landfill. Funds were generated from a 50-cent surcharge imposed on each ton of garbage disposed of at the landfill. Today, interest generated on the fund supports the grant program. Projects must directly benefit residents or neighborhoods around the landfill, including Arbor Lodge, Cathedral Park, Kenton, Overlook, Portsmouth, St. Johns and University Park.

The 2012-13 grant cycle marks the 25th year Metro has invested funds in the community through the Metro Central enhancement program. Since then, more than \$2.2 million has been awarded to help fund 465 local improvement projects.

The complete slate of 2012-13 grant awards in North Portland includes:

[Chess for Success](#)

\$2,845 - Stipends for coaches and supplies for after-school chess club at seven North Portland schools for 250 students

[Community Energy Project](#)

\$2,500 - Management support for Volunteer Services program to reach up to 90 isolated seniors, and complete safety repairs and weatherize the homes of 25 local residents.

[Impact Northwest](#)

\$4,250 - Management support, supplies and stipends for Urban Opportunities job-readiness training and internship program for 25 Roosevelt High School students.

[Oregon Partnership - Lines for Life](#)

\$4,250 - Management support, supplies and stipends for teen-to-teen crisis support and intervention hotline

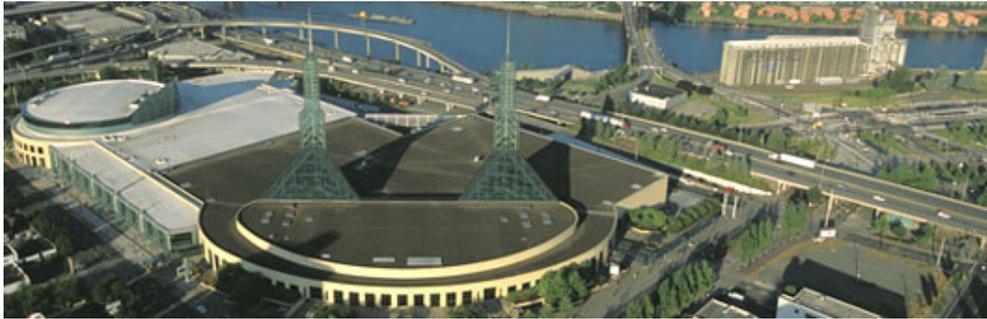
[St Andrew's Episcopal Pantry](#)

\$1,155 – Food items, storage shelving and on-going operational support for food pantry serving 720 families

For more information about projects receiving funds this year, or to read a report about outcomes of past projects funded, visit Metro's web site at www.oregonmetro.gov/grants or call Karen Blauer at 503-797-1506.

[Finalist for convention center hotel proposal could be announced next month](#)

July 13, 2012 2:54 PM



Regional leaders are hoping a private developer will build a hotel with at least 500 rooms near the Oregon Convention Center, which Metro owns.

Metro officials are just beginning to dive through the details of two proposals submitted Wednesday by development groups hoping to build a hotel near the [Oregon Convention Center](#).

The proposals were in response to a call for developers interested in ensuring there were at least 500 hotel rooms available in the immediate vicinity of the Oregon Convention Center. Regional leaders have been pushing for the room block as a way to encourage more conventions at the center.

Two groups, one led by Lloyd District developer [Langley Investment Properties](#) and the other by Minneapolis-based [Mortenson Development](#), submitted proposals to build a hotel. Metro declined to release the proposal packages to the media. Spokespeople for the development teams did not immediately respond to emails.

Teri Dresler, the director of Metro's visitor venues, said Thursday that both proposals seem viable after a first glance, but the hard work of financial analysis has yet to begin.

"We're in the process of engaging a financial consultant to help us untangle all those numbers and really look at what the bottom line is," Dresler said. "Because this is a big project, there's a lot of ifs, ands or buts to consider."

She said until that financial analysis is done, she couldn't guess what each group was proposing for the public investment in the project.

"I can't even ballpark it for you," she said.

Metro, which owns the convention center, has been working for years with Multnomah County and the Portland Development Commission to try and attract a hotel to the area. Earlier proposals faced political challenges in part because of their reliance on public financing.

In April, when Metro was preparing to issue the request for proposals, officials said the reason some public investment would be necessary was to ensure that the room block would be kept available for large conventions, whose organizers want to ensure there is enough space near the convention center to host attendees. Those rooms are often booked years in advance.

At the time, officials wouldn't say how much public money would be required to pull that off, but they hoped competitive bidding would give the public sector more leverage in negotiations.

Dresler said as many as five groups expressed interest in the project, and that Metro was expecting as many as three proposals to come in. Two did.

The Langley proposal includes Garfield Traub Development, a Dallas-based company that [was part of the aborted effort to bring a 600-room Westin hotel to the convention center area in the late 2000s](#). They are partnering with Sheraton, which is part of Westin's parent company, Starwood Hotels and Resort Worldwide.

Mortenson's proposal teams with Schlesinger Companies, which

owns land immediately north of the Oregon Convention Center. They're partnering with Hyatt Hotels Corp. for their project.

A 10-member evaluation committee is scheduled to start meeting next week to talk about what more information is needed before the review process can move forward. Dresler said she hopes to have a recommendation ready to present to the Metro Council, which ultimately will decide whether to move forward with the project, by Aug. 16.

Metro News editor Nick Christensen can be reached at nick.christensen@oregonmetro.gov or 503-813-7583. Follow Metro on Twitter [@oregonmetro](https://twitter.com/oregonmetro).

See also:

[Metro Council will hear proposals for privately funding convention center hotel](#) (April 26, 2012)

[Hughes: Time to restart convention center hotel discussion](#) (Feb. 23, 2011)

[Convention center hotel discussion shifts to private sector, smaller incentives](#) (Jan. 18, 2012)

[A personal message from Rex Burkholder: Birds and Climate Change](#)

April 5, 2012 2:01 PM

Bring in the Birds

T.S. Eliot once wrote, "April is the cruellest month." And this spring is proving him right! It's not just the hail followed by the rain followed by more rain, it's the sunny 60 degree plus day followed by the rain and the hail. But even though March was the rainiest on record, the trees are blooming and the hills are turning green again. I am a gardener and this year I've planted my yard with over 20 species of native plants ranging from the diminutive sorrel to flowering currents, serviceberries and viney maple.

Through the Backyard Bird Habitat Certification program (a joint project of the Portland Audubon Society and the Columbia Land Trust) I've gotten good professional advice—get rid of that butterfly bush, it's invasive!—information about classes on rain gardening and access to low cost plant materials—all native to

Oregon and the Willamette Valley. I'm looking forward to having a lush yard full of birds and other wildlife—right in the middle of the city. (I'm especially excited about the nettles and skunk cabbage I've put in my rain gardens.)

[Learn more about the Backyard Bird Habitat Certification Program](#)

Making Money and Fighting Climate Change

Based on my German Marshall Fund fellowship last year, I've been presenting lessons I learned about European strategies to reduce fossil fuel use, create jobs and find new markets for products and expertise that reduce use of energy or create new, renewable sources. I've spoken to the Washington County Sustainability Network, Women in Transportation Seminar, the Environment and Law Conference in Eugene and with the energy development team at McKinstry, Inc. My next scheduled presentation is in Lake Oswego on Saturday, May 5 as part of Lake Oswego's Sustainability Action Month. What I found in Europe is that it's smart business to save energy and switch to cleaner sources, and they are busy forging the way and profiting. We can as well.

[Learn more about the City of Lake Oswego's Sustainability Action Month](#)

[Metro Council president 'deeply concerned' about House committee vote to end dedicated transit, air quality funding](#)

February 9, 2012 11:23 AM

A proposal in Congress would undermine the Portland area's ability to build a balanced transportation system that provides travel options and protects air quality, Metro Council President Tom Hughes said today.

In a party-line vote, with two dissenting Republican members, the House Ways and Means Committee voted last week to end a 30-year federal commitment to dedicated funding for public transportation. The measure takes from transit the 2.86 cents of

the federal gas tax and eliminates the Mass Transit Account, forcing public transit to compete for general funds that are in line for tough budget cuts.

In addition to making the mass transit vulnerable, it also would make the [Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvements Program](#) equally vulnerable to the general fund. Though much smaller than the transit fund, the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvements Program allocates funds directly to Metro, and has for about 15 years been a key source of investment in regional trails, bicycle and pedestrian safety improvements. It is known locally as part of the Regional Flexible Fund program.

More than 600 organizations signed a letter opposing the proposal last week, including Council President Hughes, the mayor of Portland, the governors of Oregon and Washington, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, and the Sierra Club.

[Read the letter](#)

"This proposal will have a direct, adverse impact in the Portland area and in urban areas across the country," Hughes said. According to the independent Texas Transportation Institute, public transit service in the Portland–Vancouver area saved each rush hour driver 4 hours of delay in 2010, with a \$75 million economic impact.

Council President Hughes also said:

I am deeply concerned that federal policies like this could undermine our ability to use public transit to reduce congestion and also hamper our efforts to create livable, well-connected communities.

For more than two decades, the federal government has been a strong partner with the Portland area, investing with us in a public transit system that creates jobs, gives us transportation options, helps reduce congestion and preserves clean air. The results of that investment are all around, in our world-class network of light rail and bus routes from Hillsboro to Gresham, North Portland to Clackamas Town Center.

Eroding the ongoing federal commitment to transit funding could make it impossible for the federal government to honor contracts it signed to fund projects like the Milwaukie light rail

line. That project is already under construction, well on its way to creating up to 14,000 jobs and generating up to \$573 million in personal earnings.

This move is sure to make it extremely difficult to adopt a multi-year transportation authorization during this session of Congress, a development that will continue to cloud the future of our transportation infrastructure.

Federal transportation funding and policy will come up at Metro on Thursday, when the Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation considers endorsing a regional position on surface transportation authorization.

[Read the agenda and packet for upcoming meetings of the Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation](#)

[Learn more about Regional Flexible Funding, which explains how the region uses CMAQ funds](#)

[Learn more about the 2035 Regional Transportation Plan, the region's blueprint for reducing congestion and investing in bicycle, transit and pedestrian improvements](#)

[**A personal message from Rex Burkholder: Who we are**](#)

January 31, 2012 11:25 AM

Like any business, Metro's success depends on knowing our customers. What we "sell" are communities where people like to live and are proud of and where businesses want to invest and grow. As a Councilor, I spend a lot of time out in the community getting to know my neighbors and asking them about what they hope for and fear. Last week, I attended a community meeting in outer southeast Portland where neighbors introduced themselves to each other and talked about what they liked in their community: being able to get to the store easily, a close-by elementary school, and easy access to MAX and the Clackamas Town Center. They really liked the quiet and safety of their neighborhood, one where kids could run free and can be with their friends. They were eager to start a community garden and use their community room for potlucks and movie nights to have more chances to get to know one another. About half of the neighbors spoke Spanish as their first and primary language, a fun challenge for me to talk about Metro and what we do in two languages!

Earlier this month, I invited Ronault (Polo) Catalani from the City of Portland's Office of New Portlander Programs to talk to the Metro Council about our changing "customer base" in the metro area. Mr. Catalani told the Council that depending on where you live and shop, the chance of your neighbor or fellow shopper having been born in another country is between one in six to one in two! The largest group of immigrants is from the former Soviet Union, many who moved here to be able to practice their religion freely. People move to this country for its freedom and the opportunity to live a life without fear. They feel tremendously lucky to be living where they are respected and their voice is listened to. They are motivated people, who work hard to create a better life for their children and their communities.

[Learn more about the City of Portland's Office of New Portlander Programs](#)

In 1992 the people directed Metro to plan for a sustainable future. We know that it will be a quite different future, not just because more people will be living here and we, hopefully, will live more lightly on the planet, but also a future with a new set of cultural heritage and traditions. This incredibly dynamic country attracts people from all over who enrich our lives with their experiences, ideas and--my favorite--their foods. One way old timers and newcomers alike can tell Metro about their desires for a better future is through Opt In, an online community open to everyone with an email address, who get regular opportunities to pitch in with their thoughts on issues of the day, and of tomorrow. Please consider joining the almost 10,000 other metro area residents who are helping to shape their future.

[Learn more about Opt In](#)

The Metro Council is committed to learning more about the dreams and unmet needs of the diverse communities throughout this region. Over the next year, the Coalition of Communities of Color will be invited to present to the Metro Council reports focusing on the African American, African immigrant and refugee, Asian/Pacific Islander, Latino, Native American and Slavic communities. I look forward to talking with members of this Coalition to discuss what role the Metro

Council can play in addressing their findings and what we as a region can do to ensure a truly just, sustainable and peaceful future.

[Learn more about the Coalition of Communities of Color](#)

[New natural areas beyond Forest Park forge connections for wildlife, people](#)

January 26, 2012 3:01 PM



Beyond Forest Park, where elk roam forested hills and salmon swim in streams, voters have invested in a growing collection of protected natural areas.

Metro's Natural Areas Program has purchased 550 acres in western Multnomah County during the past two years, including a significant addition last month. As this network of wildlife habitat grows, so do the possibilities for restoration and recreation.

"If we protect enough land, we will have a safe place for native plants and animals to prosper as well as great places to go for a walk and refresh ourselves," said Metro Councilor Rex Burkholder, who represents the area. "A network of protected creeks and canyons from the flats to the peak of Tualatin Mountain will be a treasure and a legacy unparalleled."

Metro's new natural areas are divided into two clusters. Near Northwest Kaiser Road, 160 acres of wildlife habitat straddles Alder Creek, one of the most important headwaters of Rock Creek. A half mile north, another 390 acres – Metro's most recent purchases – are nestled along McCarthy Creek and its headwaters, north of Northwest Skyline Boulevard.

[View a map of the protected natural areas](#)

These natural areas were built piece-by-piece through seven transactions, using a total of \$5.3 million from the region's voter-approved 2006 natural areas bond measure. Land is bought from willing sellers, at market value, in targeted geographic areas across the region.

Although people sometimes assume Forest Park has already been protected, there's much to be done, said Carol Chesarek, who serves on the Forest Park Neighborhood Association board and leads a City Club of Portland committee advocating for improved restoration and funding at the park. By protecting land beyond the park – and, ultimately, creating links with the Rock Creek watershed and the Coast Range – the region can help elk, black bears and other animals travel across the landscape, she said.



"Those animals can only use Forest Park because of its connections to the larger landscape," Chesarek said. "They can't survive in Forest Park if it becomes an island."

Metro's natural areas team will monitor use at its new natural areas, making decisions in the coming years about the right level of access to support habitat goals. To protect natural resources, Metro prohibits ATVs, hunting, biking, horses and dogs at its natural areas.

Meanwhile, restoration work will get going right away. Metro's science and land management team typically marks boundaries,

meets neighbors and controls invasive species. In this area, initial plans call for replacing weeds with native trees and plants, evaluating the need for stream bank stabilization and improving the condition of spring-fed stream channels.

[Learn about Metro's Natural Areas Program](#)

Laura Oppenheimer Odom can be reached at laura.odom@oregonmetro.gov or 503-797-1879. Follow Metro on Twitter [@oregonmetro](#).

[Convention center hotel discussion shifts to private sector, smaller incentives](#)

January 18, 2012 4:37 PM

Metro appears ready to resume talking about accommodations near the Oregon Convention Center, but this time focusing primarily on letting the private sector lead development of a so-called headquarters hotel.

At a joint work session of the Metro Council and the Metro Exposition and Recreation Commission on Tuesday, councilors and commissioners seemed to agree that the focus for the agency, which owns the 22-year-old convention center, should be on facilitating development of about 400 hotel rooms somewhere near the center.

Past discussions have centered on publicly financing a headquarters hotel, which are large and expensive projects that are often financed by governments.

The new plan would involve smaller subsidies rather than outright financing – perhaps as small as providing publicly-owned land to a hotel company or companies, in exchange for guarantees of room availability for larger conventions.

Why the change? Political realities, for certain – the plug was pulled on the original project in 2009 because of questions about its economic and political feasibility. But Metro policy advisor Cheryl Twete said a strengthening hotel market nationwide has prompted hoteliers to look at Portland.

"We are being courted by a couple of the biggest hotel corporations, who are keenly interested in getting into this

market," Twete said at Tuesday's work session.

Metro attorney Dan Cooper, who has been part of Metro's staff team on the project, said the main focus now is working with Portland and Multnomah County to develop a strategy and to cut the best deal with the private sector.

"How do we induce the private market to build a sufficient number of rooms near the convention center so we have the room block capacity that's attractive to the kinds of groups we're losing?" Cooper told the council and commission.

Scope of the problem

The catalyst for Tuesday's conversation about the hotel was an economic impact report on Metro's visitor venues, which include the Oregon Zoo, the Oregon Convention Center, the Expo Center and the Portland Center for the Performing Arts. The study, by Crossroads Consulting, found that the convention center brought \$450 million in spending in the Portland region in 2011, supporting 4,260 jobs with an average wage of about \$40,000 a year.

The report also showed that the convention center had an operating deficit of \$10 million, but led to \$15.4 million in tax revenue being collected by various local governments.

When the 2010 study was released last February, convention center officials said 22 convention operators passed over Portland specifically because there wasn't a large hotel near the Lloyd District venue.

MERC chair Judie Hammerstad said that number went up in 2011.

"We had 30 lost events," she said. "These are events that wanted to come and couldn't come because they listed the lack of a convention center hotel."

MERC member Elisa Dozono offered a first-hand perspective, saying she tried to recruit the American Pacific Bar Association to hold its annual convention in Portland. The event draws 1,200 to 1,800 attorneys; it requires a 400-room block for bidding, Dozono said.

"It's not a big convention, but it's too big for a single hotel here in Portland," Dozono said. When she said the convention went to Kansas City, Metro councilors and MERC commissioners groaned.

The Lloyd District has 1,700 hotel rooms.

Political realities

The convention center hotel project has been a political hot potato for about years, receiving the most attention when Portland Mayor Sam Adams, then–Multnomah County Chair Ted Wheeler and then–Metro Council President David Bragdon tried to launch an ambitious project for what would be one of Oregon's largest hotels near the center. Since that proposal collapsed, attempts to restart the conversation have sputtered.

Metro Council President Tom Hughes was in office less than two months last year when he tried to restart the conversation. Publicly, that went nowhere.

[See also: Hughes: Time to restart convention center hotel discussion \(Feb. 24, 2011\)](#)

But there hasn't been consensus about how to proceed. Adams holds the most cash – the Oregon Convention Center Urban Renewal Area has some money left to spend before it expires in 2013 (a Portland Development Commission spokesman did not immediately respond to a request for the specific amount). Within Metro, there's concern that without some incentives, such as land or urban renewal money, new hotel capacity could be built in downtown Portland or the Pearl District. That wouldn't do much to help to the convention recruitment effort, and wouldn't come with any sort of guarantee of room availability.

"There will be a lot of hotels built in the region, and then we'll lose the interest and support for doing more," said Metro Councilor Rex Burkholder. "If we want it here and we want it the right size, we've got to act and we've got to be open for business."

Set among all of this is the ticking clock at Portland City Hall. With three city council seats up for election this year, the political will to wrap up a convention center hotel project could be drastically different in 2013. At the work session, Councilor

Barbara Roberts was particularly adamant about that concern.

Burkholder, whose district includes the convention center, said that's no reason to stall the conversation.

"What I'd say is to have a strong business case," Burkholder said. "We have the year of 2012 to think about what might be done, and actually start it. We have a year that we don't want to lose."

Metro news editor Nick Christensen can be reached at nick.christensen@oregonmetro.gov or 503-813-7583. Follow Metro on Twitter [@oregonmetro](https://twitter.com/oregonmetro).

[European cities boost economic future with public-private action on climate change, Burkholder says](#)

January 12, 2012 4:37 PM



To create jobs and save money, several European metropolitan areas are building public-private partnerships that create innovative clean energy solutions the Portland area can learn from, says Metro Councilor Rex Burkholder.

In Birmingham, England, the Detroit of Europe is reviving itself with by inventing fuel efficient car technology for sale to Chinese manufacturers.

In Rotterdam, Netherlands, the port, the local government and the leading business association are collaborating on a redevelopment plan for 4,000 acres. They're pioneering ways to use waste heat and carbon dioxide for agricultural uses.

"Why are they working collaboratively on the issue of climate change and transferring to a non-fossil fuel based economy?" Burkholder said. "Well, it's because they're going to make a lot of money."

Burkholder visited Birmingham, Rotterdam and Bologna, Italy, late last year in a three week trip funded by a fellowship from the German Marshall Fund of the United States. The report he wrote as part of the program details why he believes Europeans are tackling climate change more aggressively than Americans: economic opportunity, increasing demand for clean energy, energy independence and potential for floods and other effects.

[Read Burkholder's report](#)

[View Burkholder's slideshow, including audio and video snippets](#)

[Listen to audio of Burkholder presenting his slideshow at Metro Jan. 5](#)

[Learn more about what Metro's doing about climate change](#)

[Learn more about the Portland area's effort to grow the economy and create livable communities by using land use and transportation strategies to reduce carbon emissions](#)

[Metro events, Jan. 14 to Jan. 16: Days of service](#)

January 10, 2012 1:50 PM

Martin Luther King Jr. once said "Life's most persistent and urgent question is: 'What are you doing for others?'" In honor of the Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service on Monday, Jan. 16, check out the following opportunities to get dirty, have fun and help out. The best part is, all of these events are free, and registration is easy. Follow the links below for more information.

[MLK Weekend of Service planting](#)

8:45 a.m. to 1 p.m., Saturday, Jan. 14
Lents and Powellhurst-Gilbert neighborhoods

[Get digging at Fairview Creek](#)

9 a.m. to noon, Saturday, Jan. 14
Conifer Park

[Native Plant Center volunteer ventures](#)

9 a.m. to 1 p.m., Saturday, Jan. 14
Metro's Native Plant Center

Notes: Advance registration required

[Restoration work party](#)

9 a.m. to noon, Saturday, Jan. 14

Notes: Location provided with registration

[Shade our Streams work party](#)

9 a.m. to noon, Saturday, Jan. 14

Bonnie Lure Park

[Green the I-205 multi-use path](#)

8:45 a.m. to 1 p.m., Monday, Jan. 16

Parkrose Transit Center

[Volunteers needed for habitat restoration](#)

9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., Monday, Jan. 16

Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge

More things to do brought to you by GreenScene

Metro GreenScene provides a comprehensive calendar of free and low-cost nature activities, gardening workshops, volunteer ventures and community events offered all around the region by Metro and dozens of other organizations.

[View the online calendar](#)

[Visit the GreenScene page](#)

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[**Oregon Zoo to ring in new year with free admission Jan. 2**](#)

December 30, 2011 1:50 PM

Zoo celebrates 2011 attendance milestones, anticipates even brighter future

The Oregon Zoo will ring out 2011 in record fashion this weekend with the final nights of its best-attended ZooLights ever -- and then ring in 2012 with a celebratory day of free

admission on Monday, Jan. 2.

"We're so thankful for the community's continued support of the zoo and its mission, especially in this challenging economy," said zoo director Kim Smith. "Offering a free day is one way to show our appreciation."

Local schools, government offices and many businesses are closed Jan. 2 for the New Year's holiday. Zoo hours will be 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. for the day.

The zoo has attracted more than 1.5 million visitors every year since 2006, and it reached another attendance milestone Dec. 27 when 6-year-old Leland Heflin of Camas, Wash., became the 50 millionth zoo visitor since officials began tracking attendance in 1959.

To mark the occasion, Heflin and his family were awarded a prize package that included a one-year zoo membership, an assortment of gift items from the Zoo Store and the opportunity to help deliver Packy the elephant's 50th birthday cake this spring.

ZooLights continues through Sunday, Jan. 1. As of Dec. 29, the popular holiday light display had drawn more than 180,000 visitors, well beyond last year's record total of 141,716. ZooLights' popularity has also helped the zoo top its overall attendance record for December, last set in 2006.

"ZooLights has brought a lot of brightness to this holiday season," Smith said, "and the future of the Oregon Zoo looks especially bright too. With the recently approved zoo master plan, we now have a blueprint for the next twenty years."

Among the highlights zoo visitors can look forward to in 2012:

- In January, a new veterinary medical center is slated to open, giving vet staff the space and equipment needed to provide the very best in animal care.
- In April, one of Portland's most famous and beloved residents, Packy, turns 50.
- Toward the year's end, officials expect Rose-Tu will deliver a new addition to the zoo's world-renowned Asian elephant herd.

[Visit the Oregon Zoo](#)

[Metro grant helps the Community Cycling Center leverage funding to help families bike](#)

December 27, 2011 9:49 AM



Children and teens in North Portland's New Columbia neighborhood will soon see a vacant lot transform into a park where they can learn and test their bicycling skills.

Families in the Cully neighborhood will get lessons in how to repair bikes.

This coming summer, 150 kids living in low-income areas will receive refurbished bikes, new helmets, and safety classes.

All of this is because the Community Cycling Center is busy helping people living in low-income, diverse communities safely ride and maintain bikes.

With a \$78,625 grant from Metro, the center studied the cultural and socioeconomic barriers to bicycling in some of Portland's poorer neighborhoods. Now, the center is using the study's findings to leverage additional funding and roll through barriers to riding a bike.

The center received additional funding from several local groups. Bikes Belong awarded the center a \$10,000 grant to create a community bike hub in New Columbia as early as next summer. Cyclists will be able to hone their bike handling skills and have access to tools to keep their bikes tuned and rolling.

The center also received a \$3,000 grant from Central Northeast

Neighbors to support a group of cyclists, *Andando en Bicicleta en Cully*, from Hacienda Community Development Corporation. The grant will fund clinics to teach Cully neighbors how to maintain and repair their bikes.

Home Forward, ODS and the Bike Gallery also contributed to the project.

Metro applauds the Community Cycling Center and its partners for helping give more people the opportunity to ride bikes, which improves health and the quality of our air.

[Learn about Metro grants that support active transportation and improve air quality](#)

[Learn about the Community Cycling Center](#)

[Read the Understanding Barriers to Bicycling report](#)

[Grant connects neighbors to nature in St. Johns](#)

December 22, 2011 4:39 PM



Neighbors frequently use the street along the Baltimore Woods that is hoped to become a corridor of the North Portland Greenway.

Baltimore Woods was in limbo. While the recession kept developers at bay, the area gave rise to weeds, litter and neglect.

But neighbors around the 30-acre corridor in North Portland's

St. Johns neighborhood saw the land as a community asset. And with the support of a Metro Nature in Neighborhoods capital grant, the woods were given a new lease on life.

Much of Baltimore Woods borders homes, garages and lawns north of Cathedral Park toward Pier Park. The trees, some crawling with ivy and blackberry, act as a buffer between the elevated residential area and industrial sites below, on the edge of the eastern banks of the Willamette River.

A group called The Friends of Baltimore Woods had been advocating for restoration of the site for several years, but with development looming, it was time to act. They contacted Three Rivers Conservancy and met with Virginia Bowers, whose specialty is helping acquire land for preservation.

There must be an option for rescuing the woods, the group thought. After hearing their vision, Bowers said, "it seemed appropriate for Three Rivers to have a spot at the table."

Meanwhile, a feasibility study funded by the Port of Portland looked at options for aligning two proposed regional trails within the Baltimore Woods corridor rather than on a nearby street. In the final report, the Port noted support for preserving the woods as a trail asset and buffer, improving storm water filtration at the site, saving its 30 Oregon white oaks and potentially creating an area for environmental education.



A view of the trail, which separates residential and industrial land, in the St. Johns neighborhood.

Barbara Quinn, chair of The Friends of Baltimore Woods, said the group hoped to purchase several of the lots along the corridor, which peaked in value a few years earlier and were steadily dropping in price.

But purchasing the land could be difficult, Bowers explained.

"For urban properties, you're not going to get certain wildlife habitat funding and endangered species funding you'd get in other areas. This land wouldn't meet those criteria," she said.

Metro's Nature in Neighborhoods capital grants are a rare exception.

Approved by voters across the region as part of a 2006 natural areas bond measure, the capital grants program funds land acquisition, restoration, neighborhood and urban redevelopment projects with a focus on helping nature thrive in urban areas.

The Baltimore Woods project was chosen during the 2010 grant cycle with commitments from the Portland Bureau of Environmental Services' Grey to Green program, SOLV and the funding match of the City of Portland's Parks & Recreation department. Metro provided \$158,000 of the \$475,000 project price tag.



Barbara Quinn shows the site where SOLV has begun removing invasive weeds and planting native trees and shrubs.

With the financial backing, Bowers helped the group scoop up the five vacant tax lots along the corridor – including the site of proposed condos that were home to a large oak grove.

"The recession has had a silver lining because people were willing to sell," Quinn said. "Some saw that we were very interested in this project, and they wanted to do something

good for the neighborhood as well."

"We were thrilled," she said.

SOLV came on board to organize volunteers to remove invasive species and plant new natives to stabilize the land. Quinn described the volunteer support in restoring the site as exciting. School and business groups, including Bainbridge Graduate Institute, Students Today Leaders Forever and Meyer Memorial Trust, have taken part in the effort. More than 50 freshmen from the University of Portland helped plant natives this fall.

"The educational aspect of this project is huge," Quinn said. "I think it's been wondrously successful so far."

Bowers hopes more land can be purchased for preservation in the coming years, possibly with the help of another Nature in Neighborhoods grant. She thanks the Nature in Neighborhoods program for turning a grassroots effort into real progress for the St. Johns community.

"Without the grant from Metro, it wouldn't have happened," she said. "No way."

Metro has awarded \$4.7 million in capital grants to 18 projects across the region. Recipients are restoring salmon habitat, planting trees and creating a sense of place in their communities.

[Get more information on Nature in Neighborhoods capital grants](#)

[Learn about other capital grant recipients](#)

[Visit The Friends of the Baltimore Woods](#)

[Metro offers tips for handling holiday waste](#)

December 21, 2011 4:00 PM



Got holiday stuff to recycle? From trees to old TVs, learn what to do with what's left behind.

Residents with curbside service for yard debris can add their Christmas trees, wreath and swag, too. Remember to remove all lights, wire, tinsel, ornaments, nails, stands and other materials. Another option? Let a scout troop, school group or service club collect the tree as part of its fundraising program. For a small fee or donation, organizations will collect trees, along with wreaths, the first weekend of the year. Some will continue recycling them the following week. Call Metro Recycling Information at 503-234-3000 or check online for the nearest options.

[Find a recycler](#)

Packing peanuts aren't recyclable curbside, but folks can take clean, dry packing peanuts to a shipping store for reuse. Some locations also may accept bubble wrap and sheets of packing foam. Block foam isn't recyclable curbside, but a handful of businesses accept polystyrene block foam marked '6' inside the recycling symbol. Another possibility? Save the materials for your next big packing project. Call Metro's recycling hotline or search the online directory for more details on local options.

[Search online](#)

Making the switch to energy-saving LED holiday lights? Throughout its winter ZooLights festival, the Oregon Zoo is collecting old incandescent lights for recycling. Zoo visitors who drop off their old holiday light strings by Sunday, Jan. 1, 2012, will get a coupon for free fudge at the Zoo Store.

[Learn more](#)

Consider donating excess food to a local food bank, shelter or other charitable organization that can accept it. For leftover food scraps, don't forget to compost. With minimal equipment such as a compost bin, it's easy to turn trimmings into a garden-boosting soil amendment. Plus, Portland residents can now toss kitchen scraps - including fruit, vegetables, meat and dairy - into their green roll cart for curbside pickup. To learn more about waste-free holiday meals, visit Metro's news page.

[Visit Metro News](#)

To learn which electronics recyclers take mice, keyboards and printers, cell phones, VCRs, DVD players, fax machines or handheld devices, call Metro's recycling hotline at 503-234-3000. Another option? Offer still-good electronics to friends or relatives who can use them. Oregon E-Cycles, a statewide industry program that collects computers, monitors and televisions for recycling, makes it even easier to keep valuable materials out of the landfill. For free recycling locations in the Oregon E-Cycles program, call 1-888-5-ECYCLE (888-532-9253) or visit the website.

[Learn about Oregon E-cycles](#)

From garbage and old furniture discarded in an alley to tires and rusted drums piled in a public park, it's easy to spot an illegal dump. Metro's Regional Illegal Dumping Patrol partners with local governments including law enforcement to help clean up illegal dumps on public property. To report an illegal dump site in Multnomah, Clackamas or Washington county, call RID Patrol at 503-234-3000 or visit the website.

[Learn about the RID Patrol](#)

Of course, Metro also has the scoop on what kinds of packaging and gift wrap are recyclable, where to take other items that residents can't recycle at the curb and how to maximize reuse options. Call Metro's recycling hotline for details, or get waste-wise ideas online.

[Learn more at Metro's site](#)

[A personal message from Rex Burkholder: Learning about business and sustainability](#)

December 20, 2011 1:45 PM



Happy Holidays! Santa recently visited the Metro Regional Center during a fundraiser.

Greetings Friends,

I recently was awarded an Urban & Regional Policy fellowship by the German Marshall Fund of the United States. The fellowship allowed me to travel to Rotterdam, The Netherlands, Birmingham, U.K., and Bologna, Italy. In each city I interviewed leaders in business, government, academia and non-governmental organizations.

My goal was to learn why there is strong support for addressing climate change in Europe when there seems to be so much resistance in the United States. Four key messages were widely cited by the leaders I met for why they are involved:

1. Economic opportunity. There is money to be made – and saved – by investing in energy conservation and renewable energy. These investments also create jobs in-country, a key issue where there have been massive declines in manufacturing employment.
2. Increasing demand. Demand for clean energy is growing worldwide. Countries that are first and best in the market will reap significant economic rewards.
3. National security. Much of Europe's energy is subject to market volatility and political intrigue. Russia's punitive shutting off of Ukraine's gas supply in the winter of 2009 is a strong argument for investing in energy independence.
4. Climate change. The increased potential for droughts, floods, disease, extreme weather and other challenges are motivating innovations and investments to protect our past investments in roads, bridges, and buildings while also

making economies and cities more efficient and sustainable.

Finally, the leaders I talked with stressed that success in achieving economic, social and environmental sustainability depends upon cross-sector collaboration that is intentional, outcome-oriented and willing to challenge existing models of business and governance.

During the next several months I will be sharing what I learned with leaders in the business and sustainability arena in our region to see which ideas we can move forward.

I invite you to take a look at the [report I wrote summarizing my findings at my website](#). I'm also spreading the word by doing informal presentations. My first will be a brown bag lunch seminar here at Metro at noon on Thursday, January 5th.

Please email me at rex.burkholder@oregonmetro.gov or call me at 503-797-1546 if you want to get in touch.

[Metro Council applauds collaboration, equity in allocation of transportation projects](#)

December 19, 2011 4:13 PM

The Metro Council has approved spending \$70 million in federal transportation money, applauding a two-year effort by the agency to collaborate with cities and counties and give a more thorough consideration of low income and minority communities.

Attention on the program, known as regional flexible funding, focused on how to spend \$23 million in two years on local transportation projects across the metropolitan area. In the past, Metro staff would judge local proposals on a variety of technical criteria, then submit them to elected officials who would approve, elevate or delay projects based on a variety of factors. Projects trickled out in small bits – a sidewalk gap closed here, a trail crossing improved there.

This time was different. Councilors and elected officials on the Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation decided early on what their priorities would be: bike, pedestrian and public transit access would receive 75 percent of the money, and freight projects would receive 25 percent. Community

representatives fleshed out the project nomination criteria and priorities. Local agencies decided among themselves in each of the three counties and the city of Portland which projects they should nominate.

Setting priorities up front and collaborating with representatives of minority and low income communities made a huge difference, said Councilor Carlotta Collette. The chair of JPACT, Collette shepherded the process from policy ideas to projects approved by the entire region.

"We have fewer, larger projects that were developed collaboratively, that were vetted locally and are consistent with JPACT and council direction," she said.

The Metro Council unanimously approved the plan at its meeting Thursday. Councilors specifically praised the role of a task force created to advise how best to spend the money and a working group on environmental justice to recommend how to meet the needs of low income, minority and disabled residents.

Councilor Kathryn Harrington thanked Collette for seeking advice from councilors and JPACT members on who to include in the task force and working group. She praised those groups and agency staff for taking on tough conversations about biking, freight, environmental justice and other needs that can sometimes seem impossible to resolve.

"It can sometimes be very difficult to have those kinds of discussions and review of material," Harrington said. "The end result is certainly the benefit of all that great collaboration."

Metro explored new ways to address the needs of minority and low income communities that have traditionally been left out of transportation planning. Based on input from the working group, staff analyzed safe routes to services. This included maps showing: residential areas with high rates of minority and low income populations; essential services for daily needs such as grocery stores; and sidewalk gaps, unsafe pedestrian crossings and other areas that make it hard to get from home to services without using a car.

"I love it," said Councilor Rex Burkholder. "It just tells us right here how well we're doing on addressing those issues. We still have a lot of work to do on this around the region but most of

these projects are addressing that very directly."

Metro shared the maps with local agencies and urged them to use them as they develop projects for the flexible funding program. Planners said they also intend to use the information as they write the next regional transportation plan.

Harrington urged planners to share the maps with cities and counties that are writing transportation system plans and for Metro to use them in its upcoming effort to create a regionwide active transportation plan.

JPACT approved the list of projects and programs Dec. 8. The committee will review the allocation process in the coming months. Then later this year, the region will have a chance to start allocating another two year cycle of transportation projects.

[Review projects funded in the 2014-15 fund cycle](#)

[Learn more about the flexible funding program and the two federal programs that comprise it](#)

[Read the public comment report](#)

[Learn more about the Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation](#)

[Equity concern on Portland Bike Sharing program overshadows flexible funding decision](#)

December 9, 2011 8:54 AM

A rare public dust up between Portland and Multnomah County was the flashpoint of a meeting where a regional committee approved spending \$70 million in federal money for transportation projects and programs across the metropolitan area.

Multnomah County Commissioner Deborah Kafoury suggested delaying approval of \$2 million for Portland Bike Sharing, asking that city officials take more time to address concerns raised by the Community for Equity, a coalition of seven local nonprofits. The groups want the proposed system of bike rentals to include specific goals for hiring low income and other disadvantaged workers and contractors - in operating the rental system as well

as building it.

"I've been somewhat bothered by the concerns raised by the Community for Equity," Kafoury said. "It's one of our priorities and commitments. We need to continue to walk that talk."

"That's pretty gutsy on your part because your projects went through much less equity review than this project," Portland Mayor Sam Adams replied.

The tension arose at the Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation, a 17-member panel of some of the most high-profile elected officials across the region and the leaders of transportation agencies. The committee was giving final approval to regional flexible funding, a program of federal money that Metro controls and allocates in two-year cycles.

Thursday's meeting was the culmination of more than 18 months of discussion about how best to spend \$23 million on transportation projects. In the summer of 2010, JPACT decided by a one-vote margin to spend 75 percent of the money on bike, pedestrian and public transit access projects, and 25 percent on freight and "green economy" projects. The Port of Portland and Oregon Department of Transportation had suggested a 75 percent share for freight.

After the contentious decision on the 75-25 split, Metro formed a citizen task force to advise JPACT on how to spend the money and a working group on environmental justice to advise on how best to meet the needs of low income and minority communities. Local officials have said they felt empowered by the new process, which allowed the three counties and Portland to develop their own lists of projects last spring. They each held public meetings over the summer to whittle down their lists in August, before a 30-day public comment period run by Metro.

The result? Bigger projects, including \$5 million for a system of trails, bike paths and sidewalks in the Sherwood area that is the largest dollar amount the program has allocated to a single project. Also, more projects that build sidewalks and safe pedestrian crossings in low income areas, such as Arata Road in Wood Village and along 122nd Avenue in East Portland. Freight projects include \$2.4 million for the Around the Horn project in North Portland's St. Johns area and \$790,000 for high tech improvements in the Clackamas area.

"This is an absolutely excellent package of projects," said TriMet General Manager Neil McFarlane. "As we mold this process that we have been doing overall, we are getting higher quality projects. It's very balanced and overall looks good."

The Bike Sharing proposal, which would be a first for the region, was by far the most controversial project. Alan Hipolito, with the Verde landscaping nonprofit firm that employs low income workers, said the city had not adequately responded to the workforce and other concerns raised by the Community for Equity organizations months ago. They want to be included in shaping the request for proposals to build and operate the system, so it includes workforce goals. After the meeting, Hipolito said that Verde would refrain from bidding on Bike Sharing contracts if it presented a conflict of interest.

Adams said the request for proposals hadn't been written. The city would continue discussion with social equity groups, and the city council would consider the contract before it is finalized.

"I don't mind the high standards in terms of equity," Adams said. "I understand in this particular proposal, equity might not be readily apparent, but that's a misunderstanding of what this proposal does for racial, geographic and class equity."

In the end, Kafoury's motion to delay approving the Bike Sharing proposal by a month failed to get a second. JPACT unanimously approved the Flexible Funding projects and programs, with Kafoury voting yes.

She and other members said they were confused by how to handle a late simmering public concern at JPACT, a body that conducts public comment periods and open houses but normally doesn't take testimony at its 7:30 a.m. monthly meetings.

The Metro Council is expected to vote on the flexible funding program Dec. 15, though the council cannot amend JPACT decisions.

The program covers money that is expected to be available in federal fiscal years ending 2014 and 2015. In addition to the local transportation projects, the allocation also includes \$47 million for a variety of regionwide programs, including \$26

million to help pay for light rail construction, \$6 million for assistance for transit oriented development and \$3 million for high-tech road system improvements.

[Read the full project list and detailed descriptions of each](#)

[Read a report on public comments received from Sept. 13 through Oct. 13, 2011, including the actual comments received from the public](#)

[Learn more about the flexible funding program and the two federal funds that comprise it](#)

Dylan Rivera can be reached at 503-797-1551 or dylan.rivera@oregonmetro.gov.

[Get tips on green gifting](#)

December 5, 2011 3:02 PM

Making headway on that holiday list? Hold the foil-coated wrapping paper! Metro's eco-friendly tips make it easy to go green while wowing everyone on your gift list.

Check out KATU's recent AM Northwest segment featuring Metro recycling expert Betty Shelley. From reusable gift bags to presents that showcase your own talents, Shelley shares the what, how and why of curbing waste while celebrating the season.

Idea alert: Don't miss the creative gift certificate great for family and friends.

[Watch the AM Northwest clip at KATU.com](#)

[Learn more about sustainable gift-giving and entertaining](#)

[Find a recycler](#)

[Behind the curtain: materials and their environmental impact](#)

December 2, 2011 8:52 AM



David Allaway

Obsessing about the potential environmental impacts of every single product you might buy? David Allaway, a senior policy analyst at the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality, wants you to stop that.

"We could drive ourselves crazy" trying to think through all the possibilities, Allaway told an audience of about 50 Metro employees, community members and government partners during his Wednesday presentation at the Metro Regional Center.

Instead, Allaway suggested individuals can make a bigger difference by focusing on their housing, how they get around, what they eat and how much energy their products – appliances, for example – consume.

But what about the impacts of other products? After all, use of materials is only increasing and accounts for the largest percentage of consumption-based greenhouse gas emissions in the state, according to a new Oregon DEQ report.

[Read the DEQ report](#)

"If we want to reduce the environmental impacts of products," Allaway said, "we have to *know* the environmental impacts of products." And using life-cycle analysis rather than relying on a product's attributes may hold the key.

Local, recyclable, compostable, biodegradable, made from plants – all characteristics that point to attributes rather than impacts, Allaway said. A product's contribution to air pollution,

however, is an example of its impact.

As consumers, "we want to reduce impacts but don't know what they are, so we fall back on attributes," Allaway said. "We hope and cross our fingers that if we buy products with [good] attributes, we'll reduce impacts." Yet, Allaway said, the two don't consistently correlate.

Enter life-cycle analysis, or the science of estimating a product's environmental impact throughout its duration. Quick? No. Cheap? Not necessarily. Universally embraced? Not yet. But it's gaining steam, Allaway said, and can provide a comprehensive look at impacts and ways to reduce them."

DEQ has used life-cycle analysis," Allaway later shared in an email, "to help producers and consumers better understand opportunities to reduce environmental impacts associated with e-commerce packaging, drinking-water delivery, waste prevention in residential housing and the carbon footprint of all consumption in Oregon."

[Read the DEQ report on life-cycle analysis of drinking water](#)

Back to individual consumer choices, like not sweating the small stuff, Allaway said, and instead acting on research that singles out housing, mobility, food and energy-consuming products as opportunities for big-impact savings.

In addition, for institutional purchasers and procurement staff, research by the Environmental Protection Agency points to cotton, apparel, industrial chemicals, vehicles, meat and housing as materials with larger environmental impacts.

[View David Allaway's presentation](#)

Allaway, a Portland native who earned a 2009 National Notable Achievement Award from the EPA for his work to reduce the greenhouse gas impacts of materials and waste, coordinates Oregon DEQ's waste prevention strategies. He has worked at DEQ for more than 11 years.

Shareefah Hoover can be reached at 503-797-1599 or shareefah.hoover@oregonmetro.gov.

[In Latin America, Ciclovía is a cultural touchstone](#)

November 23, 2011 10:30 AM



Note – Metro news editor Nick Christensen recently traveled to Mexico City for rest, relaxation and an escape from Stumptown. Within 12 hours of arriving, he found himself surrounded by bicycles and Occupy protesters.

Reporting from Mexico City

To describe movement here as chaotic would be an understatement.

The city's subway is packed like straw in a hay bale; riders make room for themselves where none seems to exist. Highways are deluged with cars, and lane markers are a mere recommendation.

But on Sundays, a city addicted to moving quickly takes a 46-mile break. *El DF's* main thoroughfare, Paseo de la Reforma, and other streets throughout the metropolis are shut for Ciclovía, a respite from the bedlam of the daily commute.

Takeaways

One-off observations in Mexico City:

BASELINES

It seemed like every building was mixed-use, with shops on the first floor and residences upstairs. Forget "20-minute neighborhoods," residents have most of what they need within

blocks of their doors.

MOBILITY

It wasn't as hard as I'd imagined to fight through crowded pedestrian areas. Part of that was because of wide sidewalks, and even some ped-only areas. A fast-moving transit system with stops that aren't too close together gets people around quickly. Walking was often faster than driving.

CYCLING

Sure, Mexico City is trying, and there were plenty of folks out at Ciclovía. But, compared to Portland at least, it was rare to see someone on a weekday actually using a bicycle, despite omnipresent, inexpensive bike rental opportunities in the city center.

THE DONUT RING

Central Mexico City was dominated by middle- and upper-class individuals, decent shops and restaurants and homes. But outside of the city's core was a ring of lower-class dwellings, ramshackle out of cinder blocks with water tanks on their roofs. It made me think of how areas like Aloha and Rockwood have struggled as central Portland has escaped from the malaise of the 1980s and 90s.

FOOTPRINT

In terms of physical distance from the city center to the edge of the suburbs, Mexico City is no larger than Portland. It has 10 times as many residents.

– *Nick Christensen*

It's part of an omnipresent push for more cycling in Mexico's capital, and a broader movement across the western hemisphere to use bicycles as a tool for community building.

"It's getting that cycling culture built in," said Grant Cogswell, a bookstore owner in the city's Roma neighborhood, and a former transportation advocate in the Puget Sound area.

How is it that in this choking city of 22 million where cars are king, so many highways can be closed so often for bike traffic?

And why is Portland limited to just five of the events every year?

A different organizational structure helps Ciclovias across Latin American prosper, said Metro Councilor Rex Burkholder.

Burkholder was in Medellin, Colombia, last week, attending an international Ciclovía conference and being honored as a Global Ciclovía Ambassador. He said it's easier to come by volunteers for Ciclovía in Latin American countries, where civic service is a required part of a college education.

Plus, when it comes to getting police to sign on, "The mayor says do it, and the police do it," Burkholder said.

By comparison, the Portland Bureau of Transportation spent nearly \$150,000 on traffic control for its five Sunday Parkways in 2010, about 40 percent of the program's total budget.

"Cops for some reason feel like nobody else can control traffic, and I don't know if that's a legal thing or if they're saying 'That's just our job and we're not going to use volunteers,'" Burkholder said.

Culturally, there's an accepted need for the Ciclovías in Latin America, Burkholder said. Countries that have been dealing with civil war for decades, he said, have an incentive to encourage human-scale interactions in diverse neighborhoods across the city.

The non-cycling public doesn't seem to mind Ciclovía, Cogswell said. The trappings of living in a massive national capital, like protests, dignitary visits and other obstructions, are just part of daily life.

"They don't flinch at that. They're like 'Oh, cool, bicycles,'" he said.

This isn't to say those Latin American cities that host frequent, massive Ciclovías have turned into bike riding Shangri-Las.

"During the week it's death on the road," Burkholder said, pointing to a trip he made to Lima, Peru, where the safest place to ride on the bike was on the centerline of the highway – because drivers would unexpectedly pull into the bike lanes to pass.

"Their bike facilities have to be separated cyclepaths, because otherwise, they're killed," Burkholder said.

Cogswell said that chaos, in a way, makes cycling safer, at least in Mexico City.

"It's probably safer here, than riding in a big city in the United States, because people have their eyes open because people do crazy (stuff)," Cogswell said. "On the other hand, people do crazy (stuff)."

Metro news editor Nick Christensen can be reached at nick.christensen@oregonmetro.gov or 503-813-7583. Follow Metro on Twitter [@oregonmetro](https://twitter.com/oregonmetro).

Zoo's animals to gobble up Thanksgiving 'Beast Feast'

November 17, 2011 12:33 PM



The Oregon Zoo's bobcats investigate a papier-mâché turkey stuffed with treats. Zoo animals will receive special treats and Thanksgiving-themed enrichment throughout the holiday weekend (Nov. 24-27). Photo by Julie Cudahy, courtesy of the Oregon Zoo.

Visitors can watch animals enjoy meals and holiday-themed treats during long holiday weekend

Leftovers, schmeftovers! Throughout the four-day Thanksgiving weekend, Oregon Zoo animals will gobble their way through their very own Beast Feast, a cornucopia of enrichment activities and treats aimed at stimulating their minds and stomachs.

From Nov. 24 through 27, visitors can watch animals dig into meals, special treats and some holiday-themed goodies. Activities will take place daily at 10 a.m., 11:30 a.m., 1:30 p.m. and 2:30 p.m.

- Thursday, Nov. 24 - Black bears, hippos, elephants and

tigers

- Friday, Nov. 25 – Polar bears, lions and wild dogs, penguins and chimpanzees
- Saturday, Nov. 26 – Sea otters, wolves, lions and orangutans
- Sunday, Nov. 27 – Rhinos, elephants, cougars and lorikeets

"This is our way of giving thanks for the zoo's visitors and animals," said zoo director Kim Smith. "Our Thanksgiving activities should be a nice treat for both. They're also a good example of the zoo's enrichment program, which is critical to our animals' well-being."

The zoo uses enrichment to keep animals mentally and physically stimulated, and to encourage hunting and foraging behaviors. Treats are tailored to the needs of specific animals by the zoo's volunteer enrichment team and keepers.

Another Thanksgiving Day event begins early Thursday, when the Oregon Zoo hosts the annual Turkey Trot, organized by the Oregon Road Runners Club. This event includes a four-mile fitness run and walk, starting at 8 a.m., followed by a half-mile "Tot Trot" at 9:30 a.m.

[Learn more about the Oregon Zoo](#)

[Oregon Zoo offers free admission for military, Nov. 11](#)

November 8, 2011 9:03 AM

Active and retired military personnel and their families to be admitted free on Veterans Day

The Oregon Zoo will mark Veterans Day by offering free admission for military veterans and active military personnel, as well as family members who accompany them to the zoo. Families of deployed military personnel also will be given free admission.

"We want to show our gratitude to those who have served in the military and to the families that support them," said zoo director Kim Smith. "On Veterans Day, we're inviting them, their families and the families of deployed military personnel to enjoy a free day at the zoo."

To receive free admission Friday, Nov. 11, visitors must show a military or veteran organization ID, discharge papers or other official military identification; families of deployed military personnel must show an active duty ID. The Zoo Store is also offering a 10 percent discount for veterans, active military personnel and their families, with proper identification.

The zoo is a service of Metro and is dedicated to its mission of inspiring the community to create a better future for wildlife. Committed to conservation, the zoo is currently working to save endangered California condors, Columbia Basin pygmy rabbits, Oregon silverspot and Taylor's checkerspot butterflies, western pond turtles, Oregon spotted frogs and Kincaid's lupine. Other projects include studies on black rhinos, Asian elephants, polar bears and bats.

The zoo opens at 9 a.m. daily and is located five minutes from downtown Portland, just off Highway 26. The zoo is also accessible by MAX light rail line. Visitors who travel to the zoo via MAX receive \$1.50 off zoo admission. Call TriMet Customer Service, 503-238-RIDE (7433), or visit www.trimet.org for fare and route information.

General admission is \$10.50 (ages 12-64), \$9 for seniors (65 and up), \$7.50 for children (ages 3-11) and free for those 2 and younger; 25 cents of the admission price helps fund regional conservation projects through the zoo's Future for Wildlife program. A parking fee of \$2 per car is also required. Additional information is available at the Oregon Zoo website or by calling 503-226-1561.

[Visit the Oregon Zoo](#)

[Metro walks its talk with new green building policy](#)

November 7, 2011 1:21 PM



Rain garden at the Oregon Convention Center

With the recent adoption of its first-ever green building policy, Metro has set new sustainability standards for all the agency's facilities and developed properties, from regional parks, solid waste transfer stations and the Oregon Zoo to venues such as the Portland Expo Center and Oregon Convention Center. The new policy follows last year's approval of a plan to transform Metro internal operations into a sustainable business model by 2025.

"By adopting this new green building policy, Metro joins public agencies from our region and across the nation in recognizing that the sustainable design and operations of our public buildings is good for our environment, our economy and our community," said District 1 Metro Councilor Shirley Craddick, who carried the legislation. "This policy will help Metro further implement best practices for sustainability in our own facilities and apply them consistently across all departments and visitor venues."

The policy, which supports Metro's sustainability goals on greenhouse gas emissions, toxics use, waste generation, water conservation and habitat enhancement, includes standards for new construction, major renovations and ongoing building maintenance and operations. It incorporates Earth Advantage Institute's new green building standards for midsize buildings and establishes goals to increase participation of minority, women-owned and emerging small businesses in Metro's green building construction projects.

Other key elements

- New buildings between 5,000 and 70,000 square feet must include Earth Advantage Commercial certification at the gold level.
- New buildings more than 70,000 square feet must include applicable Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design certification at the gold level.
- All new buildings must meet performance standards consistent with Metro's sustainability goals.
- Existing buildings more than 50,000 square feet will be assessed for LEED Existing Building certification eligibility at the silver level.
- All existing facilities must meet selected best practices for environmental performance, such as having an energy

efficiency plan, an ecoroof feasibility analysis and low-mercury lighting.

- Requirements that link green building construction projects to the agency's procurement goals for increased utilization of minority-owned, women-owned and emerging small businesses (MWESB).

Newer Metro buildings already reflect some of the agency's work to minimize the environmental impact of its facilities:

- The education center at Cooper Mountain Nature Park in Beaverton includes solar panels, an ecoroof, local construction materials and on-site stormwater management with a rain garden.
- Construction of the Hoyt Street Station Community Café at Metro headquarters in northeast Portland included reclaimed, recycled and local materials. The café also embodies the social aspect of sustainability's "triple bottom line" - people, planet and profits - having hired local and MWESB firms to build the eatery and offering a job training program to help employees gain business development skills.

[Read Metro's new green building policy](#)

[Explore Metro's sustainability plan and other initiatives to reduce waste, conserve natural resources and curb greenhouse gas emissions](#)

[Learn about the sustainability features at Cooper Mountain Nature Park](#)

[Learn about Hoyt Street Station Community Café's commitment to the triple bottom line](#)

[Frank talk about community design and health](#)

November 7, 2011 1:20 PM



Commuters in Atlanta collectively drive further than a round trip to the sun and back - each day. Professor and author Lawrence Frank points to that example as

the reason "why we're having an energy and environmental crisis today" – and why Americans are overweight and experience a number of health problems. It all comes down to how we get around.

Speaking to an audience of more than 100 people in the Metro Council chamber early Friday morning, Larry Frank, chair of Sustainable Transportation at the University of British Columbia and senior non-resident fellow at the Brookings Institution, shared research connecting how we design our communities to the health of community members. Basically, cities and neighborhoods that don't have easy and safe access to walking, biking or taking transit mean that people have to drive. Spending more time in cars leads to increased obesity and health problems – which present hidden costs for everyone in society.

Fast facts

A slice of pizza contains enough calories (or energy) to fuel a bicyclist for 10 miles, a pedestrian for 3.5 miles, or a car to travel 100 feet. "Do we really need a ton of steel to get a loaf of bread?" asks Dr. Larry Frank.

Transit users are three and a half times more likely to get the daily recommended amount of exercise.

On average, every additional hour spent daily in a car increases the likelihood of obesity by six percent.

Frank suggested two policy solutions – both sure to be controversial in some circles. First, he advocates moving the costs from the end effect of the cycle (increased health care) up to the beginning of the cycle by investing that money in better land use and transportation systems. Making it easier for people to get around under their own power will result in more exercise, less obesity and fewer health problems, Frank says.

Second, he asserts that our current auto insurance practices are the opposite of what they should be, because they encourage more cars and more driving. "Implementing pay-as-you-drive insurance might be the single most effective health-based measure we could undertake," states Frank.

[View Dr. Frank's presentation on PDF](#)

Frank has been studying the effects of neighborhood walkability on travel patterns and sustainability for nearly 20 years. He has lead or co-authored dozens of papers and two books, including his latest, *Health and Community Design: The Impact of the Built Environment on Physical Activity*. He and his colleagues have also been conducting detailed assessments of fuel consumption and climate change impacts of urban form policies.

[Read more about Dr. Frank's research](#)

[Earn your Halloween chills at the Tour of Untimely Departures](#)

October 31, 2011 9:02 AM



A costumed actor practices his haunting gaze

The spirits at Lone Fir Pioneer Cemetery are loose, but you can catch them during a series of tours this Halloween.

Join the Tour of Untimely Departures for haunting recounts of Portland's most notorious murders, suicides and deadly accidents. Period actors provide the chilling details in a 45-minute tour of the area's largest pioneer cemetery. The stories are true and the burial sites are all real.

Hear from Edgar Pittman, who in 1906 committed suicide by jumping from the Victoria dock into the Willamette River. Pittman was heard saying "here goes nothing" before the

descent. And listen to the tale of Archie Brown and James Johnson, two men found guilty of killing a young boy and sentenced to a public hanging that drew 8,000 Portlanders.

This is the tour's seventh year in production. More than 110 volunteers, hundreds of candles and tiki torches and a traveling group of hymnists ensure this year will be the event's greatest.

"With the quality of the volunteers and actors, this will be the best year ever. The music will put it over the top," said Friends of Lone Fir Cemetery board chair and event coordinator Frank Schaefer, who is expecting upwards of 2,000 guests to the cemetery this Monday.

Friends hosts the tour every year to welcome the community on a day that most cemeteries stay shuttered. Seeking to stave off vandalism that is sometimes tradition on this night, the Tour of Untimely Departures helps foster appreciation for the unique inhabitants and history of the cemetery while raising funds for Friends' cleanups and educational events.



Tombstones mark the burial sites of Portland's untold past

"The tour came out of a real negative situation, to protect the cemetery on Halloween," said Schaefer. "We like to welcome people in instead of kicking them out."

Admission can be purchased in advance or at the gate for \$10 per adult, or \$15 for a family of four, including two adults and two children under 18. The frights will happen rain or starlight.

Founded in 1855, Lone Fir is now a forested 30.5 acres of land with more than 25,000 burial sites. The property is by far the largest of 14 pioneer cemeteries managed by Metro.

[Find more information on Lone Fir Pioneer Cemetery](#)

[Learn more about Friends of Lone Fir Cemetery](#)

[Purchase tickets at Tickets West](#)

[**K-Station condominiums deliver workforce housing, green living, travel options and inspired design**](#)

October 28, 2011 9:29 AM



K-Station mixed-use residential and retail condominiums

The bright canary-yellow building with the deep green sustainable features marked the start of a new chapter last week in a story of urban development in an economic recession. And it has the hallmarks of a page-turner: false starts and do-overs, new condo construction in a saturated market, cowbell ringing picketers, and the power of sheer perseverance in a seven-year, start-to-finish launch of a recession-era project.

K-Station, a contemporary-design, four-story condominium and retail development on the corner of Northeast Interstate Avenue and Killingsworth Street, swung open its big glass double doors on Oct. 17 for the grand opening of a project seven years, two developers and \$16 million in the making.

The Portland Development Commission issued the original RFP for development of the 35,000 square-foot site in 2004 and awarded the contract only to see the developer withdraw in 2005, citing rising construction costs and market risks. A second RFP was issued, the specs changed and in August 2006, Winkler Development Corporation was selected for the project.

Perseverance through partnerships

The grand opening and model home tour drew the original project partners to the podium and members of the Overlook

Neighborhood Association, local supporters and agency staff to the unfinished retail space on the ground floor to help mark the day.

Jim Winkler, president of Winkler Development Corporation and project developer since 2006, moderated remarks from Portland Development Commission Executive Director Patrick Quinton, Mayor Sam Adams, Metro Council President Tom Hughes and City Commissioner Nick Fish.

"I'm proud to be a part of the Killingsworth project," said the PDC's Quinton. "We started this at the beginning of the recession and have seen the project go on life support a couple of times. We're here today due to the perseverance of Jim Winkler, the Portland Housing Bureau and the rest of the team."

Boosting walkability and generating jobs

Metro's Transit-Oriented Development Program was onboard from the project's start with a \$250,000 funding grant. The TOD program provides incentives to private developers to build moderate- to high-density, mixed-use projects located near transit that create a pedestrian-friendly environment. The Interstate MAX Yellow Line runs just steps from the front door and access to the TriMet bus service is no further. Bike racks on every floor of the building encourage use of alternative modes of travel.

Metro President Tom Hughes spoke of the careful consideration given to choosing projects for transit-oriented development funds, noting the investments go to those that deliver the greatest "bang for the buck." He added, "While Metro's investment represents only about 10 percent of the total cost of the project, we bring money to the table when it helps close the gap in making a project viable."

Hughes also talked jobs. As a line of protestors filed past the large, plate glass windows behind the podium ringing cowbells and carrying signs reading, "R&H Construction does not pay area standard wages and benefits - The Pacific Northwest Regional Council of Carpenters," Hughes remarked on the irony of having a backdrop of picketers at a project that "created more jobs than the economy could ever provide." According the PDC website, the project provided approximately 80 full-time

equivalent construction jobs.

R&H Construction is the general contractor for Killingsworth Station. When reached for comment, Jack Gamboa, lead representative for the regional council, indicated that R&H Construction isn't always choosing subcontractors that pay area standard wages and benefits, and that the protestors were "standing up for the working guy." Gamboa said a letter was sent on behalf of the council to the PDC and R&H in January of 2011, but he was not aware of a response from either party. John Ward, president of R&H Construction, says every publically funded project has to pay prevailing wages set by Oregon's Bureau of Labor and Industries – and they make certain you do through a certification process. "We have to send in our payroll records every week on every public job," says Ward. "BOLI then certifies that we've complied. It's a non-issue. We were certified."

Hitting the targets of the Interstate Corridor Urban Renewal Area plan

K-Station falls within the Interstate Corridor Urban Renewal Area and as such, was designed to meet the economic development and social justice objectives identified in the urban renewal area plan, developed with extensive neighborhood involvement.

Several of the morning's speakers noted the project had exceeded the plan's social justice objective with 40 percent minority, women, and emerging small business participation, "setting a high bar for minority participation," according to Patrick Quinton. Satisfying the plan's objective of using innovative green design and construction techniques, the LEED certified building offers solar-thermal hot water, energy-efficient appliances, green roofs and onsite stormwater management.

The project hit the plan's economic development objective by fostering a healthy business environment with 9,000 square feet of for-sale and lease-to-own commercial condominiums on the ground floor for neighborhood-serving retail businesses and entrepreneurs.

Affordable living with cutting-edge design

K-Station, is a mixed-income development with 60 percent of the 57 one- and two-bedroom homes affordable at 80 percent of median family income. One-bedroom units start at \$169,900 and two-bedroom units start at \$287,900. Down payment assistant loans are also available for income-eligible, first-time homebuyers.



Large windows and light shelves keep rooms filled with natural light.

Interior details include recessed lighting, oversized windows and light shelves that bounce natural light up toward the ceiling, reflecting it deeper into the interior of the room. Responsibly-sourced bamboo hardwood floors used in the units add to the reflective surface area, making even homes on the backside of the building appear bright and inviting.

Brushed aluminum, aero-line light fixtures in the wide hallways suggest a Pearl District gallery more than a moderate-income condominium project.

Ben Andrews, principal broker with Willamette Realty Group that is marketing the residential project, said seven contracts for condominiums were in process at the time of the grand opening. "Now that the models are open," said Andrews, "we probably receive a couple calls a day from interested folks."

Show of commercial courage

Community development financing during an economic downturn when liquidity is tight and capital is scarce is not for the weak of heart. "It's not often when a borrower thanks a lender," Jim Winkler noted at the end of the grand opening presentation. Proposing a development of 57 condos back in 2008 when the market was saturated and condos under

construction were being converted to apartment projects overnight was asking a lender to take a financial leap of faith.

Wells Fargo leapt. As the ceremony drew to a close, Winkler thanked the bank for its "commercial courage" in supporting the project with construction loans, adding what could be said of any degree of financial risk-taking in a time of no-to-slow economic recovery, "It takes guts and commitment."

["Grant's Getaways" visits Lone Fir Cemetery](#)

October 28, 2011 9:25 AM

How often does an outdoor recreation reporter decide to stroll through a 30-acre cemetery in the dense urban core of Southeast Portland?



That's what KGW's Grant McOmie did on Tuesday, joining the Friends of Lone Fir Cemetery and Metro to showcase this culture and habitat-rich oasis in the heart of Portland.

So what inspired McOmie to get outside and discover a cemetery? McOmie, host of "Grant's Getaways" on KGW, said his team was discussing some great fall attractions, but wanted to visit some place historical in nature which prompted a call to Kuri Gill with Oregon State Parks Heritage Program. Gill mentioned that Lone Fir Cemetery had recently been listed on National Geographic's Top 10 cemeteries to visit in the world, an honor that overjoyed many Oregon history and cemetery buffs.

The stroll was perfect in Lone Fir's 30 acre arboretum, as McOmie learned about many Oregon notables such as US Bank founder Donald MacLaey, African American suffragist Hattie Redman and Oregon pioneer Asa Lovejoy, who lost the famous coin toss that selected Portland's name. All the while, moms jogged by with their babies and couples enjoyed a simple

morning bike ride.

McOmie learned about plans for the Heritage Garden and Memorial to honor the early Chinese workers and the benevolence of Dr. James C. Hawthorne. Patients of Hawthorne are believed to be buried throughout Lone Fir as records indicate Hawthorne, who oversaw the Oregon Asylum in southeast Portland, personally ensured that every patient had a proper burial.

The early Chinese were laid to rest in Block 14 of the cemetery, which later housed a Multnomah County maintenance building after it was believed that all of the remains of the Chinese were disinterred. The heritage garden and memorial is a tribute to the early Chinese workers who helped build the infrastructure of the west while honoring the unique and compassionate care of Hawthorne.

Frank Schaefer, chair of the Friends of Lone Fir Cemetery, proudly discussed the annual Tour of Untimely Departures, which every Halloween night draws more than 1,000 visitors into Lone Fir Cemetery who learn and discover the region's stories.

Proceeds of the event go back into the restoration and research for Lone Fir, and instead of keeping people out on Halloween, the cemetery invites people in - complete with tragic stories of untimely deaths while a bagpiper plays solemnly and owls visit from the Audubon Society.

McComie asked Rachel Fox, Metro's cemetery program manager, what sets Lone Fir Cemetery apart from other cemeteries, and why she thought the cemetery made it on National Geographic's Top 10 list.

"This cemetery is like the family album of Portland, of this region," Fox said. "It tells the story of how the west was settled from the pioneer era until today. It's rich in art, culture and horticulture, which is why so many have honored their loved ones here.

"I like to look at it this way, most cemeteries feel like being in grandma's sitting room, where everything is neat and the plastic is on the couch," Fox continued. "Lone Fir is more like the living room, with the lounge chair and the remote, relaxing and

welcoming to anyone who visits. Simply, there is no other cemetery quite like this one."

"Grant's Getaways" is a weekly program produced by KGW, in conjunction with Travel Oregon, Oregon State Parks, the Oregon State Marine Board and the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. It airs on Saturdays at 7:30 p.m. on KGW Channel 8.

[Oregon Zoo to host howlin' good time](#)

October 26, 2011 11:14 AM



One of the Oregon Zoo's endangered Amur tigers nuzzles up to a jack-o'-lantern donated by Al's Garden Center. The zoo's Howloween celebration takes place Oct. 29 and 30. Photo by Mackenzie Reed, courtesy of the Oregon Zoo.

Animals and visitors will receive treats during zoo's Howloween celebration

Trick-or-treaters can fill their bags with goodies and learn about wildlife Oct. 29 and Oct. 30 during Howloween at the Oregon Zoo, presented by Sterling Savings Bank. The event runs from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. and is free with zoo admission.

In keeping with the zoo's mission, Howloween aims to be educational as well as fun. An intriguing scavenger hunt directs trick-or-treaters to easily accessible activity stations throughout the zoo. Activities are themed to teach kids about animals around the zoo, and their habitats and adaptations. Goodie bags filled with candy and prizes will be given out for completed hunts at the zoo's exit.

As part of Green Halloween – a nationwide initiative to make Halloween healthier and more eco-friendly – the zoo's goodie-bag treats are being provided by Endangered Species Chocolate, Nature Path Bars, Stretch Island Fruits, Larabar, Honest Kids pouch drinks and Glee Gum.

Additional support for Howloween is provided by FedEx in association with Safe Kids USA. Volunteers from FedEx will be at the zoo Saturday, Oct. 29, reminding children and adults to be safe and seen on Halloween. FedEx will provide reflective giveaways to increase children's visibility during evening hours and present safety tips for parents and drivers.

Throughout the weekend, visitors can watch the zoo's enrichment team provide animals with holiday-themed treats like pumpkins stuffed with snacks. Enrichment items such as pumpkins – provided by Al's Garden Center – help keep the zoo's animals mentally and physically stimulated.

The zoo is a service of Metro and is dedicated to its mission of inspiring the community to create a better future for wildlife. Committed to conservation, the zoo is currently working to save endangered California condors, Columbia Basin pygmy rabbits, Oregon silverspot and Taylor's checkerspot butterflies, western pond turtles, Oregon spotted frogs and Kincaid's lupine. Other projects include studies on black rhinos, Asian elephants, polar bears and bats.

The zoo opens at 9 a.m. daily and is located five minutes from downtown Portland, just off Highway 26. The zoo is also accessible by MAX light rail line. Visitors who travel to the zoo via MAX receive \$1.50 off zoo admission. Call TriMet Customer Service, 503-238-RIDE (7433), or visit www.trimet.org for fare and route information.

General admission is \$10.50 (ages 12-64), \$9 for seniors (65 and up), \$7.50 for children (ages 3-11) and free for those 2 and younger; 25 cents of the admission price helps fund regional conservation projects through the zoo's Future for Wildlife program. A parking fee of \$2 per car is also required. Additional information is available at www.oregonzoo.org or by calling 503-226-1561.

[Learn about the Oregon Zoo](#)

[New TriMet tool helps you plan transit, biking and walking trips in any combination](#)

October 24, 2011 3:01 PM



What's all this buzz about TriMet's new trip tool, the Portland Regional Trip Planner? Unlike existing tools, the new Trip Planner lets you to plan trips combining transit, bike and walking in a single itinerary.

With this tool, you can specify your preferences for a bike ride. For example, you can use the tool to find the safest or flattest route from your house to the nearest bus or MAX stop. Or, let's say you want to bike or ride transit to the nearest ZipCar location, the tool can help with that too.

Other features that make the tool unique:

- It allows for future inclusion of other transit systems, such as C-TRAN and SMART.
- The tool uses OpenStreetMap, a Wikipedia-like map, so bike routes and walking paths are up-to-date and reflect closure and construction information.
- It includes car-sharing locations, so you can easily plan transit or bike trips to ZipCars.
- It's the first open-source trip planner to combine transit, biking and walking produced by a U.S. transit agency.
- It offers bike routing based on suitability, which is a highly requested feature that other mapping tools don't offer.

This project was funded by a grant from Metro, and was developed by TriMet in partnership with OpenPlans and a team of developers from around the world.

Try the new tool and have fun using it to bike, walk and ride transit around town (by the way, using these modes is good for your wallet and the planet). Check out the tool and use it to plan your next adventure by going to <http://rtp.trimet.org/>

The tool is currently a test version. TriMet would like your feedback as you use the tool. Was your itinerary accurate? Was it easy to use? What could work better? Please send your feedback to rtpfeedback@trimet.org.

[Learn more about biking and Metro's Bike There! map](#)

[Learn more about walking and Metro's Walk There! book](#)

[Aprende más sobre caminar y andar en bicicleta](#)

[Metro Council completes urban growth decision](#)

October 21, 2011 8:20 AM

Today the Metro Council voted 6–0 to add 1985 acres to the region’s urban growth boundary for future housing and jobs. (Councilor Rex Burkholder was excused.) This represents less than a one–percent expansion of the region’s urban footprint to accommodate thousands of additional households and workers over the next 20 years.

This vote capped three years of analysis and planning for future growth and sets the stage for ongoing discussions about how the region can better invest in creating economically prosperous and vibrant communities while protecting farm and forest land for future generations.

Every five years, Oregon law requires Metro to prepare a forecast of the population and employment growth the region can expect over the next 20 years and then analyze whether the urban growth boundary can accommodate all of that growth. The most recent analysis of the urban growth boundary was completed at the end of 2009.

[Read more about Metro’s 2009 analysis of future growth in our region](#)

In 2010, the Metro Council worked with local governments to take measures to accommodate more growth inside the existing urban growth boundary through increased zoning in targeted areas, new transportation investments that could serve and encourage higher–density development along major transportation corridors, and other measures. Following the adoption of the “capacity ordinance” last December, the Metro Council determined that some additional capacity within the urban growth boundary would be needed to accommodate the growth that is forecast for the next 20 years, so targeted urban growth boundary expansions were considered throughout 2011.

[Read more about the 2010 capacity ordinance and ways to focus more growth inside the urban growth boundary](#)

Several areas were evaluated and identified by Metro's acting chief operating officer and requested by local cities. In the end, four areas were added to the urban growth boundary in today's decision:

- A 330-acre area north of Hillsboro, in the vicinity of NW Meek Rd. and south of U.S. Hwy. 26, for the purposes of attracting future large-site industrial employers;
- A 1063-acre area south of Hillsboro, in the vicinity of SW 229th Ave. and SE Tualatin Valley Hwy., to achieve a target of approximately 10,776 new housing units;
- A 543-acre area west of Beaverton, in the vicinity of SW 175th Ave. and SW Scholls Ferry Rd., for a minimum of 4,651 new housing units, and
- A 49-acre area west of Tigard, east of SW Roy Rogers Rd. and south of SW Bull Mountain Rd., for new residential development and to provide public structures in the West Bull Mountain area.

"We've made a modest expansion of the growth boundary. Now we must return our focus to fostering the growth of jobs and development in our downtowns and industrial areas within our region," said Metro Council President Tom Hughes.

The urban growth boundary amendment approved today will take effect in 90 days (Jan. 18). The Oregon Land Conservation and Development Commission must review the Metro Council's decision, and the Commission is expected to hold public hearings on Metro's urban growth boundary decision, including a review of the 2010 capacity ordinance, in early 2012.

[View a map of the updated urban growth boundary](#)

[Learn more about the region's urban growth boundary](#)

[Learn more about the Oregon Land Conservation and Development Commission](#)

[**Honoring the forgotten: Advocates work toward a new memorial at Lone Fir**](#)

October 18, 2011 11:38 AM

It's a special time of year at Lone Fir Cemetery, a time when hundreds come by for a foggy stroll through the graveyard, many on the popular [Tour of Untimely Departures](#).

They'll see the graves of Oregon's elite, names like Hawthorne, Lovejoy and Pittock. They'll see stark reminders of more recent arrivals, photos engraved on ornate black headstones of Eastern European immigrants to the region.

But many won't give a second thought to the gravel lot on the southwest corner of the property, a site that for years has been neglected, even abused.



Metro Councilor Barbara Roberts talks with Oregon Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association member Rebecca Liu about plans for Block 14, the gravel lot in front of them at Lone Fir Cemetery.

It's a site that's home to an unknown number of dead Oregonians, souls who were never properly recognized on their way to the hereafter.

The gravel lot is Block 14, Lone Fir's lost parcel that, in the 19th century, was the final resting place for many of Portland's unwanted. Thousands of Chinese immigrants and asylum patients were buried here, unmarked, unwanted and, until recently, forgotten.

Rebecca Liu is trying to change that.

Liu is a member of the Oregon Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association. A decade ago, she heard that a Multnomah County-owned maintenance building was for sale. Through the association, she also heard a story of the site.

The site had been home to a county building, which was demolished some time after Metro took over Lone Fir's operations from Multnomah County. In doing research of the association's records, though, she found the site was home to much more.

"They all just recorded 'Chinaman, Chinaman, Chinaman,'" Liu said, "thousands of 'Chinaman.'"

A former principal at a Chinese school, Liu remembered seeing ledger books elsewhere in the archives – thick, with heavy paper and leather covers, three columns each on a page. The books appeared to be burial records, but only said East Portland as the location.

"They have the Chinese name of the deceased, the original place they came from, what village – in detail, which area, which county... their birthday, and day of the death too," she said. "Up to 1920."

Cultural differences

Many Chinese laborers came to the United States in the 19th century to work on railroads – not only the transcontinental routes that helped Oregon's ports flourish, but the streetcars that enabled Portland's outward growth. Men weren't alone in making the journey – women, too, came to the United States seeking opportunity.

Immigrants, or their families, wouldn't just pay for passage across the Pacific. In many cases, they'd pay for the return trip, so their remains could be interred with the rest of their family in China.

It was up to local Chinese associations – in Portland, San Francisco and elsewhere – to log who was buried where, for return to the homeland.

Metro cemeteries manager Rachel Fox said that wasn't uncommon, no matter the culture of origin.

"From the late 1800s to the early 1900s... you'll see for every burial there was probably three disinterments," she said. "A lot of people came and gathered their loved ones to ship them back east."

But in many cases, only men were so fortunate.

"Every (child's) name, and woman's name, had a big cross over them," Liu said. "Do not touch it."

Unmarried women were not to be disturbed in the afterlife, she said, meaning many were forever left at Block 14, the forgotten lot of Lone Fir.

Fox said that in Chinese folklore, unwed women haunt if they die.

"Their souls go with the man they marry, and if they don't marry a man, their souls don't go anywhere," she said. "Their souls stay on earth."

Chinese folklore wasn't the only source of tortured souls at Block 14.

In East Portland, on Asylum Road, was Dr. James Hawthorne's home for the insane. Hawthorne was recognized for his compassionate treatment of those with mental illness, Fox said, and his clinic on what is now Hawthorne Boulevard was world-renowned.

"They all had jobs - they tended farms, they did laundry, nobody was doing stuff for them," Fox said. "They were meant to feel valued."

Hawthorne paid for proper burials if patients had no family to claim them. Some were buried in the grassy arboretum that is today's Lone Fir; many were buried in Block 14.

"The mental health patients had no headstones, no identification in terms of recognition," said Metro Councilor Barbara Roberts. "They were buried outside the cemetery fence, as were the Chinese workers - nobody really knew they were there."

The slow healing

Not surprisingly, many of the fallen were forgotten. Attitudes toward immigrants and mental health patients were, to say the least, unhealthy; eventually, Multnomah County built a structure on the Block 14 site.

In 1994, Lone Fir, not including Block 14, was transferred from the county to Metro as part of the county's restructuring of its priorities. About a decade later, the county's shop on Block 14 was condemned, and the prevailing thought at the county was to sell the site to a private developer.

[Learn about Metro's pioneer cemeteries](#)

That's when neighbors, and members of the Chinese association, spoke up about word-of-mouth rumors of bodies still buried on the site.

The site was transferred to Metro, and research began into the conditions underneath the building, which was demolished about six years ago.

"They brought in ground-penetrating radar to see if they could discover any sort of disturbances that look like graves," Fox said. "They confirmed that they did."

Still, the site did not feel like it was part of Lone Fir, in many ways appearing like a stepchild instead of a lost family member. Fox said Metro has done what it could with limited money – a fence now borders the outside of the site, with a simple black chain around the site's perimeter on the Lone Fir border, discouraging passers-through from trampling on graves.

More importantly, Metro, the association and the Friends of Lone Fir began a visioning process, to plan how to properly recognize the souls in that gravel lot.

The final tribute



The design of the planned Block 14 memorial garden points west (top), with a courtyard recognizing mental health patients on the east side of the site.

On a recent tour of Lone Fir, Roberts, Oregon's only woman governor, visited the final resting places of Portland's early elite and former governors. She visited the graves of suffragists she respected, as a nod to the approaching Women's Suffrage Centennial [Celebration 2012](#).

She also spent several minutes outside of Block 14, discussing the site and memorial project with Liu.

"We can offer them a dignified story and a dignified final resting place," Roberts said in an interview earlier this year. "It's a small issue, but it's an important one for Metro – if we are going to manage all those pioneer cemeteries, we need to do it with care and respect. This is a way to begin to do that."

Metro has worked through the past few years developing a concept plan for the site, to respect those interred there. Fox

said they're fairly certain of specific sites where bodies are buried – walking paths will skirt those areas. In the center of the site, an oblong grassy field points toward China – home – in the area believed to be where most of the immigrants are buried. The field is to resemble a boat.

"It's tradition that spirits are carried in boats to the west, to go to their final resting place," she said.

On the east side of Block 14, a memorial courtyard and a funerary burner mark the transition to the area where Fox and others believe asylum patients were laid to rest.

Another landscaped area, along with a tribute to the bell tower at Hawthorne's hospital, pay homage to those buried there.

The site is also envisioned as a main entrance to Lone Fir, with an interpretive area at Southeast 20th Avenue and Morrison Street telling the stories of those buried at Block 14.

The project is estimated to cost \$2 million, money the association, Friends of Lone Fir and others are working to raise.

"This is a terrible climate to be passing the hat around in," said Marcus Lee, another association member. "It's important for the Chinese community to give their ancestors... back down the line the recognition and the honor they were never given."

Lee said it's also a chance to educate today's Portlanders, including many Americans of Chinese ancestry, about the hardships immigrants faced when coming here generations ago. Chinese exclusion laws and other regulations made it hard to live in mainstream society, something long forgotten.

The site is something the association will be working on for some time, Liu said.

"This is about a commitment, a mission," she said. "It's a call – somebody has to take care of this."

[Learn more about Block 14](#)

Metro news editor Nick Christensen can be reached at nick.christensen@oregonmetro.gov or 503-813-7583. Follow Metro on Twitter [@oregonmetro](#).

[National Geographic recognizes Lone Fir Pioneer Cemetery](#)

October 17, 2011 4:14 PM

Metro's Lone Fir Pioneer Cemetery was named National Geographic's No. 9 must-see cemetery in the world for its historic past, eerie tributes and forested canopy.

The cemetery joins the ranks of graveyards in France, Argentina and Romania in the list of most legendary and scary.

[Read the National Geographic article](#)



Spirits await guests at the Tour of Untimely Departures

Just in time for the spooky season, you can join The Friends of Lone Fir Cemetery for the one night when some of the cemetery residents come to life. The Tour of Untimely Departures, held Monday, Oct. 31, offers a glimpse of the lives and deaths of the long-deceased inhabitants of Lone Fir. Volunteer actors portray select cemetery residents in tours at 6 p.m., 7 p.m., and 8 p.m.

The entry gate to Lone Fir Pioneer Cemetery is located at Southeast 26th and Stark streets in Portland. Tickets are available Halloween night or by ordering online.

[Learn more about the Tour of Untimely Departures](#)

Founded in 1855, this 30.5-acre historic pioneer cemetery has become an important and vital community resource. Lone Fir is home to 559 trees of 71 different species that were planted over the past 150 years by loved ones of the deceased. Two of the trees are now listed as Heritage Trees by the City of Portland.

The cemetery is also listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

Metro provides access to nature through its regional parks and 14 pioneer cemeteries for a variety of unique recreational opportunities and places for people to connect with each other.

[Find out more on the Lone Fir Pioneer Cemetery](#)

[Metro accepting applications for Nature University](#)

October 14, 2011 11:53 AM

Metro's Nature University is a 12-week training course that starts people along the path of becoming naturalists and teachers. Students are introduced to time-honored techniques of nature observation and principles of discovery learning, and learn about common wildlife and plants, the ecology of wetlands and ancient forests, and effective teaching techniques.

Experienced naturalists take students into the field to learn how to recognize animal tracks and signs, bird sounds and much more. Students learn the importance of careful observation and the use of field guides, skills that can be applied in a lifelong process of learning and sharing with others. No special experience is required, but a background in natural history and biology and working with groups is helpful. At Nature University, students receive the training needed to become a qualified and confident Metro volunteer naturalist.

Every year, thousands of children and adults visit Metro's parks and natural areas on school field trips and for summer programs. Volunteer naturalists, like Nature University graduates, make these wonderful experiences possible by helping Metro naturalists lead these activities and programs.

If you love nature, enjoy working with children and have access to personal transportation, consider becoming a volunteer naturalist by attending Nature University. Students learn the specifics of leading school field trips by shadowing programs led by experienced volunteer naturalists in two locations: Smith and Bybee Wetlands Natural Area and Oxbow Regional Park.

Free training and resources include:

- first Aid/CPR training
- opportunities for continuing education and training on

- various natural history topics
- fees waived for attending Metro classes
- annual Metro park pass (\$40 value)
- on-going guidance and support from Metro staff naturalists.

[Visit Metro's GreenScene website](#)
[Download the Nature University 2012 application \(PDF\)](#)
[Download the Nature University course catalog \(PDF\)](#)
[Learn about Metro Parks and Natural areas](#)

[Metro tests new approach to fight illegal dumping](#)

October 10, 2011 12:40 PM

Bright orange tags that declare "This item has been illegally dumped," are appearing on discarded sofas, mattresses and other bulky items left on street corners as part of a new effort to stop illegal dumping, clean up neighborhoods and reduce costs to Metro's solid waste rate payers.



Abandoned bulky items will be tagged by Metro work crews with a bright, visible, weather-proof tag.

Metro's Regional Illegal Dumping Patrol launched the six-month pilot program last week and will tag dumped items, much like abandoned vehicles are tagged by police agencies, rather than immediately picking them up.

The tags are intended to raise awareness, warn dumpers and engage the community in reporting illegal dumping.

"We're seeing increasing amounts of bulky waste, such as sofas, furniture, mattresses, electronics and large appliances, abandoned on street corners and alleys in city neighborhoods – mostly in Portland," said Steve Kraten, principal solid waste

planner for the patrol. "People may put these items on street corners with the hope that they will be collected and reused. While this may work in some cases, many times the items are unusable when placed on the curb or will become unusable as soon as it rains."

Abandoned bulky items will be tagged by Metro work crews with a bright, visible, weather-proof tag. Metro will return about a week later to determine whether the item was removed, moved or ignored. If the item has not been removed, Metro crews will collect the item and manage it properly. Metro work crews will continue to collect and clean up any bulky waste items that are dumped within a location that may harm the environment or compromise public safety.

Metro will test the approach as part of a six-month pilot project to better understand factors that contribute to bulky waste dumping and to assure the waste is managed in the most cost-effective and responsible way, rather than by Metro work crews repeatedly cleaning up illegally dumped items in the same neighborhoods. Ultimately, Metro wants to reduce its role as a collector of bulky waste in the region.

Metro will look at how bulky waste collection service is currently provided throughout the region, identify neighborhoods that are particularly hard-hit by this problem and key factors that play a role in bulky waste dumping and consider whether a different regional service standard or strategy could help alleviate or address bulky waste more effectively.

The nature of illegal dumping in the Metro region is changing. During the mid-1990s, most of the region's dump sites consisted of household garbage, remodeling, construction, demolition, and roofing debris dumped in out-of-the-way places like parks, schools, waterways, vacant lots and other publicly accessible areas. In the past year, more than half of the dumps cleaned up in Portland consisted of or included bulky waste. The number of bulky waste cleanups has averaged nearly 2,500 in the last two years, a doubling of bulky waste cleanups since 2007.

Metro, the regional government, crosses city limits and county lines to build a resilient economy, keep nature close by and respond to a changing climate. Representing a diverse population of 1.5 million people in 25 cities and three counties,

Metro's directly elected council gives voters a voice in decisions about how the region grows and communities prosper.

[Learn more on how Metro is addressing illegal dumping in neighborhoods](#)

[Volunteers needed for trail improvements at Glendoveer](#)

October 6, 2011 3:06 PM

Metro and Friends of Glendoveer are seeking volunteers to help prepare the Glendoveer Fitness Trail for wet weather. Metro is working closely with local groups after community feedback clearly showed East Portland's appreciation for the Glendoveer Golf Course and Fitness Trail, and a desire for more maintenance at the facility.

One of the most treasured and heavily used facilities in outer Northeast Portland, Metro estimates that the fitness trail receives more than 5,000 users a week. Running along the perimeter of the property, the 2-mile trail offers an abundance of evergreen trees and wildlife where one could easily forget the traffic only feet away. But wet weather in fall and winter can make it difficult to use portions of the trail. From 9 a.m. to noon on Sunday, Oct. 16, volunteers will spread chips on the trail and remove invasive plants.

Metro has been studying what, if any, changes to make at Glendoveer in preparation for a new operations contract, set to go into effect in 2013. Last spring, Metro started a review of maintenance issues and potential revenue opportunities at the site. Public feedback encouraged Metro to improve current conditions at the property, including the fitness trail.

Metro often relies on volunteers to help with maintenance at its parks, and Glendoveer is no exception. Participants will meet at the water tower by Northeast 148th Avenue and Glisan Street. Park at the east end of the Ringside Steakhouse parking lot, at 14021 NE Glisan St. in Portland. Gloves and tools will be provided.

For more information or to RSVP, contact Bonnie Shoffner at 503-797-1653 or bonnie.shoffner@oregonmetro.gov. For more information about the Glendoveer operations contract contact Lydia Neill at 503-797-1830 or lydia.neill@oregonmetro.gov.

[UGB FAQ: All about the Metro Council's look at the urban growth boundary](#)

October 6, 2011 12:30 PM

This month, the Metro Council is deciding whether to expand the region's urban growth boundary, and if so, how much. What does the boundary do? How will Metro decide what to add to the boundary? Here's some basics about Metro's study of the boundary, which should lead to a decision later this month.

Refresh my memory. What does the urban growth boundary do?

It's the Portland region's line in the sand – inside the boundary, land can be subdivided and generally used for what we expect to see in cities and suburbs. Outside the boundary, property owners face strict limits on what they can develop on their property.

For the most part, it's been effective. The boundary extends farther than 15 miles beyond downtown Portland in only two places – Wilsonville and areas west of downtown Hillsboro. Beyond that is farmland and neighboring communities. Anyone who's visited similarly-sized cities like Denver, Sacramento and Salt Lake know that urban sprawl can extend 30 or more miles past those cities' downtown cores.

Why is Metro studying it?

The law says it has to. Other cities in Oregon examine their urban growth boundaries (every Oregon city outside Metro has one) on an as-needed basis, but the Metro region has to study its boundary every five years. Metro's job is to figure out if there's enough land within the boundary to accommodate 20 years of responsible growth – state regulators are likely to reject any plan that calls for simple sprawl – and adjust the boundary if more land is needed.

Will Metro expand it?

Probably. Metro councilors have said the region probably needs land for about 15,000 more homes, as well as about 300 more acres of industrial/employment land, to handle the growth that's expected in the next 20 years. The council does have some flexibility in both homes and jobs, but so far, it hasn't

seemed inclined to go higher or lower.

But there's plenty of empty lots around the region...

The Metro-prepared growth forecast that the council is using actually says the region needs 47,100 more homes to accommodate 20 years of growth. But most of that development can occur in places like North Bethany and Damascus, which are still being planned and remain mostly rural.

How often does Metro do this?

Metro is supposed to study the boundary every five years. Because of the urban and rural reserves process, it got an extension from the last periodic review of the boundary.

The last time Metro went through a periodic review of the boundary was 2002, when it added about 13,000 acres near Damascus as part of a 17,836-acre expansion around the region. That expansion was fairly universally regarded as a debacle – state law forced Metro to expand to an area that was completely unready for urban development, and nearly a decade later, little growth has occurred there. Metro staff has been careful to recommend to the Metro Council that expansions this time around should be in areas that both the free market and government are likely to support development.

Since the initial 227,491-acre UGB was established in 1979, about 28,000 acres have been added to the boundary. Nearly two-thirds of that came in 2002.

How much will the boundary expand?

If Vegas had a betting line on the expansion, the over/under would be about 1,600 acres for residential land and 330 acres for industrial. The latter is the size of an area staff recommended near Hillsboro for an expansion; the former includes staff-recommended areas near Hillsboro and Beaverton.

Could the Metro Council just leave the boundary as-is?

Yes. When Metro staff prepared its growth forecast, it issued a range of estimates of how much the region would grow in the

next 20 years. On the low end, the boundary doesn't need to be expanded. On the high end, the boundary needs to be adjusted to make room for 40,000 more homes.

If Metro goes to the low end, though, it's likely to face legal challenges and tough questions from state regulators, who have to decide if Metro's growth estimates are realistic.

Where will the expansions be?

If the Metro Council decides to expand the boundary, its options are relatively limited. It can only add areas where residents have received a notice of a potential expansion; considering any areas that haven't gotten a notice would push the process back weeks, possibly into December. That's unlikely to happen.

Ten areas received the notice that the boundary could be expanded in their area. All but one are in Washington County.

[Visit Metro's urban growth boundary website, which includes maps of the proposed expansion areas](#)

The frontrunners are 330 acres north of Hillsboro, 1,000 acres south of Hillsboro and about 550 acres southwest of Beaverton – those are the areas Metro staff are most likely to develop soon, and can easily be provided with infrastructure from a nearby city.

Is there opposition to this plan?

Land use decisions are as likely to produce controversy as the skies in December are likely to produce rain. Some say Metro's shooting too low, and should add more land to the boundary. Others say Metro is running roughshod over farmland, and can do a better job getting people to live closer together in the existing boundary.

Even the concept plans for certain areas have drawn controversy. For example, land conservation advocates agree that Hillsboro could use more land for factories and jobs – but they think it should be in the South Hillsboro area, proposed for residential use.

I heard something about density...

Since the expansion is based on the number of new homes needed, it's important to know how many new homes can fit into the proposed expansion areas. Metro has generally aimed for 15 units per buildable acre for urban growth boundary expansions going forward, although some in central Portland have pushed for numbers closer to 20 units per acre.

[See also: MPAC gets headed as leaders talk about density on the edges \(Sept. 29\)](#)

The 15 units per acre is a pretty academic discussion in areas like South Cooper Mountain, southwest of Beaverton. Limited planning has been done on that area, and planners have been able to start their work with that level of density as a guiding principle.

In South Hillsboro, it gets trickier. Planning for South Hillsboro started more than a decade ago, and developers have steadily been driving up the density levels in the proposed development. The area is planned for about 12 units per acre on the whole, with denser development closer to the Tualatin Valley Highway and larger lots planned for the more distant areas of the development. The developers say it'd be hard to re-start the planning after this much work has been done.

Metro planners don't necessarily disagree with the latter part. But, they say, South Hillsboro is possibly the most prime land for a new development in the Portland region. The northern acres of the area are flat, surrounded by existing development, adjacent to an Intel factory, a major state highway and a possible transit corridor. Planners basically think that it's about as good of a situation as you can get to build a compact urban community.

Wait, units per acre?

That's the currency of the realm in land use planning. Remember, an acre is about the size of a football field. Typical lots in Portland are about 9 units per acre; in older parts of Hillsboro, that number goes down to about 8 units per acre or lower.

There's a great website called Visualizing Density that gives examples of what developments at specific density levels. For

example, [click here](#) to see what 15 units per acre looks like in Sacramento.

[Visit the Visualizing Density website](#)

How do I get involved in the process?

The easiest way is to contact your Metro councilor via e-mail.

[Visit the Contact Metro website](#)

You can also testify at public hearings on the urban growth boundary, scheduled for 5 p.m. Oct. 20 at the Beaverton Library and 2 p.m. Oct. 20 at the Metro Regional Center. Lastly, sign up for Opt In, Metro's online opinion panel.

[Sign up for Opt In](#)

[Learn more about the 2011 urban growth boundary decision](#)

Metro news editor Nick Christensen can be reached at nick.christensen@oregonmetro.gov or 503-813-7583. Follow Metro on Twitter [@oregonmetro](#).

[Share your thoughts about efforts to shrink Oregon's greenhouse gas footprint at a Global Warming Commission workshop on Oct. 11](#)

October 6, 2011 11:58 AM

The Oregon Global Warming Commission wants feedback on a proposals to help reduce Oregon's carbon footprint and meet the state's 2020 greenhouse gas reduction goals. The 25-member group has been working to coordinate state and local efforts to prepare for the effects of climate change. Last fall, the commission adopted a roadmap of ideas and has been on a "road trip," seeking input on the proposals.

Sponsored by Clackamas County and local cities, the workshop will be from 6 to 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, Oct. 11 at the Abernethy Center, 606 15th Street in Oregon City.

People are also encouraged to take a brief online survey about the roadmap and provide online comments. Feedback from the workshop and survey will be used to inform the commission's future work and will be provided to local policymakers working

on a response to climate change.

[Learn more about the Roadmap to 2020](#)

[Take the survey](#)

METRO'S ROLE

Metro is working with the state and local partners on a multiyear "scenarios" project to learn what it will take to reduce emissions from cars, small trucks and SUVs as the regional economy grows and more vibrant neighborhoods emerge. The intent is to see how addressing climate change can support the growth of communities and neighborhoods, while meeting state greenhouse gas reduction targets.

[Learn more about the Climate Smart Communities scenarios](#)

[New information available about urban growth boundary options](#)

September 30, 2011 11:49 AM

Metro is providing detailed reports and information about different areas the Metro Council may consider for an expansion of the urban growth boundary.

At www.oregonmetro.gov/greatplaces, you can view interactive maps and download reports about each of 10 areas being considered. Three of these areas have been recommended to the Metro Council by Metro's acting chief operating officer. Seven additional areas were requested by local cities for the Metro Council to consider. It is unlikely that all of the 10 areas will come into the urban growth boundary this fall.

Reports on each of these areas address:

- Traffic patterns and any resulting increase in traffic congestion, commute times and air quality;
- Whether parks and open space protection in the area to be added will benefit existing residents of the district as well as future residents of the added territory, and
- The cost impacts on existing residents of providing needed public services and public infrastructure to the area to be added.

As required by Metro's charter, notices were mailed Thursday to households within one mile of each proposed expansion area with information about these reports and directing recipients to the website for more information.

The Metro Council will hold two public hearings on a possible urban growth boundary expansion in October. The first public hearing will be held at 5 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 6, at the Beaverton Library, located at 12375 SW Fifth St.

A final public hearing will be held at 2 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 20, at the Metro Regional Center, 600 NE Grand Ave. in Portland. The Metro Council is scheduled to make its decision at this hearing.

In addition, written comments may be provided to the Metro Council through other means, up through Oct. 20:

[Join Metro's online participation tool, Opt In, to provide feedback about this decision](#)

[Send comments via email to 2040@oregonmetro.gov. Email messages will be shared with Metro Councilors and included in the public record](#)

Written testimony may be mailed to the Metro Council, 600 NE Grand Ave., Portland, OR 97232, and included in the public record.

You can also contact your Metro Councilor directly.

[Learn more about how to contact the Metro Council](#)

[Learn more about this fall's growth management decision](#)

[**Bike ride to support the search for Mark Bosworth**](#)

September 28, 2011 9:33 AM



A bike ride for Mark Bosworth, the Metro employee who disappeared on September 16, will be held at 10 a.m. on Saturday, October 1, beginning and ending at North Portland's Peninsula Park. The ride is being organized by Cycle Oregon director Jerry Norquist, who has spent the days since Mark Bosworth's disappearance, looking for him.

Mark went missing in Riddle, Oregon while volunteering with Cycle Oregon. He had been confused and disoriented in the weeks before, and on the night he disappeared.

Riding for Mark

Norquist and Mark's family feel the ride is a perfect way for people to come out and show support for Mark, while continuing to spread the word about the search for him. Mark is an avid bike rider who often bought his family bikes and biking equipment for birthdays and special occasions. In fact, the family of four has 14 bikes in their garage these days.

Saturday's ride will take bicyclists through an area that Mark's wife, Julie, says he loves to ride. From Peninsula Park, bikers will head to Kelley Point Park, where the Willamette and Columbia rivers meet, and then back to Peninsula Park. It will be a ten-mile loop, with several ride leaders helping show the way. Following the ride, people are encouraged to have a picnic lunch at the park.

Cycling rivals team up to help find Mark

Lance Armstrong and Greg LeMond may have been rivals on the cycling course, but both have now used their social networks to help spread the word about Mark. Armstrong posted on his Facebook page and sent out a tweet about Mark today. Sunday, LeMond tweeted and posted a photo of himself and Mark's missing persons flier. The photo was taken in Oregon at a cycling event in the Gorge.

[See a photo of Armstrong's Facebook Page and the photo of Greg LeMond](#)



Mark Bosworth, with daughters Kelly and Claire, and wife Julie

People in the Northwest and across the country have posted on the [Find Mark Facebook page](#) and tweeted with the #findmarkbosworth hashtag. Grassroots efforts have led to fliers being distributed today to truckers in Gresham, at the Amtrak station in Spokane and at areas in Colorado, to name a few. On social media networks, strangers are sharing their ideas of who to contact and how to get more people keeping an eye out for Mark.

Mark's condition at the time of his disappearance

In year's past when Mark volunteered at Cycle Oregon, he would ride every day of the week-long ride. This year, he only rode one day because he was having trouble following the signs. He was also often seen standing alone, staring – behavior unusual to him. Mark shrugged off concerns from those around him, saying he had a headache and was tired.

In the weeks prior to Cycle Oregon, Mark was repeating himself, according to his daughter Kelly. He also seemed less active and Julie said he had complained of bad headaches. It was concerning enough that he scheduled appointments with his oncologist and ophthalmologist – but made them for after Cycle Oregon; he didn't want to miss it.

Two-time cancer survivor

Mark has overcome cancer twice. In the summer of 2007, he noticed a lump under his chin that wasn't going away. He was diagnosed with non-hodgkins lymphoma. He underwent a comprehensive chemotherapy regiment. In the summer of 2009, the same cancer returned – this time in his eye. He underwent eight months of treatment, including injections of chemo in his eyes and radiation therapy. Because the cancer had passed what medical experts call the blood-brain barrier, Mark had a bone marrow transplant in April of 2010.



At a news conference held Monday, Julie showed the media a gold bracelet she wore throughout her husband's second battle with cancer. She took it off when he was declared cancer-free. On Sunday, she put it back on. "I'm keeping it on until he has his arms around me again," she said.

Confusion related to past cancer battles

Doctor Eric Bosworth, Mark's brother, spoke with Mark's doctors and said the fear is the cancer has returned, this time in his brain, or that an infection in the brain related to the transplant, could be behind his confusion and disappearance.

Mark is a survivor, his family said, but he is also a regular guy. Imagine if it was your husband or father who had a medical problem and couldn't find his way home, they added.

Keep looking for Mark

It will likely be a stranger who has seen Mark's flier, the social media outreach and/or news coverage, who runs into Mark and recognizes him. The family asks anyone who sees Mark to call 911 immediately. Those who think they may have seen him

previously are asked to call the Douglas County Sheriff's Office tip line at 541-957-2099. A \$10,000 reward is offered for information that leads to finding Mark.

[Keep up on developments in the search for Mark at www.FindMark.org](#)

[Visit the Find Mark page on Facebook](#)

[Follow @FindMarkB #findmarkbosworth on Twitter](#)

[**Couch Street Apartments connect residents to safe, reliable travel options**](#)

September 27, 2011 5:06 PM



Rendering of Couch Street Apartments

Renters looking to expand their travel options may find the Couch Street Apartments the ideal urban dwelling, with space to store and work on their bicycles inside the building and all four MAX lines within walking distance. The project comes with support from Metro's transit-oriented development program for its use of space and promise of accessibility.

Brad Fowler of Fowler Andrews LCC is developing the five-story building designed by Vallaster Corl Architects. It includes 70 apartments, 7,000 square feet of ground-level retail and live-work space, a rooftop patio, storage for 80 bicycles, and a mere 23 parking spots.

But travel options will not be scarce for residents. Four bus lines, a MAX station and the new Portland Streetcar loop - expected to begin next year - are all within blocks of the building.

Once the apartments are occupied, the number of transit trips is estimated to increase by 41 trips per day. The transit-oriented

development program expects that increased use to generate more than \$500,000 in revenue for public transportation over the next 30 years and aid in the region's commitment to cutting green house gas emissions and creating livable communities.

The Couch Street Apartments is the first new housing development in the Lower Burnside area in nearly two decades. Recent improvements in the neighborhood, including the new Burnside–Couch couplet, are expected to boost visibility for businesses at the site and provide convenient amenities for residents.



Metro councilor Rex Burkholder joins the ranks of Bremick Construction, Fowler Andrews LCC and Vallaster Corl Architects at the project groundbreaking

Rex Burkholder, Metro councilor representing the area, was on hand for the groundbreaking ceremony. He described the development as innovative and necessary for renters seeking affordable, car-free living.

"Projects like the Couch Street Apartments provide good housing choices for people who want to live in the city, close to jobs and exciting opportunities," Burkholder said.

The transit-oriented development program implements the region's vision for managing growth by stimulating private investment in the development of compact, walkable communities near transit. The program provides financial incentives for higher density and mixed-use buildings that would not otherwise be constructed.

The total cost to develop the apartments is \$11.8 million. Metro provided \$300,000 in funding through its transit-oriented development program.

Portland-based Bremick Construction has begun work on the site, which will be move-in ready by fall 2012.

[Youth use photos to exhibit health gap in outer Southeast Portland](#)

September 27, 2011 5:02 PM

Portland youth are using photos to engage local residents in a conversation about health in an art show at Metro Regional Center Wednesday.

The project, called Photovoice, is geared toward children and young adults 18 years and younger – all from outer Southeast Portland. Partnering with parents and other adults, the youth were given cameras and asked to document the urban amenities and play structures that play a role in their community's health.

Participants were also asked to show where improvements could be made.

Common themes of the show include the need for neighborhood connectivity, safe biking and walking routes, and more options for healthy food.

ROSE Community Development – the housing agency that created Photovoice – hopes the project will make an impact how the community views the health needs of outer Southeast Portland. Participants will share their thoughts at the exhibit, titled "People in Action for Change."

Opening night is 4 p.m. on Wednesday, Sept. 28 at 600 NE Grand Ave., in Portland. There is no cost for admission, and the exhibit will be open during regular business hours, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

ROSE Community Development manages five properties where the youth reside. Since 2010, ROSE has been a partner in the Healthy Kids Healthy Communities Initiative, a national program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to prevent childhood obesity.

[Public gets to improve, refine \\$22 million in transportation projects through Oct. 13](#)

September 27, 2011 3:17 PM

Cities and counties across the region have nominated 11 transportation projects for Metro to approve – and now through Oct. 13, the public gets a chance to help refine and improve

those projects.

Seven projects aim to make our streets safer for people who depend on the bus, walking or biking. Those include a proposal for a bike sharing system in central Portland and an extension of trails and safe pedestrian crossings in Sherwood, Milwaukie and Wood Village.

Four other projects would make it easier for large trucks to pass – speeding goods to businesses while making the road safer for everyone. Those include an intersection improvement in Forest Grove, a road widening and safety enhancement in the St. Johns area in Portland, and high tech traffic enhancements in the Clackamas area.

During a public comment period through Oct. 13, the public has a chance to suggest ways the projects can be refined to address transportation needs in the areas nearby.

In December, a list of final projects with revisions responding to public input will be approved by the council and the Joint Policy Advisory Committee for Transportation.

[Learn more about the projects and post your comments online](#)

[Learn more about the Regional Flexible Funding program](#)

[**350 Day event highlights carbon reduction, but not all convinced**](#)

September 22, 2011 12:10 PM

It's pretty easy to convince folks in inner Portland to fight climate change. With thousands of pedestrian, bike commuters and transit riders taking the low-carbon route to work, environmental responsibility isn't necessarily a tough sell.

But it is a nuanced pitch.

That's why this year's Moving Planet event, scheduled for Sept. 24, is about more than just making low-impact transportation choices.

"It's about what policies affect our transportation behavior," said Rex Burkholder, a Metro councilor who sponsored a resolution designating Sept. 24 as a Global Day of Climate Action. "You can't blame someone who lives in a place that doesn't have

good transit, where things are far apart, if they're forced to use their car."

The event coincides with 350 Day, designated to highlight what some climate scientists say is the safe level of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere – 350 parts per million. According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the level recorded at an observatory in Hawaii is 390 parts per million, up from less than 320 ppm in 1960.

[Learn about 350 day](#)

The goal of the organization is to get that number back below 350 ppm.

"It's an ambitious goal," said Jessica Atwater, a Metro policy assistant who helped coordinate the agency's involvement in the event. "We've got to aim high to get there."

Not everyone is convinced such action is necessary. Kathleen Worman asked the Metro Council on Thursday to oppose a resolution supporting 350 Day and the Moving Planet event.

"This is unproven science, and 350.org has no scientific background to what they're doing," she said. "It's just a way to spend public money and make public policy based on unproven science."

Gordon Fulks, an academic advisor for the [Cascade Policy Institute](#) with a doctorate of physics, said humans have little impact on the earth's climate.

"Man's effects are small, if not completely insignificant," Fulks told the Metro Council at Thursday's meeting.

Burkholder pointed out that the 350 ppm number came from James Hansen, the director of NASA's Goddard Institute for Space Studies.

"The National Academy of Sciences, in its report, says the science is settled," Burkholder said. "It's a very appropriate task for this government to take on."

The Moving Planet event is scheduled from 11:45 a.m. to 3 p.m. Sept.24 at the Memorial Coliseum Commons. Sen. Jeff Merkley, D-Ore., is scheduled to speak at the event at noon.

[Visit the Moving Planet website](#)

Metro news editor Nick Christensen can be reached at nick.christensen@oregonmetro.gov or 503-813-7583. Follow Metro on Twitter [@oregonmetro](#).

[Don't miss the last Sunday Parkways of the season](#)

September 21, 2011 2:30 PM



The Sunday Parkways season wraps up the year by rolling into Northeast Portland on Sunday, Sept. 25. Unlike previous Sunday Parkways events this year, the Northeast Portland event will run from noon to 5 p.m.

Walkers, bikers, joggers and skaters will take to the streets in place of cars along an eight-mile route for the afternoon. The route will have two loops, connecting Woodlawn, Alberta and Fernhill parks, plus Rigler School and Cully Boulevard.

Food, music and activities will fill parks and stretch along the route. Metro, the City of Portland and Kaiser Permanente sponsor Sunday Parkways to promote healthy and active living while giving people a great opportunity to connect with their community and show their civic pride.

[Get a map and more information for the Northeast Sunday Parkways](#)

[Looking for more outdoor family fun? Check out Metro's GreenScene](#)

[Find biking and walking information](#)

[Reduce, reuse, reART](#)

September 13, 2011 5:01 PM

Exhibit challenges ideas about waste, consumption

Imagine sorting through bits and pieces of your daily life, things you've tossed away, from that wild fashion accessory that never quite worked, to a well-loved baking pan used to make your family memorable meals and festive feasts.

Contemplating that tangled mess of unpredictable odds and ends and guiding them to become objects suitable to be contemplated as fine art may seem unimaginable or downright ludicrous. For Jen Fuller, one of five local artists given seven months of scavenging privileges and access to the region's discards dropped off at Metro Central Transfer Station in Northwest Portland, "what began as an exploration of materials has morphed into an overwhelming and emotional experience."

The Pacific Northwest Art Program is a collaboration between Recology, an employee-owned company that manages resource recovery facilities; Cracked Pots, an environmental arts organization, and Metro, the regional government serving the Portland metropolitan area. A jury of arts and environmental professionals selected the artists who will each be paid a stipend for the creation of works that will be on display beginning Thursday, Sept. 15 at Metro Regional Center, 600 NE Grand Ave., Portland. They hope the exhibit will inspire the public to think about recycling and resource conservation. Nominations for the People's Choice Awards will be taken during the show; results will be posted on Metro's website after the show.

"In the beginning I was so excited about getting all this material, my mind whirled with ideas," said Mike Suri, who collected random metal objects and crushed them into large-scale sculptures. "I also didn't anticipate how overwhelmed I'd become with all this 'garbage' I was bringing into my studio," he said. "It has changed the way I think."

Far from the classic museum model, the majority of the two-day exhibit will take place in an outdoor plaza on the north end of the Metro Regional Center. William Rihel's work, which he describes as "a combination of ideas about space and adapting to it," will be displayed in a parking lot stairwell. There will be a table-top demonstration inside the building that shows the progressive steps taken by artists to breathe new life into seemingly obsolete trash.

Ben Dye, a sculptor whose work reveals his love for large-scale

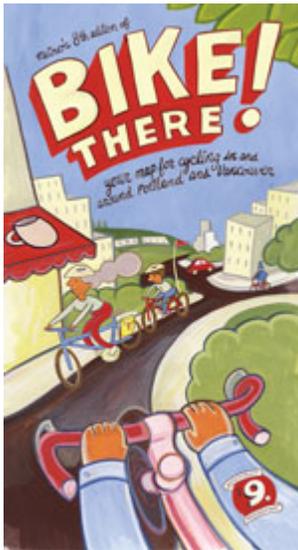
mechanics and design, has always incorporated reused materials into his work. He wants people to look closer at the many textures and embedded history in each piece.

"I'm shocked at what people throw away," said Leslie Vigeant, an artist who works with post-consumer products like plastic bags and bubble wrap to make sculptural works that often have a textile-like quality. "I have found couches, bamboo mats, and beautiful antiques in flawless condition. The only problem with them is that someone threw them away."

[Learn more about the Pacific Northwest Art Program](#)
[Get more details on the exhibition, including directions](#)

[Interactive Bike There! map is now online](#)

September 6, 2011 3:51 PM



Looking for another resource to plan safe bike trips? Check out an interactive, zoomable version of the Bike There! map, so you'll know where to go. Your computer must have Flash to view the map.

[View the Bike There! map](#)

The tool enables users to see the most suitable bike routes across the region, but does not have route-planning.

Metro's Bike There! map features 675 miles of bike routes and 234 miles of off-street trails for recreational rides, detailed commuter maps of downtown Portland and 21 area cities, elevation points and identification of steep hills and transit lines and stations to help extend rides with transit.

Don't forget the full-color, waterproof version of Bike There! is also available for \$9 at local retailers and bike shops.

Use these tools to plan your rides for this month's Bike Commute Challenge!

[Learn more about the Bike Commute Challenge](#)

[Learn more about the Bike There! map](#)

[Find bike safety tips and resources](#)

[Plant natives for a low-maintenance, wildlife-friendly yard](#)

August 31, 2011 4:39 PM



Columbine

Fall is a great time to transplant new plants into your yard, especially native trees and shrubs. Dormancy reduces damage during transplanting, and the rain and lower temperatures help the plants get established. You can learn more about natives at a free natural gardening workshop on Saturday, Sept. 10. There are only a few spots left! See link below.

What are native plants?

Native plants are simply plants from a particular place, like the Willamette Valley or the Pacific Northwest, that have evolved over thousands of years and adapted to the local soils and climate.

Why plant natives?

Native plants help keep nature in our neighborhoods by supporting wildlife, including birds, butterflies and bees, with vitally needed habitat. Wildlife not only makes your yard a more beautiful and interesting place to be, but many creatures also control pests in your yard for you and help your plants pollinate.

Natives can help you save time and money, especially when planted in the conditions they are adapted to. Pick a good spot and get them established, and they're likely to need little if any watering or other maintenance.



Oregon grape

Getting started with native plants: a few suggestions

- Douglas aster and penstemon are beautiful perennial flowers great for sunny dry spots in local gardens. Their flowers provide nectar for dozens of beneficial insects like bees, miniwasps and butterflies.
- Western hemlock and Douglas-fir are majestic trees that will grow quite large. Trees in general are great because they absorb rain water, protect air and water quality, and moderate summer temperatures. They also provide a variety of heights of foliage in the garden essential to habitat for many birds and other wildlife. Large trees should only be planted if space permits.
- Sword fern and licorice fern are beautiful and dependable for shady spots.
- Ceanothus is an evergreen shrub that has great spring blossoms and evergreen foliage that looks good year-round.
- And we can't forget our state flower, Oregon grape. It has yellow spring flowers and beautiful sour berries in winter that birds love. Watch for cedar waxwings, robins and flickers. Its evergreen foliage adds to its year-round interest.

Things to keep in mind when you're choosing new plants for your yard



Ceanothus

Avoid invasive plants. Invasives are aggressive, non-native plants that often crowd out natives for water, sunlight, nutrients and space. They're carried by wind, water, wildlife and people. Left unchecked, they can severely alter wildlife habitats, crops, stream flows and the diversity of life in natural areas. A single English ivy plant, for example, can smother an entire forest. Learn to choose garden plants carefully.

Invasives aside, many non-native plants are fine for gardens. Food crops, medicinal plants and ornamental plants generally pose no threat to native plants and animals.

Ask your local plant nursery to help you pick out some natives for your yard this fall, or call Metro for tips on choosing native and nature-friendly plants at 503-234-3000.

[Download a free coupon to use toward your native plant purchase.](#)

[Sign up for a free workshop on wildlife-attracting native plants](#)

[Learn more about natural gardening](#)

[Management plan protects one of America's largest urban wetlands](#)

August 31, 2011 3:23 PM



Coyote pup at the landfill.

At nearly 2,000 acres, Metro's Smith and Bybee Wetlands Natural Area is one of the region's most important assets. Hidden on all sides by industrial land and commercial development, it provides rare habitat for plants, birds and wildlife and unique opportunities for human interaction with nature. Visitors are often surprised to find the area teeming with beaver, river otter, black-tailed deer, osprey, bald eagles and Western painted turtles living only minutes from downtown Portland. Recognizing the importance of the property to the region, Metro has been working with the Smith and Bybee Wetlands Advisory committee, local partners and the public to develop a comprehensive natural resource management plan.

This plan builds on the legacy of the 1990 natural resource management plan which guided activities at the property for the past 20 years. The comprehensive plan emphasizes the restoration of wildlife habitat, the importance of integrating human experiences and educational opportunities with the natural area and the future connection of the now-closed St. Johns Landfill with the overall property. The 10 year plan is available for review and Metro welcomes your thoughts and feedback.

Comments will be accepted until Friday, Sept. 30 at 5 p.m.

[Read an executive summary and review the plan](#)

[Metro grant supplies 500 students with tools to learn](#)

August 30, 2011 11:22 AM

On the first day of school, James John Elementary's 500 students will get the tools they need to succeed thanks to a \$7,500 community enhancement grant from Metro. Through a partnership with Schoolhouse Supplies, every child enrolled at

the school will receive a new backpack full of classroom supplies.

Schoolhouse Supplies, a nonprofit dedicated to providing Portland Public Schools with the supplies students need to learn, coordinates the effort. The program is aimed at providing relief for parents, who spend an average of \$96 on school supplies per child each year, as well as teachers, who sometimes contribute hundreds, if not thousands, of dollars for classroom supplies.

"Schoolhouse Supplies is thrilled to welcome new partner Metro to Tools for Schools 2011," said Jennifer Samuels, development director for the nonprofit.

"Metro's partnership with James John School will ensure that every student at the school in the heart of St. Johns has the school supplies needed to kick-off a year of learning and achieving," she said.

The Tools for Schools program targets schools where at least 65 percent of students are eligible for federally-funded free or reduced lunches. Eighty-two percent of James John students qualify for the lunch assistance.

Word of Metro's grant was spread to parents in June, when staff members at James John were told the school would receive enough book bags and supplies for all of its students.

"We contact the principals in June, letting them know that their school has been sponsored," Samuels said. "It's the best phone call we get to make all year."

"We love to get that message out there so those families and parents aren't stressed out about how their families are going to afford those school supplies in September," Olinghouse said.

The most exciting part for teachers, said principal Beth Shelby, is starting the year off right.

"Believe it or not, yellow pencils and bright new spirals can be pretty exciting – symbolizing a new year of possibilities," Shelby said. "Metro's generous support of Schoolhouse Supplies means that every child can share in this same experience, regardless of income level."

Metro's community enhancement grants benefit areas directly affected by garbage disposal facilities. Funds for the project at James John Elementary School were generated from a 50-cent surcharge collected on each ton of garbage disposed of at the Metro Central garbage transfer station in Northwest Portland. Since the Metro Central program was established in 1991, Metro has invested more than \$3.1 million in projects that create changes in the community.

"This grant money is an investment that can make a difference for our children and our future," said Metro Councilor Rex Burkholder, whose district includes the neighborhoods around James John and who chairs Metro's Northwest Portland grant selection committee.

During the 2011 funding cycle, Metro Council delivered \$67,000 to fund 12 projects in North and Northwest Portland.

[Learn more about the Metro Central enhancement grant program](#)

[Find out how to get involved at Schoolhouse Supplies](#)

[A personal message from Rex Burkholder: August 2011](#)

August 19, 2011 9:27 AM

Jeremy Grantham, founder and chief strategist of the \$100 billion dollar asset management firm GMO, says " ... dealing with climate change will be good for the economy and job creation." Corporations respond well to this message because they are "persuaded by data," but American public opinion is harder to move.

[Read the article](#)

Ninety-nine percent of climate scientists tell us our climate is changing faster than ever predicted. Many argue we are facing the biggest crisis in our history. I tend to agree. The challenge is persuading the public that there is a way to address this problem even as an individual. From my perspective, the key is to tie climate action to the core values we share as a community.

[Read what one scientist thinks about climate change](#)

Ask anyone why they choose to live and work in our region and they won't hesitate in their answer: the lush, green beauty,

proximity to natural areas and wildlife, clean air and water, and communities close to transit, schools and jobs.

Because these are the things we value, it just makes sense to protect the air and water, conserve energy, grow food locally and choose transportation options that don't rely as much on fossil fuels. It costs less, keeps money in the local economy and supports a healthier lifestyle.

People are already making personal choices that reduce the amount of carbon in the atmosphere – they carpool or take transit to work, walk to the store and choose local products whenever possible. They support investments that are needed to create great communities – thriving downtowns supported by transit, safe sidewalks and bike trails, new technology like electric vehicles and signal timing.

In our region, we emit far less carbon per person than the national average, mainly because land use and transportation decisions allow us to drive 15 percent fewer miles than our peers (which gives us more time with friends and family and less time stuck in traffic).

We are preparing for the inevitable climate changes by planning for wetter winters and warmer summers. We're expanding floodplain protection areas, raising bridge heights, like the new MAX Yellow Line Bridge over the Willamette, and planting more heat tolerant species in our natural areas. But this isn't enough to curb climate change or to cope with its effects on communities.

These choices support people's personal values, with a secondary benefit of addressing climate change. If we want more climate action, we need to stay focused on choices that support our region's core values.

Again, the very actions we need to protect our climate also improve the livability of neighborhoods, protect air and water, and create good jobs. And, regardless of the cause, the fact is there is too much carbon in the atmosphere and there is a cost for doing nothing about that problem.

On Sept. 24, Metro is joining with many community groups to raise awareness of this issue as part of the Moving Planet event put on by 350.org. (350 parts per million is the concentration of

carbon in the atmosphere considered safe by many scientists, including James Hansen, chief climate scientist for NASA.)

[Learn more about Moving Planet](#)

[Read about 350.org](#)

As you know, I have been working for many years to bring climate change into the planning that Metro and other governments in the region do. This work includes designing communities to be more walkable and bikeable, increasing funding for conservation education, protection and restoration of natural areas and helping to grow an efficient, green economy that uses less fossil fuel.

[Discover how Metro is addressing climate change](#)

I've recently been honored with a fellowship from the German Marshall Fund to research how and why businesses are pushing European governments to get moving on this important issue.

[Learn more about the German Marshall Fund](#)

In October, I will be meeting with leaders of the business, government, academic and nonprofit communities in three cities – Rotterdam, the Netherlands, Birmingham, England, and Bologna, Italy – to find out what made the difference for them.

I will return with ideas and tools to share, which I hope will get us working together as a united community. Together we can improve the livability of this place we call home as we build a strong economy, protect our farms and natural areas, and make the most of our existing communities.

[Community nature projects blossom, showing reach of Metro Natural Areas Program](#)

August 8, 2011 9:20 AM



Across the Portland metropolitan area this month, efforts to protect nature in neighborhoods are taking root

Salmon habitat is being restored along Johnson Creek. A park will be dedicated in Cedar Mill. The new Cornelius Wellness Center, which will transform a concrete alley into a green parkway, is breaking ground. A dinner concert will raise money to expand and restore West Linn's White Oak Savanna. The Equity Bike Ride will highlight a partnership to green the Interstate 205 path for cyclists and pedestrians. And West Linn will celebrate new nature trails, playgrounds and more.

The common denominator: support from Metro's voter-approved Natural Areas Program.

About one-quarter of the region's 2006 natural areas bond measure goes toward community nature projects, in the form of money distributed to cities, counties and local park providers and Nature in Neighborhoods grants. After several years of planning, many efforts to protect nature close to home are unfolding on the ground.

"When you first start out, there are a few isolated projects," said Metro Councilor Carl Hosticka, who has served on the Nature in Neighborhoods grant committee since it launched. "When you add them up, it starts to amount to something over the years."

The Metro Council has awarded nearly \$4.7 million in Nature in Neighborhoods grants, supporting 18 projects. And local jurisdictions have spent more than \$22 million in their communities – about half the money available through the bond measure.

A month of kickoffs and celebrations got under way Thursday night, when the Johnson Creek Watershed Council and its partners commemorated starting construction on a project to restore salmon habitat at the confluence of Johnson Creek and the Willamette River. The project, which recently received a Metro grant, is expected to be complete this fall.

Projects such as the salmon restoration provide concrete examples of the impact that neighborhood-scale efforts can have, said Mary Rose Navarro, Metro's natural areas grants coordinator.

"Voters should feel excited about the wide variety of efforts envisioned and initiated by local communities," Navarro said. "The projects that will be highlighted this month are examples

of how organizations are pulling together to provide a wide variety of experiences throughout the region."

This month's array of milestones also shows why the Metro Council shifted away from hard-and-fast environmental regulations in the early 2000s, Hosticka said, instead focusing on incentives and investment.

"The Council agreed that, if we could somehow foster a larger public consciousness of the need and opportunities to do these things, that would be the best role Metro could play," Hosticka said. "All these projects move in that direction. At some point, you get synergy."

You can see projects first-hand by attending an event this month:

Jackie Husen Park dedication

6 p.m. Wednesday, Aug. 10

10955 NW Reeves St., Cedar Mill area, Washington County

The Tualatin Hills Parks & Recreation District will celebrate its new Jackie Husen Park, which was protected and upgraded with funds from Metro's voter-approved Natural Areas Program. Festivities include prizes, information, a ribbon cutting, hot dogs, chips and soft drinks. To RSVP, contact Anne Bookless at 503-645-6433 or abookless@thprd.org.

Cornelius Wellness Center groundbreaking

8 to 9:30 a.m. Friday, Aug. 12

85 N. 12th St., Cornelius

Celebrate the groundbreaking for the Virginia Garcia Memorial Health Center's new Cornelius Wellness Center. A Metro Nature in Neighborhoods grant is helping transform a concrete alley outside the building into a public greenway where people can connect with nature. To RSVP, contact Michele Horn at mhorn@vgmhc.org or 503-352-8617.

Concert for the White Oak Savanna

6 p.m. Friday, Aug. 12

Adult Community Center, 1180 Rosemont Road, West Linn

Casual dinner and performance by John Nilsen, \$15 per person

Help raise money to expand and restore the 14-acre White Oak

Savanna natural park and wildlife habitat, which was protected with support from a Metro Nature in Neighborhoods grant. Supporters hope to protect an additional six acres and continue restoring the property. No RSVP required.

Equity Bike Ride along the I-205 path

6 p.m. Thursday, Aug. 25

Meet at Lents Park, Southeast 92nd Avenue and Southeast Steele Street, Portland

Join a guided ride along neighborhood streets and the I-205 cycling and walking path, where thousands of trees and shrubs are being planted with help from a Metro Nature in Neighborhoods grant. The ride will highlight equity efforts by a variety of community groups. No RSVP required.

West Linn parks celebration

11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday, Aug. 27

Robinwood Park, 3600 Fairview Way, West Linn

West Linn recently completed improvements ranging from nature trails, spray features and playgrounds to rain gardens and bank angling access at multiple locations, including Robinwood, Midhill and Marylhurst parks. All improvements were funded through West Linn's share of Metro's 2006 bond measure. Following a brief ceremony, children can enjoy juggling entertainer "Mag" Hughes, face painting, balloons and family lawn games. Bring your picnic or "relish" a hotdog lunch.

[Explore community nature projects and regional natural areas on an interactive map](#)

[Learn more about Metro's voter-approved Natural Areas Program](#)

[Learn more about Metro Nature in Neighborhoods grants](#)

[Opt In panel reaches 5,000 participants](#)

August 4, 2011 3:59 PM

Metro's online opinion panel reached a significant milestone Wednesday, with more than 5,000 people now signed up for Opt In.

The panel, organized by Metro and managed by polling firm DHM Research, was launched last winter as part of an effort to better gauge opinions of the Metro region's residents without

having to conduct expensive telephone surveys. Panelists have received six surveys since Opt In's launch.

"This milestone is a big step. The more participants we can enroll, the better sense we have from our region's residents about how to make this region a great place," said Dan Cooper, Metro's acting chief operating officer.

Metro still has work to do to get Opt In to its objectives. Multnomah County residents and Democrats are over-represented in the panel; conservatives, suburban residents, minorities and residents who didn't go to college are under-represented on the panel.

[Click here to view Opt In's demographics](#)

"While we're making progress on increasing diversity among our participants, we're committed to creating an online panel that better reflects the community we serve," Cooper said. "We have communications staff and Diversity Action Team members actively building community relationships so we can reach that goal. We can't listen to just the usual suspects."

Patty Unfred, Metro's Opt In manager, echoed the need for a more diverse group of participants.

"We can't thrive as a community when the conversation about jobs, roads, bridges, parks and other important public structures is dominated by the voices of a few," she said. "We are excited to break the 5,000 mark with the Opt In panel but we have a ways to go to ensure the members of Opt In reflect our region as a whole."

Opt In recently conducted a survey on Metro's coming urban growth boundary management decision. Results from that survey are expected this week.

[Click here to join Opt In](#)

[**Glendoveer open house draws community concerns about change**](#)

August 3, 2011 5:02 PM

More than 250 community members attended an open house Aug. 1 at Metro's Glendoveer Golf Course and Fitness Trail to

express their concerns about proposed changes to the property. Councilors Barbara Roberts and Shirley Craddick were on hand to discuss the facility assessment and business plan project and hear public feedback.

A chief concern among nearby residents was a rumor that housing would be developed on the property, an option that is not being considered for Glendoveer. It was clear from the tone and comments at the meeting that most in attendance like the facility as it is, and any changes should be focused on maintenance and upgrades to existing amenities. Members of the tennis community also attended the open house to show support for continued use of the tennis courts and oppose turning the facility into an event space.

Metro initiated the Glendoveer facility assessment and business plan project to evaluate the site's conditions and identify opportunities for improvement. Glendoveer is overdue for maintenance and upgrades. Metro's contract with the facility's operator, Glisan Street Recreation, nets the agency about \$800,000 a year, an amount that has been declining as golf revenue drops. Additionally, Metro is concerned that the rounds of golf played at Glendoveer has dropped every year since 1997 and is on track this year to be just 50 percent of earlier years. The contract expires at the end of 2012.

Whatever decisions are made about the property, the golf course and fitness trail will continue to be the focus at Glendoveer. The desired outcome for the project is a fair and competitive process to develop and award a new contract to operate the facility starting in 2013.

Feedback from the open house will be compiled for review by the Metro Council. Staff will provide a brief update on the project and share what they learned from the community during a Metro Council work session at 2 p.m. Tuesday, Aug. 16. Because it is a work session and no decisions will be made, the council will not be taking public comments at the meeting.

[Learn more about the project](#)

[Learn about Metro Council work sessions and meetings](#)

[Public can talk about how to spend \\$22 million in transportation funding](#)

August 3, 2011 11:07 AM

Cities and counties across the region are selecting transportation projects this summer they plan to nominate for Metro's \$22 million regional flexible funding program. [Learn more about regional flexible funding](#)

Final decisions about which projects to nominate are scheduled to happen at meetings starting Aug. 4 through Aug. 29. After local agencies nominate projects to Metro Aug. 29, the Metro Council and a transportation policy committee will affirm the list of projects that will go out for public comment in September. During the comment period, the public will have a chance to suggest ways the projects can be refined to address transportation needs in the area near the projects.

In December, a list of final projects with revisions responding to public input will be approved by the council and the Joint Policy Advisory Committee for Transportation.

Upcoming local agency meetings for project selection include:

City of Portland

The Portland City Council is scheduled to make a decision on which projects to nominate for regional flexible funds on **Wednesday, Aug. 17, 6 p.m.** in Council Chambers, City Hall, 1221 SW 4th Ave.

East Multnomah County

The East Multnomah County Transportation Committee will make its final project selection on **Monday, Aug. 15, 3 to 5 p.m.** in the Oregon Trail Room, Gresham City Hall, 1333 NW Eastman Parkway. The committee sets transportation planning priorities for unincorporated areas of eastern Multnomah County and area cities Fairview, Gresham, Troutdale and Wood Village. Information about proposed projects is available online. [View project information](#)

Washington County

At its July 11 meeting, the Washington County Coordinating Committee made a recommendation to fund three projects:

Tonquin Trail System (West Fork) to Cedar Creek Greenway Trail in Sherwood; Hillsboro Regional Center: Oak and Baseline; and the Highway 8/Highway 47 intersection improvements in Forest Grove.

For more information, contact Clark Berry, senior planner, at 503-846-3876 or clark_berry@co.washington.or.us.

Clackamas County

The C4 Metro subcommittee will meet to select projects for Regional Flexible Fund consideration on **Thursday, Aug. 4, 7:30 to 9 a.m.** in the Lake Oswego City Council Chambers, 380 A Avenue. Projects for regional flexible funds are available online. [See projects](#)

For more information, contact Karen Buehrig, transportation planning supervisor, at 503-742-4683 or karenb@co.clackamas.or.us.

[Learn about all 28 projects proposed by local agencies](#)
[Learn more about the flexible funding program and public comment opportunities](#)

Ready, set, count!

August 1, 2011 10:15 AM

Each September, volunteers from throughout the region gather along trails to count and survey people biking and walking on the Intertwine – the Portland metropolitan area's system of trails, parks and natural areas. The count is part of the National Bicycle and Pedestrian Documentation project's ongoing effort to gather accurate trail use data to help decide where and when to build new trails and respond to the needs of trail users.

The 2011 trail counting season is gearing up, and Metro, along with trail count partners, is looking for volunteers to donate their time to this fun and worthwhile project. Volunteers will participate in an hour-long training session, held at locations across the region, prior to going out to a designated trail for a two-hour weekend or weekday shift. To find out more about the project and how to volunteer, contact Mel Huie at 503-797-1731 or mel.huie@oregonmetro.gov.

[Learn more about the Intertwine trail counts and survey](#)

[For the first time, Sunday Parkways rolls through Downtown Portland](#)

July 20, 2011 10:59 AM



Leave the car at home but bring your drive – for action and fun – to downtown and Northwest Portland on Sunday, July 24.

Streets along a 6.4-mile route will be closed to car traffic, so people can walk, bike, run and roll through the streets instead. This is the first time Sunday Parkways will stretch so far into and through downtown Portland.

The route will have two loops, connecting downtown, Old Town, Chinatown, the Pearl District and other Northwest neighborhoods. Visitors can check out Circus Cascadia at Wallace Park, enjoy live music at Shemanski Fountain, take in the magic at Director Park or try your hand at rock climbing or Spanish dancing at the Waterfront Park Bowl. This month's Sunday Parkways will feature the Portland Trail Blazers Stunt Team and Blazer Dancers at the Southwest Naito Parkway Marketplace. There are even more activities, entertainment, food and fun to be had throughout the entire route.

Metro, the Portland Bureau of Transportation and Kaiser Permanente host the Sunday Parkways events to encourage people to get out, get active, celebrate sustainability and connect with their community.

[View the Sunday Parkways Northwest/Downtown Portland route](#)
[Check out other ways to stay active and have fun this summer](#)

['Metro map service provides instant access to unique information'](#)

July 19, 2011 10:54 AM



*Metro News publication featuring
Alan Holsted and the Metro map service, 1986.*

It's a headline as relevant today as it was 25 years ago.

When it first ran in 1986 just inside the front cover of the Metro News, "instant access to unique information" had to be the hook that pulled the reader in.

Yet in the pre-geographic information system (GIS) era of mapmaking at Metro in the late '80s, "instant access" most likely referred to the turnaround time from paying for and receiving a Metro map.

Today, immediate access to Metro's regional GIS data – known as the Regional Land Information System or RLIS – means nothing less than the ability to download more than 100 map layers at the RLIS Discovery website from anywhere with Internet access.

In an age when the instantaneous delivery of data to handheld devices is recasting innovative technology into an everyday expectation, the very idea of drawing the boundaries of the region's urban and rural reserves by hand is, well – unimaginable.

Metro mapmaking 101

Metro's map service began in the late 1960s with the original Columbia Region Association of Governments planning

organization before it combined with the Metropolitan Service District to form Metro. Planners produced maps and CRAG shared them with other governments. When Metro absorbed CRAG, the map service continued.

Alan Holsted, GIS program supervisor who began working on maps as a member of the graphics department, has witnessed and, in many instances, pioneered the evolution of mapmaking in his 38 years at Metro.

"GIS changed everything," says Holsted, who recently retired from Metro. After working in the graphics department for 15 years, he moved to the Data Resource Center along with the maps and spent the next 23 years displaying information digitally instead of with pen and ink.

While good design skills are as essential for today's cartographer and GIS specialist as they were in the early days of mapmaking at Metro, the other skillsets required have changed.

"The most important skillset for a cartographer to have after design skills used to be hand lettering ability. Once RLIS came along, it became working with databases," says Holsted.

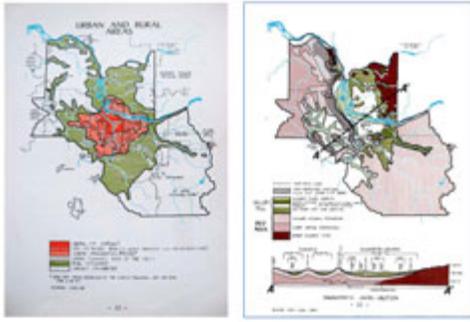
The history of mapmaking at Metro

As a way to capture the institutional knowledge of mapmaking at Metro, Holsted put together a historical perspective of the tools, techniques and processes used to create maps from the days of hand drawing right up to the launch of RLIS.

[Download the History of Mapmaking](#)

While the 29–page document describes the evolution of the visual display of geographic information through description and archival images, it's also the story of the growth of Metro as an agency.

Maps produced by the Data Resource Center, whether rendered with pen and ink or data sets, help inform policy and land use decision–making at Metro. Early maps displayed regional information in one dimension without local detail. Today, RLIS data provides detail right down to the outline and height of most buildings in the Portland metropolitan area. Decision–making, if not always faster, is better informed.



Hand drawn maps of urban and rural areas created in the '70s.

Rapidograph, Leroy lettering, tape

This is not to say early mapmaking tools weren't responsive to changing land use decisions. Expanding the urban growth boundary on a map of the region simply required a little more tape.

"The urban growth boundary was drawn with tape and Leroy lettering on a mylar," says Holsted, "then photographically combined with an arterial base map."

Chartpak tape was used to add thicker lines to maps while the finer details were added using a Rapidograph, a refillable ink pen with a fine tip suited for laying down dense, even-flowing lines on mylar. While most cartography was done on matte mylar – a polyester film that received ink well – clear mylar was often used for meeting presentations.

Lettering was most often done with a Leroy set of alphabet templates for tracing letters onto maps. Press-on letters were used for titles and headings. In some instances, county names were applied to display maps using one of the simplest and most enduring tools – the felt tip pen.

Partnership builds capacity

While the greatest difference between maps then and now could easily be imagined as level of detail, major advances were often achieved with one project, when the sheer need for greater detail pushed cartographers beyond what they imagined their tools – or they – could do.

"Whenever we wanted to show the complete street system of the region, we had to resort to using a base map created from U.S.

Geological Survey quadrants," says Holsted. "The problem was we couldn't make our own updates and there weren't many street names on what we had."

So they drew in their own street lines. TriMet then approached them about adding street names and together, they created a route map for TriMet buses and a detailed street map with a street name index and bike map for Metro use.

Today, screens take the place of mylar for displaying geographic information and the print version of Metro News has been replaced with a scrolling newsfeed on the agency's home page. But Holsted doesn't see an end to the changes anytime soon.

"We'll all be using new techniques that make today's methods look antique," he predicts.

[Read Metro News](#)

[Learn more about RLIS Live](#)

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[Metro invites public comments on food waste reload facility](#)

July 15, 2011 5:17 PM

Recology Oregon Materials Recovery, Inc., has submitted an application to Metro to amend its facility license to accept, consolidate and reload commercial food waste and residential food waste mixed with yard debris at its Suttle Road property in North Portland. Food waste would be received and reloaded inside a new building to be constructed at the site. The public can review and comment on Recology's application; comments must be received by 5 p.m. Friday, Aug. 5.

Recology's facility, at 4044 North Suttle Road, is authorized by Metro to accept yard debris, wood debris, construction and demolition debris and other non-putrescible materials for recycling. If Recology's application is approved by Metro, garbage trucks can begin delivering loads of food waste mixed with yard debris collected from residents in the city of Portland's residential food scrap program. Private self-haulers and the general public also will be able to take similar loads to the facility. The facility would operate from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Monday through Friday; 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday.

According to Recology, the food waste mixed with yard debris will be reloaded within 48 hours of being received and transported to a composting facility. Recology's facility is prohibited from composting yard debris or food waste on site.

According to the city of Portland, the property is a heavy industrial zone, with the environmental conservation and aircraft landing overlay zones. The proposed activity is considered a waste-related use by the city of Portland and a conditional use permit was required. In mid-May, Recology received a conditional use permit; the city's approval did not include the acceptance of commercial food waste.

Recology, a solid waste management company headquartered in San Francisco, is the owner and operator of two other Metro-licensed solid waste facilities in the Portland area, as well as contract operator of the Metro Central Transfer Station in Northwest Portland. Recology's is working on a trial performance with Washington County for its composting facility in North Plains to serve as a food waste composting operation.

Metro is responsible for managing the region's garbage and recycling system in an effective, economical and environmentally sound manner. To carry out its mission, Metro authorizes and monitors private solid waste facilities, ensuring they operate in compliance with standards that protect the environment and benefit the citizens in the region.

Written comments about the proposed facilities can be submitted to Metro by mail (Metro, c/o Finance and Regulatory Services, 600 NE Grand Ave., Portland, OR 97232), fax (503-813-7544) or email (bill.metzler@oregonmetro.gov).

[Learn more about Recology's application for a Metro license to operate a material recovery facility](#)

[Learn more about solid waste management franchising and licensing](#)

[Metro Council tees up discussion about Glendoveer Golf Course and Fitness Trail](#)

July 15, 2011 5:16 PM

The Glendoveer Golf Course and Fitness Trail is one of the most treasured and used community facilities in outer Northeast Portland. But the facility is in need of some structural improvements, and its operations contracts expire soon.

A facility assessment and business plan project is underway to figure out what needs to be done to prepare for a fair and competitive process to develop and award a new contract to operate the facility starting in 2013.

At 2 p.m. Tuesday, July 19, the Metro Council will hold a work session to hear staff updates on the project. It's no secret that Glendoveer is in need of maintenance and improvements. The irrigation system is beyond its useful life, the water tower is leaking, and under any scenario these will be expensive to replace. While some site improvements or changes may take place as a result of this project, the popular golf course and fitness trail will continue to be a focus at Glendoveer.

Metro staff will provide council with an update on the Glendoveer facility assessment and business plan project and receive direction on potential investments and improvements. The council will not be making decisions or taking any specific action. Because it is a work session and because no decisions are being made, the council will not be taking public comments.

The existing contract Metro has with a private company to manage Glendoveer, originally signed in 1977, is out of date. Metro plans to go to the marketplace next year to solicit competitive bids on future operations, including a bid from the existing operator.

To learn more about the project and provide feedback, attend a community open house from 6 to 8 p.m. Monday, Aug. 1 at Glendoveer. Metro councilors and staff will be on hand to hear ideas and concerns, answer questions and provide information about next steps. Updates about the project are also available at www.oregonmetro.gov/glendoveer.

[Click here to visit Metro's Glendoveer project website](#)

[Grant funds project to create a Regional Active Transportation Plan](#)

July 7, 2011 4:09 PM

Last year, Metro went full-bore into planning for transit projects, for the first time adopting a ranked outlook for the region's high capacity transit corridors in the coming decades.

With the recent award of a grant from the Oregon Department of Transportation, a similar ranked list of "active transportation" projects could be developed. Last month, Metro was awarded \$280,000 through ODOT's Transportation and Growth Management Grant program; Metro matched another \$56,000 for the project.

Many of the cities and counties in the Portland region already have their own plans for bike paths and walking trails. But Lake McTighe, a Metro planner who put together the grant proposal, said that while some cities, like Portland, have robust plans for pedestrian and cyclists, other cities and counties don't.

It's also, she said, about directing more money into active transportation infrastructure. She pointed to the most recent round of Regional Flexible Funds spending, which allotted 75 percent of the discretionary funding to active transportation projects.

"With this kind of plan we can start to almost think programmatically about how we're going to fund out our system," McTighe said. "That's why we keep thinking of it as the High Capacity Transit plan for active transportation."

[Click here to see Metro's June 2010 Regional High Capacity Transit System Plan](#)

The allocation of Regional Flexible Funds didn't come without controversy. Advocates of freight projects pushed to divert more of the \$25 million in 2010 flexible funds to improving the region's freight capacity.

Much of the advocacy for establishing some sort of regional bike and pedestrian plan is couched in discussion about transportation choices and multimodal transit.

"If I want to get around without having to drive, sometimes I'm going to walk, sometimes I'm going to take transit, sometimes I'm going to bike - it depends on the length of my trip," McTighe said. "We want people to be able to use this system interchangeably and seamlessly."

She said there is \$1 billion worth of bike and pedestrian projects in the Regional Transportation Plan.

"The connection to transit is so key, because as that system grows, we want to be able to support those last-mile connections," she said.

Gerik Kransky, the advocacy director for the Bicycle Transportation Alliance, also emphasized the connections aspect of the proposal.

"One of the things you start to see when you build a regionally connected network is the opportunity to link trips," Kransky said. "Building transit in as part of the spine for an active transportation network, it's a significant effort that's worthy of attention at the 30,000-foot level – the Metro regional level."

Metro Councilor Rex Burkholder said it's important to coordinate planning efforts between cities and counties.

"A regional approach to active transportation will ensure that the investments in one community benefit from and add value to the investments in neighboring communities," Burkholder said. "In addition, the backbone of a high quality active transportation network is the system of regional trails, which require a higher level of planning and effort to get the funds to build."

It's one thing, though, to encourage people to bike and walk. It's another thing to get them to have somewhere to bike to – inner eastside residents in Portland may live within biking distance of their favorite restaurants or groceries, but that's not the case in much of the rest of the region.

McTighe said the proposed plan wouldn't directly address those questions, but will reference to other strategies to better tie together the economy and transportation.

[A 2007 British study](#), Burkholder said, shows that improving active transportation can bring the economy around.

"There is a close synergy between increasing access – bike, ped and motor vehicle (as long as speeds are low) – and increased commercial activity and value," the councilor said. The study "shows a clear connection between more people moving through

an area and higher values for both commercial and residential use."

Kransky said the project will also help with the state's greenhouse gas emission goals.

"Without taking a holistic approach, from a regional perspective, there's no way you're going to be able to reduce global warming, pollution from cars and trucks and provide people with transportation choices," he said. "Seeing this kind of regional plan put in place serves as a tool for all of our cities when they need to prioritize investments and make their contribution toward reducing global warming and making healthier choices... to have this resource is very nice."

Metro news reporter Nick Christensen can be reached at nick.christensen@oregonmetro.gov or 503-813-7583. Follow Metro on Twitter [@oregonmetro](https://twitter.com/oregonmetro).

[Have an innovative nature project? Now's the time to explore a Metro Nature in Neighborhoods grant](#)

July 7, 2011 3:29 AM



Future visitors to North Clackamas Park will enjoy two new overlooks along Mount Scott Creek, funded in part by a Nature in Neighborhoods Grant.

If you were inspired by Metro's recent Nature in Neighborhoods grant recipients, who are transforming an alley into a green parkway, restoring fish habitat and more, why not join them?

It's time to fine-tune your own idea to protect and enhance nature. Metro staff needs to know how many viable projects are brewing to anticipate the next full application period. If you have a project ready for consideration, submit your letter of interest as soon as possible.

Nature in Neighborhoods capital grants, which are funded by Metro's voter-approved Natural Areas Program, support

innovative approaches to integrating nature into communities. Over the past four years, Metro has awarded a total of \$4.7 million to 18 projects across the Portland metropolitan area.

Your idea can begin with an email or phone call. Metro staffers provide guidance in project planning, direct you to potential partners and resources, and give feedback along the way. To discuss your project idea, contact Mary Rose Navarro at 503-797-1781 or maryrose.navarro@oregonmetro.gov.

After getting initial guidance, you can submit a letter of interest. Some of those letter writers will be invited to submit a full application – and a select group will receive funding next spring or summer.

Successful Nature in Neighborhood Capital Grant projects have fallen into four general categories:

- land acquisitions that protect habitat or increase people's access to nature
- stream restoration projects that improve fish habitat and wildlife connectivity
- urban redevelopment projects that integrate low-impact development practices
- neighborhood projects that enhance people's experience of nature.

While projects vary greatly depending on the category, the grant review committee is drawn to several compelling qualities:

- high level of community engagement
- diverse and/or non-traditional partnerships
- multiple benefits beyond the project itself
- enhances access to nature for low-income and/or communities of color

[Learn about Nature in Neighborhoods grants](#)

[Read about previous Nature in Neighborhoods grant winners](#)

[**Metro Council invests \\$15,000 to address community's pressing needs**](#)

July 5, 2011 4:01 PM

Programs to deliver youth programs, work readiness training and jobs

With the deepest recession in decades still lingering, Metro Council gave North Portland residents some good news in approving a \$15,000 grants package earmarked for neighborhood projects. Funds will support programs that benefit youth with literacy intervention efforts and merit scholarships for college-bound high schoolers, result in weatherization and safety repairs for 60 elderly and disabled residents, and pay the salaries and stipends of more than 20 North Portlanders who, in turn, will directly serve their community.

“Critical times like these call for public funders to play an active role in meeting emergency needs and supporting a strong recovery,” said Metro Councilor Rex Burkholder, chair of Metro’s North Portland grant selection committee and whose district includes North and Northwest Portland. “I’m confident the investment of the public’s money, coupled with great community involvement, will deliver tools and solutions for the common good,” he added.

The North Portland fund was created from a 50-cent surcharge imposed on each ton of garbage disposed of at the now-closed St. Johns landfill. Today, interest generated on the fund supports the grant program. Projects must directly benefit residents or neighborhoods around the facility, including Arbor Lodge, Cathedral Park, Kenton, Overlook, Portsmouth, St. Johns and University Park.

“Metro’s narrowed in on funding priorities that respond to the community’s most pressing needs,” said Tom Griffin-Valade, director of North Portland Neighborhood Services and one of several local activists that work with Burkholder to help guide the selection process.

“Giving local residents the authority to make decisions about these community investments demonstrates Metro’s commitment to authentic involvement,” Griffin-Valade said.

The 2011-12 grant cycle marks the 24th year Metro has invested funds in the community through the North Portland enhancement program. In that time, more than \$2.2 million has been awarded to help fund 460 neighborhood improvement projects.

For 2011-12, Metro awarded a total of \$15,000 to 7

organizations, including the following:

- [Bethel Neighborhood Drop-in Center](#)
\$1,000 – Youth counselor training program for summer day-camp that serves 60 children a week.
- [Boys & Girls Club](#)
\$2,500 – Targeted literacy intervention program for 175 youth participating in New Columbia’s Regence Club.
- [Columbia Slough Watershed Council](#)
\$2,000 – Classroom and field-based science education program for 500 students from Ockley Green, Rosa Parks and James John schools.
- [Community Energy Project](#)
\$2,500 – Volunteer training program to weatherize and repair homes of 60 seniors and people with disabilities.
- [Impact Northwest](#)
\$3,000 – Urban Opportunities work readiness and life skills training program for 20 under-served and credit-deficient Roosevelt High School students.
- [Theodore Roosevelt Women's Scholarship Association](#)
\$2,000 – Merit scholarships for post secondary education for female graduates of Roosevelt High School.
- [PPS Tender Loving Care/Think ‘n Try](#)
\$2,000 – Stipends for peer mentor counselors at a summer day camp program serving 400 children.

For more information about projects receiving funds this year, or to read a report about outcomes of past projects funded, visit www.oregonmetro.gov/grants or call Karen Blauer at 503-797-1506.

[Proposal reflects region's success in protecting farmland, investing in communities](#)

July 5, 2011 3:42 PM

Over the summer, the public can weigh in on a proposal that helps focus continued growth and investment in the region’s downtowns, main streets and employment areas.

Today Metro’s acting chief operating officer, Dan Cooper, presented the Metro Council with several options to consider for small expansions of the urban growth boundary. These options are located in targeted areas to complement ongoing efforts that focus more growth and investment in existing

communities.

“This proposal reflects the success of our region in getting more out of what we already have,” said Cooper. “Because we place a value on investing in our existing communities, we can attract more jobs and people to revitalize our established downtowns and main streets, which in turn protects our valuable farmland and natural areas for future generations to enjoy.”

The areas have been studied by Metro staff for their suitability to develop into complete urban communities in a timely fashion. Some of the considerations included whether an area has been subjected to preliminary planning efforts and whether adjoining cities have expressed an interest in annexing and providing services to these areas.

Options to consider

The proposal offered by Cooper recommends adding 310 acres along Northwest Meek Road, south of U.S. 26, on the northern edge of Hillsboro, to provide lands suitable for future large-lot industrial employment.

The proposal also outlines some options for the Metro Council to consider to meet anticipated needs for new housing over the next 20 years. These options include:

- 1,063 new acres south of Hillsboro and Tualatin Valley Hwy. to support more than 7,000 new homes in an area that has already received preliminary land use planning from the City of Hillsboro
- 256 acres located around the intersection of Southwest Roy Rogers Road and Southwest Beef Bend Road, west of Tigard, to help complete planning and public services for the West Bull Mountain Plan area
- 543 acres south of Cooper Mountain and west of Beaverton to help meet anticipated demand for new housing in this area
- 210 acres to the southeastern corner of Cornelius, in order to provide more residents to support economic activity and jobs in the city’s revitalized downtown area
- 496 acres west of Sherwood near Highway 99W and Southwest Kruger Rd. to provide for new homes and neighborhoods

- 316 acres adjacent to the City of Wilsonville to the east, around Advance Rd., which may help complete planning and services for an adjacent area, near Frog Pond, that is already inside the UGB
- 573 acres in the Maplelane area east of Oregon City, near a previous UGB expansion area that remains undeveloped

[View a map of the proposed areas](#)

To put these acreages into context, the expansion of the urban growth boundary in 2002 to include what is now the city of Damascus, along with other areas, totaled nearly 18,000 acres. It is expected that the Metro Council will consider some, but not all, of the areas proposed by Cooper when it decides whether to expand the UGB this October.

Why the Metro Council is considering this action

Every five years, Metro is required by Oregon law to forecast the growth in people and jobs that the region can expect over the next 20 years and then determine whether the current UGB can sufficiently accommodate all of that expected growth. The most recent analysis, which was completed in December 2009, indicated that additional public investments and new local policies would be needed to accommodate all of the forecast demand for new housing without a UGB expansion.

[Read more about the 2009 analysis of the urban growth boundary](#)

Throughout 2010, some local governments increased zoning in certain areas and made other policy changes to accommodate more growth inside the current UGB. The Metro Council also adopted the Regional Transportation Plan in June 2010 that included investments in future light rail and other high-capacity transit service that could enhance greater development inside existing communities.

Even with these measures, last December the Metro Council acknowledged the need for some expansion of the UGB to provide more large (50 acres or larger) sites for future industrial jobs. The Metro Council may also consider expansion of the UGB to allow for more residential development in specific areas, though it can also decide not to expand the UGB this year if it believes that the current UGB can accommodate future housing

needs over the next 20 years.

Public comment sought

The public is encouraged to provide comment and guidance to the Metro Council on this proposal. Over the next few weeks, Metro staff members will present these proposed options to community leaders and other interested citizens in several public meetings to be held throughout the region.

Metro also welcomes members of the public to take part in an open house to learn more about the proposal and when decisions will be made, and to ask questions of staff and offer suggestions and alternatives for the Metro Council's consideration. This open house will take place on Thursday, July 28, from 5 to 8 p.m. at the Hillsboro Civic Center Auditorium, located at 150 E. Main St. [Get details and directions](#)

Additionally, a survey will be sent out on Friday, July 15, to enrollees in Metro's Opt In panel, an online public participation tool.

[Learn more about Opt In and sign up to participate](#)

Comments may also be emailed or mailed directly to the Metro Council. [Learn more about how to contact the Metro Council](#)

What comes next

Public comment received over the summer, along with recommendations from the Metro Policy Advisory Committee in September, will inform the Metro Council's decision this fall.

The Metro Council will hold a public hearing at 5 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 6, at a location to be determined. The council is currently scheduled to vote on whether to expand the urban growth boundary – and if so, where – at a final public hearing that begins at 2 p.m. on Thursday, Oct. 20, at Metro Regional Center, 600 NE Grand Ave., Portland.

More information about this proposal and the Metro Council's decision this fall can be found online at www.oregonmetro.gov/greatplaces.

[New Conservation Education Council calls for nominations](#)

July 5, 2011 9:17 AM

What's the best way to implement a regional vision for conservation education?

That's the task ahead for members of the Intertwine's Conservation Education Council, a group of leaders charged with developing that vision, as well as working with regional partners and conservation advocates to support the Intertwine's mission.

The Intertwine has begun accepting nominations for the Conservation Education Council, which was formed based on a recommendation from the Intertwine Conservation Education Task Force. The task force, which convened in January, released an education plan earlier this month.

"What we have here is a powerful message about engaging the region's residents in the daunting challenge of protecting and restoring our earth. It will take open minds, caring hearts and willing hands," said Metro Councilor Rex Burkholder. "The great work of the Task Force sets us on a clear path. Their recommendations, including convening a Conservation Education Council of regional leaders, give me hope for the future."

For more information about the Council, member expectations or to receive a nomination form, please email Stacey Triplett, Conservation Education Manager at Metro, at stacey.triplett@oregonmetro.gov.

[Learn more about the Intertwine](#)

[A personal message from Rex Burkholder: Still on the bike](#)

July 1, 2011 9:44 AM

I'm going to start this message with a confession: this month I turn 55 years old. This triggers memories of getting on my first bike when I was 5 - a red single speed that my older brother and younger siblings all learned how to ride on. My Dad would run behind us, hand on the seat, encouraging us to pedal and puffing along. Then the shock of turning around and seeing that he had let go and I was riding! It was about then I lost control and crashed. "Back on the bike!" my Dad would say, brushing

gravel off skinned knees and elbows. And I never got off.

In my 50 years of two-wheeling it, I've ridden country roads in Virginia, through the wilds of Boston ("Look out for the caws!"), up Mount Constitution on Orcas Island (puff! puff!) and 30 years on Portland streets. Streets that once were like the Wild West, requiring hair-trigger reflexes and the courage to stare down drivers with a two-ton advantage. Streets that are now, thankfully, much safer because of the work of the Bicycle Transportation Alliance and innovative traffic engineers that responded when the people asked for a change. It's been 20 years since I helped start the BTA, pushing for a little clearly marked space on the roads and improvements to bridges so that cycling needn't be a contact sport. Getting TriMet to allow bikes on buses and the first light rail trains was another early win that continues to pay off.

[Learn more about BTA](#)
[Read about bikes and TriMet](#)

I was inspired to get involved when I took my oldest son, age 5, on his bike for his first solo trip downtown. Being 5, he stopped in the middle of North Broadway, on the approach to the Broadway Bridge, to ask me a question – right in front of a barreling semi! Something had to change and I wasn't going to give up riding or deprive my children of the joy and independence of cycling their community. Now my sons are in their 20s and ride their bikes to work and everywhere else on a system of safe, connected and practical bike lanes all over the Portland metropolitan area.

Three years ago, they convinced me that bike riding can be fun as well as practical, and got me to buy my first road bike in almost 30 years. This past weekend, I rode to Vancouver to the farmers market (a really good one on Saturday and Sunday in Esther Short Park). I love/hate crossing the I-5 bridge – beautiful views but scarily narrow sidewalks. That afternoon, I rode out to North Portland and joined in the Sunday Parkway, where thousands of families took over the streets for joyful, human-powered fun. There are still three more Portland Sunday Parkways to come this summer.

[Discover Sunday Parkways](#)

I am inviting mayors from other metro area cities to join me at a

Sunday Parkway so they can see how much people enjoy their communities from the seat of a bicycle, with hopes that we can have similar events everywhere. Hope to see you out there!

[Apotheker remembered as a visionary, Metro's "captain" on recycling](#)

June 27, 2011 12:53 PM

In a time before recycling was a fact of life and part of a business model, Steve Apotheker was leading a cause, a crusade.

It was a mere 20 years ago that recycling was still somewhat of a novelty, particularly for consumers used to burying their waste forever. Recycling advocates beat the drums of environmental stewardship, but Americans were more concerned about quickly-filling landfills and barges of trash looking for a place to go.



Metro solid waste planner Steve Apotheker was remembered for his vision for recycling and his witty sense of humor.

That was about when Apotheker became part of the fabric of recycling in Oregon, working on the grassroots level to get waste reused.

Apotheker, a Metro solid waste planner who was described as the captain of the agency's thinking about trash and recycling, died this week from symptoms of [multiple system atrophy](#). He was 58.

"Steve had the big picture," said Paul Sullivan, a recycler who worked with Apotheker in Illinois in the 1980s. "You're going to

bury it, burn it or you're going to have to recycle it – and recycling is the best of those three things."

Community origins

Apotheker started on a small scale, working in Champaign, Ill., at the nonprofit Community Recycling Center after earning his masters in physics.

He wasn't just about re-processing waste into something else, Sullivan said. He was about getting the word out about the center, and the commitment.

"In the early 80s, in order to make his point to the city about where we were, he rented a pair of oxen and one of those medieval wagons for the Fourth of July parade," Sullivan said. "He was trying to raise awareness and trying to get the city to support recycling."

So he picked up recyclables along the parade route and put them in the wagon.

"It wasn't a service," said Metro Councilor Rex Burkholder, who was working in recycling in the 1980s. "It was this crazy thing that was done not by government, but by community members. You went out and smashed cardboard and broke up glass, and it was almost all volunteers."

Eric Lombardi, the executive director of Eco-Cycle, a recycler in Boulder, Colo., called Apotheker one of the bedrocks of recycling. "He was able to communicate this deep sense of truth," Lombardi said.

Lombardi points to the context of the time: For most Americans, trash went into a truck and was hauled away, never to be seen again. It wasn't until 1987, when the Mobro 4000 barge, and its 3,100 tons of trash, couldn't find a dump to call home that Americans started thinking about trash differently.

Apotheker was already there.

People "started pushing the agenda of zero waste, that it's not just about recycling, it's about upstream product design – so much more than just putting it in your bin," Lombardi said. "That's what Steve was about in the 80s."

His reputation extended beyond the Midwest. Jerry Powell, executive editor of Resource Recycling magazine, called Apotheker the guru of recycling.

"I quickly figured out... you couldn't design a recycling program that didn't pass Steve Apotheker's muster," said Powell, who hired Apotheker as a technical writer for the magazine in 1989. There, he was researcher, editor and writer, encouraging the development of recycling programs nationwide.

"Some people were cautious about 'Why should I do it? Would it move forward?'" Powell said. "Much of Steve's work helped to convince people it was worthy of doing. It wasn't some sort of environmental fad, but something that was necessary."

Contributions at Metro

Apotheker joined Metro in 1998, seeking to have a direct impact on recycling in the Portland region, said Meg Lynch, a Metro waste reduction manager who worked with Apotheker for two decades, at Metro and at the magazine. Most of his early work at Metro, Lynch said, was analyzing the agency's solid waste management plan.



Apotheker was recognized for his contributions to recycling, including receiving an award from the Association of Oregon Recyclers in 2007.

But he was hardly a number cruncher. Many of the sustainability initiatives internally at Metro, such as the Metro Meeting Mugs outside of the Council Chamber and the recycling and compost bins that are ubiquitous around the building, resulted from recommendations from the Green Team, an employee initiative Apotheker founded.

At the time, Lynch said, many Metro employees were burned out on trying to get management to promote recycling.

"He just never stopped working," she said. "He worked with management, worked with other employees, worked to actually get the Green Team recognized by upper management – he presented things in such a reasonable way that you went towards 'yes.'"

Matt Korot, Metro's recycling director, said he heard someone refer to Apotheker as the environmental conscience of the agency.

"His mind thought big, and he wanted to take us down the steps to get there in a properly planned and analytical way," Korot said. "He brought an intellectual rigor and that mission-driven element, which was a pretty cool combination."

In 2007, he was recognized by the Association of Oregon Recyclers – 17 years after he'd been named Recycler of the Year by the National Recycling Coalition.

Soldiering through

Apotheker was diagnosed with MSA six years ago, a few years after symptoms of the disorder started to manifest. He kept physically active, and continued to come to work at Metro, eventually using a walker to get around, until about a month ago.

"It was the purpose of the work, what we were trying to achieve... and I think being a part of, and around this team and its members and the people in this building as a whole was really important to him," Korot said. "Metro and the work here was just a big and important part of his life."

At the Metro Council's work session Tuesday, Metro natural areas director Jim Desmond said the agency's national leadership in resource management can be traced to Apotheker's advocacy.

"It's not an exaggeration to call him the father of recycling in the region, and really the state," Desmond told the council. "If anyone ever questions the power of one public servant to make a huge difference in the world, you don't need to look further than Steve Apotheker."

Apotheker is survived by his wife, Diane Meisenhelter, and

daughter Jesse Meisenhelter. A memorial service is planned for 5:30 p.m. June 30 in the Metro Council Chamber.

Metro news reporter Nick Christensen can be reached at nick.christensen@oregonmetro.gov or 503-813-7583. Follow Metro on Twitter [@oregonmetro](https://twitter.com/oregonmetro).

[Metro Council adopts 2011-12 budget](#)

June 23, 2011 5:20 PM

The Metro Council voted 7-0 today to adopt a \$385 million budget for the regional agency for its 2011-12 fiscal year, which begins July 1. The budget is 10 percent smaller than the current year's budget, and is focused on initiatives aimed at spurring private investments that will create good jobs, make neighborhoods safer and more livable, and protect the region's farms, forests and natural areas.

"In a time of continuing economic challenges, Metro is focusing its limited resources more strategically to promote jobs and the protection of natural resources in our region," said Metro Council President Tom Hughes. "This agency is positioned to play a pivotal role in the region's long-term economic growth and sustainability."

The balanced budget invests the agency's resources in five areas to protect the region's livability:

- Leveraging land use and transportation investments to fight traffic congestion and stimulate community and economic development
- Identifying the most effective investments that will improve the region's economy, create bikeable, walkable and transit-supported neighborhoods while meeting state carbon pollution reduction targets
- A [Community Investment Strategy](#) to strengthen public-private partnerships that will spur redevelopment of dilapidated buildings and brownfields, development of vacant lots, and to create needed water, sewer, parks and other public structures needed to support new and existing urban communities
- A strategy to restore and maintain more than 11,000 acres of natural and recreation areas across the region
- The development of a roadmap for creating innovative new

technologies to manage the region's waste, reduce costs to ratepayers and prevent material from entering the waste stream in the first place

The budget fulfills Metro's commitments to promote and operate the Oregon Zoo, Oregon Convention Center, Portland Expo Center and Portland Center for the Performing Arts. Those facilities generated more than \$680 million in regional direct and induced spending last year while supporting 6,600 jobs. It also continues voter-approved purchases of natural areas and improvements to the Oregon Zoo that will improve animal health and safety and conserve water.

The budget features a net reduction of five full-time positions, freezes the pay of senior managers for the second time in three years, increases contributions of non-union-represented employees for health insurance premiums and retirement plans, and requires all new non-union employees, hired on or after July 1, to contribute six percent of their salaries to PERS.

[Ready, set, play! at North Portland's Sunday Parkways](#)

June 21, 2011 4:36 PM



Portland Mayor Sam Adams and Metro Councilor Shirley Craddick celebrate May's Sunday Parkways event in East Portland.

Sunday Parkways season has begun, here's your chance to get outside and have some fun! The second Sunday Parkways event of the year is Sunday, June 26, in North Portland. Streets along an 8-mile route will shut down to vehicle traffic from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. so people can explore the neighborhood under their own power.

The route will have two loops, connecting Peninsula, Arbor Lodge, Kenton and McCoy Parks, plus the Willamette Bluff. Walkers, bike riders, joggers and roller skaters will fill the

streets to check out the food, music and activities set up at the different parks.

Stop by Metro's booth at Peninsula Park to play a round of disc golf, plan your next bike ride and learn how to make your own green cleaner. The National Champion University of Oregon disc golf team will be on hand to guide you through a three-hole course and give tips to disc golfers of all ages and skill levels. Join Metro and Next Adventure outdoor store to get a sneak peek at the plans for the future Gold Disc Golf Course at Metro's Blue Lake Regional Park, designed by World Champion Dave Feldberg.

Kaiser Permanente will be hosting other family fun activities at Peninsula Park, featuring the Oregon Children's Theatre and Playworks. There will also be dance and fitness classes, a hula hooping contest and more. Other parks will feature a climbing wall, sack races, a bouncy inflatable play zone, parachute games, yoga, a bike skills track and a fitness challenge, as well as juggling and unicycle lessons.

Metro, the Portland Bureau of Transportation and Kaiser host Sunday Parkways to encourage people to get out, get active, celebrate sustainable practices and connect with their community. What better place to do that than car-free streets and parks!

[View the North Portland Sunday Parkways route](#)

[Check out sustainable activities you can incorporate into your life](#)

[Learn about Metro's Blue Lake Regional Park](#)

[**Outdoor school teaches waste reduction to next generation**](#)

June 21, 2011 11:11 AM



Metro Councilor Shirley Craddick

watches students prepare for a water quality test at MESD's Camp Namanu.

On a rainy Thursday in May, three sixth graders from River Grove Elementary School formed a semi-circle under a covered porch and watched as a student carefully squeezed drops of pH testing solution into a small beaker of pond water. Metro Councilors Rex Burkholder and Shirley Craddick watched on as the students waited to see what color the water would turn; dark blue, orange or green. They were hoping for green, indicating a neutral chemical balance, the best environment for a variety of wildlife.

The students' water quality test was one of many activities done that week as part of Multnomah Education Service District's outdoor school program at Camp Namanu. MESD is one of four outdoor education providers Metro contracts with to provide waste reduction education at outdoor school.

New subject for outdoor school

While outdoor school has long been a staple of Portland-area schools' science education, Metro began providing funds and curriculum resources for waste reduction education at outdoor school two years ago; paying for a full day of activities for students.

That education has come in many forms, from traditional classroom activities like making crafts out of recycled materials and studying how humans impact water quality, to less traditional activities that integrate waste reduction into everyday life at the camps.

At Camp Namanu, students use reusable dishes and cloth napkins at meals and staffers demonstrate how many paper napkins they save by choosing reusable options.

Many camps have students take turns measuring, charting and composting leftover food from meals, preparing cans and cardboard from the camp kitchen for recycling, and watching and performing skits about conservation at campfire programs.

By incorporating waste reduction education into outdoor school's daily activities, Metro hopes students will adopt reduction practices in their own lives.

"If we can use this memorable camp experience to show students how easy it is to practice waste prevention, then they can take that information and continue applying it at home and at school," said Metro waste reduction educator Freda Sherburne.



Councilor Rex Burkholder observes students during a worm composting activity at outdoor school.

Metro funding

Since 2009, Metro has provided nearly \$1.4 million to expand waste reduction education to more than 25,000 students at outdoor school programs across the region. It's an investment Metro councilor Rex Burkholder says is paying off.

"As school budgets continue to decline, many schools have considered cutting outdoor school opportunities for their students," Burkholder said. "Metro's sponsorship of these programs has allowed schools to continue giving students the opportunity to attend outdoor school. It also provides incentives for other schools to resume or expand their outdoor school curriculum and grows Metro's waste prevention and recycling outreach."

Effects you can see

At the end of its fifth season of providing waste reduction education at outdoor school, Metro's award-winning program still impresses observers.

"You can see students take recycling to heart at outdoor school

because they get to experience the effects their choices have on nature," Councilor Craddick said. "These sixth-graders are learning they can have a positive impact on their environment right now and that's something they'll remember throughout life."

And it continues to be praised by participating teachers in their anonymous, year-end reviews.

- "For many of my students this was their first real connection to conservation and their own lives. It's the start of an important conversation and understanding."
- "There is nothing more hands-on and fantastically educational than seeing conservation at work."
- "I heard students repeating the mantra, "Reduce, reuse" on their own - they got it."

Most importantly, the experience seems to resonate with students.

"Pre- and post assessments show that students are increasing their knowledge about waste prevention, recycling, toxics reduction and composting as a result of their experiences at outdoor school," Sherburne said. "Also, a large number of outdoor school students go back to traditional school saying they will try to incorporate specific sustainable practices into their everyday life. To us, that's a huge success."

Metro-supported outdoor school programs held their last classes of the season in late May. The next session of outdoor school starts in September.

[New cafe offers lunch, job opportunities in Lloyd District](#)

June 15, 2011 3:36 PM

On June 20, the Hoyt Street Station Community Café will open its doors to Lloyd District residents and neighbors, serving healthy and delicious salads, sandwiches and soups with a focus on locally sourced ingredients. Named after the future nearby Portland Streetcar stop, the café is a joint collaboration between Metro's Oregon Convention Center and its food and beverage service contractor, Aramark/Giacometti Partners, Ltd.



Lunchgoers line up to get a sample of Hoyt Street Station Community Café's fare during a preview for stakeholders on June 14.

The café hopes to distinguish itself through its commitment to the “triple bottom line” – people, planet and profits – in all aspects of its operation.

The café will be staffed with Aramark employees, along with two paid interns participating in an 18-month food service management training program geared towards individuals in underserved communities who face barriers to entering culinary management careers. The program will include a broad array of topics including food production, service, safety and hygiene; menu planning and food procurement; employee supervision and labor relations; sales and marketing; cash and inventory controls; and customer service. Interns will begin with six months of hands-on training and instruction at the OCC, followed by two six-month segments, back- and front-of-house, in the café. Upon completion of the program, participants will be eligible to apply for additional grants to be used for culinary school tuition or as seed money to start their own businesses.

During café construction, efforts were made to utilize local contractors classified as minority and/or women-owned or emerging small businesses (MWESB), and firms located within in the immediate vicinity of the OCC, known as the First Opportunity Target Area or FOTA. Of the 13 contracts awarded, 11 went to MWESB and/or FOTA businesses, totaling roughly two-thirds of the total contract dollars.



Reclaimed wood was used to build the cafe's tabletops.

Efforts also focused on using local, recycled, reused and LEED-certified products and materials. Energy-efficient refrigerators, hand dryers, lighting and a dishwasher were installed. The carpet, table bases and chairs, and fluorescent lights are reused, and the bar and table tops were built with reclaimed wood from Refind, a division of the Rebuilding Center. Portland-based Schoolhouse Electric light fixtures offset walls covered in Metro's recycled paint, recycled quartz countertops and tile backsplash and Evoke vinyl flooring. A refurbished classroom chalkboard serves as the menu display.

"It is extremely satisfying to see our vision for the community café project come to fruition," says Jeff Blosser, Executive Director of the Oregon Convention Center. "Creating good jobs that translate into successful and meaningful careers is what we do at the Oregon Convention Center. With the support of Metro and partnership of Aramark/Giacometti, we're able to make a huge difference in the lives of those who need it."

Profits from the project will be reinvested into the café and internship program. Recruitment is currently underway for interested individuals. Applications and more information can be found online.

Located at the northwest corner of the Metro Regional Center plaza, at 622 N.E. Grand Avenue in Portland, the Hoyt Street Station Community Café will be open Monday through Friday, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. beginning June 20, 2011.

[Learn more about Hoyt Street Station Community Café](#)
[Learn more about the Oregon Convention Center](#)

[**Northeast Portland community celebrates a new and improved Cully Boulevard**](#)

June 13, 2011 10:47 AM



Metro Councilor Rex Burkholder speaks at the opening ceremony for the Cully Boulevard project.

Metro Councilor Rex Burkholder on Friday celebrated the innovative reconstruction of Northeast Cully Boulevard, which provides sidewalks, trees, lighting and bicycle safety improvements for a largely Latino area that suffered for decades with unsafe streets.

The project was funded by the regional flexible funding program, a pot of money that Metro and officials from across the region designed to make the most strategic use of federal transportation money. The flexible funding program paid for nearly half the cost of the City of Portland's rebuild of Cully, with the city providing the balance.

"To make the most of our tight transportation dollars, the region has focused on making our streets safer for pedestrians and bicyclists," Burkholder said. "It's especially important for us to put these investments in neighborhoods where busy streets lack sidewalks and other basic needs."

The City of Portland worked with the Oregon Department of Transportation and Hacienda Community Development Corporation to ensure that Cully area residents had an opportunity to work on the project. Northeast Portland residents employed by Verde, Hacienda's nursery enterprise, have installed nearly 100 trees and 1,000 other plants to filter polluted stormwater and improve air quality.

At a ribbon cutting celebration on Friday, Mayor Sam Adams credited regional partnerships with Metro and Oregon's transportation department for making the project a success.

"This was one of the busiest, most dangerous streets in

Portland," Adams said. "Now, it's one of the most advanced designs in the United States."



Nathan Teske of Hacienda CDC and Claudia Gonzales of the Cully neighborhood, speak with Metro Councilor Rex Burkholder at the ribbon cutting ceremony for the Cully Boulevard reconstruction project.

The one-mile project connects the Villa de Clara Vista apartments, which houses low income families at Northeast Cully Boulevard and Killingsworth Street, to the Albertson's grocery store at Northeast Cully and Prescott Street. Previously, residents walked in the street, dodging fast-moving cars, because the two-lane stretch had no sidewalks or even safety shoulders.

The project also installed a streetlight at a five-way intersection of Cully Boulevard, Prescott Street and 57th Avenue.

"This is about safety for our communities and our families," Garrett said. "This is really a project from the community."

General contractor Westech Construction Inc. encouraged one of its subcontractors to train neighborhood residents to become certified construction area flaggers. Claudia Gonzales, a resident who worked as a flagger on the project for nearly a year, said the new facility and the jobs mean a lot to the community.

The flexible funding program provided \$2.4 million of the project's \$5.4 million budget, starting in 2002. The Cully project competed in the fund's "green streets" category, providing money for projects that use plants to slow and clean stormwater runoff before it enters waterways.

[Learn more about regional flexible funding](#)
[Learn about opportunities to comment on flexible funding projects](#)

[Compost options expand at MetroPaint Swan Island store](#)

June 3, 2011 4:48 PM



One of the new compost bins available at the MetroPaint Swan Island store.

Metro has made it even easier for residents to turn food scraps and yard debris into organic gardener's gold with a new, expanded selection of compost bins. The MetroPaint Swan Island store in north Portland now offers three different bin options with various features and capacities to meet the needs of neophytes and pros alike. Enviro World and Oregon-based Beaver State Plastics supply the new bins. Each bin is recyclable and made from 100 percent recycled plastic. They include a floor and lid at no extra cost.

Composting kitchen scraps and yard waste saves money and reduces waste – and it's easy. The resulting mix will help your garden grow healthy and strong. Finished compost is a dark, crumbly mixture of decomposed organic matter that you can use to control weeds, provide nutrients to plants, improve soil and save water.

[Find out more about the new composters including how to get yours. Learn about different composing methods, uses and recipes](#)

[A personal message from Rex Burkholder: Spring 2011](#)

June 1, 2011 12:13 PM



Greetings!

Whether you're digging in your garden, participating in outdoor activities or hosting a cookout for family and friends, I hope you enjoy our "a bit sunnier than November" spring weather. I'm writing you to provide a heads up about what we're up to at Metro and to highlight a few upcoming events in the region in which you might be interested.

The Metro Council has been reviewing the agency's finances to produce a balanced budget for 2011–2012 that will create more bike-able and walkable neighborhoods, strengthen public-private partnerships to spur economic development, and maintain our focus on strategic projects that improve the region's quality of life for years to come. Council approved a preliminary budget in early May, with final approval scheduled for June after it is reviewed by the Multnomah County Tax Supervising and Conservation Commission. Public hearings will take place June 9 and June 23 during council meetings.

[View the detailed budget and learn about the process](#)

In the meantime, my colleagues on the council and I have been working on redrawing the boundaries of the Metro districts. This became necessary after the release of localized data from the 2010 Census. By law, Metro's six districts must be as close to equal in population as possible, as well as contiguous and geographically compact. The resolution to adopt our new district map was approved with a 7–0 vote on May 19. Check out Nick Christensen's reporting on this issue, or Metro's redistricting website if you would like more information. The new district boundaries will be used for the 2012 elections.

[View the new district boundaries map](#)

[Read Nick Christensen's article](#)

[Learn more about Metro's redistricting process](#)

With that out of the way, we can now talk about some of the fun opportunities Metro is providing to help you take advantage of sunshine I know is coming! The arrival of summer is a great time to discover your green thumb, and whether you are interested in tours of nontoxic gardens around the region, taking courses on building a rain garden, or learning how to create your own Garden of eatin', there are numerous opportunities for you to roll up your sleeves and start gardening this summer. Events such as the Plant explorations afternoon out in Blue Lake Regional Park make for great family outings, and give you an opportunity to spend time outdoors with your children. Check Metro's natural gardening calendar for more details on these and other upcoming events.

[Building a rain garden](#)

[Gardens of eatin'](#)

[Plant explorations](#)

The warmer weather is a great excuse to get out on your bike as well. The region's newest favorite summer tradition, Sunday Parkways, kicked off May 22 with the first event hosted out in East Portland. The next Parkways event will take place in our district in North Portland on June 26; the route winds through Kenton, Piedmont and University Park neighborhoods. The map can be viewed on the City of Portland's website. The fabulous crew that organizes Sunday Parkways is currently looking for volunteers for the rest of their events this summer, and attempting to raise funds for the event as well; if you feel inclined, donate your time and resources to a great cause. Pedalpalooza is also not far behind. The two-week celebration of all-things bicycle hosts countless rides and activities starting June 9. Metro's calendar boasts a clinic to help women interested in bicycling on June 4 and a bicycle tour of Portland's wells on June 5.

[Learn more about Sunday Parkways](#)

[View North Portland route map](#)

[Volunteer for Sunday Parkways](#)

[Become a Friend of Portland Sunday Parkways](#)

[Get ready for Pedalpalooza](#)

[Register for the Women on Bikes clinic](#)

[Register for Cycle the well field](#)

Along with these events, Metro and its partners have more than 100 other events scheduled in June. I hope to see you at one or more of them. View the Metro calendar and follow the links for

additional information and to register.

[Go to the Metro calendar](#)

As always, I welcome your input and am glad to answer any questions or concerns you have. Please don't hesitate to contact me at rex.burkholder@oregonmetro.gov or 503-797-1546. I look forward to hearing from you.

To learn more about upcoming Metro Council action, advisory committee decisions, major policy announcements and other important updates, please subscribe to my newsfeed at www.oregonmetro.gov/connect. I encourage you to sign up to make sure you receive updates via email or directly to your RSS feed.

[Bike, pedestrian, transit and freight projects up for public comment](#)

June 1, 2011 9:52 AM



The Springwater Corridor, an example of a Regional Flexible Funds project.

Cities and counties from across the Portland metropolitan area are gearing up to decide which transportation projects to nominate for Metro's Regional Flexible Fund program. In the next few weeks, the public can help decide which projects are considered.

The flexible fund program has \$22.5 million to spend over the next two years, a relatively small amount in the transportation industry, but the program has a high profile because flexible funds can be spent in a greater variety of ways than most federal transportation dollars. The program has been crucial to construction of regional trails such as the Springwater Corridor in Multnomah County, the Trolley Trail in Clackamas County and

the Westside Powerline Trail in Washington County.

The program has also rebuilt many major roads across the region, including the freight bottlenecks of 82nd Avenue and Columbia Boulevard interchange, and the Lombard Avenue bridge over the Columbia Slough in the Rivergate Industrial area. Other road reconstruction projects include the recently completed Cully Boulevard reconstruction in Northeast Portland, Adair Avenue (Highway 8) in Cornelius, and McLoughlin Boulevard in the downtowns of Milwaukie and Oregon City.

The flexible fund program also provides resources to make the region's existing transportation system more efficient, with projects that reduce motor vehicle travel during congested periods and allow greater capacity in existing facilities through signal improvements and other efficiencies. It has also been used to plan and help construct the region's light rail system.

The money is controlled by the Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation, a 17-member body comprised of elected officials and agency leaders from across the region, and the Metro Council. Last year, they decided that the next two-year round of funds should be spent on Active Transportation/Complete Streets – which includes trails, bike and public transit access – and Green Economy/Freight projects. About 75 percent will be for active transportation, and 25 percent for freight.

“The Flexible Fund program is a great example of how this region is working to give people choices about how they get around,” said Metro Councilor Carlotta Collette, who also chairs JPACT. “We need communities to be engaged so Metro and our partners are making the most creative use of these limited dollars.”

Local communities have until June 17 to identify candidate projects for technical feedback and until Aug. 29 to nominate projects to be considered for funding. After a regional public comment period, a final list of projects is expected to be approved by JPACT in December.

Metro planners have divided the money into four subregions within the three-county metropolitan area: the City of Portland, East Multnomah County, Clackamas County and Washington County. This will allow each area to discuss which local projects

to nominate with help from the Metro planners who have designed the program.

Upcoming comment opportunities

City of Portland

The Portland Bureau of Transportation will hold a public meeting on Wednesday, June 1, 6 to 8 p.m. in room B, second floor, Portland Building, 1120 SW Fifth Ave., Portland, to gather public comment on potential bicycle and pedestrian projects. A list of potential projects can be viewed on the bureau's web site.

[The Portland Bureau of Transportation's candidate projects for regional flexible funds](#)

The Portland Freight Committee and the transportation bureau will hold a public meeting on Thursday, June 2, 9:30 to 10:30 a.m. in the Lovejoy Room, second floor, Portland City Hall, 1221 SW Fourth Ave., to gather public comment on potential freight projects. The freight committee's regular monthly meeting will be held from 7:30 to 9:30 a.m. The committee will discuss projects beginning at about 9 a.m., before the comment period.

For more information on Portland projects, contact Paul Smith, transportation planning manager, paul.smith@portlandoregon.gov.

Eastern Multnomah County

The East Multnomah County Transportation Committee will convene a public meeting to receive input on potential active transportation and freight projects for Metro's Regional Flexible Funds program. The meeting is scheduled for June 6 from 5 to 7:30 p.m. in the Oregon Trail Room, Gresham City Hall, 1333 NW Eastman Parkway, Gresham. A list of potential projects is available on the county's website.

[East Multnomah County Transportation Committee flexible fund meeting information](#)

For more information, contact Joanna Valencia, transportation planner, at 503-988-3043 ext. 29637 or joanna.valencia@multco.us.

Washington County

The Washington County Coordinating Committee will hold a 10-minute public comment period at the beginning of its monthly meeting for June 6 at noon in the conference room, Beaverton Library, 12375 SW Fifth St., Beaverton. The committee will also take comments during its regular meetings on July 11, when it expects to endorse draft project nominations and Aug. 8, when it approves final nominations.

For more information, contact Clark Berry, senior planner, at 503-846-3876 or clark_berry@co.washington.or.us.

Clackamas County

Technical staff for the Clackamas County Coordinating Committee will present a list of proposed active transportation and freight projects for flexible funding to Metro by June 17. A list of the projects that received positive input from Metro will be presented to the coordinating committee and available for comment at a public meeting on July 7. A subcommittee of the coordinating committee that includes metropolitan area cities and the county will meet Aug. 4 to discuss and recommend a final project list to forward to Metro.

For more information, contact Karen Buehrig, transportation planning supervisor, at 503-742-4683 or karenb@co.clackamas.or.us.

In the past, agencies nominated two to three times the number of projects that could expect to be funded. Metro staff then rated and ranked the projects, and finally policymakers on the committee would add or subtract projects. Public input was sought on a list of projects that had already been nominated and evaluated, before final approval of the project list.

This year, Metro is working collaboratively with local agencies to identify which projects best address the active transportation or freight program criteria and should be considered for funding. Cities and counties are expected to submit summaries of projects that could be eligible for funding June 17. Then, a citizen task force will meet with local agency staff to review the projects and discuss which ones best meet the new funding criteria.

This approach has incorporated citizen input early and often: a citizen task force and a working group on environmental justice helped design the program in fall 2010. Public meetings will solicit input on project selection this summer, and once a final list of candidate projects are nominated, Metro will offer opportunities for input on refinements.

A final list of projects is expected by Aug. 29. A public comment period hosted by Metro is expected Sept. 9 to Oct. 10, followed by final adoption by the policy committee and Metro Council.

[Read more about the flexible fund program](#)
[Read more about last summer's JPACT and Metro Council votes on flexible funding](#)
[Panel reaches consensus on approach for flexible funds transportation projects](#)
[Learn more about the Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation](#)
[Learn more about efforts to grow an active transportation network in the region](#)

[**Metro helps fight an invasive weed, count mussels and connect people with nature in Multnomah County**](#)

May 26, 2011 3:02 PM

Neighbors in Northeast Portland are taking on an invasive weed that may be relatively new to the Portland metropolitan area but has wreaked havoc in California, other parts of the United States and France.

The Metro Council, on May 19, awarded more than \$572,000 in Nature in Neighborhoods grants to seven community projects in Multnomah County. One of the projects received a capital grant funded by the natural areas bond measure approved by voters in 2006. The six other projects will get restoration and enhancement grants that come out of Metro's general fund.

Waging war against the Ludwigia weed in Northeast Portland

Ludwigia, a water primrose, reproduces quickly, clogging ponds

and lakes, covering wetlands, choking slow-moving streams and even impeding rivers with dense mats of vegetation. For humans, it interferes with boating, swimming and fishing. For native plants and aquatic life, it degrades water quality and lowers oxygen levels and water temperature. The invasive weed has already taken over three ponds in the Blue Heron Wetlands.

Thanks to a \$20,000 Nature in Neighborhoods restoration and enhancement grant, East Columbia neighbors will team with experts to get a jump on the weed.

"Conversations with local and out-of-state environmental managers have confirmed that this species threaten the ecological integrity of other local waterways, in addition to Blue Heron Wetlands," said Jane Bacchieri, watershed group manager for the City of Portland's Bureau of Environmental Services. "Given this threat, we feel that the time to act is now."

The Oregon Department of Agriculture recently listed *Ludwigia* as a Class B Noxious Weed, meaning eradicating it has become a high priority.

"While it is now established in tributaries of the Upper Willamette system, its impacts will be detrimental to the slow moving waterways in the area by stagnating water, creating excellent habitat for mosquito survival and by significantly restricting aquatic recreational opportunities in the area," according to Glenn Miller with the department's Noxious Weed Control Program.

Nearby residents get credit for getting this project moving.

"Again and again, it is neighbors and just plain folks that make the difference, whether it's restoring a wetland or coming up with new ways to improve this great place," said Metro Councilor Rex Burkholder.

Monitoring streams and mussels

Many of the other six projects in Multnomah County that received nature grants from Metro on May 19 will track and benefit the health of other local waterways. One such project partners the [Xerces Society](#), a nonprofit organization working to conserve invertebrates and their habitat, with groups such as the [Johnson Creek Watershed Council](#), the [Tryon Creek](#)

[Watershed Council](#) and the [Clackamas River Basin Council](#). The organizations will use \$11,500 in grant money to track freshwater mussels in the region. These mussels are some of the most at-risk species in the United States, but their decline has received little attention in the Pacific Northwest. The mussels are an important food source for aquatic wildlife and their presence helps maintain healthy streams.

Finishing up restoration at the Pittock Bird Sanctuary

Another project receiving funding ties into the revival of Forest Park. [The Audubon Society of Portland](#) and its partners will use a \$20,000 restoration and enhancement grant to finish a project in the Pittock Bird Sanctuary, next to the park. Volunteers have made a big dent pulling out invasive species and planting native alternatives, but now contractors can come in and tackle the tougher work on steep and sensitive slopes.

A lesson in nature for Centennial students

Students at Centennial's Pleasant Valley Elementary School will soon have a better way to explore the seven-and-a-half-acre Wildside Natural Area next to their school. A more than \$112,000 capital grant, funded by Metro's 2006 voter-approved natural areas bond measure, will create a new network of trails and a boardwalk. The boardwalk will be constructed and installed by students from Ace Academy, a charter high school that specializes in architecture, construction and engineering.

"The Wildside project is a wonderful example of ecological restoration on a site with lots of potential for community engagement," according to Jean Fike, executive director for the East Multnomah Soil & Water Conservation District. "Not only does the Wildside project provide real ecological improvements in our region; invasive species removal, hydrologic restoration through innovative stormwater management as well as the establishment of a mixed conifer/hardwood forest, it also provides a way for the local community to be actively involved in restoring a forest in their community."

[Find out about other Multnomah County projects and programs](#)
[Metro's Nature in Neighborhoods grants support](#)
[Learn more about Nature in Neighborhoods capital grants](#)
[Learn more about Nature in Neighborhoods restoration and enhancement grants](#)

[Identify the 'connectors' in your community](#)

May 25, 2011 2:49 PM

Every community has key connectors who knit together the fabric of society and make things work. They might not be "official " leaders but rather the owner of the corner coffee shop, the teacher at the local elementary school or a neighborhood organizer.

The Portland/Vancouver Connector Project is an innovative study taking place in Portland and other metropolitan regions around the country. Following a concept in Malcom Gladwell's book "The Tipping Point," the project proposes to identify "connectors" in the Portland area. Connectors are individuals who exemplify community leadership – whether or not they are in the public eye. Their key features are that they know how to get things done, demonstrate concern for the "common good" in actions and attitudes, and are trusted by their fellow citizens.

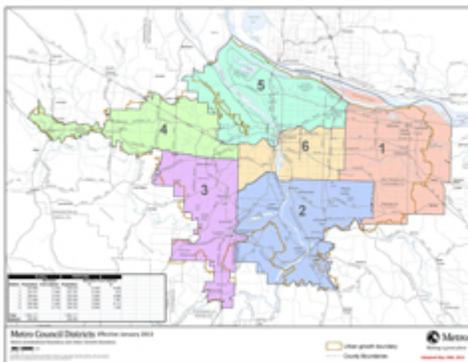
To nominate potential connectors in your community, visit www.connectorprojectportland.com. The survey is only seven questions and you can add as many or as few names as you would like. Complete the survey by May 31 and you'll be entered to win one of two packages of tickets to see the Portland Timbers play at home this summer.

[Learn more about the Connector Project](#)

[Learn more about ways to connect with Metro](#)

[Metro Council adopts new district maps](#)

May 23, 2011 8:31 AM



The Metro Council voted 6–0 today to adopt a new map of

Metro Council districts that will remain in effect for at least the next 10 years, beginning with the 2012 election cycle. Each new Metro Council district will come within 3.5 percent of the average district population of 248,362 people, based on the results of the U.S. Census.

Every ten years, following the completion of the U.S. Census, the Metro Council is required to evaluate whether its six districts are of relatively equal population and adjust the district boundaries as necessary to provide for equal representation. The results of the 2010 U.S. Census indicated that the populations of two of the Metro Council districts, which were last established in 2001, varied significantly from the average district population.

In considering how to redraw its district boundaries, the Metro Council gave consideration to existing precincts and sought to maintain communities of interest. The Metro Council defined communities of interest as cities under 15,000 in population, regional centers, town centers, school districts, established neighborhood associations, neighborhood planning organizations, community planning and participation organizations and other similar groups as specifically defined by the Metro Council.

Councilor Carlotta Collette was excused from Thursday's Council meeting.

The new redistricting map goes into effect for Metro councilor elections to be held in May 2012. Metro Councilors currently in office will continue to represent their current districts until January 2013.

[Learn more about the new Metro Council districts](#)
[Download a map of the new districts \(PDF\)](#)

[**Nearly \\$1.6 million in Metro's Nature in Neighborhood grants benefit community projects**](#)

May 23, 2011 8:29 AM

Envision standing underneath a magnificent old oak and looking down into the Willamette River to see salmon and trout making their way into the mouth of Johnson Creek. Now imagine watching an invasive weed new to the Portland metropolitan area clog ponds at the Blue Heron Wetlands and make its way to nearby waterways including Smith and Bybee lakes.

Efforts to protect, restore, promote and celebrate nature throughout the Portland metropolitan region received a nearly \$1.6 million boost from Metro on Thursday. The Metro Council awarded 17 Nature in Neighborhoods grants to a variety of worthwhile projects.

Of the 17 projects getting funding, six will get capital grants from Metro's Natural Areas Program, which is funded by a 2006 voter-approved bond measure. The program supports efforts to preserve or enhance natural features and habitats that will benefit communities now and for generations to come.

[Learn more about Nature in Neighborhoods capital grants](#)

The other 11 projects have been awarded restoration and enhancement grants paid for through Metro's general fund. These grants benefit hands-on restoration activities and environmental education programs that protect water quality as well as fish and wildlife habitat.

[Learn more about Nature in Neighborhoods restoration and enhancement grants](#)

Clackamas County

Boardman Creek fish habitat restoration project

Recipient: Oak Lodge Sanitary District, Clackamas County

Department of Transportation and Development

Partners: North Clackamas Urban Watershed Council, Oak Lodge Community Council, Jennings Lodge Citizen Participation

Organization, Clackamas County Urban Green, North Clackamas Parks & Recreation District

Nature in Neighborhoods capital grant: \$485,000

Total project cost: \$1,667,000

Location: Southeast River Road and Southeast Walta Vista Court, Jennings Lodge

Boardman Creek is slowly being transformed from an overgrown urban ditch to a refuge for fish and wildlife. This grant will support the keystone to the restoration of this basin — replacing two culverts near the mouth of the creek with bridges, and allowing fish to return to more than a mile of the creek between the park and the Willamette River. This transformation will daylight and restore instream habitat along 300 feet of the

creek, and demonstrate how bridges can also create a “wildlife crossing” for amphibians and land animals.

Klein Point overlook and habitat enhancement

Recipient: Johnson Creek Watershed Council, City of Milwaukie

Partners: Willamette Riverkeepers, Milwaukie Rotary, Oregon

Dental Services (ODS), Gary and Sharon Klein, Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board, PGE Salmon Fund, FishAmerica Foundation, City of Portland

Nature in Neighborhoods capital grant: \$225,000

Total project cost: \$670,399

Location: 1900 SE Jefferson St., Milwaukie

Someday soon, Milwaukie Riverfront Park will provide a unique vantage point on the history and restoration of fish and wildlife habitat along the Willamette River. This grant will initiate the first phase of a master plan for the park, constructing an interpretive overlook and a new trail tracing the river bluff. Visitors will be able to stand in the shade of a magnificent old Oregon white oak. Below, they might see salmon and trout making their way into the mouth of Johnson Creek, where six acres of restored riparian habitat will provide refuge to help threatened fish species thrive.

Mount Scott Creek restoration at North Clackamas Park

Recipient: Clackamas Water Environmental Services

Partners: City of Milwaukie, North Clackamas Parks & Recreation District, Friends of Trees, North Clackamas Urban Watershed Council, Friends of Kellogg and Mt. Scott Creeks, Friends of North Clackamas Park

Nature in Neighborhoods capital grant: \$150,034

Total project cost: \$450,222

Location: 5440 SE Kellogg Creek Drive, Milwaukie

Restoring lower Mount Scott Creek at North Clackamas Park will balance the needs of people and fish, creating a model for improving habitat at popular recreation destinations. Located in a densely developed urban area, Mount Scott Creek is a priority for restoration because of the salmon, steelhead and cutthroat trout that have been documented there. This project will restore the stream bank and its riparian areas, and remove a small culvert at the confluence of Camas Creek. It will also redesign access to the creek, installing two new visitor overlooks to reduce the heavy foot traffic that has trampled plants and

habitat.

Camassia and Wilderness Park Restoration Project

Recipient: Nature Conservancy

Partners: City of West Linn, West Linn/Wilsonville School District, West Linn High School

Nature in Neighborhoods restoration and enhancement grant: \$25,000

Location: 5464 West A Street, West Linn

This project spans three landowners, 138 acres and multiple habitats. The Nature Conservancy is expanding restoration efforts at part of its Camassia Natural Area, along with at neighboring property owned by the City of West Linn and by West Linn High School. During the first year, partners and volunteers will control invasive species and prepare for replanting and reseeded. During the second year, they'll plant local willow cuttings and other trees and shrubs along 200 feet of degraded stream. They will also sow more than five pounds of native forbs in oak woodland and herbaceous bald habitats, which have declined dramatically in the Willamette Valley.

Springwater Corridor Ecology Project

Recipient: Lent Elementary School

Partners: Lents Springwater Habitat Restoration Project, Ecology in Classrooms & Outdoors, Portland Parks & Recreation, Johnson Creek Watershed Council, City of Portland's Bureau of Environmental Services

Nature in Neighborhoods restoration and enhancement grant: \$24,700

Location: Springwater Corridor, between Southeast 80th and 112th avenues

Lent Elementary School will expand experiential learning opportunities for underserved students, while restoring habitat along the Springwater Corridor and nearby Johnson Creek. During the two-year project, some 300 students will get hands-on ecology lessons in the classroom. They'll apply their new knowledge during restoration field trips, with 150 high school students serving as mentors. Community work days will give adult volunteers a chance to help out, too. All told, the school will plant 6,000 native trees, shrubs, grasses and wildflowers along more than one-third mile of the region's signature trail.

LOUCC Stormwater Management Phase II – Parking Lot Rain Garden

Recipient: Lake Oswego United Church of Christ

Partners: City of Lake Oswego, Clackamas County Soil & Water Conservation District; Dana Thompson Tanks and Soil; Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon; The Friends of Tryon Creek; Forest Highlands Neighborhood Association; Otak, Inc.; Tryon Creek Watershed Council

Nature in Neighborhoods restoration and enhancement grant: \$12,129

Location: 1111 SW Country Club Rd., Lake Oswego

Lake Oswego United Church of Christ (LOUCC) is taking on the second phase of a three-part project to manage stormwater – and, in the process, creating a model for private landowners to improve watershed health. The church’s “Green Team” along with members of Beit Haverim, a Jewish community sharing worship space with LOUCC, plan to install a natural way to collect, filter and slow runoff from its parking lot, with a goal of eventually managing all water before it reaches Nettle Creek and the Tryon Creek watershed. By removing part of the parking lot, replacing it with a native plant garden and making other improvements, project leaders expect to clean 430,000 gallons of rain water every year. They also aim to educate the community at large, other faith communities and their own congregation.

Rinearson Creek Feasibility Study

Recipient: SOLV

Partners: Willamette Riverkeeper, Wilderness International, North Clackamas Urban Watershed Council, City of Gladstone, Rinearson Homeowners Association, Robinwood Riverie Homeowners Association, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, Oregon Department of Environmental Quality

Nature in Neighborhoods restoration and enhancement grant: \$10,000

Location: Rinearson Creek, Gladstone

SOLV and its partners are exploring long-term restoration opportunities in the lower Rinearson Creek watershed. An independent scientific assessment will narrow down five alternatives, which include restoring a pond area and removing a dam, and will help the Rinearson Coalition pick one approach to move forward. Meanwhile, SOLV will restore the upper

watershed near Rinearson Creek, engaging volunteers through community planting days. Students will help monitor water quality, wildlife and vegetation.

Site Restoration at the John Inskip Environmental Learning Center

Recipient: Clackamas Community College

Partners: Greater Oregon City Watershed Council, Clackamas County Office of Sustainability, City of Oregon City, Oregon State University Extension for Clackamas County

Nature in Neighborhoods restoration and enhancement grant: \$10,000

Location: 19600 Molalla Ave., Oregon City

Clackamas Community College will revive its work to redevelop a five-acre environmental learning center. The project had been abandoned several years ago due to budget cuts. This planning project will lay the groundwork for a regional outdoor learning laboratory, demonstration site and natural area that showcases innovations in stormwater management, landscape design and sustainable living practices. Ultimately, the learning center will improve water quality in the Newell Creek watershed and create a network of partners committed to protecting its health.

Healthy Streams Program

Recipient: City of Gresham

Partners: Johnson Creek Watershed Council, Columbia Slough Watershed Council, Sandy River Basin Watershed Council, Central City Neighborhood Association, Northwest Neighborhood Association

Nature in Neighborhoods restoration and enhancement grant: \$7,000

Location: Throughout Gresham

Gresham's Healthy Streams Program creates awareness and momentum for managing stormwater and reducing non-point source pollution. Using effective community-based social marketing techniques, this program will directly engage citizens. This grant will translate to 20 home visits, canvasses of three high-priority neighborhoods, safety assessments and downspout disconnect work at nearly 50 homes as well as outreach at five community forums and events.

Multnomah County

Wildside boardwalk

Recipient: Pleasant Valley Elementary School

Partners: Ace Academy, City of Gresham, East Multnomah Soil & Water Conservation District, Johnson Creek Watershed Council, Pleasant Valley School PTA

Nature in Neighborhoods capital grant: \$112,350

Total project cost: \$478,893

Location: 17625 SE Foster Road, Gresham

Restoring the Wildside natural area has been a learning experience for students at Centennial's Pleasant Valley Elementary School — and now the lessons will multiply with a new network of trails and boardwalks. This project will allow students to explore the seven-and-a-half-acre natural area more easily, enhancing environmental education without sacrificing habitat. Students and teachers have already built rain gardens, a greenhouse and small overflow dams that improve the health of a seasonal stream. The new boardwalk will be constructed and installed by students from Ace Academy, a charter high school that specializes in architecture, construction and engineering.

Balch Creek and Cornell Road Corridor Invasive Removal Project

Recipient: Audubon Society of Portland

Partners: Forest Park Conservancy, West Multnomah Soil and Water Conservation District, Audubon's national "Together Green" Program

Nature in Neighborhoods restoration and enhancement grant: \$20,000

Location: 5151 NW Cornell Road, Portland

The Audubon Society of Portland and its partners will finish a restoration project in the Pittock Bird Sanctuary, a 22-acre parcel along Balch Creek. Volunteers have already helped control invasive species and planted native alternatives. Now, paid contractors will tackle the remaining infestation, on steeper and sensitive slopes. Volunteers can then replant, monitor and maintain the area — using human and financial resources efficiently.

Blue Heron Wetlands Restoration Project

Recipient: East Columbia Neighborhood Association

Partners: North Portland Community Works, Portland Bureau of

Environmental Services, Portland State University's Center of Lakes and Reservoirs, Multnomah County Drainage District/Pen#2, Columbia Slough Watershed Council, Port of Portland's Natural Resources Program, Oregon Invasive Species Council, USDA Research Services Aquatic Weed Laboratory at the University of California/Davis, Columbia Edgewater Country Club

Nature in Neighborhoods restoration and enhancement grant: \$20,000

Location: Blue Heron Drive, between Northeast 16th Drive and Northeast 20th Court, Portland

The East Columbia neighborhood in Northeast Portland is teaming up to oust a highly invasive weed from the ponds at the Blue Heron Wetlands. While the weed called Ludwigia is new to the region, it has created a mess in California. This project will launch a community education program, create a sustainable management plan for the weed and spread the word about the restoration effort. Wetland restoration will engage many partners, including 50 neighborhood volunteers. Ultimately, they will work together to control or eliminate the invasive weed and improve watershed health. Leaders also hope they'll inspire similar projects elsewhere.

Community Based Freshwater Mussel study

Recipient: Xerces Society

Partners: Johnson Creek Watershed Council, Tryon Creek Watershed Council, Clackamas Basin River Council,

Nature in Neighborhoods restoration and enhancement grant: \$11,500

Location: Johnson Creek Watershed

Freshwater mussels are some of the most at-risk animals in the United States, but their decline has received little attention in the Pacific Northwest. Freshwater mussels are also a great indicator of a waterways overall health. A better understanding is needed to guide future projects and management decisions. Volunteers will survey mussels in area waterways and record information that will allow local watershed advocates to begin protecting the declining mussel population — which also tends to help amphibians, birds and native fish.

Gateway Green Planning Project

Recipient: Friends of Gateway Green

Partners: ODOT, City of Portland, Northwest Trail Alliance, Groundworks Portland, Friends of Gateway Green
Nature in Neighborhoods restoration and enhancement grant: \$10,000

Location: Northeast Portland, between I-205 and I-84

A 30-acre parcel of neglected public land wedged between I-205 and I-84 will be reinvented as a regional asset. By enhancing ecological conditions, this project will improve water quality and biodiversity, as well as provide nature-based recreation opportunities at the site, which is owned by the Oregon Department of Transportation. Hundreds of native trees and shrubs will be planted. This transformation is part of the larger Gateway Green project, which aims to increase diversity, quality and accessibility of recreation opportunities in one of Portland's most park-deficient areas.

Washington County

Green Alley

Recipient: Virginia Garcia Memorial Health Center

Partners: City of Cornelius, Adelante Mujeres, Centro Cultural, Verde, Jackson Bottom Wetlands Preserve

Nature in Neighborhoods capital grant: \$322,234

Total project cost: \$1.2 million

Location: 85 N. 12th St., Cornelius

With this project, the Virginia Garcia Memorial Health Center takes the concept of wellness and expands it from the personal to include the community and the environment. The nonprofit healthcare provider will transform an alley outside its Cornelius Wellness Center into a linear parkway that integrates nature and engages the community. The former alley will feature native plants, porous paving, on-site stormwater management, and exhibits highlighting the area's ecological, cultural and historical significance. It will serve as a model for adjacent landowners and the city's vision for a transformed downtown.

Wapato Marsh wetlands restoration project

Recipient: City of Hillsboro

Partners: Ducks Unlimited, Clean Water Services, Jackson Bottom Wetlands Preserve

Nature in Neighborhoods capital grant: \$129,200

Total project cost: \$1.2 million

Location: 2600 SW Hillsboro Highway, Hillsboro

At 725 acres, Jackson Bottom Wetlands Preserve already serves as a destination for hiking, bird watching and environmental education in Hillsboro. It's about to get even better. This grant will help in a major restoration effort to transform 120 acres of degraded wetlands located within the Tualatin River floodplain into a healthy ecosystem, and improve water quality in the Tualatin River. Native plants will gain a foothold and support diverse wetland wildlife, including amphibians, fish and migratory birds. By connecting an isolated pond to a forest on the preserve's north side, the project will provide improved habitat for many native species, including threatened red-legged frogs.

Diverse Partners for Nature Awareness

Recipient: Tualatin Riverkeepers

Partners: Vose Elementary School, West Washington County Family Literacy Collective, City of Tigard, Adelante Mujeres, The Wetlands Conservancy, Cleanwater Services, Tualatin Hills Parks and Recreation District, Center for Diversity and the Environment

Nature in Neighborhoods restoration and enhancement grant: \$24,606

Location: 11645 SW Hazelbrook Rd., Tualatin

Diverse Partners for Nature Awareness will engage low-income Latino families and youth in hands-on nature experiences, growing a new generation of watershed stewards. Building strong relationships with diverse communities will help meet the Tualatin Riverkeepers' goal of clean water and a healthy environment. Immediate plans call for engaging 350 participants in hands-on experiences such as school field trips, summer day camp and a new event, Rumba al Rio. The Riverkeepers will take steps to continue this outreach by training volunteers, expanding programs and identifying sustainable funding.

[Learn more about Nature in Neighborhood capital grants](#)
[Learn more about Nature in Neighborhood restoration and enhancement grants](#)

[Sixth graders get lesson in nature, waste reduction with new season of outdoor school](#)

May 13, 2011 5:07 PM



With Metro's third season of waste reduction education at outdoor school under way, a new group of sixth graders across the region will discover how their choices can help conserve resources and protect the environment.

Since the award-winning program's 2009 debut, successes include increased student knowledge about waste prevention, recycling and resource conservation; increased intention among students to practice more waste prevention behaviors such as using refillable water bottles; increased willingness among camps to implement recycling and composting programs; and positive feedback from teachers. Metro contracts with approved outdoor school providers to teach waste reduction.

Metro will begin seeking proposals from providers for the next school year soon.

For more information, contact Freda Sherburne by phone at 503-797-1522 or [by email](#).

[Learn more about waste reduction education at outdoor school](#)

[Email Freda Sherburne for more information about Metro's involvement with outdoor school](#)

[Join Councilor Burkholder and pledge to help save endangered leopards](#)

May 12, 2011 9:46 AM



Metro Councilor Rex Burkholder showing off his new Amur leopard bike jersey.

Using the very successful Bowling for Rhinos fundraiser as a model, the Portland Chapter of the American Association of Zookeepers is raising money for the Amur Leopard and Tiger Alliance in an effort to save the critically endangered Amur leopard.

The chapter is selling eye-catching bike jerseys collaboratively designed by a local company, Retro Image Apparel, and Oregon Zoo employee Philip Fensterer. The Amur leopard bike jersey was inspired by Philip's interest in defeating extinction of the Amur leopard and a passion for cycling. "As a bicyclist, I can also attest that the bright orange color will make you more visible on the road," Philip says.

These jerseys would retail for \$70 locally but are available for a minimum \$50 donation, payable by check (made out to Portland AAZK) or cash. Donations to this cause are tax-deductible.

In addition to selling jerseys, a group of 20 riders, including seven zoo employees, will collect pledges for the Seattle to Portland bike ride July 9-10, 2011. All pledges will be donated to the Amur Leopard and Tiger Alliance.

Questions about purchasing a jersey? Contact Stephanie Cameron, Marketing and Communications Manager of the Oregon Zoo, at stephanie.cameron@oregonzoo.org.

[Learn more about the Amur Leopard and Tiger Alliance](#)
[Learn more about regional transportation options](#)

[Learn more about Metro's Bike There! map](#)

[Learn more about the Oregon Zoo](#)

[Metro transit-oriented development project vies for prestigious ULI award](#)

May 3, 2011 4:44 PM



A low-maintenance, open stairwell serves all floors at the Burnside Rocket.

The project must achieve a high standard of excellence in all areas – design, construction, economics, marketing and management.

It must demonstrate relevance to the contemporary and future needs of the community in which it is located.

The project must be worthy of emulation.

For over 30 years, the Urban Land Institute's Awards for Excellence have celebrated significant, innovative projects that demonstrate visionary urban planning, improve communities,

promote economic development and take a leadership role in environmental responsibility and urban revitalization.

Sounds like the Burnside Rocket.

Challenging assumptions for mixed-use buildings

On the first warm and sunny spring day in April, two jurors representing ULI visited the Rocket to evaluate it against the awards' standing criteria. Project designer Kevin Cavanaugh led a tour for jurors Jeff Mayer, placemaking expert from Southern California, and noted architect Greg Baldwin of Portland's Zimmer Gunsul Frasca Architects, while providing a running narrative on the unique features of the Rocket from the lobby-free entrance to the rooftop garden.

"Creating an open-air stairwell instead of a traditional lobby challenges the assumptions of what a building is supposed to be," says Cavanaugh. While there is an elevator, the accessible stairwell offers health benefits and cost savings. "There are no janitorial expenses of maintaining a lobby that would add to the tenants' costs. A staff person from the restaurant on the top floor sweeps down the steps at the end of the day as part of his closing duties."

Metro's Transit-Oriented Development Program invested in the four-story mixed-use project in 2007 from both TOD funds and the program's green building fund. Built on a narrow lot only 38 feet wide, the project has no onsite parking. As a result, it generates an additional 66 daily transit trips as compared to a one-story office with surface parking on the lot.

Innovation and energy-savings through design

Small lot size aside, the bright red building is impossible to miss on its corner at East Burnside Street and Northeast 11th Avenue. When even a four-alarm red exterior takes a backstage to a slate of innovative features, you know you have a contender.

Outdoor corner terraces on floors 2 through 4 encourage interaction with the street scene. Operable exterior art panels act as shades to the building's 24 windows. An "edible rooftop" supplies the top floor restaurant with produce and herbs. A

no-walls shared workspace offers architects and designers a desk, a view and the camaraderie of their peers for \$330 a month. Together, the elements generate a vibe closer to that of a creative community than a building at capacity with interesting tenants. And it's one of the few buildings in the city to earn a LEED® Platinum Certification from the U.S. Green Building Council.



A rooftop garden provides fresh produce and herbs for the fourth floor restaurant.

"I didn't know where to stop," says Cavanaugh of taking every opportunity to turn the functional into the creative. A sliding door separating the common office space from another room was fabricated from a reclaimed ODOT-green directional sign for Sandy Boulevard that was removed from East Burnside when the space was developed.

An open-loop geothermal system that draws from an ice-age aquifer 300 feet beneath the building supports the building's heating and cooling systems. It operates by an extraction and injection well and provides water for all the building's needs. The energy-saving system earned the building extra points toward LEED® platinum certification and, hopefully, will warrant bonus points on the jurors' scorecards.

Changing the world through smart, urban development

The Urban Land Institute's Awards for Excellence seek real estate development projects with a touch of the visionary about them. They look for best practices, yes, but with features that inspire, innovation that surprises, and efficiencies in design that

reflect a conscious intent about how land, space and resources are used.

"I have a crazy idea to change the world 3,000 square feet at a time," says Cavanaugh. Projects like the Burnside Rocket provide new comparables for the area and can give lenders confidence the next time a similar project comes along by demonstrating a demand for transit-oriented developments – with a flair for the creative. "In guerilla style," says Cavanaugh, "that's how you change swaths of city blocks."

The Burnside Rocket is one of 20 building finalists for this year's Urban Land Institute's Awards for Excellence. The awards will be announced at the ULI Spring Council Forum, May 18 to 20, in Phoenix, Arizona.

Transit-oriented development, like the Burnside Rocket, helps support the region's six desired outcomes by creating vibrant communities and safe and reliable transportation choices that enhance the quality of life for residents of the Portland metropolitan area.

[Learn more about the Burnside Rocket](#)

[Read about the ULI Awards for Excellence](#)

[Discover how the Metro TOD program supports innovation](#)

[**Join Metro and Bigfish Bikes to learn about the role of folding bikes in transportation**](#)

April 28, 2011 11:07 AM



A Bigfish Folding Bike.

Metro Regional Travel Options and Bigfish Folding Bikes will host a presentation on the role of folding bikes in transportation

from noon to 1 p.m. on Tuesday, May 3, in rooms 370A and B at Metro Regional Center, 600 NE Grand Ave. in Portland. Bigfish Folding Bikes works with cities across the country to incorporate folding bikes into transit use, giving commuters an easy solution for traveling the first and last mile trips to and from the transit stations. The company is currently installing 15 "mobility hubs" in the greater Los Angeles area that bring together several modes of transportation in one centralized portal that is open to the public.

[Learn more about Bigfish Folding Bikes](#)

[Learn how to use a folding bike](#)

[Learn how to safely get around the region by bike](#)

[**Share your ideas about potential improvements at the Glendoveer Golf Course and Fitness Trail**](#)

April 26, 2011 10:02 AM

The first of three discussion groups will take place this Wednesday, April 27, to talk about potential improvements at the Glendoveer Golf Course and Fitness Trail. The discussion groups will further explore themes and issues heard in surveys conducted both onsite and online about the facility and deepen Metro's understanding of community values surrounding the Glendoveer facilities. The discussion groups will take place at the City of Portland's Water House, 1616 NE 140th Ave., Portland, on the following dates and times:

Wednesday, April 27, 9:30 to 11 a.m.

Thursday, April 28, 6:30 to 8 p.m.

Tuesday, May 3, 6:30 to 8 p.m.

Feedback from the discussion groups will assist Metro in creating a more efficient, sustainable and profitable operation at the Glendoveer property, and one that is more responsive to community needs. A public open house will be held in the coming months to review the outcomes of the Glendoveer facility assessment and business plan study, as well as share a plan for potential investments at Glendoveer.

For more information about the project or to sign up for a discussion group, contact Corie Harlan at 503-797-1764 or send e-mail to Corie.harlan@oregonmetro.gov, or mark your

calendar and attend one of the events listed above. Refreshments will be provided.

[Learn more about the Glendoveer facility assessment and business plan project](#)

Metro Council adopts final component of 50-year growth plan

April 22, 2011 10:08 AM

The Metro Council voted 6-1 Thursday to adopt the last piece of an historic 50-year plan for protecting farm and forest land while allowing for additional housing and jobs in limited areas outside the current urban growth boundary and focusing additional investment and redevelopment in existing communities.

The ordinance establishes the urban and rural reserves map for Washington County in Metro's code, along with the findings that support those reserves. This is the last product of nearly four years' effort on the part of Metro and Clackamas, Multnomah and Washington counties, plus citizens, land owners, business leaders, city and county officials, farmers and others, to allow for sufficient land needed to support future growth while protecting farms and forests that contribute to the local economy and define the character of the region.

Last October the Oregon Land Conservation and Development Commission approved urban and rural reserve maps for Clackamas and Multnomah counties but did not approve the map proposed for Washington County, citing concerns about potential development on farmland north of Cornelius and in areas north of Forest Grove. LCDC asked Washington County and Metro to revise the map to address those concerns. LCDC allowed enough flexibility for the two governments to replace the lost urban reserve acreage while ensuring continued protection of valuable farm and forest lands.

The revised proposal, agreed to by the Metro Council and Washington County Board of Commissioners on March 15, includes approximately 13,500 acres of urban reserves. Combined with more than 14,000 acres of urban reserves in Clackamas and Multnomah counties, this proposal provides an overview of areas that are best suited to provide for additional jobs and housing as they are needed over the next 50 years

while supporting continued growth and investment in existing cities and neighborhoods.

Nine individuals testified before the Metro Council, all in opposition to the proposed ordinance, with many expressing particular concern about a proposed 352-acre urban reserve in the Helvetia area north of Hwy. 26. This is in addition to an urban reserve of 86 acres in that area that LCDC approved last October.

"Hillsboro doesn't need the 440 acres north of Hwy. 26," said Cherry Amabisca, one of the leaders of the Save Helvetia organization that has sought to keep the Helvetia area out of urban reserves. "This has been part of Helvetia's economic engine for 150 years."

Mary Kyle McCurdy from 1000 Friends of Oregon also raised concerns about the proposal, but focused her comments on lands north of Council Creek near Cornelius and Forest Grove. She raised concerns about the proposed undesignated 360 acres of undesignated land north of Cornelius that was previously rejected by LCDC as an urban reserve. "The area north of Cornelius is not good for urban reserve. Why leave it undesignated?" she asked. "It qualifies as rural reserve because it is agricultural."

Amy Scheckla-Cox, a member of the Cornelius planning commission, urged the Metro Council to consider putting in a smaller urban reserve north of Cornelius, as was proposed in a "compromise map" endorsed by the Washington County Planning Commission in early March. "There is this worry that LCDC won't like any urban reserve north of Cornelius, but that has not been backed up with a legal written notice," she said.

During the Council's deliberations before the vote, Metro Councilor Kathryn Harrington noted the historic nature of the agreement. "Today, I celebrate," she said. "I celebrate that we are helping our region provide for good jobs now and in the future, while providing significant protections for the valuable farm and forest lands that are essential to our economy and define the character of our region."

Councilor Shirley Craddick cast the lone dissenting vote on the ordinance. She was also the only no vote on the Metro Council on the final agreement with Washington County at the March 15

joint meeting. While noting her support for the process that has led to urban and rural reserves, and her support for urban and rural reserves already acknowledged in Clackamas and Multnomah counties, "I am not happy with the decision in Washington County. I believe too much farmland is in urban reserve. I have to stay with my values."

The Washington County Board of Commissioners must adopt its land use ordinance to account for the revised urban and rural reserves. The board is holding one additional public hearing, on Tuesday, April 26, beginning at 6:30 p.m., at which it is scheduled to vote on that ordinance. If Washington County's ordinance is adopted, and if the Multnomah County Board of Commissioners adopts the revised set of findings at its meeting on Thursday, April 28, the revised urban and rural reserves proposal for Washington County will go back to LCDC for its review and approval. (The Clackamas County Board of Commissioners adopted the revised reserves findings at its meeting on Thursday.) It is expected that LCDC will consider the Washington County reserves package at its meeting in Portland in August.

[Read more about Washington County's land use ordinance on urban and rural reserves](#)

[Read more about urban and rural reserves](#)

[**Metro hosts talk on transportation links to farmers markets for low-income families**](#)

April 20, 2011 4:41 PM

Join Metro, the Oregon Public Health Institute and the Hillsboro Farmers Market for a presentation to learn about barriers preventing low-income families from accessing healthy foods from their neighborhood farmers markets.

Amy Gilroy from the Oregon Public Health Institute and Laura Conroy of the Hillsboro Farmers Market will share findings related to food equity and transportation from the "Healthy Eating at Farmers Markets" study. Hear about common barriers and potential strategies to improve fruit and vegetable consumption among at-risk communities at farmers markets in the Portland metropolitan region.

The presentation will take place Tuesday, April 26 at Metro

Regional Center, 600 NE Grand Avenue in Portland, in rooms 370A and B, from noon to 1 p.m.

[Metro's James Davis makes nature look larger than life](#)

April 19, 2011 11:14 AM

Get close enough to inspect the legs of an insect or stare at the swirls on a snail's shell during this Metro nature minute video. Join Metro naturalist James Davis as he examines insects, feathers, flowers, leaves and other close-up mysteries of nature under a magnifying glass at Smith and Bybee Wetlands Natural Area. Watch as James shows how an owl pellet conceals the bird's last meal and learn how to pick out a durable magnifying glass.

But don't stop now, after watching, grab a magnifying glass of your own and start experiencing the outdoors up close. Spring provides the perfect opportunity to explore nature, and with the weather getting warmer, there couldn't be a better time.

Check out activities at Smith and Bybee Wetlands Natural Area and other places through GreenScene, Metro's quarterly publication featuring sustainable living tools, seasonal nature notes and stories about outstanding people and places.

And if you enjoy James in this video, see below for more.

[Read the GreenScene](#)

[See more Metro nature minute videos](#)

[State's greenhouse gas mandate has Metro, cities thinking about getting public support](#)

April 14, 2011 1:07 PM

Eighty percent of Metro area residents support "building more neighborhoods where people can get where they need to go by walking, biking or taking public transit," according to a recent scientific survey.

The State Mandate

Just who is mandating this cutback in greenhouse gas emissions?

The credit goes to Salem. [House Bill 3543](#), passed in 2007,

made it state policy to curb Oregon's greenhouse gas emissions. Using 1990 emission levels as a benchmark, the bill said Oregon's per capita greenhouse gas emissions must be at 10 percent below 1990 levels by the year 2020. By 2050, per capita emissions must be at 75 percent below 1990 levels.

[The Jobs and Transportation Act](#), a 2009 bill that raised the gas tax to pay for several key statewide highway projects, included a provision that required Metro to both plan for population growth and reduce emissions from motor vehicles. It mandated cities to change their comprehensive plans to accommodate the reduction in emissions.

The state Department of Land Conservation and Development, which oversees the planning statewide, is [drafting its own requirements](#) for the Metro region.

Those rules use 2005 emissions as a benchmark, and say Metro must see those drop by 21 percent by 2035. To be in compliance with the state laws, Metro has to draft plans to address those goals. Cities, ultimately, will be the ones figuring out how to make the goals translate into their own planning.

Thirty-six percent of people in that same survey support "building more compact neighborhoods."

The difference in outcomes might be indistinguishable. But it's the difference in support that's been the topic of conversation among policymakers for the past two weeks, as Metro and its constituent cities and counties come to grips with a state mandate to drastically reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

A volley of laws and planning rules from Salem (see sidebar) has put Portland-area drivers under a microscope. While only 25 percent of the region's greenhouse gas emissions come from commuting, policymakers are focusing their carbon reduction efforts on cars, pickups and sport utility vehicles.

[See also: Regional greenhouse gas inventory](#)

But how do policymakers get the public to buy in to what might seem like mandated lifestyle changes?

Pollster Adam Davis has been making the rounds the last few weeks with data from a phone survey his company, DHM

Research, conducted in March. It questioned 600 Metro-area residents, with a margin of error of 4 percent. DHM also conducted several focus group sessions to supplement the survey.

Davis has been preaching to elected officials and planners a simple message – the public believes in this, if you frame it the right way. Just as people support or oppose the ideals of New Urbanism depending on what questions are asked, Portland-area residents are lukewarm in their belief that global warming is a reason to change the way we live.

"Quite frankly, I would not lead with climate change, or global warming for that matter," Davis told the Metro Policy Advisory Committee on Wednesday. "Talk about these other values which Portlanders hold dear."

The region's residents support keeping a tight urban growth boundary. They want to prevent urban sprawl and protect farm and forest land, Davis said. They like developments like Orenco Station in Hillsboro and The Crossings in Gresham. They like Portland's neighborhoods.

To back up the numbers, Davis pointed to a recent national survey that found that 58 percent of Americans prefer to live in a neighborhood that has a mix of houses, stores and other businesses that are easy to walk to. Sixty-six percent think it's important to be within easy walking distance of a mix of places near their homes.

Back to the Portland-region survey – 67 percent of those in Davis' survey said they think addressing climate change should be a priority for local government. That number seemed to resonate with Metro Councilor Rex Burkholder at a Tuesday worksession.

"They're looking for leadership," Burkholder said. "They need to know someone is taking care of this."

Councilor Carlotta Collette, just back from a business recruitment trip to Spain, compared the American response to climate change to that of other countries.

"We're the last part of the planet that's responding to this," she said.

"There's power in this message – we're behind, we're playing catch up," said Councilor Kathryn Harrington. "China's eating our lunch."

Metro news reporter Nick Christensen can be reached at nick.christensen@oregonmetro.gov or 503-813-7583. Follow Metro on Twitter [@oregonmetro](https://twitter.com/oregonmetro).

[Metro launches 2011-12 North Portland grant cycle](#)

April 13, 2011 2:56 PM

Passionate people with great ideas invited to complete pre-application forms by May 2

If you live and work in North Portland, you are probably the best source of ideas about important community investments there. That's why Metro is soliciting grant proposals from local residents, community groups, nonprofit organizations, schools and others who share closely linked goals that help create great communities and support a strong economy as the region – and North Portland neighborhoods – grow.

The pre-application deadline for a North Portland community enhancement grant is 5 p.m. Monday, May 2. Pre-applications are available online.

"Over the years, North Portland residents have generated some truly innovative solutions to respond to neighborhood needs – from apprenticeship programs in the food service industry for high school youth, to a tool lending library that helps make home repairs and garden projects more affordable for everyone," said Metro Councilor Rex Burkholder who represents North Portland and chairs the grant committee. "Even if you haven't heard about these programs, chances are you or your neighbors have been touched by them," he added.

Financial constraints limit the total amount available to award this year to \$15,000. As a result, Metro's grant selection committee, made up of neighborhood activists, established priorities and a pre-application procedure to help guide the solicitation and selection process. Grants will support projects that respond to the community's most pressing needs – jobs and job training; programs for youth; and programs or projects that deliver basic needs and respond to the issues of hunger, health care for the uninsured, and housing or essential

household needs.

[Learn more about the North Portland enhancement grants](#)

[**A personal message from Rex Burkholder – Metro convenes leaders on climate change**](#)

April 7, 2011 5:43 PM

On April 1, Metro convened a Climate Leadership Summit for local governments, businesses and community leaders to identify ways to create sustainable communities and reduce the region's greenhouse gas emissions. What I saw was a strong endorsement of much of what the region is famous for doing: improving transportation options by providing for safer, more attractive walking, cycling and expanded transit, as well as building complete communities, where one's job, shopping, schools and parks are nearby. In addition to making our communities healthier, cleaner, more livable and "funner" places to live, these "new old" ways reduce our carbon footprint immensely.

In a project mandated by the Oregon Legislature, Metro is leading the effort to reduce carbon emissions from cars and light trucks. The Portland metropolitan area will be the first in Oregon to use land use and transportation scenario planning to meet state and regional targets for carbon emission reduction. The scenarios haven't been designed yet; local leaders who attended the summit told us what political, economic, social equity and other factors Metro should consider as it studies the issue and forms scenarios for the region to test in 2012. The region will implement the best ideas by 2014.

By combining local aspirations and public opinion with international best practices, leaders across the region will determine the most effective land use and transportation strategies to create climate smart communities.

Step by step, we will move toward achieving Oregon's emissions goals as well as make our region a great place for future generations.

Learn more about the Climate Leadership Summit and follow the outcomes of the summit on the Metro newsfeed in the weeks ahead.

[Read about the Climate Leadership Summit](#)

[Read about climate change on Metro news](#)

Metro 2011–2012 Proposed budget available online

Every year, the Metro Council decides how best to deliver services and programs the region depends on—recycling and solid waste disposal, the Oregon Zoo, parks and natural areas, planning for the future, and more. With the Metro budget, we think like you, what you spend your money on is the clearest way to understand what is really important. Like everyone else, the economic disaster has affected Metro resources, and that makes our decisions all the more crucial and difficult. I encourage you to read the budget message that outlines proposed priorities and changes we may make. It is an easy way to understand what Metro does and hopes to accomplish. What are your thoughts? Please let me know.

[Read the Metro budget message](#)

In the meantime, I hope to see you at some of the events Metro has scheduled in April. Please read more below and follow the links for additional information and registration.

City of Beaverton Living Greener Summit

Join us and bring your family and friends for a day of fun and learning. The Living Greener Summit offers many opportunities for you to gain insight on practical sustainable solutions to everyday living. Explore over 50 green exhibitors on display. Meet at the Beaverton Library. Free raffles, free entry and a free gift for the first 50 attendees. Win Trail Blazer tickets, gift baskets from New Seasons. [Learn more](#)

9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
Saturday, April 9
Beaverton City Library
12375 SW Fifth St.
Beaverton, OR 97005

Pedal Nation Bicycle Show

Bicycles are taking over the Oregon Convention Center for the

Pedal Nation Bicycle Show. Fun, interactive bike activities will engage everyone in your family, plus check out Portland's largest display of bicycles, gear and apparel all under one roof.

[Learn more](#)

10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Saturday, April 9

10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Sunday, April 10

Oregon Convention Center
777 NE Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
Portland, OR 97232

Painted turtle walk

Oregon's turtles are rare, shy and hard to find, but Smith and Bybee Wetlands Natural Area is home to one of the largest populations of Western painted turtles in Oregon. See these beautiful reptiles with the help of Metro naturalist James Davis, who provides small telescopes for a close look. Suitable for ages 5 and older. Meet in the parking lot on North Marine Drive.

Advance registration required. [Learn more](#)

1 to 2:30 p.m.

Saturday, April 9

Free, advance registration required

Smith and Bybee Wetlands Natural Area

5300 N. Marine Drive

Portland, OR 97203

Metro's Native Plant Center volunteer venture

Come celebrate spring at Metro's Native Plant Center in Tualatin and discover the joys of propagating sensitive native species to support regional restoration projects. Volunteers will help plant native seeds, bulbs and seedlings, maintain native seed grow-out beds and work with local herbaceous species. No experience necessary. Gloves, tools, water and snack provided.

Advanced registration required; call 503-797-1653. [Learn more](#)

9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Saturday, April 16

Free, advance registration required

Metro's Native Plant Center

2661 SW Borland Road
Tualatin, OR 97062

Introduction to the language of the birds

Would you like to understand what the birds are saying? Join naturalists at Oxbow Regional Park for this introduction to the fascinating art of interpreting the meaning of bird songs and calls. This popular class combines modern birding tools and techniques with ancient awareness skills known to native people worldwide. Class is held outdoors; bring a notepad, sack lunch and something to sit on in the woods. Suitable for adults and teens. Meeting location dependent on weather; ask at the park gate. Registration and program fee of \$11 per person required in advance; call 503-797-1650 option 2. There is a \$5 per vehicle entry fee to the park, payable at the gate. [Register now](#)

10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Sunday, April 17

\$11 per person, \$5 entrance fee to the park

Oxbow Regional Park
3010 SE Oxbow Parkway
Gresham, OR 97080

Blue Lake Bunny Bonanza Egg Hunt

Bring the family to Blue Lake Regional Park for a fun-filled candy egg hunt rain or shine. Children age 4 years and younger will begin their search at 10:30 a.m. Children ages 5 to 10 years will seek their treats beginning at 11 a.m. Enjoy a hoppin' good time with free face painting and coloring activities under covered shelters. Free with your annual pass or park entry fee of \$5 per car or \$7 per bus. [Learn more](#)

10 a.m. to noon

Saturday, April 23

Free with \$5 entrance fee to park or annual pass

Blue Lake Regional Park
20500 NE Marine Drive
Fairview, OR 97024

Beautify the I-205 multi-use path

Join Friends of Trees for a planting event along the Interstate 205 multi-use path. This is a three-year project to plant thousands of trees and native plants from Marine Drive all the way to the city of Gladstone. Arrive by 8:45 a.m. to register and

enjoy coffee and breakfast treats. Meet at Southeast Salmon Street and 94th Avenue. Gloves, tools and guidance provided. Volunteers younger than 18 permitted with waiver; bring the completed waiver to the event. For more information, call Andrew Land at 503-282-8846, ext. 18 or visit <http://friendsoftrees.org>.

8:45 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Saturday, April 23

Free

I-205 multi-use path

Southeast Salmon Street and 94th Avenue

Portland, OR

Spring bird walks at Smith and Bybee Wetlands

Spring brings more than 25 different songbirds to join the resident birds at Smith and Bybee Wetlands Natural Area. April and May are the peak of migration, with nesting in high gear during May and June. The birding action will be lively and noisy. Learn to identify birds by sight and song. Walks led by Metro naturalist James Davis or Patty Newland, volunteer naturalist and Audubon Master Birder. Meet in the parking lot on North Marine Drive. Bring binoculars or borrow a pair on site. Suitable for ages 10 and older. Free. Advance registration required; call 503-797-1650 option 2.

[Register now](#)

9 to 11:30 a.m.

Saturday, April 23

Free, advance registration required

Smith and Bybee Wetlands Natural Area

5300 N. Marine Drive

Portland, OR 97203

Reptiles and amphibians

Are there really boas living in Portland? Do we have any venomous snakes? Can eating a newt kill a grown man? Why are bullfrogs such a problem in Oregon? People have been confused by reptiles and amphibians forever. It was so confusing that they were lumped together, and the study of these animals became called herpetology, which means "creeping things." The Portland metropolitan area does not have a lot of "herps" – so it is easy to sort out the lizards, snakes, turtles, frogs and salamanders that live among us. Learn about what it means to

be "cold-blooded" or ectothermic. Look at photos and a few live specimens. Suitable for ages 10 and older. Meet in room 370 at Metro Regional Center. Registration and payment of \$11 per person required in advance; call 503-797-1650 option 2.

[Register now](#)

7 to 9:30 p.m.

Thursday, April 28

\$11, advance registration required

Metro Regional Center

600 NE Grand Ave.

Portland, OR 97232

Native Plant Center volunteer venture

Come celebrate spring at Metro's Native Plant Center in Tualatin and discover the joys of propagating sensitive native species to support regional restoration projects. Volunteers will help plant native seeds, bulbs and seedlings, maintain native seed grow-out beds and work with local herbaceous species. No experience necessary. Gloves, tools, water and snack provided. Advanced registration required; call 503-797-1653. [Learn more](#)

9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Saturday, April 30

Free, advance registration required

Metro's Native Plant Center

2661 SW Borland Road

Tualatin, OR 97062

Birding Killin Wetlands

Killin Wetlands in Banks, also known to birders as Cedar Canyon Marsh, is a great place to see (or at least hear) three very hard to find marsh birds: American bittern, sora and Virginia rail. Many other common wetland birds are seen here this time of year.

Join naturalist James Davis at this special place protected by Metro's Natural Areas Program. Suitable for ages 10 and older. Directions provided with registration. Registration and payment of \$6 per person required in advance; call 503-797-1650 option 2. [Register now](#)

9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Saturday, April 30

\$6, advance registration required

Killin Wetlands

Banks, OR 97106

[Metro, OEC host discussion with Benjamin Ross, author of "The Polluters"](#)

April 7, 2011 10:09 AM

Join author Benjamin Ross for a brown bag discussion of his new book *The Polluters: The Making of Our Chemically Altered Environment* Monday, April 11, from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. in rooms 370 A and B at Metro Regional Center, 600 NE Grand Ave. in Portland.

The Polluters is a ground-breaking history of the chemical industry and its effects on the environment. According to Ross, today's environmental problems were understood far earlier than most people realize. He contends the chemical industry used its economic and political power to block environmental regulation. Ross says the pollution that irrevocably damages today's environment is the legacy of conscious choices made long ago.

In the years before and just after World War II, discoveries like leaded gasoline and DDT came to market, creating new hazards even as the expansion and mechanization of industry exacerbated old ones. During this time, Ross says research was slanted, unwelcome discoveries were suppressed and friendly experts were placed in positions of influence, as science was subverted to serve the interests of business.

The Polluters reveals the crucial decisions that allowed environmental issues to be trumped by political agendas. Ross' book spotlights the leaders of the chemical industry and describes how they applied their economic and political power to prevent the creation of an effective system of environmental regulation.

Ross' talk at Metro is hosted by the Oregon Environmental Council. OEC will provide dessert and coffee at the discussion. Please register for the talk by April 8. Ross will also be in Portland for an evening reading at Powell's City of Books on April 11.

For more information, email info@oeconline.org

[RSVP online](#)

The Oregon Environmental Council advances innovative, collaborative solutions to Oregon's environmental challenges for today and future generations. Its priorities include: protecting kids' health, from toxic pollution, improving stewardship of Oregon's rivers, slowing global warming, building a sustainable economy, creating a sustainable food and farm system and strengthening support for effective environmental policy in the Oregon Legislature.

[Learn more about Benjamin Ross and his new book](#)[Learn more about the Oregon Environmental Council](#)[A personal message from Rex Burkholder – legislative update and climate leadership](#)

March 30, 2011 12:18 PM

The Oregon State Legislature is in session and I want to keep you informed about some proposals currently in process that impact Metro's work. Our lobbyist, Randy Tucker, is hard at work in Salem representing the region with respect to these and other bills.

Plastic bag ban

Senate Bill 536 prohibits retailers from providing single use plastic checkout bags at grocery stores and other retail businesses across the state. If passed, customers could use their own reusable bags at no charge, or purchase a paper bag from stores for at least five cents. Sponsored by Senators Mark Hass (D-Beaverton) and Jason Atkinson (R-Central Point) and Representatives Ben Cannon (D-Portland) and Vic Gilliam (R-Molalla), the bill has the support of environmental groups and grocers. The bill is currently sitting in the Environment and Natural Resources Committee in the Oregon Senate, which has reviewed the measure but has not yet moved to advance the bill.

[Read Senate Bill 536](#)

This year marks the fortieth anniversary of Oregon's innovative bottle bill. Senate Bill 536 would once again put Oregon at the forefront of the recycling movement, making Oregon the first state in the country to ban plastic bags after similar measures passed in Seattle and Los Angeles County. Oregon cities from

Beaverton to Lake Oswego have passed resolutions stating their support for the bill and in January, the Metro Council voted unanimously to support this bipartisan, statewide effort.

[Learn about Beaverton's support of the plastic bag ban](#)

[Learn how Lake Oswego is joining the bandwagon to ban plastic bags](#)

[Read more about Metro Council's support of plastic bag ban](#)

The reduction of plastic bags will likely help cut costs caused by bags gumming up the machinery at material recovery facilities in the region, thereby making recycling efforts more efficient. Opposition to the bill has come from national plastic bag manufacturers such as Hilex Poly, as well as the American Chemistry Council.

[Learn more about opposition to SB 536](#)

State designation of Regionally Significant Industrial Areas
Senate Bill 766, sponsored by Senator Lee Beyer (D-Springfield), aims to allow the state to identify and protect important industrial lands and then expediently approve development when manufacturers commit to developing in Oregon.

[Read Senate Bill 766](#)

The bill would establish an Economic Recovery Review Council to perform accelerated evaluation of specific sites to attract the manufacturing businesses that provide family-wage jobs and have a significant impact on the economy of Oregon communities. Governor Kitzhaber has expressed support for this effort to facilitate job creation on our most important industrial lands and protect those lands from conversion to nonindustrial use. These regionally significant industrial lands are located in areas already planned for development, and have access to existing infrastructure that can enable them to foster economic growth. Lands currently zoned for industrial development also tend to be more closely located to population centers, encouraging smart growth and compact communities.

Local politicians, however, remain concerned that the bill removes local authority over planning decisions and sacrifices community input on industrial projects in the name of economic

development, a viewpoint recently expressed by columnist Steve Duin of *The Oregonian*. Metro will continue to closely watch the development of this bill in the Senate Business, Transportation and Economic Development Committee before formally taking a position.

[Read Steve Duin's column](#)

These are just two of the primary legislative actions that have direct impact on Metro and the region. I have specifically shared these issues with you because I feel the potential implementation of these bills will have significant long-term effects on our region. I encourage you to contact your state senators if you have any questions or comments regarding these proposals. If you don't know which district you are in, use the links below to search for or write to your Oregon senator.

[Find your Oregon senator](#)

[Write to your Oregon senator](#)

Climate Leadership Summit

On Friday, April 1, Metro will convene a Climate Leadership Summit for local governments, businesses and community leaders to identify ways to create sustainable communities while at the same time, reducing the region's greenhouse emissions.

By combining the aspirations of local cities and communities with international best practices, organizations across the region will determine land use and transportation strategies and public attitudes that will best address local policies to create climate smart communities.

Step by step, we will move towards achieving Oregon's emissions goals and implementing land use and transportation plans that will make our region a great place now and for future generations.

[Read more about Metro's work in climate leadership](#)

[Critically endangered condors lay record number of eggs at Oregon Zoo](#)

March 25, 2011 12:19 PM

California condors at the Oregon Zoo's Jonsson Center for

Wildlife Conservation laid 10 eggs this breeding season, the most in the program's seven-year history. Seven of the 10 are fertile, including the heaviest egg in the history of the zoo's condor program: an 11½ ounce giant.



Ojai, a condor at the Zoo's Jonsson Center for Wildlife Conservation, laid the first egg of the season on Jan. 28.

The condors started laying eggs in late January and finished mid-March. The first eggs are expected to hatch before the end of the month.

After low birth rates, poaching, lead poisoning and other factors led to the condor's extinction in some parts of the United States, it became one of the original animals included in the 1973 Endangered Species Act. Still, by 1982 there were only 22 birds left in the wild. In an attempt to save the species through captive-breeding programs, all California condors were taken into captivity by 1987.

Thanks to the efforts of breeding programs like the Oregon Zoo's, there are now more than 370 California condors both in captivity and in the wild.

The Jonsson Center has hatched two dozen healthy chicks since the program began in 2003, and 17 Oregon Zoo-reared birds have gone out to field pens, with most released to the wild.

The Oregon Zoo's condor recovery efforts take place at the Jonsson Center for Wildlife Conservation, located in rural Clackamas County on Metro-owned natural areas land. The

remoteness of the facility minimizes the exposure of young condors to people, increasing the chances for captive-hatched birds to survive and breed in the wild.

[Tell Metro what you think about the Glendoveer Golf Course and Fitness Trail](#)

March 18, 2011 3:17 PM

Metro will be conducting an onsite survey between March 19 and April 1 at Glendoveer Golf Course and Fitness Trail to gather feedback on what the community values about Glendoveer and to get input on potential improvements to the facilities. The survey will also be available online March 19 through April 8.

In April, Metro will also conduct discussion groups with interested volunteers to talk about the project in more detail. To participate in a discussion group, contact Corie Harlan at 503-797-7164 or send e-mail to corie.harlan@oregonmetro.gov.

The Glendoveer Golf Course and Fitness Trail, located in East Portland, is an important community asset and one of Metro's most heavily used facilities. The popular, public golf facility provides amenities for golfers and nature lovers alike with two 18-hole courses, a pro shop, covered tennis courts, a restaurant and a two-mile public trail, all surrounded by hundreds of majestic fir trees. It is estimated that each week, 5,000 people from the surrounding neighborhood, residents in East County and throughout the region use the fitness trail.

Recognizing the need to maintain Glendoveer's role as a community asset and be to fiscally responsible, Metro is undertaking an assessment project to evaluate current conditions and identify opportunities for improvement. The project will culminate in a more efficient, sustainable and profitable operation.

[Learn more about the project and take the online survey](#)

[After marathon meeting, Washington County and Metro agree on reserves plan](#)

March 17, 2011 9:38 AM

Tuesday the 15th the Metro Council and the Washington County

Commission worked hard to make history—setting clear boundaries to guide the next 50 years of growth in this region. (full coverage below). The process was long—including seven hours of heartfelt testimony by citizens—but it was also transparent, open and characterized by 12 leaders striving in good faith to ensure the future health and prosperity of our citizens. It was a proud moment that gives lie to those who paint government as venal and under the thumb of special interests. Thanks to Washington County Chair Andy Duyck, Metro President Tom Hughes and my colleagues on both boards.

--Rex Burkholder

By [Nick Christensen](#). This story was not subject to the approval of Metro staff or elected officials. Its content does not necessarily reflect the opinion of Metro staff or councilors.

Reporting from Hillsboro

Urban and rural reserves live.

After a nine-hour meeting that at times resembled a cross between the board games Battleship and Clue, the Metro Council and Washington County Commission agreed on a plan for land reserves. The new urban and rural reserves proposal will be sent to the Land Conservation and Development Commission for consideration this summer.

In 2010, the commission remanded part of the reserves proposal back to Washington County and Metro chiefly because of concerns about urbanization north of Council Creek near Cornelius.

[See also: State board's partial remand puts UGB decision in flux \(Oct. 29, 2010\)](#)

The new proposal kept most of what was accepted by the commission. But part of the proposed urban reserve north of Cornelius was changed to undesignated. Areas near Highway 47 north of Forest Grove went from urban to undesignated, and a new undesignated parcel was designated southwest of Aloha.

The most controversial element of the proposal, however, was changing an undesignated area north of U.S. 26 and west of

Helvetia Road from undesignated to urban.

Thus begins Reserves: The Game. After taking public testimony for about seven hours, the boards met in joint session to try and hammer out a compromise each would accept. The baseline was the so-called Duyck/Hughes map, first proposed by Washington County Chair Andy Duyck and Metro Council President Tom Hughes after weeks of negotiations.

[Click here to see the Duyck/Hughes map, before the changes agreed to at the March 15 meeting](#)

Up first were Metro councilors, each offering their own opinions on what the final map should look like. Many on the council expressed concern with the idea of designating urban reserves north of the Sunset Highway.

"Are we, by adding this change north of 26, putting at risk this whole process?" asked Councilor Rex Burkholder. "We have nothing to judge whether this would be supported by the (state land use) commission or not."

It was up to Washington County Commissioners to start guessing what would be the winning combination on the map. But instead of Miss Scarlet in the library with the candlestick, commissioners were left to figure out what would get three votes on their own board plus pass muster at Metro.

Commissioner Dick Schouten made the first guess – make the area north of 26 rural and accept the rest of the Duyck/Hughes map as is. That suggestion failed 4–1 out of concern it wouldn't give Washington County cities enough flexibility if the urban reserves do, one day, run out of suitable land.

Next up was Commissioner Roy Rogers, taking the southern portion of the area north of Cornelius and making it an urban reserve, with rural north of Hobbs Road and leaving the area north of the Sunset Highway as undesignated.

That motion didn't even get to a vote, after it was withdrawn by Rogers because of opposition on his own board.

"As much as I would like to see an urban reserve in Cornelius, I have a fear of LCDC throwing it back," said Washington County Commissioner Bob Terry.

Terry then moved to accept the Duyck/Hughes map as-is. That failed 3-2, prompting a break in the action.



Members of the Washington County Commission and Metro Council talk during a recess at the March 15 joint meeting. In the background, former Washington County Chair Tom Brian stands on the dais, talking to his successor, Andy Duyck.

A 10 minute recess brought intense negotiations around the Shirley Huffman Auditorium. Metro staff and a few councilors met in the back room for a briefing. Joining Hughes and Duyck on the dais were Hughes' successor as Hillsboro Mayor, Jerry Willey, and Duyck's predecessor as county chair, Tom Brian. Former Metro Councilor Rod Park worked the room.

The dealings brought the boards no closer to a consensus. With the Metro Council taking the lead in the session that followed, Councilor Carl Hosticka moved to accept most of the Duyck/Hughes map, but with some of the area nearest Cornelius left undesignated, as with all of the land north of Council Creek.

The Metro Council passed that 7-0, and at 6:22 pm, recessed.

Schouten moved to accept Metro's proposal, but adding no new urban reserves wasn't good enough for the Washington County commissioners.

"I am not comfortable with the current proposal, with no urban reserves in any of it at all," Terry said. "I think some of it should be urban reserves."

Schouten's motion failed 3-2, with Commissioner Greg Malinowski the only supporting vote.

The next proposal, from Terry, was the same as the Metro

proposal, but included the area north of U.S. 26 as an urban reserve. That passed 3–2, with Schouten and Malinowski opposed.

At 6:37 p.m., the Washington County Commission recessed.

Metro Councilors expressed dismay that the proposal would have to include any urban reserves north of U.S. 26.

"I respect my colleagues' concern for changing any portion of Area D to urban reserve," said Councilor Kathryn Harrington, who was Metro's lead negotiator on reserves until this year. "I don't get to make this decision by myself. I don't get to make a proposal to LCDC by myself. I do it as a member of the Metro Council and the Metro Council does so in association with our three county partners."

But with Washington County seemingly unbending, the council voted 6–1 to approve a motion, put forth by Councilor Carlotta Collette, to designate areas east of Groveland Road, between U.S. 26 and West Union Road, as an urban reserve. Councilor Shirley Craddick cast the lone dissenting vote.

The Washington County Commission voted 3–2 to support the Metro Council proposal. The meeting concluded at 6:59 p.m., nine hours after it began.

The boards will have to vote on formal agreements next month, leading up to the anticipated review by the state land commission in August.

[Click here to learn more about urban and rural reserves](#)

[Oregon Zoo invites community to preview master plan](#)

March 16, 2011 8:51 AM

The Oregon Zoo is developing a new 20–year master plan and is inviting the public to an early preview. Members of the public are encouraged to drop in at one of two open houses and view conceptual drawings and initial designs, chat with designers and animal experts and provide feedback.

The open houses, which are scheduled for Thursday, March 31, from 5 to 8 p.m., and Saturday, April 2, from 9 a.m. to noon, will also include a brief presentation and video (5:30 p.m. and 7

p.m. on March 31 and 9:30 a.m. and 11 a.m. on April 2). Both events will take place in the Cascade Grill, lower floor, and they do not require zoo admission.

“I’m really excited to see the new vision for the Oregon Zoo come to light in these initial designs and drawings,” said Kim Smith, Oregon Zoo director. “We’re working with an outstanding team of zoo design experts. There has been great synergy between the designers and our animal experts and educators as we consider how to create the best homes for our animals and a great experience for visitors. We love the early designs and think our community will be excited to see our initial progress.”

Zoo staff members from every division have been working with designers to develop the long-term master plan for zoo grounds while at the same time designing six animal exhibits and a new conservation education center funded under the 2008 Oregon Zoo Bond. The bond projects will be constructed over the next eight to 10 years.

The 20-year master plan is a map of the zoo showing both bond-funded projects and anticipated future projects. It will be final in October upon approval by the Metro Council. Schematic designs for the animal exhibits and the conservation education center illustrate the footprint of each building or exhibit, its floor plan, location within the zoo and its relationship to adjacent buildings or facilities. These first-stage designs will be completed in early summer.

The second phase of planning comes next year as final designs and construction drawings are developed for each exhibit; then construction will get under way. Two bond funded projects -- a new veterinary medical center and a penguin water-filtration system are currently under construction.

Voters in 2008 supported a bond measure to design and build new exhibits for elephants, primates, polar bears, hippos, California condors and a new conservation education facility as well as the veterinary center and penguin filtration system. The new master plan includes a strong focus on water and energy conservation and improved sustainability of all zoo operations, which was also identified in the bond measure.

The zoo is a service of Metro and is dedicated to its mission of inspiring the community to create a better future for wildlife.

Committed to conservation, the zoo is currently working to save endangered California condors, Washington's pygmy rabbits, Oregon silverspot and Taylor's checkerspot butterflies, western pond turtles, Oregon spotted frogs and Kincaid's lupine. Other projects include studies on black rhinos, Asian elephants, polar bears and bats.

The zoo opens at 9 a.m. daily, and is located five minutes from downtown Portland, just off Highway 26. The zoo is also accessible by MAX light rail line. Visitors who travel to the zoo via MAX receive \$1.50 off zoo admission. Call TriMet Customer Service, 503-238-RIDE (7433), or visit www.trimet.org for fare and route information.

General admission is \$10.50 (ages 12-64), \$9 for seniors (65 and up), \$7.50 for children (ages 3-11) and free for those 2 and younger; 25 cents of the admission price helps fund regional conservation projects through the zoo's Future for Wildlife program. A parking fee of \$2 per car is also required. Additional information is available at www.oregonzoo.org or by calling 503-226-1561.

[Add the March 31 open house to your calendar](#)

[Add the April 2 open house to your calendar](#)

[Let Metro help your neighborhood clean up](#)

March 14, 2011 1:21 PM

Letters of Intent deadline for neighborhood cleanup matching grants program approaches

Is your neighborhood planning a spring cleanup event? Let your local government know—and let Metro help cover the cost.

Local governments around the region that help organize community cleanup events can qualify for Metro's neighborhood cleanup matching grant program. Cities and counties participating in this program have until Thursday, March 31, to submit a letter of intent. Your neighborhood association should already be in contact with local government about this program, but if you need any help making the connection, just [contact Aidan Gronauer](#) at Metro's Sustainability Center.

Metro's neighborhood cleanup matching grant program

supports neighborhood groups through local governments with the costs associated with community and illegal dump site cleanups. Expenses related to the cleanup event that qualify for reimbursement include items such as dumpster rental fees, waste hauling services, signage, supplies, personnel, printing, promotion and barricades.

Community cleanup projects enhance the appearance and safety of neighborhoods and contribute to the livability of the region while building community pride.

To apply for grant funds, local governments must complete a Letter of Intent and submit it by March 31, 2011, to Aidan Gronauer, Sustainability Center, Metro, 600 NE Grand Avenue, Portland, OR 97232.

[Learn more about Metro's neighborhood cleanup matching grants program](#)

[Metro Central: Taking trash for 20 years](#)

March 14, 2011 1:18 PM

Metro Central solid waste transfer station celebrates its 20th anniversary



A truck dumps trash at Metro Central.

The Metro Central solid waste transfer station first opened its doors 20 years ago, welcoming in trash, recyclables and hazardous waste from residents, businesses and commercial waste haulers. Embracing the philosophy that one person's trash is another's treasure, the station has recycled more than half a million tons of material and served more than 2.3 million public customers at its Northwest Portland location. In two decades, it has moved more than 6.5 million tons of waste to landfills, a feat equal to hauling the Great Pyramid of Giza from Portland to

Tacoma, Wash.

But the transfer station's work isn't limited to accepting and recycling trash. Metro collects a 50-cent surcharge on each ton of garbage disposed at the station. From that money, a committee of residents from Metro Central's Northwest Portland neighborhood selects local improvement projects to fund. The 18-year-old grant program has invested more than \$3.1 million in 328 different neighborhood improvement projects, ranging from youth leadership programs to grocery delivery services for the elderly and disabled.

Community Warehouse is one organization that has benefited from the Metro Central program, receiving \$50,000 in Metro community enhancement grants since 2006.

The Warehouse is a Portland nonprofit that collects donated household goods like furniture, kitchenware and linens, and distributes them at no cost to families and individuals in need. It mirrors the transfer station's ideals, recycling tons of usable furniture each year.

"We rely on grants to keep our doors open. Donated funds from the community allow us to do the work we do," Executive Director Kristy Wood said. "Most people in the area would be surprised by how many kids literally don't have a bed to sleep on. Last year we gave away nearly 1,400 beds for kids. This is a great example of neighbors helping neighbors to create stable homes for kids."

The Warehouse is just one of the more than 300 different projects helping turn transfer station dollars into change in the Portland community. That's exactly the type of positive change Metro Central hopes to continue funding two decades from now—giving back as much as it takes.

[Learn more about Metro Central transfer station](#)

[Join Opt In by March 15 and join in the rewards](#)

February 28, 2011 2:57 PM



Have you joined Opt In yet? Nearly 2,000 of your neighbors in the region have already signed up to participate in Metro's new online panel and help guide important decisions that affect your community.

Civic involvement isn't the only incentive: If you join by March 15, you'll be eligible to win one of five \$50 cash gift cards you can use anywhere!

[Join Opt In now](#)

This will be the second incentive drawing for Opt In. In mid-February, five lucky members were selected at random to receive Powell's Books gift cards as thanks for choosing to participate.

Asked why they joined Opt In, the prize winners made it clear that a pile of free books wasn't their main motivation.

"I know the importance and value of gathering thoughtful public opinions, and would like to contribute to that effort," said one. "I am a strong believer in the concept of metro-wide government and would like to help it continue to be successful here in the Portland area."

Said another winner: "I believe we need more people 'Opting In.' We need people to engage in the discussion to make this community a better place to live."

With nearly 2,000 members, the Opt In panel is off to a great start toward its goal of engaging at least 10,000 residents of the Portland-Vancouver metropolitan area in the choices that make this region a great place. You can help by [signing up today](#) and [inviting your friends, neighbors and co-workers to join you](#) on the panel. It's fast, easy and confidential—and rewarding.

Opt In now. Weigh in for the future.

[Join Opt In now and find more ways to Connect with Metro](#)

[Read five good reasons people are joining Opt In](#)

[Learn more about Opt In](#)

[Already joined? Invite your friends to Opt In!](#)

[Hughes: Time to restart convention center hotel discussion](#)

February 24, 2011 10:35 AM

By [Nick Christensen](#). This story was not subject to the approval of Metro staff or elected officials. Its content does not necessarily reflect the opinion of Metro staff or councilors.

One recent evening, Metro officials were beaming after the release of a report highlighting the economic impact of the agency's visitor-driven venues.

Among the findings – the Oregon Convention Center, which had a net operating loss of \$8.3 million in 2010, generated \$526 million in spending in the Portland region, and \$19 million in tax revenue for the state, Metro and the three counties.

It's in contrast to just a few years ago, when concerns about not realizing the full potential of the convention center led officials from Metro, Portland and Multnomah County to push for development of a new hotel near the center. The project was estimated to cost taxpayers about \$150 million.

The project, long thought dead, reappeared last week in the form of a \$3.2 million line item in the Portland Development Commission's 2011–12 budget, apparently at the request of Mayor Sam Adams.

It wasn't a typo.

"What the mayor wants us to do is look into whether or not there are opportunities – not for a headquarters hotel, but a convention center hotel near the convention center," said Keith Witcosky, the Portland Development Commission's government relations manager. "He (Adams) wants to see whether there's any possibility of that idea moving forward. It would be smaller scale, and doesn't require the county to give up the visitor resources."

Metro Council President Tom Hughes said he's had

conversations with Adams and Multnomah County Chair Jeff Cogen about reviving the hotel. The reason, Hughes said, is the lack of "national" conventions held at the convention center.

Last year, 44 such conventions, which bring in guests from across the country, were held at the convention center.

According to Travel Oregon, 22 potential convention hosts, with a combined 41,000 attendees, specifically said they weren't coming to Portland for their convention because of a lack of a headquarters hotel. Another 17, with more than 17,000 attendees, cited similar reasons, like the lack of a hotel "under one roof" with a convention center, the quality of hotels nearby or the lack of meeting space in hotels.

In total, according to Travel Oregon, the Portland area lost nearly 120,000 nights of hotel room bookings, and the Oregon Convention Center lost \$5.2 million in revenue.

Conventioneers love taking MAX from the airport to their hotel to their convention. But convention hosts?

"They hate it," Hughes said, "because they've got to schlep their stuff from wherever their hotel is. So if you're more than across the street away, they see that as a disadvantage."

But aren't there already hotels in the immediate vicinity?

"It's got to be nicer than the Red Lion, nicer than the Inn at the Convention Center," the new Metro Council president said. "They have to be decent hotels."

The \$5.2 million in lost revenue is just the direct cost to the convention center. Hughes looks to his eight years as the mayor of Hillsboro for another reason to try to attract more conventions to Portland.

"It's hard to get a hotel room in Hillsboro on Monday through Friday," Hughes said. "On Saturday and Sunday, you could get any hotel room you wanted because people come to town for business and leave for the weekend."

If more national conventions are held in Portland, Hughes said, some attendees would stay for the weekend because they don't get to Oregon very often.

"Then you can begin to market the opportunities that exist in Washington County and Clackamas County for tourism," he said.

Hughes' scenario conjures up images of visitors touring the vineyards of the Tualatin Valley or skiing at Mount Hood. But lobbyist Len Bergstein, who's represented Portland-area hoteliers in opposing a headquarters hotel, had a decidedly less rosy view.

"It seems like we're in the middle of a vampire movie, with shadows and people smiling and clicking their long teeth," Bergstein said. "Nobody's talked about it and explained it in a way that doesn't suck a tremendous amount of public money."

Bergstein said the concept isn't bad. But the financing mechanism – using public money to pay for the hotel – gives him pause.

"It may be a terrific investment of a private entrepreneurial project that would be at the right size. We've talked about 400 to 500 rooms, with the possibility of phasing it up with a second tower or something like that – when the marketplace determines it," Bergstein said. "People thought they wanted a project that was so oversized it couldn't make it in the real world."

Hughes' involvement gives Bergstein some comfort – "Having him in the middle of talking about it will give everybody some confidence that it will be a smart project as opposed to something somebody's going to try and jam through, regardless of market realities," Bergstein said – but he emphasized that the private sector should take the lead on the project.

Lew Bowers, the Portland Development Commission's Central City Project Manager, said the public financing model has worked in other cities.

"Headquarters hotels, as a unique sort of real estate product, don't pencil, whereas some more traditional hotels with less amenities do pencil," he said. "It's a unique project to serve a particular market which has certain amenities that the industry is telling us they need."

It's a model that's been used extensively nationwide. Houston's 1,200-room convention center Hilton cost \$326 million, and is paid for in part by a city-wide room tax. A sports facilities tax

helps pay for Phoenix' 1,000-room convention center Sheraton. And dozens of cities, including Houston and Phoenix, issued municipal bonds to subsidize the construction of the hotel.

By comparison, the entire Lloyd District has 1,700 hotel rooms. Oregon's largest hotel, the Portland Hilton, has 782 rooms.

According to a 2009 report from Swerdling and Associates, hotel brands for headquarters hotel projects also included Hyatt, Westin and Renaissance. A 2004 report from HVS International showed only one brand that has a presence in the Lloyd District – Bay City, Mich., has a 160-room Doubletree as its headquarters hotel.

So what about that \$3.2 million in this year's PDC budget?

Bowers said the commission's staff will continue feasibility studies, working to develop a plan that is "economically viable." If a headquarters hotel can't be built, he said, it could be possible to upgrade existing hotels near the convention center. The last option would be to continue working on improving the area around the convention center, without sprucing up the area's hotel space.

For Hughes, the most important part is that the conversation has restarted.

"I think we need to have moved somewhere," Hughes said. "I don't know what the solution is. I just mentioned that I think it's time we begin to look at it."

Metro news reporter Nick Christensen can be reached at nick.christensen@oregonmetro.gov or 503-813-7583. Follow Metro on Twitter [@oregonmetro](https://twitter.com/oregonmetro).

Disclosure – The reporter is a volunteer member of a Portland Development Commission subcommittee. The subcommittee focuses on Lents and is unrelated to the PDC's work near the Convention Center.

[Welcoming wildlife](#)

February 23, 2011 9:37 AM

Last summer, Tricia Knoll watched in awe as a pileated woodpecker mined insects from alder snags that she and

co-owner Darrell Salk have left in place on their Southwest Portland property. “That magnificent bird would not have been there had we not chosen to restore native habitat in our yard,”



she says.

Since they bought their home in 2008, Tricia and Darrell have worked to reclaim their third-of-an-acre property from blackberries and other invasive weeds. Together, they’ve renovated the yard to welcome wildlife with a diverse mix of native plants and trees and to protect the year-round creek that runs along the back. It’s a labor of love that Tricia – the gardener-in-chief – has tackled with determination and passion. When she learned about the Backyard Habitat Certification Program for Portland property owners, she was eager to apply.

Managed by Columbia Land Trust and Audubon Society of Portland, the program helps private property owners restore native wildlife habitat in their yards by removing invasive weeds, landscaping with native plants, managing stormwater on site and providing the basic habitat requirements for wildlife such as water and shelter. Grants from Metro’s Nature in neighborhoods program have supported this direct approach to working with private landowners since 2008. Additional funding has come from the East and West Multnomah soil and water conservation districts and other organizations. This year, a new Metro Nature in Neighborhoods grant extends the program into East Multnomah County in partnership with the Johnson Creek Watershed Council. The City of Lake Oswego will provide funding to expand certification to their residents beginning in July 2011.

Program participation starts with a site visit to assess what has already been done to restore wildlife habitat and to identify next steps to continue improvements. Some property owners qualify for one of the three levels of certification – silver, gold or

platinum – at the first site visit. Others get specific advice on how to reach certification by enhancing or modifying their yard to become wildlife friendly. Every participant receives a wealth of informational resources, along with ongoing technical assistance and discounts on plants and supplies. Once certified, property owners earn an official Backyard Habitat Certification sign, gift cards and other perks.

“I’m very proud to have my sign out front,” Tricia says about her gold Backyard Habitat Certification. “Neighbors stop and ask about it, and I enjoy telling them how they can do the same things in their yards.” She especially likes reaching out to others. In August 2010, she hosted an open house for her Ash Creek Neighborhood Association and Master Gardeners.

Crickets in Kenton

In North Portland’s Kenton neighborhood, John Goetze III and his wife Alison Sigler have transformed their yard with a diverse array of native plants and trees that have earned gold level Backyard Habitat Certification. In 2007, the couple began removing laurel and holly and digging out blackberries and ivy. A forester by profession, John replaced the invasive plants with a wide range of plants, including quaking aspen, salmonberry and native wildflowers. To manage stormwater, they disconnected their home’s downspouts and installed rain barrels. To welcome species that need cavities for breeding, they hung bird nest boxes and installed mason bee houses to boost the garden’s productivity.

John and Alison have enjoyed watching bird activity and variety increase, and John notes that birds “hang out” longer. Crickets also prospered this past summer, providing a nightly symphony of sound. “Our neighborhood is really quiet at night. But this summer, you’d hear the sound of chirping crickets as soon as you got near our house. It was really fun.”

Get your yard buzzing and humming

Spring is a great time to make changes to your yard so you can enjoy more wildlife year-round. Visit www.columbialandtrust.org or audubonportland.org to find out how you can get the support you need and earn Backyard Habitat Certification. A \$25 initial site visit lasts approximately

one hour.

[Metro protects and restores natural areas](#)

February 23, 2011 9:33 AM

Metro natural resource technician Rick Scrivens stands on a grass berm at the Multnomah Channel natural area, gesturing as workers dig and plant a row of trees and shrubs.

"This area here was covered in Himalayan blackberry that was 10 feet tall. We cut and sprayed it last December," Scrivens says. "We're trying to get rid of invasive species and restore native species."

It's the constant work of Metro's science and stewardship team, and February is planting season. Metro is adding 165,000 plants to its natural areas this year, with 55,000 being planted at Multnomah Channel alone.

Since 1995, two bond measures have allowed Metro to acquire and protect more than 11,000 acres of land across the Portland metropolitan area. Multnomah Channel is one of those areas.

Located four and a half miles north of the Sauvie Island Bridge on the west bank of the Willamette River, the Multnomah Channel natural area has undergone a lot of changes since Metro first purchased property there in 1997. Metro expanded the channel in 1998 and eventually combined five different properties to create the present layout.

"This was actually a dairy farm when Metro first acquired it," Scrivens said of one of the planting areas. "The dairy farm had been finished for a while but the owner wanted to see it go back to its natural state."

Returning areas to their natural state is one of Metro's main goals in natural areas, but it can mean many different things. Depending on the property, Metro may have to rent out or tear down buildings, eliminate illegal dumping or remove invasive species. This month, it meant planting native species at the site – one of the focal points of this year's planting efforts.

"It's not an easy process. This is going to be a solid seven years of maintenance to get these trees up and growing," says natural resource technician Chris Hagel. "The trick about restoring these

sites is that we can never walk away. If we don't continue maintenance, we're going to end up losing the investment we made. Restoration takes time, money and a lot of energy."

As contractors put one- and two-year-old seedlings in the ground, Scrivens is optimistic about his project's chances.

Looking up and down the line of plants he says, "when it all grows up, we're going to have a number of Oregon ash with understories of snowberry, Oregon grape and twinberry. It'll look more like the area behind you," he says pointing to a slim line of natural woods near the river bank.

While the grass mound Scrivens stands on has a long way to go to mirror the nearby woods, restoration is well underway. "These will start sprouting out in a couple of weeks," he says.

[Metro Council appoints Barbara Roberts to represent District 6](#)

February 17, 2011 3:42 PM

The former Oregon Governor to serve out remainder of Robert Liberty's term

Today the Metro Council appointed former Oregon Gov. Barbara Roberts to serve as Metro Councilor for District 6, filling the vacancy left by the Jan. 15 resignation of Robert Liberty.

Roberts served as Governor from 1991 to 1995 and as Oregon Secretary of State from 1985 to 1991. She also served in the Oregon House of Representatives, as a Multnomah County Commissioner and on the Parkrose School Board. Since leaving public office, she has served in leadership positions at Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government and in the Executive Leadership Institute at Portland State University's Hatfield School of Government.

The Metro Council solicited applications for the vacant position through Feb. 9. Eight people applied for this position, though two applicants, Martha Dibblee and Bob Stacey, withdrew their applications this week.

Roberts and the other five applicants were interviewed by the Metro Council Wednesday night in a public meeting in East Portland. Members of the public also took the opportunity to

speak on behalf of individual applicants and discuss the appointment process.

In addition to Roberts, the other applicants interviewed by the Metro Council were:

- Kenny Heggem, a sales representative with Columbia Northwest Heating and board member of the Woodstock Neighborhood Association.
- Jonathan Levine, a former project manager with the University of Western States.
- Walt Nichols, a bookkeeper with Watson Plumbing Co. and chair of the Mt. Scott-Arleta Neighborhood Association.
- Alesia Reese, a clerk with the U.S. Postal Service and member of the Parkrose School District board. She is also chair of the Woodland Park Neighborhood Association and the East Portland Parks Coalition.
- Bob Shiprack, a labor relations consultant for Pac/West Communications and a former executive secretary of the Oregon State Building Trades Council. He served six terms in the Oregon House of Representatives from 1983 to 1995.

Roberts will be sworn in next week. She may serve the remainder of Liberty's term, which ends in January 2013. An election for a four-year term will be held in May 2012, and if no candidate receives more than 50 percent of the vote, the two highest vote winners will advance to a run-off election the following November.

Metro District 6 includes portions of Southwest, Southeast and Northeast Portland.

[**Metro visitor venues generate \\$680 million in spending, sustain nearly 7,000 local jobs**](#)

February 10, 2011 10:46 AM

OCC, Expo, PCPA, Zoo, sustain nearly 7,000 local jobs

A new analysis of the fiscal and economic impacts generated by the venues under Metro's management - the Oregon Convention Center, Portland Expo Center, Portland Center for the Performing Arts and Oregon Zoo - was released yesterday revealing good news for the Portland metropolitan region's economy.

In aggregate, throughout the agency's 2010 fiscal year (FY), nearly 3.4 million people visited the four venues, catalyzing \$680 million in direct and induced spending throughout the region. Spending for the purposes of this analysis includes services and goods purchased at the venue and also as a result of each visit, such as dining in area restaurants, lodging in hotels, purchasing gasoline or public transit, and shopping at local retailers. Indirect spending, such as the purchase of products and services by vendors, exhibitors, suppliers and contractors as a result of the venue's operations, is also included.

The number of full and part-time jobs created and sustained by Metro's venue business totaled 6,680 during the same time period, translating into personal earnings of \$256 million.

A new feature of the 2010 report, conducted by Florida-based Crossroads Consulting Services, is the inclusion of the Oregon Zoo, which generated \$64 million in regional spending, supported 700 jobs representing personal earnings of \$27 million, and produced nearly \$2 million in state and local tax revenue.

In addition, an interesting trend emerged in the analysis of the Oregon Convention Center: Despite hosting fewer events overall, the facility hosted a greater percentage of national conventions to local events, generating significantly higher rates of spending in local businesses. Compared to FY 2009, in which the center generated \$440 million in regional spending, spending increased to \$526 million in FY 2010, an amount greater than the combined total spending generated by convention and expo centers and Portland Center for the Performing Arts in the previous year.

[Read the executive summary and individual reports](#)

Metro, the regional government, crosses city limits and county lines to build a resilient economy, keep nature close by and respond to a changing climate. Representing a diverse population of 1.5 million people in 25 cities and three counties, Metro's directly elected council gives voters a voice in decisions about how the region grows and communities prosper. For more information, visit www.oregonmetro.gov.

[Metro Council receives eight applications for District 6](#)

[vacancy](#)

February 10, 2011 8:37 AM

The deadline for applications to the vacant District 6 position on the Metro Council passed at 5 p.m. Wednesday, and eight qualified applicants expressed interest in the upcoming appointment.

The eight applicants are:

- Martha Dibblee, a retired health physicist and consultant who has served on the Energy Facility Siting Council and the board of the Climate Trust .
- Kenneth Heggem, a sales representative with Columbia Northwest Heating and board member of the Woodstock Neighborhood Association.
- Jonathan Levine, a former project manager with the University of Western States
- Walt Nichols, a bookkeeper with Watson Plumbing Co. and chair of the Mt. Scott–Arleta Neighborhood Association. Nichols was an unsuccessful candidate for Portland City Council in 2010.
- Alesia Reese, a clerk with the U.S. Postal Service and member of the Parkrose School District board. She is also chair of the Woodland Park Neighborhood Association and the East Portland Parks Coalition.
- Barbara Roberts, former Oregon Governor.
- Bob Shiprack, a labor relations consultant for Pac/West Communications and a former executive secretary of the Oregon State Building Trades Council. He served six terms in the Oregon House of Representatives from 1983 to 1995.
- Bob Stacey, a consultant and former executive director of 1000 Friends of Oregon. He also served as chief of staff to Congressman Earl Blumenauer and as executive director of policy and planning for TriMet. Stacey was an unsuccessful candidate for Metro Council President in 2010.

The Metro Council will interview the applicants in a public meeting next Wednesday, Feb. 16, beginning at 5 p.m. at the David Douglas School District headquarters, located at 1500 SE 130th Ave. in Portland. Members of the public are welcome to testify on behalf of, or in opposition to, any of the applicants, or to provide other comments relating to the appointment process.

At the conclusion of the public testimony, the Metro Council will decide whether to appoint a new Metro Councilor or invite a group of finalists to appear in a public debate. If that debate occurs, it will be held on Tuesday, Feb. 22, beginning at 5 p.m. at Metro Regional Center, which is located at 600 NE Grand Ave. in Portland. If the debate occurs, the Metro Council will likely vote on the appointment at its regular meeting beginning at 2 p.m. on Thursday, Feb. 24.

This vacancy on the Metro Council occurred when Robert Liberty resigned Jan. 15 to become executive director of the Sustainable Cities Initiative at the University of Oregon. The person chosen to fill the vacant position may serve the remainder of Liberty's term, ending in January 2013. An election for a four-year term will be held in May 2012, and if no candidate receives more than 50 percent of the vote, the two highest vote winners will advance to a run-off election the following November.

Metro District 6 lies entirely within Multnomah County and includes portions of Southwest, Southeast and Northeast Portland.

[Read more about the District 6 appointment process](#)

[Metro's Opt In online panel reaches first 1,000 members](#)

February 8, 2011 4:16 PM



Metro's new Opt In online panel has signed up more than 1,000 members, an encouraging participation milestone for the new research panel. Metro and three community partners launched Opt In last month to gather public opinion among residents of the Portland-Vancouver metropolitan area.

Metro's goal is to attain a panel participant base of 10,000 by October 2011. The goal of the new panel is to provide a timely, cost-effective way for the region's residents to provide input into decisions affecting them and their communities.

[Learn more about Opt In and join now](#)

Building a large, diverse Metro research panel will allow the agency to conduct more in-depth polling for a lower cost, since a large part of a survey's expense lies in gathering and maintaining an appropriate respondent pool. An innovative public-sector use of a research tool that has been highly effective in the private sector, the panel is hosted by Davis, Hibbitts & Midghall (DHM), a Portland-based consulting firm with extensive experience in public opinion research related to public policy.

Metro's Opt In partners are playing a key role in broadening the panel's enrollment outreach to include traditionally underrepresented communities and other residents who have been hard for Metro to reach. Respected organizations that are deeply connected to the community, [United Way of the Columbia-Willamette](#), [Northwest Health Foundation](#), and [Portland State University's College of Urban and Public Affairs](#) are helping Metro develop a panel that is more representative of the diverse communities and individuals in the Metro region.

During the Opt In panel's initial recruitment period, Metro is offering membership incentives to new panel members. Eligible members who join the panel by Feb. 15 will be entered in a drawing for five \$100 Powell's gift certificates. More drawings for other prizes will take place monthly and whenever the Opt In panel adds another 1,000 members up to its goal of 10,000.

Participating in the Opt In panel is quick, easy and confidential. Panelists are invited to participate in one or two short online surveys each month about topics in which they have indicated interest. All personal and demographic information panel participants submit will remain confidential; Metro and its partners will receive only anonymous, aggregate reports of participants' survey responses. That means private information stays private, while Metro derives important data and guidance from the opinions Opt In panelists provide.

The Opt In research panel is just one of Metro's new online tools aimed at creating and sustaining online engagement with more of the region's residents. The "Connect with Metro" section of Metro's website provides ways to learn more and engage with Metro through newsfeeds, online calendars, Metro GreenScene and social media platforms such as Twitter and Facebook. These

interactive tools in turn help Metro learn what is working and what could be improved. For more information, visit www.oregonmetro.gov/connect.

[Join Opt In now and find more ways to Connect with Metro](#)

[Read five good reasons people are joining Opt In](#)

[Learn more about Opt In](#)

[Already joined? Invite your friends to Opt In!](#)

[Activities for eyes, ears and hands: Metro events Feb. 4 – 8](#)

February 4, 2011 9:05 AM

Whether you're a night owl or an early bird, bird watching opportunities abound this week, highlighted by the Raptor Road Trip this weekend. Prefer your wildlife a little larger? Come to the Oregon Zoo on Tuesday to hear Dr. Steven C. Amstrup, senior scientist with Polar Bears International, discuss what we can do to preserve the world's largest land carnivores. Or maybe you're a naturalist who loves to get your hands dirty? Volunteer to plant trees at Carter Creek or dig up invasive species at Hazeldale Park on Saturday. Whatever you're into, Metro and other local organizations have activities this week you're sure to love.

The best part is, most of the events are low-cost or free, and registration can be completed online. Follow the links below for more information.

[Raptor Road Trip](#)

9 a.m. – 2 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 5

Kruger's Farm Market

18330 NW Sauvie Island Road

Portland, OR 97231

\$10 per vehicle, cash only

[Habitat restoration at Steigerwald National Wildlife Refuge](#)

9 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. Feb. 5 and 6

Steigerwald Lake National Wildlife Refuge

Washougal, WA 98671

[Carter Creek tree planting](#)

9 a.m. – noon Saturday, Feb. 5
Carter Creek
5800 Meadows Road
Lake Oswego, OR 97035

[Invasive plant removal at Hazeldale Park](#)

9 a.m. – noon Saturday, Feb. 5
Hazeldale Park
Southwest 192nd Avenue and Prospect Place
Beaverton, OR 97007

[Saturday guided nature hike](#)

10 – 11:30 a.m. Saturday, Feb. 5
Tryon Creek Nature Center
11321 SW Terwilliger Blvd
Portland, OR 97219

[Guided tour of Magness Tree Farm](#)

2 – 3:30 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 6
Magness Memorial Tree Farm
31195 SW Ladd Hill Rd
Sherwood, OR 97140

[Storytelling of Western Oregon](#)

6 – 7 p.m. Monday, Feb. 7
Tualatin River National Wildlife Refuge
19255 SW Pacific Highway
Sherwood, OR 97140

[Polar bears in the 21st century – the science of today, the hope for tomorrow](#)

7 – 8 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 8
Oregon Zoo Cascade Crest Banquet Center, Vista Room
4001 SW Canyon Rd.
Portland, OR 97221
\$10 for nonmembers; \$8 for members, students and seniors

[Oregon Convention Center leverages funds to retrofit lights and save thousands in energy costs](#)

February 1, 2011 4:08 PM

Replacing 1000+ metal halide light fixtures is not an easy or inexpensive task, but the Oregon Convention Center (OCC) was able to offset a majority of the costs by leveraging a mix of funding sources to achieve this major energy efficiency

initiative.

New induction and LED lighting and compact fluorescents across 255,000 square feet is expected to decrease energy usage by half and upwards of 90% in some cases. Savings of more than \$130,000 per year are anticipated and customers will enjoy brighter, more natural lighting throughout the building. Overall, expected annual energy savings is expected to total 2.7 million kWh.

By leveraging funds through the America Recovery and Reinvestment Act, Oregon Business Energy Tax Credit, and incentives from the Energy Trust of Oregon all but \$125,000 of the \$750,000 total cost was covered.

[Read more about the Oregon Convention Center's sustainability programs](#)

[**Metro, American Legion rededicate flag pole at Glendoveer Golf Course and Fitness Trail**](#)

January 25, 2011 8:31 AM

Veterans and Metro officials will raise a new flag above Glendoveer Golf Course and Fitness Trail on Thursday, Jan. 27th, at 11 a.m., 38 years after the signing of the Paris Peace Accords which ended the Vietnam War. The event highlights repair work done on the flagpole and will include brief remarks from veterans and officials in addition to the flag raising ceremony.

Metro officials and American Legion volunteers worked together to repair the damaged flagpole and replace its missing flag. The repairs included fixing the finial, or ball, at the top of the flagpole, replacing the rope used to raise the flag, and raising the anchor and cleats used to tie the flag down. "It's nice to have a flag up on it and everybody is excited for it to be there," said Ray Grahn, the Legionnaire who led the repair project.

The rededication ceremony will be a tribute to all military personnel from every service branch and every time period in American history.

The American Legion is a congressionally chartered veterans' organization representing United States servicemen and women from every war. It was founded in 1919 by veterans returning from Europe following World War I and has grown into the

world's largest veterans' organization, with nearly three million members in nearly 15,000 posts worldwide.

The Glendoveer Golf Course and Fitness Trail, located in East Portland, is one of Metro's most heavily used facilities. The popular facility provides amenities for golfers and nature lovers alike with two 18-hole courses, a pro shop, covered tennis courts, and a restaurant and a two-mile public trail, all surrounded by hundreds of majestic fir trees. It is estimated that about 5,000 people from throughout the region use the trail each week.

[Learn more about Glendoveer Golf Course and Fitness Trail](#)

[Five reasons to join the Opt In panel today](#)

January 24, 2011 10:27 AM

Have you joined Opt In yet? More than 500 of your neighbors in the region have already signed up to participate in Metro's new online pane—a good start toward Metro's goal of 10,000 panel participants helping guide important decisions that affect your community. Here are five good reasons you should join Opt In today.

1) Let Metro know what is important to you. Making a great place to live with good jobs and healthy communities takes the involvement of lots of people with a variety of viewpoints. Metro and its community partners created the Opt In online research panel this month so residents of the Portland-Vancouver metropolitan area can weigh in on issues that make a difference. Join Opt In and share your views on schools, housing, sustainability, parks, community centers, clean drinking water and more.

2) Help great organizations support our great communities. Metro's respected community partners are dedicated to improving the health, well-being and quality of life in the region. Together with [United Way of the Columbia-Willamette](#), [Northwest Health Foundation](#), and [Portland State University's College of Urban and Public Affairs](#), Metro will broaden its outreach and target the most effective investments in the region's diverse communities. With your voices, Metro can make the right choices.

3) Make the most of the resources we have. Metro's

innovative online research panel uses an effective private-sector tool to make government more efficient. The panel is hosted by Davis, Hibbitts & Midghall (DHM), a Portland-based consulting firm with extensive experience in opinion research related to public policy. The large, diverse Opt In panel will allow Metro and its partners to get better information about your priorities at about half the cost of previous surveys.

4) Share only what you want—and share in the rewards.

Participating in Opt In is quick, easy and secure. After you join, you'll be asked to answer two or three short online surveys each month. Your personal information will remain confidential; Metro and its partners will receive only aggregate reports of survey responses. That means your private information stays private, while you help improve programs serving your community.

[Join the panel now](#) and be entered in a monthly drawing for \$100 Powell's gift certificates and other prizes.

5) Connect with Metro on your terms, and in your time. Not everyone has time to attend public meetings or write policy letters. The Opt In panel is just one of the new tools Metro has created to reach you where you live online, at a time that's right for you. On the ["Connect with Metro" page](#), you'll find other convenient ways to learn more and get involved, including newsfeeds, online calendars, Metro GreenScene, and social media options such as Twitter and Facebook. Join the Opt In panel, connect with Metro, and participate in the decisions that make this region a great place to live.

Opt In now. Weigh in for the future.

[Join Opt In now and find more ways to Connect with Metro](#)

[Learn more about Opt In](#)

[Already joined? Invite your friends to Opt In!](#)

[A personal message from Rex Burkholder – people helping people](#)

January 21, 2011 10:56 AM

As a Metro Councilor, I've met some incredible people doing incredible things. From delivering programs to people in need, to providing economic development opportunities, to saving our

planet, many people are doing great work in our community. As we begin the new year, I want to share some of their amazing work and introduce you to their organizations.

Verde

Verde is a tax-exempt, nonprofit group working to improve the economic health of disadvantaged communities by creating environmental job training, employment and entrepreneurial opportunities, and fostering the connection between economic vitality, environmental protection and restoration.

Under Executive Director Alan Hipolito's leadership, Verde makes the connection for low-income citizens with the economic benefits of protecting the environment: good jobs, new skills and growing businesses. Verde pursues this goal through social enterprise and outreach.

As we continue to climb out of the recession, we must support organizations that find ways to provide economic opportunities for those most in need. Verde staff is constantly out in the community working hard to develop partnerships that lead to more opportunities for the residents in the Cully neighborhood of Northeast Portland.

[Learn more about Verde](#)

P:ear

P:ear builds positive relationships with homeless and transitional youth ages 15 to 24. It provides programs, workshops and services that use education, the arts and recreation as vehicles for building self-esteem and fostering positive change for youth who are working to become good citizens.

With strong leadership from Executive Director Beth Burns, Assistant Director Joy Cartier and Program Director Pippa Arend, P:ear provides a safe environment as well as the teaching and mentoring needed for homeless youth to outgrow harmful and unproductive behaviors. Providing this safe environment allows mentors and young people to build trust and self-esteem. These critical steps foster a sense of purpose and success so vitally important in helping homeless youth move past the stigma of "hopeless cases" and into being vital contributors to society.

P:ear offers many opportunities to learn more about the work they do. Check out one of their First Thursday shows where P:ear youth display their artwork, or get a fresh cup of coffee brewed by a P:ear youth in their on-site barista training program. Coffee is served from Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. to noon, at their location on 338 NW Sixth Ave. in Portland.

[Learn more about P:ear](#)

Columbia Corridor Association

Columbia Corridor Association actively helps businesses located on the south shore of the Columbia River as an advocate for business and development interests with local, regional, state and federal jurisdictions. CCA's mission is to enhance economic prosperity in the Columbia Corridor and be the voice and resource for businesses in the Columbia Corridor.

Through breakfast forums, lunches with leaders, working committees, workshops and newsletters, CCA actively promotes the Columbia Corridor as a unique, advantageous location for new industry and jobs. Thanks to the guidance of Executive Director Corky Collier and hard work from staff and members of the association, the CCA has worked successfully to promote the natural, human and economic values of the corridor. Corky has a wonderful ability to bring a range of people together to solve important problems.

The CCA provides an invaluable venue for organizations and local governments to share information about the important issues of the day and provide opportunities for a range of voices to be heard. Metro has used the breakfast forums on numerous occasions to share information on current initiatives as well as to gain a better understanding of the needs of the businesses and industries in the Columbia Corridor.

[Learn more about the CCA](#)

Native American Youth and Family Center

The mission of the Native American Youth and Family Center (NAYA) is to enhance the diverse strengths of youth and families in partnership with the community through cultural identity and education. This nonprofit group has been a vital asset to our region, providing resources and support to the Portland area's American Indian and Alaska Native community for more than 35

years. In addition to many community programs, NAYA runs a school for native youth on Northeast Columbia Boulevard, which hosts a fantastic annual powwow.

Under the leadership of Nichole Maher, NAYA has grown to provide \$5 million in services to the community. NAYA plays an important role in making our region a welcoming and desirable location for all who choose to call it home. From providing direct services to families in need to helping people find jobs and buy homes, NAYA is an invaluable resource to the native community.

Most recently, NAYA became proud new owners of the second largest solar roof installation in Multnomah County. Consisting of 428 solar panels, the new addition to the NAYA campus represents the organization's commitment to the earth, the community and to practicing their traditional values. NAYA is becoming an important partner in Metro's work around the Community Investment Strategy and we look forward to continuing to work with their staff.

[Learn more about NAYA](#)

[Learn more about the Community Investment Strategy](#)

Eleek

Eleek, a patternmaking shop in North Portland, represents the city's entrepreneurial spirit and artistic design. Featured in multiple home and design magazines such as *GOOD* and *This Old House*, Eleek has received laudable praise for the company's significant commitment to environmental sustainability. Their storefront runs on renewable power and 80 percent of the company's supplies come from within 50 miles. Eleek is also committed to becoming a zero waste company.

Eleek made it onto Sustainable Industries' Top Green Building Products 2009 list, and was among Bloomberg Businessweek's Top 25 Most Promising Social Entrepreneurs in 2010.

Co-owners Sattie Clark and her husband Eric Kaster are celebrating Eleek's eleventh year. I have been out to tour the shop and left impressed and excited that new businesses like Eleek are thriving in Portland.

If that's not enough, Sattie is the organizing force behind Voice for Oregon Innovation and Sustainability, a new alliance of

businesses working to become sustainable and sustainability
businesses working to become economically successful.

[Learn more about Eleek](#)

[Learn more about Voice for Oregon Innovation and Sustainability](#)

[Learn more about the Zero Waste Alliance](#)

[Portland's transportation systems continue to save commuters time and money](#)

January 20, 2011 1:46 PM

The Texas Transportation Institute released its 2010 Urban Mobility Report today, identifying trends in traffic congestion and rating urban areas based on traffic problems. The Portland-Vancouver area has reason to be proud, earning high marks by saving commuters time and money through good public transportation and planning.

Portland, ranked 23rd nationally in population, boasts the nation's 17th best number of hours saved using public transportation services, and saving every traveler four hours a year during rush hour. This is time that would be lost without public transit and saves \$128 million in congestion costs (factoring in lost time and excess gas consumption). Portland also scored in the top 20 in its management of vehicles on the road, shaving three hours a year off a rush hour commute and saving \$85 million through its use of freeway ramp metering, service patrols, traffic signal coordination and carpool lanes.

One of the principal uses of the report is to track long-term transportation congestion trends. In 1990, a trip in the Portland area estimated to take 20 minutes in free-flow traffic took 22.4 minutes in rush hour, or peak traffic (4 to 6 p.m.). By 2000, that number rose to 25.2 minutes, but in 2009, the same trip was shortened to 24.6 minutes despite metropolitan population growth adding more than 300,000 people in the last decade. By creating transportation options and planning for compact growth, Portland has reduced the length of its average commute, saving drivers time and money. Over the years,

Portland's overall rank in total and annual hours of delay has remained stable despite increased population growth and fewer lane miles added to major roadways.

Portland's annual delay for commuters in peak traffic has also decreased in the last five years, from 40 to 36 hours.

The Texas Transportation Institute has published its Urban Mobility Report since 1982. Sponsors of the study include the Texas Transportation Institute, the University Transportation Center for Mobility, the American Road and Transportation Builders Association – Transportation Development Foundation and the American Public Transportation Association.

The study's findings are intended to provide a collection of easily understood measures to support national and local decision-making related to understanding congestion problems and identifying solutions, and provides a basis for comparing all of the country's metropolitan areas using a consistent method of measuring.

[Read the TTI report](#)

[Sauvie Island – Home of Metro's Raptor Road Trip](#)

January 19, 2011 12:35 PM

Participants can choose their own route to enjoy guided bird viewing, meet live raptors, learn raptor identification tips and see hawk identification displays.

With 50 of its dedicated volunteers, Metro and the Audubon Society of Portland are hosting the seventh annual Raptor Road Trip, Saturday Feb. 5, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., on Sauvie Island. Home to bald eagles, hawks and falcons that spend the winter there, the island is just 10 miles northwest of Portland.

On this special day devoted to raptors, experienced naturalists will host activities at four locations around the 26,000-acre island. For only \$10 per vehicle (carpooling is encouraged) a map and the required Wildlife Area parking permit are provided, then you choose where to go to enjoy guided bird viewing.

Spotting scopes are provided for up-close viewing of frequently sighted raptors including bald eagles, red-tailed hawks, American kestrels and Northern harriers. Metro naturalists and

local expert birders from partners Audubon Society of Portland, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife and Hawk Watch International will be on hand to point out and identify these magnificent birds at each of the four locations. With a little luck, you might spot a rough-legged hawk, Cooper's hawk, merlin or peregrine falcon. Beautiful sandhill cranes, snow geese and great blue herons are often seen at this time of year. Sauvie Island's watery habitat draws huge flocks of waterfowl, estimated at 150,000 on any day, to spend the winter. And all those ducks and geese attract the raptors, the meat-eating predators.

At Metro's Howell Territorial park you can meet live raptors up close; Finnegan, the peregrine falcon and Hazel, the spotted owl (Audubon's education birds). Learn what the presence of raptors tells us about the health of local natural areas and how you can help keep wild birds living in your neighborhood. The event starts at Kruger's Farm Market, 17100 NW Sauvie Island Road.

Three of the four event locations offer wheelchair access.

[Learn more about the Raptor Road Trip](#)

[**Metro Council announces appointment process for District 6 vacancy**](#)

January 18, 2011 11:02 AM

Council expects to appoint new Councilor by end of February

The Metro Council today opened the formal application period for appointment as Metro Councilor for District 6. Robert Liberty resigned this position on Jan. 15 to lead the Sustainable Cities Initiative at the University of Oregon.

Citizens who have been registered voters in District 6 for at least one year may apply for consideration for the position. District 6 is located entirely within Multnomah County and includes portions of Southwest, Southeast and Northeast Portland.

Application materials are available to download from Metro's website at www.oregonmetro.gov/district6 or can be picked up at the council office at Metro Regional Center, located at 600 NE Grand Ave. in Portland. Applications must be submitted in

person or through U.S. mail to:

Metro Council office
Attn: Tony Andersen
600 NE Grand Ave.
Portland, OR 97232

Applications must be received by Metro no later than 5 p.m. on Wednesday, Feb. 9. Applications will not be accepted via fax, e-mail or other means.

Qualified applicants will be interviewed by the Metro Council at a public meeting to take place at 5 p.m., Wednesday, Feb. 16, at David Douglas School District headquarters, located at 1500 SE 130th Ave. in Portland. The Metro Council will also provide opportunities for members of the public to testify in support or opposition to any applicant or to provide other testimony relating to this appointment.

At the conclusion of the meeting, the council will determine whether to vote to appoint a new councilor or select a limited number of finalists to invite to participate in a public debate. Should that decision be made, the debate will occur Tuesday, Feb. 22 at 5 p.m. at Metro Regional Center.

After that debate, the Metro Council will likely vote on the appointment of a new District 6 councilor at its regular meeting on Thursday, Feb. 24, which begins at 2 p.m.

The person chosen for this appointment may serve the remainder of Liberty's term which ends in January 2013. An election for a four-year term will be held in May 2012.

Metro, the regional government, crosses city limits and county lines to build a resilient economy, keep nature close by and respond to a changing climate. Representing a diverse population of 1.5 million people in 25 cities and three counties, Metro's directly elected council gives voters a voice in decisions about how the region grows and communities prosper. For more information, visit www.oregonmetro.gov.

[Read about the appointment process](#)

[Metro Council delivers \\$68,500 grant package to](#)

Northwest Portland

January 12, 2011 12:03 PM

Twelve projects support innovative programming for youth and seniors, aid the needy

The Metro Council sent a grants package valued at \$68,500 to Northwest Portland late last week with monies earmarked for neighborhood improvements. Funds will be used for bricks and mortar capital improvements at nonprofits that serve the area's low-income residents, as well as for some innovative projects that engage seniors and teens.

"This year's slate supports bold new ideas and maintains some existing programs that respond to vital community needs," said Metro Councilor Rex Burkholder, chair of Metro's Northwest Portland grant selection committee and whose district includes Northwest and North Portland. "The right investments today can make a difference for our children and our future."

Funds are generated from a 50 cent surcharge collected on each ton of garbage disposed of at the Metro Central garbage transfer station in the Northwest industrial area. Projects must directly benefit residents or neighborhoods around the facility, a area that stretches from Linnton in the north to the high density Northwest Portland residential core.

The 2011 grant cycle marks the 18th year Metro has invested funds in the community through the program. In that time, more than \$3.1 million has been awarded to help fund 316 neighborhood improvement projects.

The complete slate of 2011 grant awards in Northwest Portland includes:

Audubon Society of Portland www.audubonportland.org
\$1,000 - Interpretive sign for the Collins Sanctuary

Chess for Success www.chessforsuccess.org
\$2,000 - After-school chess club at James John Elementary School for 75 students

Forest Park Conservancy www.forestparkconservancy.org
\$13,500 - Crew leadership training program for trails and restoration efforts

Friendly House, Inc. www.friendlyhouseinc.org
\$10,000 – Safety and security system improvements at the Friendly House community center and administrative facilities

Northwest Children's Theater & School www.nwcts.org
\$3,500 – Fire alarm system and emergency lighting plan for NW Neighborhood Cultural Center

Northwest Film Center www.nwfilm.org
\$7,000 – Production of video programs about sustainable living by 60 seniors and teens

Open Meadow Alternative School www.openmeadow.org
\$2,000 – Upgrades to telephone system

Oregon Student Association www.orstudents.org
\$7,100 – Intensive leadership program for 12 youth leaders and school-break camps for 33 students

Portland Festival Symphony www.PortlandFestivalSymphony.org
\$4,000 – Free classical music concert in Cathedral Park

Sauvie Island Center www.sauvieislandcenter.org
\$5,732 – Expansion of farm-based educational opportunities, including field trips and summer camp

Schoolhouse Supplies www.schoolhousesupplies.org
\$7,500 – Educational supplies for 500 James John Elementary School students

Store To Door or Oregon www.storetodooroforegon.org
\$5,184 – Grocery shopping and delivery service for seniors and disabled people

For more information about projects receiving funds this year, or to read about past projects funded, visit Metro's web site at www.oregonmetro.gov/grants or call Karen Blauer at 503-797-1506.

[Oregon Zoo offers free admission on MLK holiday](#)

January 11, 2011 4:38 PM

Visitors encouraged to bring donations of food or clothing

The Oregon Zoo is offering free admission Jan. 17, celebrating the spirit of public service associated with Martin Luther King Jr.

Day.

“It is the 25th anniversary of Martin Luther King Jr. Day and a perfect opportunity for the zoo to provide this service to our community,” said Kim Smith, zoo director. “We strive to make the zoo accessible to the entire community. Through special promotions and our monthly Second Tuesday discounts, we want to make sure as many people as possible have the chance to visit.”

The federal holiday was first observed in 1986. In 1994, Congress designated it as a national day of service and charged the Corporation for National and Community Service with leading this effort. According to the CNCS website, the day of service “empowers individuals, strengthens communities, bridges barriers, creates solutions to social problems, and moves us closer to Dr. King’s vision of a beloved community.”

Although not required for admission, zoo visitors are encouraged to bring donations of food or gently-used clothing to benefit SnowCap and Transition Projects on that day. Donation barrels will be available at the zoo entrance.

“We hope our visitors will follow Dr. King’s example of giving to the community,” Smith said. “A few cans of food or a donation of clothing can provide a much-needed service to the less fortunate in our community.”

According to SnowCap, the metro region's high unemployment rate has driven record numbers of people to their organization in search of food to feed their families. Last month they fed nearly 11,000 people.

“Oregon is number two in per capita homelessness, and we have seen a steady rise in homelessness and people at-risk of homelessness,” said Executive Director of Transition Projects, Doreen Binder. “We help people move from homelessness to housing by providing for basic needs such, as hygiene and clothing, and help people end their homelessness by helping them gain and maintain housing.”

The zoo opens at 10 a.m. during January and February. A parking fee of \$2 per car is required.

The zoo is a service of Metro and is dedicated to its mission of

inspiring the community to create a better future for wildlife. Committed to conservation, the zoo is currently working to save a number of western species.

[Learn more about the Oregon Zoo](#)

[Metro Council votes to support statewide plastic bag ban](#)

January 7, 2011 9:30 AM

Bill expected to pass when legislature convenes

During its first council meeting with newly elected President Tom Hughes and District 1 Councilor Shirley Craddick, the Metro Council passed a resolution introduced by Councilor Rex Burkholder and co-sponsored by Craddick to support a statewide ban on single-use plastic bags at retail stores.

"Plastic bags cause tough litter problems in our neighborhoods, significant issues at recycling facilities, and lethal harm to wildlife," Burkholder said. "This resolution supports Metro's goals to promote sustainability and protect the natural environment that makes our region so special."

The proposed legislation is sponsored by Senators Mark Hass (D-Beaverton) and Jason Atkinson (R-Central Point), who teamed up with environmental activists, grocery store owners and paper bag manufacturers to craft the proposal that would ban the use of single-use plastic bags at Oregon retailers and require customers to either bring their own reusable sacks or pay a 5 cent fee to use paper bags. With bipartisan support and backing from grocers, the bill is expected to pass when the legislature reconvenes later this month.

"This legislation is a vital step in protecting the region's environment, and I'm proud to support Metro's resolution," said Craddick. "It will help preserve clean rivers and water quality, and the outdoor opportunities we enjoy with our families."

Although the Metro resolution doesn't affect actual policy, it's a strong sign of solidarity with the legislation's proponents.

Plastic bags cannot be recycled curbside but frequently get mixed with other recyclables and clog sorting machines at material recovery facilities. They account for as much as 30 percent of overall labor costs at local recycling facilities. Plastic

bags also don't biodegrade and instead often make it into waterways where they accumulate and harm marine life.

Oregon Zoo Director Kim Smith also supports the legislation. At a hearing before the Oregon Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources, she said "the reason I support banning single-use plastic bags is simple – they pollute the environment and create hazards for wildlife on a massive scale."

Smith went on to note the overall danger to wildlife includes animals becoming entangled in plastic debris, animals eating plastic, and the chemical pollution caused when plastic bags degrade into smaller bits and absorb toxins that are then eaten by ocean organisms, moving up the food chain and poisoning other animals.

"These problems with plastic waste are among the reasons we don't use plastic bags, straws or cup lids in our shops and concessions at the zoo," Smith added.

The cities of Portland and Lake Oswego have already passed similar resolutions, as have municipalities and countries across the world including Los Angeles County, Italy, Ireland, the UK and parts of Australia.

The Oregon Zoo is a service of Metro and is dedicated to its mission to inspire the community to create a better future for wildlife. Committed to conservation, the zoo is currently working to save a number of endangered western species.

Metro, the regional government, crosses city limits and county lines to build a resilient economy, keep nature close by and respond to a changing climate. Representing a diverse population of 1.5 million people in 25 cities and three counties, Metro's directly elected council gives voters a voice in decisions about how the region grows and communities prosper. For more information, visit www.oregonmetro.gov.

[Have a resolution to get fit? Metro can help](#)

December 30, 2010 9:19 AM



Stay active and get fit during the winter months by cycling or walking. No gym membership needed, just head out your door.

Leaving your car behind to walk and bike for trips is good for the planet, your health and your wallet. People who choose to walk or cycle as their primary mode of travel save their households an average of \$694 per month.

Here are some tips to help you get moving during the new year:

Check out Metro's Walk There! guide book for ideas on where to walk. You could even set a goal to complete all 50 treks in the book this year.

Shop close to your home so you can walk or ride your bike. This is a great way to get exercise and see your neighborhood without a windshield in your way.

Be seen. Be safe. While you are out and about during the winter months, remember to wear light-colored jackets and reflective clothing to help you stay safe.

Take public transportation. Studies have shown people who use public transportation walk more each day. Hop off a stop or two earlier than your destination to up the fitness level even more.

TriMet can help you plan your trip. Download an app for your smart phone that tells you when your bus is coming. Call 503-238-RIDE (7433) from any phone, smart or otherwise, for a real-time transit tracker.

[Learn more about Metro's Walk There! guide book.](#)

[Check out TriMet's trip planner.](#)

[Learn more about bike safety.](#)

[Watch videos and see more resources for driving less in the new year.](#)

[Metro councilors meet with student leaders across the region](#)

December 22, 2010 12:06 PM

Metro Councilors recently joined students at several schools around the region as part of the Reaching and Empowering All People (REAP) "Future is Now Tour." The tour, which brought students from diverse backgrounds and decision makers together to discuss Metro's role in the community and brainstorm solutions to the region's problems, paired Metro Councilors with students in their district.

Students who attended the events are participants in the REAP program, which empowers young people and provides leadership training. Metro has partnered with REAP for several years. The school visits comprise an important part of the agency's ongoing commitment to fostering diversity and directly engaging the community in Metro's decision making process.

Mark Jackson, Vice President and Executive Director of REAP praised the meetings saying, "The Future Is Now Tour highlights how strategic community partnerships help engage future leaders to ensure the region protects its unique brand of sustainable living."

Each councilor's presentation varied depending on their particular field of interest. The overall mission of the visits was to inform students about how Metro policies affect the region, increase opportunities for young leaders to participate in decision making processes and build a long-term relationship between Metro and REAP.

After each presentation, students discussed their perception of Metro's role in the region and made suggestions for how the agency can improve its effectiveness. They also brainstormed ways Metro could effectively engage students and communities of color.

Visitation schedule:

- Council President Carlotta Collette visited Rowe Middle School Friday, Dec. 10
- Councilor Rod Park visited Centennial High School Monday, Dec. 13
- Councilor Carl Hosticka visited Beaverton High School Monday, Dec. 13
- Councilor Kathryn visited Aloha High School Wednesday, Dec. 15
- Councilor Rex Burkholder visited Lincoln High School Friday, Dec. 10
- Councilor Robert Liberty visited David Douglas High School Monday, Dec. 6

The mission of REAP is to be proactively involved to empower and engage youth, families and the community for a better future now.

[Read more about REAP](#)

[Metro offers tips for handling holiday waste](#)

December 21, 2010 4:46 PM

For most people the holidays mean great joy, lots of new stuff and old trash they don't always know what to do with. Metro has several tips for what to do with Christmas trees, holiday lights, wrapping paper, packaging and even old electronics. Check out these tips from Metro's recycling experts:

- Christmas trees, wreaths and swags – Trees are run through chippers to grind them up for mulch, so before recycling them, be sure to remove all lights, wire, tinsel, ornaments, nails, stands, frames and other materials. Another option? Let a scout troop, school group or service club collect the tree as part of its fundraising program. For a small fee or donation, organizations will collect trees, along with wreaths, the first weekend of the year. Some will continue recycling them the following week. Call Metro Recycling Information at 503-234-3000 or visit www.oregonmetro.gov/trees to find the nearest recycler for drop-off or pickup service.
- Old holiday lights – Making the switch to energy-saving LEDs? Throughout its winter ZooLights festival, the Oregon Zoo is collecting old incandescent lights for recycling. Zoo visitors who

drop off their old holiday light strings by Sunday, Jan. 2, 2011, can get a coupon for a piece of fudge at the Zoo Store. For more information, visit www.oregonzoo.org.

- Old electronics – Oregon E-Cycles, a statewide program that collects computers, monitors and televisions for recycling, makes it even easier to keep recyclable materials out of the landfill. For free recycling locations, visit www.oregonecycles.org or call 1-888-5-ECYCLE. To learn which electronics recyclers take mice, keyboards and printers, cell phones, VCRs, DVD players, fax machines or handheld devices, call Metro Recycling Information at 503-234-3000.
- Wrapping paper, cards and boxes that are 100 percent paper can be recycled in curbside bins. Unfortunately, wrapping papers made with foil, plastic coating and glitter contaminate the recycling process and should not be put in recycle bins.
- A number of depots accept film-type plastics such as bubble wrap, sheet foam, plastic bags and shrink wrap for recycling. Packing peanuts and bubble wrap can be taken to a shipping store for reuse. There are even a handful of options for block foam.

If you aren't sure where to bring your holiday detritus and what can or can't be recycled, call the friendly staff at Metro's Recycling Information Center, who can give you the scoop on what goes where. Call Metro's recycling hotline at 503-234-3000 or visit www.oregonmetro.gov/holidaytips for help.

[Council passes capacity ordinance, delays affordable housing](#)

December 17, 2010 11:54 AM

The Metro Council unanimously approved its 2010 capacity ordinance Thursday, setting policies that will guide the Portland region's growth for decades to come.

But the approval came after the council decided to delay taking on one of the ordinance's more controversial topics.

The capacity ordinance approved Thursday sets the stage for an urban growth boundary review in 2011 by formally spelling out the region's 20-year need for housing, and establishing how

much capacity the region has for homes, businesses and factories. Councilors formally accepted that at least half of the region's 20-year need can be met inside the current urban growth boundary.

The council also accepted many of Chief Operating Officer Michael Jordan's recommendations as part of his Community Investment Strategy, including establishing six outcomes that the council will use in future decisions.

"We have much to cheer for in this capacity ordinance," said Metro Councilor Kathryn Harrington. "It's far-reaching. There are aspirations here, and we should continue reaching for those. We're not resting. This work does not rest on any laurels. There is no status quo maintained here. That's why I support this."

Council President Carlotta Collette lauded the Community Investment Strategy as an effort that will leave a legacy in the region.

"We can plan communities all we want, but unless we can invest in them we can't deliver," she said. "So this strategy really talks about how do we get people to commit to bring not just public dollars, which are tiny, but also private dollars, which are also tiny – but together they start making something that is a livable community."

[Learn more about the Community Investment Strategy](#)

The meeting, though, wasn't without some surprises. Early in the discussion on the ordinance, Harrington issued a rebuke from the dais because proposed changes to Title 11, adopted by the council at the Dec. 9 meeting, weren't properly announced on Metro's website.

"I am deeply disturbed that the Title 11 language, that a lot of people hustled and bustled last week to work out and get amended, hasn't been published as part of our vote," she said. "I do not want to be voting that in as part of this ordinance."

The proposed changes to Title 11 prompt cities to plan for affordable housing in urban growth boundary expansion areas.

[See also: Saying language remains vague, housing industry calls for delay in Title 11 reforms \(Dec. 15\)](#)

In the final public hearing on the ordinance, representatives from the Home Builders Association of Metropolitan Portland and the Portland Metropolitan Association of Realtors also asked that the Title 11 changes be delayed.

"The new language hasn't received input from the housing community... not even MPAC (the [Metro Policy Advisory Committee](#))," said Dave Nielsen, the CEO of the Home Builders Association. "We have not had a chance to review this language and the ramifications of a policy like this are huge."

Harrington emphasized that her issue wasn't disagreement with the language, and said she appreciated the work that MPAC's housing subcommittee and Metro staff did to get the wording into the capacity ordinance.

"I'm proposing this amendment to ensure that we have what I believe is the appropriate and required public availability of the proposed language," she said.

The council voted 4-2 on the motion to hold off on the Title 11 language until 2011; Councilors Robert Liberty and Rod Park voted against the motion.

"It was unfortunate the final meeting of MPAC was cancelled unilaterally," Liberty said, adding that he thought the committee would have approved it anyway. "Are you going to be able to satisfy the concerns raised by the home builders and the Realtors after taking everyone's time to go through another set of meetings? I'd submit to you we won't."

Park's last meeting

The meeting was the last for east Multnomah County Councilor Rod Park, who has served 12 years on the board and is term-limited out.

"So many people continue to push us, as well as the region, just to be a better place, and I have a lot of faith in your ability that you're going to continue to do that," Park said to a packed council chamber.

Metro news reporter Nick Christensen can be reached at 503-813-7583 or nick.christensen@oregonmetro.gov. Follow Metro on Twitter [@oregonmetro](#).

[Metro Council approves food recycling facility in northeast Portland](#)

December 10, 2010 10:22 AM

Power generation, greenhouse gas reduction, job creation, neighborhood grants among benefits

The Metro council last night unanimously approved a franchise permit for Columbia Biogas to operate a facility in northeast Portland that will recycle food waste from commercial and industrial sources, keep about 200,000 tons of waste out of landfills or the sewer system, and produce enough electricity to power up to 5,000 homes.

Columbia Biogas plans to convert local food waste into renewable power, clean water, fertilizer and soil amendments. The anaerobic digestion operation will be located at 6849 NE Columbia Blvd, in an industrial-zoned portion of the Cully area in northeast Portland. Anaerobic digestion is a controlled and enclosed biologic process that breaks down organic matter without oxygen oxygen and produces methane-rich biogas that can be burned to make electricity.

Construction is expected to begin in summer 2011, and will provide about 85 jobs. Once opened, the facility will employ about 10 full time workers and is expected to create additional waste hauling jobs.

Columbia Biogas plans to operate power generating engines that will produce about five megawatts of electricity and to connect to a substation grid in the PacifiCorp system. The digestion process also produces a byproduct that can be used as fertilizer and soil amendments in nurseries and farms.

The facility will be capable of processing about 90,000 tons of solid food waste and 104,000 tons of liquid food waste per year. The material will be processed in tanks in an enclosed building. Solid food waste will come from local commercial sources such as grocery stores, restaurants and food processors. Liquid food waste will come from commercial grease traps and food and beverage processors. Liquid waste is currently sent down sewers and treated at wastewater plants. No yard debris or garbage will be accepted.

"Columbia Biogas brings an excellent model for how to handle

food waste throughout the region," said Metro Councilor Rex Burkholder, whose district includes the new facility. "It eliminates the need to truck waste to landfills far from town therefore reducing greenhouse gasses, the process helps power our homes and fertilize our farm fields with food waste instead of burying it, and by partnering with the community, it creates and maintains good paying jobs for people in their own neighborhoods."

Neighbors benefit from grants, agreements, jobs

Neighbors in the Cully area will benefit in other ways. The Metro Council has called for a 50 cent per ton surcharge on waste brought to the facility to establish a grant program to support community rehabilitation, mitigation and enhancement projects. Council has also requested that Columbia Biogas create a Good Neighbor Agreement with the Cully Association of Neighbors to minimize the impacts of the facility on local residents. Columbia Biogas has also formed an advisory committee with the neighbors, as well as a jobs subcommittee which includes the Native American Youth Association, Verde, Hacienda and Work Systems Inc.

Columbia Biogas must also receive a permit from the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality; that decision is expected soon.

[Learn more about the Columbia Biogas facility](#)

[Learn more about Metro's role in waste reduction](#)

[Tell us what you think](#)

Take a 2 minute survey about Metro news.

[Start survey](#)

[Metro Councilor Burkholder to meet with student leaders in SW Portland](#)

December 7, 2010 4:16 PM

Metro Councilor Rex Burkholder will join students at Lincoln High School in Southwest Portland from 2:15 to 3:20 p.m. Friday, Dec. 10 to participate in the Reaching and Empowering All People (REAP) "Future is Now Tour." The tour, which brings students from diverse backgrounds and regional decision

makers together to discuss Metro's role in the community and brainstorm solutions to the region's problems, will pair Metro councilors with students in their district.

Students attending the event are participants in the REAP program which aims to empower and provide leadership training. Metro has partnered with REAP for several years and this week's school visits are an important part of the agency's ongoing commitment to fostering diversity and directly engage the community in Metro's decision making process.

Mark Jackson, the Vice President and Executive Director of REAP praised the meetings saying, "The Future Is Now Tour highlights how strategic community partnerships help engage future leaders to ensure the region protects its unique brand of sustainable living."

The presentations follow a meeting held at the Metro Regional Center this past July in which Metro Councilors met with several REAP participants to discuss the regional government's role in transportation planning, climate change mitigation and the promotion of renewable energy resources. While each councilor's presentation will vary depending on their particular field of interest, the overall mission is to inform students about how Metro policies affect the region, increase opportunities for young leaders to participate in decision making processes and to build toward a long-term relationship between Metro and REAP.

After the presentation, students will discuss their perception of Metro's role in the region and make suggestions for how the agency can improve its effectiveness as well as brainstorming ways in which Metro can effectively engage students and communities of color.

2:15 - 3:20 p.m., Friday Dec. 10, 2010
Lincoln High School
1600 Southwest Salmon Street
Portland, OR 97205

The mission of REAP is to be proactively involved to empower and engage youth, families and the community for a better future now.

Metro, the regional government that serves 1.5 million people

who live in the 25 cities and three counties of the Portland metropolitan area, provides planning and other services that protect the nature and livability of our region.

[Metro Council appoints diverse residents to transportation panel](#)

November 23, 2010 4:51 PM

The Metro Council has named its most diverse group of residents ever to an influential transportation committee.

Council on Thursday, Nov. 18 appointed three citizen members to the Transportation Policy Alternatives Committee (TPAC), a 21-member panel that advises regional policymakers on transportation projects and plans across the Portland metropolitan area.

“I’m proud to appoint this highly qualified group of citizen members, who will help us ensure that our transportation dollars are spent most effectively,” Metro Council President Carlotta Collette said. “Metro is committed to addressing the needs of all the people in our region, especially those who have not traditionally had a seat at the table in our planning decisions.”

Council appointed two Latinos and an expert on climate change, and reappointed one member to fill a an upcoming vacancy. The new members are:

- Marta Carrillo of Wilsonville. Carrillo is a graduate of the Latino Network’s Diverse Civic Leaders Academy, and works as a bilingual public involvement specialist on planning issues for the City of Woodburn.
- Chris Beanes of North Portland. Beanes is a Latino bike activist who has a landscape architecture and urban planning background. He speaks from personal experience about the health benefits of active transportation. Beanes is a former land use plan reviewer for the City of Portland.
- Charlie Stephens of Oak Grove. Stephens is an engineer and an expert on climate change science, especially as it pertains to building efficiency. He also has been active in improving natural areas preservation for the Milwaukie light rail project.

Council also reappointed Mara Gross of Northeast Portland.

Gross has served one two-year term on the committee and will continue for a third year, filling in for an upcoming vacancy. She is the policy director for the Coalition for a Livable Future, a Portland-based nonprofit that advocates for sustainability, affordable housing and open space preservation.

Metro received a record 40 applicants for the four citizen openings. An important responsibility of TPAC is to advise the Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation (JPACT), a panel of elected officials and transportation agency executives that controls federal transportation spending in the Portland area. TPAC also advises the Metro Council, which reviews and must approve all major JPACT actions.

TPAC is an advisory committee that reviews regional plans and federally funded transportation projects across the three-county Portland area. It advises regional leaders on transportation spending priorities as well as policies related to transportation, such as efforts to curb greenhouse gas emissions. It also recommends needs and opportunities for involving citizens in transportation matters.

TPAC is comprised of 15 professional transportation staff appointed by area cities, counties and government agencies, and six at-large citizen members.

[Learn more about the Transportation Policy Alternatives Committee](#)

[Learn more about the Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation](#)

[Learn more about transportation planning in the Portland area](#)

[Learn more about the Regional Transportation Plan](#)

[**Metro Council to focus on efficiencies inside UGB this fall**](#)

November 23, 2010 4:30 PM

The Metro Council will soon consider improvements to the Portland region's growth rules that will require more effective and efficient use of existing public investments and that improve the management and accountability of public services. Metro's goal is to ensure the region makes the most of its existing cities as part of the agency's long-term strategy to

provide good jobs, protect valuable farm and forest land and preserve outdoor recreation opportunities.

Metro is evaluating proposals to create stronger protections for industrial land to ensure it remains available for large manufacturers; to focus public investments to support existing businesses, cities, town centers and transportation corridors; and to provide more affordable housing, among other areas.

Four public hearings will be held throughout the region over the next three weeks:

- 5 p.m., Monday, Nov. 29, Clackamas County Public Services Building, 2051 Kaen Rd., Oregon City
- 5 p.m., Thursday, Dec. 2, Hillsboro Civic Center Auditorium, 150 E. Main St., Hillsboro
- 5 p.m., Dec. 9, Metro Regional Center Council Chamber, 600 NE Grand Ave., Portland
- 2 p.m., Thursday, Dec. 16, Metro Regional Center Council Chamber, 600 NE Grand Ave., Portland during the Council's regular meeting. NOTE: The Metro Council is scheduled to vote on the proposed capacity ordinance at this time.

[Read more about Metro's work to improve growth management, including information about upcoming public hearings](#)

The Metro Council will be considering ways to protect farms, forests and natural areas by investing inside the existing urban growth boundary this fall. It will not be considering an expansion of the urban growth boundary in 2010 until a revised urban and rural reserves map for Washington County is agreed to by the Metro Council and the Washington County Board of Commissioners and acknowledged by the Oregon Land Conservation and Development Commission. That work will not be completed before Spring 2011.

[Read more about the ruling of the Oregon Land Conservation and Development Commission on urban and rural reserves](#)

[Read more about the current status of urban and rural reserves](#)

[**A personal message from Rex Burkholder – please share your comments on proposed Columbia Biogas facility**](#)

November 23, 2010 10:49 AM

As your representative on the Metro Council, I want to let you know about a public hearing opportunity on Dec. 9 regarding a franchise permit for Columbia Biogas to operate a facility in the Cully neighborhood in Northeast Portland. I encourage you to help shape the future of your neighborhood by sharing your comments with the Metro Council.

Metro is responsible for managing the region's garbage and recycling system in an effective, economical and environmentally sound manner. To carry out this responsibility, Metro regulates private solid waste facilities, ensuring they operate in compliance with procedures and performance standards that protect and benefit the citizens in the region.

The Metro Council will hold a public hearing at 5 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 9, at Metro Regional Center, 600 NE Grand Ave., Portland, to consider a solid waste facility franchise permit application submitted by Columbia Biogas. If the application is approved by Metro and permits are issued by the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality, the company will construct and operate a food waste anaerobic digestion and energy recovery facility at 6849 NE Columbia Blvd., which is in the Cully neighborhood.

[**Read the proposed Metro legislation, staff report and the Metro Chief Operating Officer's recommendation**](#)

If you have a question about Metro's staff report, call Bill Metzler at 503-797-1666.

[**Sign up to get email news updates about the Columbia Biogas franchise and other important issues**](#)

In addition to requiring actions to prevent off-site nuisances such as litter, dust, odors and noise, Metro is calling for the collection of a community enhancement fee on waste brought into the facility. Additionally, Columbia Biogas will be required to develop and maintain a Good Neighbor Plan to minimize the impact of the facility on local residents. As part of the plan, the company will work toward a written agreement describing how the company will hear and respond to neighborhood concerns.

The type of facility proposed by Columbia Biogas meets several goals established by the Metro Council. It could help our region develop a food waste collection and processing infrastructure, a key strategy that will lead us toward a more sustainable future. The facility will help the region dispose of less food waste in landfills and sewers by converting organic matter to energy and agricultural supplements.

But before taking any action, the Metro Council wants to hear from Cully neighbors. Do you agree with the provisions and conditions in Metro's proposed franchise with Columbia Biogas? Do they address your interests and concerns? If not, what is missing?

You can provide public testimony to the Metro Council in person, by mail or by e-mail.

The hearing will take place at 5 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 9, at Metro Regional Center, 600 NE Grand Ave., Portland.

- To testify in person at the Metro Council meeting, complete a testimony card, submit it to the council clerk and be present when your name is called to testify. If you require any special accommodation in order to testify before the council, please make your request to the council clerk at least 24 hours before the meeting by calling 503-797-1542.
- Written testimony is also welcome. To comment in writing, insert the agenda item and topic at the beginning of your letter or e-mail message (Ordinance No. 10-1248, Columbia Biogas franchise). Fax your testimony to 503-797-1793. Mail your testimony to the Metro Council, 600 NE Grand Ave., Portland, OR 97232. Send e-mail to metro council@oregonmetro.gov.

The Metro Council and I want to hear from you about this important decision. Your input and insights will be helpful in making policy decisions for the region. Thank you for your consideration.

[Tracking animals in winter](#)

November 19, 2010 1:24 PM

Moist soil is the perfect palette for capturing the wanderings of animals. From shorebirds to bugs to animals that only come out

at night, tracks on the ground can tell quite a bit about the quiet lives of elusive animals.

Tracking can be done all year, but wet winter weather makes success a sure bet. Open year-round, Metro's nature parks, with habitats ranging from rivers and stream sides to rare Oregon white oak forests and former lava domes, provide a variety of options.

Metro and its partners offer animal tracking classes throughout the year, but to get started learning tips on how to find critters such as raccoon, river otter, Canada goose, rabbit, deer, red fox, black bear or cougar, watch this video with Metro naturalist James Davis.

[View the Metro calendar](#)

[Sign up for GreenScene](#)

[Learn more about Metro's nature parks](#)

[Metro reduces barriers for minority, women and emerging small businesses](#)

November 19, 2010 1:23 PM

The Metro Council recently made new commitments to hire minority-owned, women-owned and emerging small businesses (MWESB). Metro's use of MWESB firms increased during the last decade and a half, but the Metro Council is pushing for even greater MWESB participation in its contracting programs.

To increase opportunities for MWESB firms the Metro Council directed staff to:

- expand outreach to additional minority business groups, including the Asian, native American and Hispanic business communities
- provide a forum for Metro project managers to network with MWESBs, including hosting open houses and attending minority business forums
- package construction projects to fit within the current sheltered market program for projects up to \$50,000

- engage the Office of Metro Attorney to promote the use of MWESB firms within the bounds of state and local contracting rules
- create an electronic notification system for MWESBs to provide automated notice of upcoming bids and requests for proposals (RFPs)
- include employee compensation as a factor in the selection of service contractors.

Metro also will encourage prime contractors to subcontract at least 15 percent of their work to MWESBs and require them to formally report their use of MWESB subcontractors.

The Council also directed staff to include diversity as evaluation criteria in all Metro RFPs and to increase MWESB training throughout the agency, including the Oregon Zoo and the Convention Center. Metro also aspires to utilize MWESB contractors for 15 percent of the total value of every formal bid and RFP.

[Read more about Metro's MWESB program](#)

[Volunteer work crews to restore Baltimore Woods greenway, where Metro is making a difference](#)

November 18, 2010 9:45 AM

Volunteers will be out in full force this Saturday, helping SOLV plant native trees and shrubs in the Baltimore Woods corridor of North Portland. Volunteer teams will help restore this unique oak habitat in the middle of the city, which is being protected in part by Metro's voter-approved natural areas bond measure.

Metro has collaborated with the City of Portland this year on two milestones. First, the city purchased a one-acre cluster of properties with funding from a Metro Nature in Neighborhoods grant, the city's share of bond money and the city's Grey to Green initiative. Then, the city purchased a six-acre addition with regional bond funds, local bond funds and Grey to Green funds. Preservation efforts have been supported by Friends of Baltimore Woods, a community group that advocates for this ribbon of green connecting Cathedral and Pier parks.

The next Baltimore Woods planting with open slots will be from 9 a.m. to noon on Saturday, Dec. 11, at North Decatur Street

and North Baltimore Avenue. Tools, gloves and supplies will be provided; advance registration required.

[Sign up for the Dec. 11 planting](#)

Or contact Brett Lyon: brett@solv.org or 503-844-9571.

[Cultural explosion planned Saturday, Nov. 13 when "North Portland Meets Africa"](#)

November 10, 2010 1:18 PM

"North Portland Meets Africa," a first-time event featuring information about the African continent, its people and cultures, is slated to take place from noon to 4 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 13 at the St. Johns Community Center, 8427 N. Central in North Portland. Family-friendly programming will give participants ways to increase their understanding of and exposure to their neighbors and friends, or to learn more about their own African heritage. The event is free and open to the public and was funded in part by a Metro Central community enhancement grant. It is sponsored by the Multnomah County Cultural Coalition.

Local nonprofit organizations affiliated with Portland's African community will exhibit and showcase resources as varied as the individuals' interests and needs they serve. In addition to arts and health screenings, there will be workshops on African drumming and dancing sprinkled throughout the day.

The program is the creation of Homowo African Arts and Cultures and The Obo Addy Project. Since its inception in 1986, Homowo African Arts & Cultures has performed in and offered programming to groups in schools, parks, community centers and performance venues in North Portland, as well as throughout Oregon and around the country. Obo Addy, artistic director of Homowo, is a composer whose music reaches far beyond the boundaries of Ghana, the land of his birth. Considered an originator of the musical movement known as "Worldbeat," he is part of the first generation of African musicians to bring their traditional and popular sounds to America and Europe.

[Learn more about Metro's community enhancement grant program and other grant resources](#)

[Metro celebrates another successful year of outdoor school](#)

November 10, 2010 11:05 AM



As another successful year of outdoor school comes to a close, National Sustainability Education Week is in full swing. Although their schedules may not correspond, Metro's ongoing sponsorship of waste reduction education for area outdoor school programs promotes the same goals as National Sustainability Education Week, a nationwide program to encourage awareness and adoption of sustainable practices.

[Learn about Metro's National Sustainability Education Week activities](#)

Since the Metro Council approved funding for outdoor school waste reduction education programming in 2008, more than 12,000 sixth-graders from area schools have attended Metro-sponsored outdoor school programs. In addition to providing financial support for waste reduction education, Metro staff helps outdoor schools craft award-winning curriculum for such programming.

Outdoor school is a fun and interactive way for students to experience the environment that surrounds them and better appreciate the importance of conservation, habitat protection and sustainable living. Along with learning about ecosystems and natural processes, students learn how to shrink their environmental footprint by reducing the amount of waste they create. Educational and experiential activities are integrated throughout the week in all aspects of the programs, including meals, duties, field study, recreation and evening programs.

Metro's support for outdoor school has gained statewide attention: Metro's waste reduction curriculum received the

Oregon Association of Recyclers annual Education Program of the Year award for 2010. Waste reduction education programming has been shown to strengthen students' willingness to recycle and follow sustainable practices that will, in turn, reduce the amount of waste entering the landfills.

As school budgets have continued to decline, many schools have considered cutting outdoor school opportunities for their students. Metro's sponsorship of these programs has allowed many schools to continue allowing students the opportunity to attend outdoor school and provides incentives for other schools to resume their outdoor school curriculum. Metro reimburses the cost of providing waste reduction programming for 14 outdoor schools provided by four providers across the tri-county metropolitan area.

[Learn more about Metro's support for outdoor school](#)

[Metro partnership demonstrates concrete way to protect water quality and habitat](#)

November 5, 2010 8:32 AM



One sunny Wednesday recently, several dozen people gathered at a house in Northeast Portland to watch workers pour concrete.

Slow news day? Not quite. The wet stuff being poured was pervious concrete, a nature-friendly paving material that helps protect water quality and fish and wildlife habitat. The observers at the Oct 20 pour, who included design professionals, school district staff, a contractor and staff from nine cities and counties, were there to better understand the installation process and talk with experts.

Pervious concrete is rapidly increasing in popularity as a nature-friendly building practice. Porous surfaces, such as pervious

pavement or pavers, allow rainwater to pass through them and soak into the ground instead of flowing into storm drains. Pervious pavement allows water to be filtered through natural microbes in the pavement and soil, allowing the microbes to "eat" hydrocarbons and clean the water. As water soaks through the soil it is also cooled, so when it reaches a stream it will not shock fish who are very sensitive to even small increase in temperature. The result: healthier urban waterways.

Metro partnered with Home Builders Association, Earth Advantage, City of Portland and Evolution Paving Resources to provide this behind-the-scenes workshop at the Water House, a demonstration project showcasing nature-friendly landscaping and residential green building practices. The Water House is currently under construction and will open in early 2011 to demonstrate what people can do to protect water quality and reduce water use at home.



The pervious concrete workshop was supported by Metro's Nature in Neighborhoods initiative, which encourages habitat-friendly development practices without regulation. Such demonstrations help demystify nature-friendly building practices, providing experience and training to those involved in development and construction projects. With such high demand for demonstration opportunities, Metro and its partners have committed to providing more in the coming year.

[Learn more about Metro's Nature in Neighborhoods and sign up for the newsletter](#)

[Learn more about the benefits of pervious surfaces](#)

[Check out photos from the Water House workshop](#)

[Join Metro this Friday, Nov. 5, to "Be seen. Be safe."](#)

November 3, 2010 2:58 PM

Free, interactive gathering on Friday evening, Nov. 5, at Pioneer

Courthouse Square shines a light on biking and walking in the dark



Biker shows one way you can dress to be seen and be safe during winter months.

With the days getting shorter and daylight saving time ending Sunday, Nov. 7, people who bike and walk in the evening are likely to find themselves in the dark earlier. Metro, TriMet, Drive Less/Save More and other partners are hosting a free, interactive "Be seen. Be safe." rally at Pioneer Courthouse Square from 5 to 7:30 p.m. on Friday, Nov. 5, to encourage bikers and walkers to stay safe.

The event will feature a fashion show of inexpensive, reflective clothing and accessories. Participants will receive tips on how to make themselves more visible when walking and biking in the dark morning and evening hours, as well as refreshments and free giveaways, such as safety lights and reflective gear. There will even be a contest for the best-lit bike and entertainment by local LED hoop dancers with Sparkle Movement. The Bicycle Transportation Alliance will also lead a fun, easy-paced bike ride for riders of all ages through downtown.

Registration is not required, and the event is free. For more information, please send an e-mail to rto@oregonmetro.gov or visit www.trimet.org.

[Learn how you can stay safe while riding your bike](#)
[Learn how you can stay safe while walking](#)

[Visit the Drive Less/Save More site for safety tips and videos](#)

[Task force and equity groups to help set priorities for regional flexible funds](#)

November 3, 2010 8:55 AM

To help make the most of limited transportation dollars, Metro is convening two groups to advise on how to spend \$24 million in Regional Flexible Funds.

The federal money gets a lot of attention locally, largely because it doesn't have the constraints of most federal programs, which require bridge money to be spent on bridges and public transit funds to be spent on those projects. The program drew concern last summer, when regional officials were deciding how much to spend on freight versus active transportation priorities.

A Regional Flexible Funds Task Force comprising 20 experts from across the region will help set priorities and funding strategies for the flexible funds program. Task force members include experts in public health, freight logistics and pedestrian safety, among other areas of regional interest.

The task force meets for the first time today at Metro and again on Nov. 17. Future meeting dates in December have not yet been set. The meetings are open to the public, but no public testimony is planned.

An Environmental Justice Working Group will advise the task force and the Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation about how best to serve the needs of minorities, the disabled and other underserved communities.

Metro is inviting working group participation by affordable housing providers and community nonprofit leaders from across the region. A less formal group than the task force, the working group will meet twice. Its first meeting, also open to the public, will be held Nov. 10, 8-10 a.m. in council chambers, 600 NE Grand Ave.

The task force is expected to develop priorities for flexible funds spending by the end of the year. Metro staff will work with cities and counties to collaboratively draw up a list of projects recommended for funding. A public comment period will follow next summer before a final vote at JPACT and the Metro Council.

For more information about either the task force or working group, contact Dylan Rivera at 503-797-1551 or e-mail Dylan.Rivera@oregonmetro.gov.

[Read more about the flexible funds program, the task force and working group](#)

[Read more about last summer's JPACT and Metro Council votes on flexible funding](#)

[Want to be a volunteer naturalist? Nature University applications are due Nov. 4](#)

November 2, 2010 9:30 AM

If you love nature, enjoy working with children and have access to personal transportation, consider becoming a volunteer naturalist by attending Nature University. But hurry: Applications for the 2011 training course are due Nov. 4.

At Nature University, you receive the training needed to become a qualified and confident Metro volunteer naturalist. Students learn about common wildlife and plants, the ecology of wetlands and ancient forests, and effective teaching techniques. Student naturalists go into the field with experienced naturalists to learn how to recognize animal tracks and signs, bird sounds and much more. Learn the importance of careful observation and the use of field guides, skills that can be applied in a lifelong process of learning and sharing with others.

Find out more about Nature University and download an application at the links below. Submit your completed application by Nov. 4, 2010, via e-mail to parkvol@oregonmetro.gov or by fax to 503-797-1849.

[Learn more about Nature University](#)

[Download the 2011 Nature University catalog \(PDF\)](#)

[Download your application \(PDF\)](#)

[Download your application \(MS Word\)](#)

[Fowl fun: Metro events Oct. 27 – Nov. 2](#)

October 27, 2010 9:11 AM

This weekend's events at Smith and Bybee will give birdwatchers something to flock to: join Metro Naturalist James Davis as he takes guests on a tour of many different birds who are passing the fall at Smith and Bybee. Even if birding isn't your pastime,

Metro has plenty more opportunities to get out this weekend. Join Metro and SOLV to plant trees at Beaver Creek or meet the famous Oregon pioneers interred at Lone Fir Pioneer Cemetery. The best part is, most of the events are low-cost or free, and registration can be completed online. Follow the links below for more information.

[Plant trees with SOLV in Troutdale](#)

9 a.m. to noon, Saturday, Oct. 30
Glenn Otto Park, Troutdale
Note: all tools provided

[Autumn birds at Smith and Bybee Wetlands](#)

9:30 a.m. to noon, Saturday, Oct. 30
Smith and Bybee Wetlands Natural Area
Note: advance registration required

[Mushrooms for beginners at Smith and Bybee Wetlands](#)

1:30 to 4 p.m., Saturday, Oct. 30
Smith and Bybee Wetlands Natural Area
Note: advance registration and \$10 fee required

[Tour of Untimely Departures](#)

6 to 9 p.m., Sunday, Oct. 31
Lone Fir Pioneer Cemetery
Note: advance registration encouraged

[Planning your garden in the off-season](#)

6 to 8 p.m, Tuesday, Nov. 2
Sabin School, NE Portland

More things to do brought to you by GreenScene

Metro GreenScene provides a comprehensive calendar of free and low-cost nature activities, gardening workshops, volunteer ventures and community events offered all around the region by Metro and dozens of other organizations.

[View the online calendar](#)
[Visit the GreenScene page](#)
[Follow on Facebook](#)
[Follow on Twitter](#)

[Reserves decision on hold for a week](#)

October 25, 2010 12:22 PM

The state board tasked with reviewing the region's proposed urban and rural reserves put off its decision for a week, saying it still had questions about controversial proposed urban reserves near Forest Grove, Cornelius and Hillsboro.

[Read more about urban and rural reserves](#)

The [Oregon Land Conservation and Development Commission](#) is looking at whether Clackamas, Multnomah and Washington Counties, and Metro, adequately studied the suitability of their various proposed urban or rural reserves for either protection from or designation for future development.

But commissioners were grappling as to whether there was evidence in the record that the proposed urban reserves on farmland in western Washington County to support designation as urban reserves.

The commission scheduled a 1 p.m. meeting on Oct. 29 to make its final vote.

Brent Curtis, Washington County's planning manager, tried to make the case for the designation in more than three hours of testimony Friday morning. After the board put off its decision, he said there's "lots and lots and lots" of material that's "really the explanation of how we connected the evidence to the requirements of the law."

Not surprisingly, the lead lawyer in opposing the Washington County reserves disagreed. Mary Kyle McCurdy, attorney for [1000 Friends of Oregon](#), had a one-word answer when asked if the county could justify its case: "No."

The charge against designating the areas as urban reserves was led by Commissioner Greg Macpherson, a Lake Oswego attorney. He said he'd have a hard time finding "that any reasonable person could conclude the factors (for urban

designation) have been met," particularly with regard to land north of Council Creek near Cornelius.

"To draw a peninsula is, I think, intrusive into the agricultural landscape and certainly based on my knowledge of agriculture, a risk of breaking down the separation and buffer of the factors," Macpherson said.

In testimony earlier in the day, though, Curtis encouraged commissioners to look past the proposed Cornelius urban reserve, which in earlier testimony had been referred to as a "megaphone."

"We have a supergigantic megaphone that predates the planning process. The city of Cornelius and the city of Forest Grove exist," Curtis said. "Those conflicts exist. They were there in the beginning."

Once the commission looks at the record next week, it can either uphold the region's first-of-its-kind urban and rural reserves designation, or it can remand all or part of it back to the region for a second look.

The western Washington County areas seemed to be the only parts of the proposal at risk of a remand. Commissioners had little further discussion on other hot-button areas, including a rural reserve in western Multnomah County, an urban reserve near Stafford, urban reserves and undesignated areas north of U.S. 26 and an urban reserve in the Tonquin Geologic Area near Wilsonville.

Still, Kathryn Harrington, the Metro councilor who led negotiations for the agency, wasn't celebrating yet.

"There is a lot of consensus, so there's a lot to feel good about with that regard," Harrington said. "But there are some very important areas of contention, so I'm not willing to declare victory."

The location for the Oct. 29 commission meeting has not been determined.

Metro news reporter Nick Christensen can be reached at nick.christensen@oregonmetro.gov or 503-813-7583.

[Don't let rain ruin your ride](#)

October 25, 2010 12:20 PM



The weekend forecast calls for rain, but don't let that dampen your biking spirit.

Staying active by biking or walking for short trips is great for the planet, your health and your wallet. Households that walk and cycle as the primary modes of travel save an average of \$694 per month.

Follow these easy tips below to stay comfortable, safe and dry while biking for work or play even when it's raining:

Wear rain gear and clothing that fits loosely, has air vents and is water-repellent. Rain capes or ponchos are inexpensive options that keep your top dry while providing plenty of ventilation. If you're commuting by bicycle every day, a Gore-Tex suit or other suit that sheds water and is breathable may be a good option.

Bring a small towel with you. Keep it in an accessible pocket to wipe away any water or splashes during your ride.

Remember that **Metro's new Bike There! map is printed on durable, waterproof paper**, making it a perfect planning tool for finding your way in rainy weather.

Clean off your bike after rainy rides. Wash or wipe down your bike, paying special attention to the chain, headset, bottom brackets and brakes. Accumulated dirt can interfere with your bike's performance.

Be visible. Wear bright reflective clothing and make sure all your bike lights are bright and blinking so cars can see you in poor conditions.

Invest in fenders for your bike. They will help keep rain and

dirt off of your body and the more vulnerable parts of your bicycle.

Avoid puddles. Not only will riding through puddles soak you and your bike, but there may also be bumps or potholes that you can't see.

Remember biking is just one car-free way to get where you need to go. If you're not in the mood to ride in the rain, consider taking transit or sharing a ride with a coworker or someone else in your neighborhood.

[Watch a Drive Less/Save More video about essential rainy weather bike gear](#)

[Learn more about Metro's waterproof Bike There! map](#)

[Learn more about ridesharing or other travel options](#)

Metro grants available for more nature in the neighborhood

October 22, 2010 1:09 PM

The liveliest cities and neighborhoods don't happen by accident. We all have the ability to shape our communities through vision and leadership – but it also takes investment. Sometimes a little money is all that stands in the way of turning a good idea into a great project.

Does your favorite natural area need a little love?

Does your school need money for trips into nature?

Do you have an idea that will help local rivers and streams?

Metro's Nature in Neighborhoods restoration and enhancement grants connect people to their neighborhoods, natural areas, backyards and beyond. We look for thoughtful projects that help strengthen the community, involve residents and deliver results. Proposals are accepted from nonprofits, or from an individual, business or group that has an agreement with a nonprofit fiscal agent. A pre-application is the first step. **The deadline to submit a pre-application is 4 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 18, 2011.** Funding requests can range from \$5,000 to \$25,000 for hands-on activities and environmental education programs that protect and contribute to watershed health in the 25 cities in Clackamas, Multnomah and Washington counties. Visit Metro's website and review the program information packet for more details.

www.oregonmetro.gov/grants

New this year is the introduction of planning and project development grants. These grants are for organizations and community groups that need support developing partnerships to tackle bigger projects or that lack the financial and technical resources to develop proposals beyond the conceptual or master plan phase. Planning and project development requests can range from \$5,000 to \$15,000. Up to \$30,000 total will be awarded for these proposals this year.

Don't let the fear of grant writing be an obstacle. If you need help with your application, attend Metro's free grant-writing workshop geared for first-time applicants. **The two-hour session begins at [9 a.m. Saturday, Nov. 13](#)** and will include practical advice, examples of successful projects, time to network with others and much more. Contact Metro for workshop details and to **reserve your place** by calling 503-797-1834 or e-mailing kristin.blyler@oregonmetro.gov.

This is your opportunity to bring a little more nature into YOUR neighborhood!

[Metro grant provides secure, covered bike parking at PSU](#)

October 18, 2010 8:22 AM

Metro helps Portland State University improve bike parking, encouraging people to ride to campus



PSU's Montgomery Bike Parking Garage features two-tier parking, making room for 77 bicycles.

Portland State University showed off its newly renovated parking facility on campus Monday, Oct. 11, but this garage is for two-wheel commuters not four. A \$50,000 grant from Metro's Regional Travel Options Program helped fund the Montgomery Street Bike Garage project.

The project took a dark, unsafe and underused bike shelter and turned it into secure facility that can house up to 77 bikes. It is among the first in the region to feature two-tiered bike parking that allows for stacking bikes double-decker style. This maximizes space in the garage, which is located at Southwest 12th Avenue and Montgomery Street between Blumel Hall and Stephen Epler Hall.

Metro Councilor Rex Burkholder, an avid cyclist himself, attended the opening ceremony for the garage and touted the Montgomery Street Bike Garage as the first project to receive a capital award through Metro's Regional Travel Options grant program.

Students get a special access card to use the bike parking garage. Security cameras, forced entry alarms and enhanced lighting have been installed for added protection. The garage also features an eco-roof.



Councilor Burkholder tries his hand at the double-decker bike parking in the Harrington Street Bike Garage.

A second bike parking garage is located on campus at Southwest Fifth Avenue and Harrison Street. That facility is connected to an automobile garage where students pay \$318 a term to park. Students using either the Harrison Street or Montgomery Street Bike Garage, pay just \$15 a term.

A 2009 survey by PSU's Transportation and Parking Services showed biking to campus on the rise while drive-alone car

trips declined. The university now has just under 2000 bike parking spots on campus with 163 of those in secure, covered facilities.

Metro encourages biking because it helps keep the air clean and it's a great way to get around town, get exercise and save money that would go to parking and gasoline. Metro takes that support of bicycling a step further with its new Bike There! map, sold at the PSU book store as well as other retailers and bike shops in town. The map provides important route and safety information to help people travel and explore the region on bike.

[Learn more about Regional Travel Options grants](#)

[Check out the new Bike There! map](#)

[Find out more about the benefits of biking](#)

[Get information about bike parking and bicycling at PSU](#)

[Take a tour of untimely departures at Lone Fir](#)

October 18, 2010 8:20 AM



Annual event takes place Sunday, Oct.

31

Purchase tickets online to reserve your spot on the popular Tour of Untimely Departures at Metro's Lone Fir Pioneer Cemetery. Meet some of Lone Fir Pioneer Cemetery's residents at their graves and hear the unusual circumstances surrounding their deaths. Ghostly guides share the history of Lone Fir as they take you through the cemetery on a path lit with candles.

Hosted by the Friends of Lone Fir Cemetery, the tours last approximately 45 minutes and start hourly at 6, 7 and 8 p.m. Admission is \$10 per person, \$15 per family. Tickets will be available at the gate on a first-come, first-served basis. To reserve your spot and choose your tour time, buy your tickets online at Tickets West (processing fees apply). Tour proceeds support education, preservation and restoration efforts; no refunds available.

[Register online](#)

[Learn more about Lone Fir Pioneer Cemetery](#)

[Metro's business operations get sustainability boost](#)

October 18, 2010 8:18 AM

The Metro Council has approved a plan to further reduce the agency's environmental footprint. The new plan, addressing greenhouse gas emissions, toxics use, waste generation, water consumption and habitat, aims to transform Metro's internal government operations into a sustainable business model largely by year 2025.

Key goals, with most slated for completion by 2025 – or 2050, in the case of greenhouse gas emissions – include the following:

- greenhouse gas emissions – reduce direct and indirect greenhouse gas emissions to 80 percent below 2008 levels
- toxics – eliminate the use or emissions of persistent bioaccumulative toxics and other priority toxic and hazardous substances
- waste – recover all waste for recycling or composting and reduce overall generation of waste
- water – reduce water use to 50 percent below 2008 levels
- habitat – ensure that Metro's parks, trails and developed properties positively contribute to healthy, functioning urban ecosystems and watershed health and that its natural areas reflect healthy, functioning ecosystems.

Metro's plan, which includes nearly 100 actions to reach the listed goals, builds on current successes such as the Oregon Convention Center's LEED certification, the Oregon Zoo's composting of animal waste and the Metro Regional Center's use of 100 percent renewable power.

Read the Metro Sustainability Plan, and learn about other

initiatives to reduce waste, conserve natural resources and curb greenhouse gas emissions on Metro's website. [Go](#)

[**A personal message from Rex Burkholder – Supporting and promoting diversity at Metro and in our region**](#)

October 13, 2010 12:00 AM

I would like to report on some recent work by Metro to engage and involve a broader cross-section of our community, including a major strengthening of Metro's Diversity Action Plan. As Metro Council liaison to the Diversity Action Team, I am proud of the hard work and strong commitment Metro staff put into a significant update of our plan that commits Metro to serve everyone better.

Metro's Diversity Action Plan upholds Metro's value of Respect and calls on Metro to better reflect the community we serve. The Diversity Action Plan identifies strategies and actions to increase diversity and cultural competence at Metro in four key areas: employee recruitment and retention; internal awareness and sensitivity; procurement; and committee membership and public involvement.

[Read Metro's values](#)

For the first time we are surveying our employees to establish a baseline of employee attitudes and perceptions on diversity, assess how these attitudes impact and shape Metro's organizational culture, and to determine next steps for implementing our diversity goals. It is important to understand the range of diversity within Metro and how we are or are not meeting the needs of our employees and constituents.

We are also renewing our efforts to reach out to communities of color to include them in an ongoing discussion about a regional Community Investment Strategy. Chief Operating Officer Michael Jordan, Councilor Robert Liberty and I presented this idea to members of the Coalition of Communities of Color, a group founded nearly 10 years ago, to address disparities and inequities among services experienced by minority communities. While this was a beginning step in establishing ongoing relationships with these communities, it was an important one. The consistent message that was shared during

the meeting was the importance of continuous engagement with, and involvement of, communities of color.

[Learn about the Community Investment Strategy](#)

I very much value the diverse communities in this region. It is imperative that Metro reflects the communities we serve: whom we employ, the plans we create and the programs we run. If you are a part of a community that has had limited access to Metro but are interested in learning more, please contact me and I can connect you with the right people. My e-mail address is rex.burkholder@oregonmetro.gov and phone number is 503-797-1546. I also regularly post important items and personal updates to my newsfeed. Please subscribe to my personal newsfeed at www.oregonmetro.gov/news.

[Fascinating fungi: exploring the Northwest's mushrooms](#)

October 7, 2010 9:43 AM

While it may be hard to believe after the incredibly sunny week we've had, fall rains are just around the corner and following the rain is a bountiful crop of mushrooms. The forests of the Pacific Northwest are an ideal home for mushrooms that thrive in our cool, wet fall.

As Metro Naturalist James Davis shows us in another of his "Nature Minute" videos, a brief walk through the wooded trails of Oxbow Regional Park can uncover countless mushrooms of all shapes, sizes and colors. Oregon is home to many types of coveted edible mushrooms including chanterelle, white matsutake, morel, porcini, lobster and Oregon truffle.

If you want to learn more about Oregon's awesome mushrooms and even pick some for your own dinner, join mycologist Gary Slone for a two-hour class that ends with a walk on an easy trail in the old growth forest at Oxbow Regional Park Sunday, Oct. 10. Gary will discuss mushroom classification and edibility before participants gather, identify and compare specimens. Beginning and experienced 'shroomers' age 12 and older are welcome. You can even bring your own mushroom specimens for identification.

[Register for the mushroom walk](#)

If you can't make it this weekend, don't fret: Later this month,

wild salmon will complete their trek up the Sandy River and lay another generation of eggs in the river's bed. After celebrating the salmon's homecoming, you can join James Davis on fungi-focused walks through Oxbow from 2:30 to 4 p.m. on Saturdays Oct. 16 and Saturday Oct. 23.

[Read more about the salmon homecoming](#)

[Learn more about the Pacific Northwest's mushrooms](#)

[Organic art installations invite community interaction at Lone Fir](#)

September 30, 2010 8:03 AM

Metro's Lone Fir Pioneer Cemetery to host "Still" and "Without Name" Oct. 1 to 15

Sculptures of fairy-tale proportions will be installed on the grounds of Metro's Lone Fir Pioneer Cemetery. The exhibit begins with a reception 5 to 10 p.m. Friday, Oct. 1, 2010.

"Still," created by Jacomijn Schellevis and Micki Skudlarczyk, is an edible art installation built of a crystallized sugar solution. "Still" invites the community to celebrate the beauty of life and its inevitable process; the edible sugary installation will be slowly dismantled by people who want to take a piece of this art with them.

Schellevis and Skudlarczyk are fascinated by death. Their passion is the beauty of burial, its quietude of organic process and its significance in world culture.

The artists also plan to install a boat made out of salt in Block 14, the portion of the cemetery that is the burial ground for Chinese railroad workers, many of whom lived in the area in the late 1800s and early 1900s, as well as pioneer era mental health patients of Dr. James Hawthorne. The history of the Chinese burials that took place on Block 14 and sensitivity to the beliefs and rituals for what remains there are the inspiration for this installation, called "Without Name." With this work the artists hope to illuminate the beauty of the belief that the spirits of the dead are carried in boats to the Western Paradise. Much like the Block 14 memorial design, the arched path in the sculpture represents a boat that carries the spirits to the west. Extra care will be taken not to harm the soil in Block 14. The exhibit begins

with a reception 5 to 10 p.m. Friday, Oct. 1, 2010.

Founded in 1855, Lone Fir Pioneer Cemetery is located between Southeast 20th and 26th avenues and Stark and Morrison streets. Today, the cemetery is a wooded, landscaped arboretum in the heart of Portland. More than 25,000 people are buried there, from the familiar (Curry, Dekum, Hawthorne, Lane, Lovejoy, Macleay) to the unknown.

Another opportunity to visit Lone Fir Pioneer Cemetery is the annual Tour of Untimely Departures on Halloween night. This popular event allows visitors to "meet" some of the cemetery's residents at their graves and hear the unusual circumstances surrounding their untimely departures. Ghostly guides share the history of Lone Fir as they take you through the cemetery on a path lit with candles. [Learn more](#)

To view "Still" and "Without Name" enter Lone Fir on Southeast 26th Avenue, between Stark and Morrison streets. Pets are not allowed in any of Metro's parks or natural areas, including cemeteries. Getting there: Tri-Met stop IDs 4023, 4024 and 7216.

[Learn more about the artists](#)

[Learn more about Lone Fir Pioneer Cemetery](#)

[Learn more about the plans for Block 14](#)

[From landfill to wetlands to planning our future: Metro events Sept. 29 – Oct. 4](#)

September 28, 2010 1:22 PM

Join Metro this week for a rare tour of Smith and Bybee Wetlands to find out how Metro and its partners are working to restore and enhance the unique habitat at Smith and Bybee Wetlands. If marshy adventures aren't your cup of tea, watch for birds at Cooper Mountain or explore the natural beauty of Clear Creek. The best part is, most of the events are low-cost or free, and registration can be completed online. Follow the links below for more information.

[Community Investment Strategy briefing](#)

6:30 to 8 p.m. Wednesday Sept. 29, 2010
Hillsboro Civic Center

[Capital grants workshop](#)

7 to 9 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 29, 2010
Beaverton City Hall
Note: advance registration encouraged

[Community Investment Strategy open house](#)

5 to 7 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 30
Gresham City Hall

[Beginning bird watching class at Cooper Mountain](#)

7 to 9:30 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 30
Cooper Mountain Nature Park
Note: advance registration and \$8 fee required in advance

[Transportation Policy Alternatives Committee](#)

9:30 a.m. to noon, Friday, Oct. 1
Metro Regional Center

[Capital grants workshop](#)

9 to 11 a.m., Saturday, Oct. 2
Metro Regional Center
Note: advance registration encouraged

[Smith and Bybee Wetlands open house and tour](#)

9 a.m. to noon, Saturday, Oct. 2
St. Johns Landfill, 9387 N. Columbia Blvd.
Note: arrive early to reserve your spot on the tour bus

[Clear Creek Natural Area tour](#)

12:30 to 3:30 p.m., Saturday, Oct. 2
Clear Creek Natural Area
Note: advance registration and \$5 fee required

[EOregon's Environmental Concert of Oregon](#)

4 to 11 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 2

Oregon Convention Center

[Community enhancement grants workshop](#)

7 to 9 p.m. Monday, Oct. 4
Friendly House, 1737 NW 26th Ave
Note: advance registration encouraged

More things to do brought to you by GreenScene

Metro GreenScene provides a comprehensive calendar of free and low-cost nature activities, gardening workshops, volunteer ventures and community events offered all around the region by Metro and dozens of other organizations.

[View the online calendar](#)
[Visit the GreenScene page](#)
[Follow on Facebook](#)
[Follow on Twitter](#)

[Last chance to weigh in on Community Investment Strategy](#)

September 27, 2010 4:06 PM

This fall, the Metro Council will make decisions that will make a difference for our neighborhoods and communities. Your opinions about how and where the region should invest in important public structures and systems and how, where and if we should expand the urban growth boundary to accommodate future residential and employment growth will help shape important decisions by Metro and your local city or county.

On Aug. 10, Metro Chief Operating Officer Michael Jordan proposed a set of recommendations called the Community Investment Strategy that is designed to pave the way for innovative new partnerships among government and business. The recommendations call for our community to:

- invest in safe, livable communities
- promote economic development and good jobs
- protect our natural areas
- reduce inefficiency, foster innovation and demand accountability.

[Read the Community Investment Strategy](#)

The deadline for providing comments about the best role for the public sector in implementing these recommendations is this **Friday, Oct. 1**. Comments can be made through an online survey, via e-mail to 2040@oregonmetro.gov or written comments can be sent to Metro – Community Investment Strategy, 600 NE Grand Avenue, Portland, OR 97232.

[Take the survey](#)

You may also get more information and provide comments at the seventh and final open house on the Community Investment Strategy from **5 to 7 p.m. this Thursday, Sept. 30** at Gresham City Hall Conference Center, 1333 NW Eastman Parkway in Gresham.

[Metro closes more than half of the Sellwood Gap, allowing the Springwater Corridor to expand in Southeast Portland](#)

September 24, 2010 10:52 AM

Trail extension will improve public safety, make commuting easier and bolster outdoor recreation

Runners, walkers and cyclists needn't scrutinize trail plans to name the region's most notorious missing piece: the Sellwood Gap, which forces people off the Springwater Corridor for a mile in its namesake neighborhood in Southeast Portland.

That gap will shrink dramatically, thanks to an agreement reached this week by Metro and the Oregon Pacific Railroad Co. More than half a mile of trail will be built alongside the train tracks the company operates, allowing commuters and outdoor enthusiasts to take the trail between Southeast Umatilla Street and Southeast 13th Avenue.

“By definition, trails connect places,” said Acting Metro Council President Carlotta Collette. “But they also connect many of the issues that Metro tackles, from health and safety to land-use and transportation. Closing more than half the Sellwood Gap is a prime example, improving public safety and inspiring people to get out and exercise.”

Metro will work with the City of Portland to arrange design and construction for this section of the Springwater, which is one of the Portland metropolitan area's signature trails. If the Sellwood

Gap is fully closed, visitors will be able to traverse 20 miles from central Portland through Milwaukie and Gresham to Boring without having to use public streets.

The Springwater Corridor is one of 27 focal points of Metro's voter-approved 2006 natural areas bond measure, which is designed to protect water quality, wildlife habitat and recreation opportunities for future generations – and one of several so-called “target areas” that highlight trails. Metro has also made progress this year on the Fanno Creek Greenway in Tigard, the Marine Drive Trail near the Portland–Gresham border and the Willamette River Greenway in North Portland.

“Closing trail gaps typically involves small pieces of property, but it makes a huge impact on neighborhoods across the region,” said Metro Councilor Robert Liberty, who represents portions of Southeast, Southwest and Northeast Portland in District 6. “The extension of the Springwater Corridor will be felt right away by residents of the Sellwood neighborhood and the thousands of people who use the Springwater Corridor.”

Metro's agreement with Oregon Pacific, which was finalized Tuesday for about \$618,000, also included the sale of a 5,000–square–foot property in the Sellwood area. The land did not further Metro's natural area goals, and its sale to Oregon Pacific helped secure the rights to extend the Springwater Corridor.

[PCPA throws open the drawers to Northwest artists](#)

September 24, 2010 10:50 AM



A sample of the imagery at the "Out of the Drawers" show.

The Portland Center for the Performing arts is digging deep into Blue Sky Gallery's voluminous drawers full of stunning photography from Northwest artists for its "Out of the Drawers" show. Starting Oct. 7, guests to PCPA's Art Bar and Bistro can peruse photographs from more than 40 Northwest artists who have participated in Blue Sky Gallery's Juried "viewing drawers."

By showing photographs in drawers throughout the gallery rather than on walls or from ceilings, Blue Sky Gallery's Northwest Photography Viewing Drawers program takes a non-traditional approach to art display. Participating artists contribute 10 photographs to the archival drawers which are open for gallery visitors to explore at their leisure. Photographs in the exhibit represent some of the most interesting, beautiful and creative imagery from regional photographers in recent years.

More than 40 photographs will be pulled from the drawers and displayed in both the PCPA Art Bar and Bistro as well as in Portland City Hall. "Out of the Drawers" will be on view at PCPA from Oct. 7 - Jan. 3 and at City Hall from Sept. 29 to Jan. 3. A special reception will be held in the Antoinette Hatfield Hall of the PCPA on Oct. 7 from 6 to 9 p.m. The public is invited.

[Learn more about the Pacific Northwest Photography Viewing Drawers](#)

[Don't miss out on the last Sunday Parkways of the season](#)

September 24, 2010 10:48 AM

Metro, the City of Portland and Kaiser Permanente wrap up a great Sunday Parkways season on Sunday, September 26.

The last Sunday Parkways of 2010 will roll into Northwest Portland this weekend. The car-free event will close streets to vehicle traffic along a 4.5-mile route. Two loops connecting Southwest Stark Street, Old Town, Chinatown, Pearl and Northwest neighborhoods will be filled with booths, activities and food vendors.

Be sure to stop by Metro's Drive Less/Save More booth at Wallace Park. You'll get free walking and biking safety resources and information. Show off your smile and style with a free souvenir photo at the Bike There! photo station. The station is

powered by renewable energy. Maybe that will lure out the sun for the day.

Parking, often in short supply in Northwest Portland, will be a particular challenge for this event. If you don't live in walking distance to the route, you're encouraged to bike in or take the bus or streetcar to the area.

For two years now, Sunday Parkways events have let Portlanders experience their city from a new perspective, meet their neighbors and enjoy all kinds of entertainment along the way.

[Visit the Sunday Parkways website](#)

[Check out Bike There! souvenir photos from the last Sunday Parkways](#)

[Find information about Metro's walking and cycling resources](#)

[A personal message from Rex Burkholder](#)

September 13, 2010 3:32 PM

Over the last year, Metro has been hard at work developing a toolkit to help our employees work out how to calculate the greenhouse gas emissions created by policies or projects. Last week, we unveiled the Greenhouse Gas Emissions Analysis Toolkit, which gives employees a range of software products and analytical tools to use. I am proud of our staff, which includes Nuin Tara Key, Mike Hogle, and Heidi Rahn, among others, and thank them for developing this groundbreaking product.

The development of the toolkit is an important step in helping Metro and the region to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions. The first of its kind in the nation, the toolkit will serve as a model for local and state government as well as the rest of the country. This task wasn't easy – it's difficult to find one tool to calculate emissions across the various Metro departments, which include, long range transportation and land use planning and visitor venues such as the Oregon Zoo, the Oregon Convention Center and our many parks and natural areas! A team of interdisciplinary staff came to the conclusion that offering a range of tools would work best. The toolkit directs Metro staff to look at the scope and scale of a project, and then to select the right tool for the analysis. It also calls for Metro to

count emissions from raw materials production and eventual disposal – known as the "life cycle" – whenever possible.

This development of this toolkit is one of many things that Metro is doing to address climate change. I encourage you to check out our website to learn more.

[Learn more about Metro's efforts to address climate change](#)

Metro Central Enhancement grant cycle begins

Do you belong to a nonprofit organization? Represent a school or neighborhood group? Are you looking for ways to strengthen your neighborhood and make it more sustainable? Metro's community enhancement grant program may be able to help. The program benefits areas directly affected by the region's garbage disposal facilities.

Groups in north and northwest Portland should consider applying for a Metro Central grant today.

The deadline to submit is 5 p.m. Monday, Nov. 9. Applications and more information are available on Metro's website at www.oregonmetro.gov/grants. A free, grant-writing workshop takes place from 7 to 9 p.m. Monday, Oct. 4. Get details and reserve your place today by calling Kristin at 503-797-1834.

At this time, we are also recruiting residents of Linnton to fill a position on Metro's Central grant selection committee. Current and past committee members have commented that their work, though limited in scope and time commitment, is challenging and very rewarding. For more information about Metro's grant program or to learn more about serving on Metro's grant selection committee, contact Karen Blauer 503-797-1506 or karen.blauer@oregonmetro.gov.

Bike Commute Challenge

Don't forget, September is Bike Commute Challenge month! Sponsored by the Bicycle Transportation Alliance, this is a friendly competition to encourage cycling to work. Metro and Drive Less/Save More are proud to be sponsors of this amazing collective effort that helps promote using your bike to get around. For more information, visit <http://bikecommutechallenge.com>.

OCC celebrates 20 years of premier service

This month, the Oregon Convention Center celebrates its twentieth year of operation, an important and historic milestone for the center and the region. Fifteen million people have attended more than 10,000 conventions, meetings, consumer trade shows and special events, infusing hundreds of millions of dollars into the local economy. Since it opened direct spending generated for the Portland metropolitan region totals \$3.8 billion, with more than \$235 million in taxes going to cities, counties, Metro, and the State of Oregon. An average of 5,500 full time equivalent jobs have been sustained annually in hotels, restaurants, food and beverage suppliers, transportation, retail, security services, airlines and in many other areas of the local hospitality industry. Visit OCC's web page at www.oregoncc.org for more information. If you haven't had the opportunity to see the convention center, consider taking a walking tour to view its vast array of artwork, unique architectural features and sustainability achievements. The next tour is scheduled for Thursday, Sept. 16 at 10:00 a.m. To register, please call 503-731-7858 by Sept. 14.

[Metro to turn asphalt green on PARK\(ing\) Day](#)

September 10, 2010 2:56 PM



Hundreds of parking spaces will be turned into mini-parks on Sept. 17

Mini-parks will be sprouting up in parking spaces across the metropolitan area on Friday, Sept. 17. The parks, which are part of a worldwide event called PARK(ing) Day, will highlight the impact even small patches of green have on a dense urban environment.

In the Portland-Vancouver area, PARK(ing) Day helps celebrate and promote The Intertwine – the region's remarkable network of parks, trails and natural areas. Started in 2005 by ReBar, a San Francisco art and design studio, PARK(ing) Day inspires people to turn metered parking spots into temporary parks

where people can congregate, socialize and play for the day. It's grown into a world-wide, open-source experiment showcasing the need for more green space in urban areas.

Metro is proud to partner with The Intertwine and the Lloyd Transportation Management Association (TMA) to transform parking spaces on Northeast Eighth Avenue and Northeast Multnomah Street into a relaxing park celebrating biking and walking. Visitors can enjoy refreshments, kick back in the park and learn how walking and biking are great ways to get around and enjoy the outdoors.

The Metro/Lloyd TMA park is one of more than 30 parks you can visit in Portland and Vancouver on September 17 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. For a full list of parks, visit www.theintertwine.com.

Hotel Monaco in downtown Portland will host a lunch-time bike tour of several of the parks. The tour pedals off from Hotel Monaco, 506 SW Washington Street, at noon. Pedal Bike Tours will lead the 45-minute, family friendly ride and provide complimentary bicycles for those who need one for the tour. Those bikes must be reserved by Thursday, September 16. After the ride, the Red Star Tavern & Roast House will provide a pulled pork sandwich lunch for riders. A \$5 donation for The Trust for Public Land is suggested for those taking advantage of the lunch.

"We feel PARK(ing) Day is a perfect platform to talk about The Intertwine because of its mix of creative fun balanced with a serious mission and call-to-action," said Karen MacDonald, with The Trust for Public Land, a partner of The Intertwine Alliance.

The Intertwine Alliance consists of organizations, public agencies, private businesses and nonprofits that work side by side toward a common mission - celebrating, promoting and improving The Intertwine.

[Get information about The Intertwine and view a map of local PARK\(ing\) Day parks](#)

[Learn more about the Hotel Monaco bike tour of PARK\(ing\) Day parks](#)

[Check out the national PARK\(ing\) Day website](#)

[Find out more about ReBar, the inventor of PARK\(ing\) Day](#)

[Metro welcomes new interns from De La Salle North's Corporate Internship Program](#)

September 7, 2010 11:14 AM

Starting Tuesday Sep. 7, Metro will welcome four new interns from North Portland's De La Salle North Catholic High School. Olivia Martin, Nyalual Beng, Keisha Johnson and Vishal Nguyen will each work about five days a month at the Metro Regional Center as part of the school's Corporate Internship Program, which places students of diverse backgrounds at cooperating agencies and businesses. The students will join the Metro Council office team for the next ten months to provide support to Metro Councilors and office staff.

Participating in the Corporate Internship Program is an outgrowth of Metro's ongoing commitment to increasing diversity among its workforce and to improving opportunities for underserved communities. The interns, who are between the ages of 14 and 17, will perform basic operational and clerical duties for Metro councilors, senior managers and Council Office staff. In addition they will be active members of the Council Office team, learning public policy processes and applying their experience as representatives of Metro to De La Salle. Participating students are assigned specific days to work and will also work on alternating Mondays.

Modeled after the Chicago area's acclaimed Cristo Rey High School, De La Salle North is a private catholic high school designed to provide college preparatory courses and unique work experiences for underserved students in the Portland metropolitan area. To help students afford the cost of tuition and allow them unique work experiences, De La Salle North places students in professional internships across the region where they gain valuable work skills, bolster their resumes and address their financial aid needs.

[Learn more about Metro's efforts to promote diversity](#)

[Read about De La Salle North's Corporate Internship Program](#)

[Get rolling this month with the Bike Commute Challenge](#)

September 2, 2010 1:44 PM



Starting today, join thousands of individuals and workplaces competing to log the most bike rides to work this month during the Bike Commute Challenge.

The Bike Commute Challenge is a friendly competition between work sites to encourage employees to bike to work. It's easy, fun and free. To participate, register online and then ride to receive discounts at local bike shops and more.

Log seven bike commutes this month and earn bike shop discounts. Each week during the Challenge, the BTA will draw names for a prize for anyone who has logged at least one trip. Prizes include restaurant gift certificates, gear from Columbia Sportswear, Bike Gallery, Keen and more. Share why your commute is a breath of fresh air by sending your story and a photo of your team to the BTA.

Metro and Drive Less/Save More are proud to be sponsors of this collective effort to support clean air and healthy communities.

[Get discounts at bike shops across the state](#)

[Learn more about the Bike Commute Challenge and log your trips](#)

[Consult Metro's Bike There! map to find the safest commute route](#)

[Check out the BTA's resources page for commuter tips, links to bike maps and information about bikes and transit and more](#)

[Metro to host community investment strategy open house in North Portland](#)

August 30, 2010 5:17 PM

Metro has added another open house to answer questions and take public comment regarding Chief Operating Officer Michael Jordan's recommended community investment strategy. The event will be held at the St. Johns Community Center in North Portland on Tuesday Sep. 21 from 5 to 7 p.m. Investment and economic growth in the North Portland area is important to the region's continued success and Metro hopes to hear from residents how the regional government can help improve their community.

[Find out more about the event](#)

Released Aug. 10, Jordan's report calls for a regional approach to community investment for everything from pipes to parks to green jobs. Public comments and ideas about community investments as well as about potential urban growth boundary expansion areas will help inform decisions this fall. Additional open houses will be held in Lents, Wilsonville, Sherwood, Oregon City and Hillsboro.

[View the complete list of open houses](#)

[Review the community investment strategy recommendations](#)

[**Metro, neighbors celebrate success of north Portland's Baltimore Woods**](#)

August 20, 2010 2:00 PM

Join Metro Councilor Rex Burkholder this Saturday to celebrate a new nature corridor in North Portland – made possible in part by Metro's Nature in Neighborhoods grant program.

An open house and used book sale will highlight the Baltimore Woods project, an effort to protect 30 acres of undeveloped land between the Cathedral Park neighborhood and the Willamette River.

Advocates got a good start this summer, when the City of Portland purchased three parcels just north of Cathedral Park, totaling one acre. A \$158,000 Metro grant went toward the total cost of about \$475,000.

The properties will help protect rare oak trees and enhance the nature experience for bicyclists, walkers and joggers who will someday use this section of the Willamette River Greenway Trail

envisioned along the adjacent street. City agencies, land trusts, nonprofit organizations and Metro have come together to promote restoration and long-term stewardship in the Baltimore Woods corridor.

Metro's Nature in Neighborhoods capital grants reward innovative approaches to balancing development and conservation and improving ecology in urban areas. Since the program began in 2008, Metro has handed out a total of \$3.3 million – including the Baltimore Woods grant, in the most recent round of awards. Capital grants are funded by Metro's voter-approved 2006 natural areas bond measure.

The Baltimore Woods open house and book sale will take place from 1 to 4 p.m. Saturday at the Portland Bureau of Environmental Services water lab adjacent to Cathedral Park, at 6543 N. Burlington St. Guests can learn about Baltimore Woods, purchase used books to support the project and watch a historical reenactment of the Lewis and Clark expedition.

[Learn more about Baltimore Woods](#)

[Read about Metro's Nature in Neighborhood capital grants program](#)

[Construction begins on veterinary center at Oregon Zoo](#)

August 19, 2010 11:24 AM

New facility is first of several to be funded by 2008 zoo bond

Visits to the doctor will soon be much more pleasant for mammals, fish, birds and reptiles at the Oregon Zoo. Construction is expected to start later this month on a new Veterinary Medical Center -- the first new facility funded by the voter-approved 2008 zoo bond. The center is expected to be completed by summer of 2011.

The zoo's old vet facilities, built in 1966, have been remodeled and retrofitted several times but cannot accommodate the medical equipment, surfaces and temperature controls available today for treating the many species under the care of the zoo's veterinary staff. As doctors conduct checkups and treat ailments of snakes, tigers, bears and frogs, they need to adjust the conditions to suit the animal. Features of the new building include heated and rubberized floors, holding areas designed

specifically to accommodate different species, and adjustable air and water temperatures.

The new medical center will have more than 15,000 square feet dedicated to advanced veterinary treatment. The facility's efficient floor plan will allow staff to easily coordinate medical treatments, surgeries and other procedures. It combines a veterinary clinic and quarantine area where new animals arriving at the zoo get health checks and are observed for a month or so prior to entering their long-term zoo homes. Through closed-circuit monitors and large viewing windows, students will be able to learn about science and conservation by watching surgery firsthand. This same technology will record surgeries and other procedures for educational purposes and provide the means for around-the-clock remote observation of animals in treatment.

While contributing to the health of zoo animals, the facility also is sensitive to the environment. The project is expected to receive LEED silver certification from the U.S. Green Building Council. Rain will be harvested from the roof and stored in a 30,000-gallon tank to be used for washing down animal areas and flushing toilets. Fresh water will be solar-heated and there will be an energy-saving electrical system. Much of the material used in the building's construction will come from recycled sources and 90 percent of construction waste will be recycled.

Trees that surround the new facility will remain; however, some trees must be removed from the building site. Skanska USA Building Inc. of Beaverton, the project's general contractor, is working with the Portland Water Bureau's natural resources staff to reuse these trees in stream-habitat restoration projects.

The zoo's old quarantine facility will be demolished to make room for the new medical center. Demo work, tree removal and site excavation are expected to start Aug. 26. Zoo visitors should be aware that trucks will be hauling soil, building materials and logs from the site for about two weeks. There will be some noise and dust. For the safety of visitors and animals, the Family Farm exhibit will be closed for a few hours at a time during this period.

The zoo is a service of Metro and is dedicated to its mission of inspiring the community to create a better future for wildlife.

[Sunday Parkways set to sizzle in Southeast Portland](#)

August 13, 2010 4:14 PM



Slather on the sunscreen. Grab plenty of water and a friend. Head to the Southeast Portland Sunday Parkways this weekend on Aug. 15. The temperatures will be rising – as will the fun factor – as the car-free festival helps people get out and explore their community by walking, biking, rolling and running.

Visit Metro's Drive Less/Save More booth at Colonel Summers Park for free resources to help you get moving. Walking and biking for short trips, instead of driving, benefits your pocketbook by saving money otherwise spent on gas, parking and your vehicle. It's also great for your health and the planet's.

Check out Metro's Bike There! souvenir photo station powered by renewable energy. Bring your family and friends into the free photo booth and get a memento that captures the fun of Sunday Parkways.

Metro, the City of Portland and Kaiser Permanente happily sponsor the Sunday Parkways series to help people connect with their community, meet their neighbors, get exercise and have some fun.

[Find out more about the Sunday Parkways events](#)

[Learn about Metro's Walk There! and Bike There! resources](#)

[Metro's facility earns top peer recognition](#)

August 13, 2010 10:21 AM



Oregon Convention Center Executive Director Jeff Blosser showcases the 2010 Venue Excellence Award.

Awarded for its leadership in community service, operational excellence, and safety and security, Metro's Oregon Convention Center (OCC) was celebrated at the recent convention, exhibition and performing arts centers industry conference and trade show in Houston, Texas, by the receiving the 2010 Venue Excellence Award.

Long-time OCC Executive Director Jeff Blosser believes the center's recognition by its peers – the first award of its kind – is due to the center's mission of making the most of the community's resources while striving to exceed client expectations through exceptional customer service, an especially difficult task during an economic recession.

The OCC's innovative business strategies were credited by the judging panel in distinguishing it from its competitors. One example is the decision to be the first to pursue LEED-EB (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design – Existing Buildings) certification nearly a decade ago, a time in which no other convention centers considered LEED or sustainable operations a legitimate business expense. Achieving LEED-EB certification in 2003 and LEED-EB Silver in 2008 positioned OCC as the industry leader in operating sustainably and helped set a standard among venues nationwide. OCC's collaboration with Portland's destination marketing agency, Travel Portland, to create an online "green meetings toolkit," offering ways for convention and meeting planners to arrange environmentally-conscious events, was also an industry first and contributed to a shift in client needs and expectations throughout the country.

OCC's early engagement of social media strategies, including the use of Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn, to engage meeting planners and convention attendees was also mentioned.

Other unique initiatives, such as partnering with the center's largest collective bargaining unit to provide financial incentives to employees who meet annual recycling goals, was noted as an example of venue excellence. The OCC's commitment to community service, as evidenced by neighborhood clean-up projects during staff retreats and the joint partnership with its food and beverage contractor, ARAMARK/Giacometti Partners, to provide workforce training opportunities to disadvantaged individuals, also received high marks by the judging panel.

More information about OCC and the Venue Excellence Award can be found at www.oregoncc.org.

[Metro Council President David Bragdon resigns post](#)

August 11, 2010 3:28 PM

Bragdon will leave office four months early, capping legacy of sustainability and collaboration

David Bragdon, who has built his Metro Council presidency on sustainability and collaboration, announced Wednesday that he will leave four months early to pursue the same ideals in New York City at the invitation of Mayor Michael Bloomberg.

Beginning in mid-September, Bragdon will serve as director of long-term planning and sustainability for the nation's largest metropolis. He will lead the mayor's PlaNYC initiative to create a "greener, greater" city.

[Watch David Bragdon announce his resignation, discuss his new job and reflect on his tenure at Metro](#)

"Being able to do that is, like Metro Council President, a dream job for me," Bragdon said this week in an interview. "It involves all the issues that I care about, in a place that I really care about. It involves natural area restoration, recycling of solid waste, improved transportation, infrastructure that we need for the future."

Bragdon's last day on the Metro Council will be Sept. 7, ending nearly a dozen years at the regional government. He won a

district council seat in 1998, and was elected council president by voters across the Portland metropolitan area in 2002 and 2006. His term was scheduled to end Jan. 6.

“Based on David’s experience and skill set, he’s a perfect fit for what Mayor Bloomberg hopes to accomplish,” said Oregon State Treasurer Ted Wheeler. “I think it’s a tremendous opportunity for David and the City of New York.”

During nearly eight years at the helm of Metro, Bragdon has focused on protecting natural areas and the environment, transforming the way the region plans for growth and making the agency more collaborative and financially responsible.

Bragdon championed a \$227 million bond measure that has protected 2,500 acres – so far – for water quality, wildlife habitat and recreation opportunities. He also launched The Intertwine, a regionwide movement to create a world-class network of parks, trails and natural areas.

Under Bragdon’s leadership, the Metro Council provided landowners and local communities with a clearer vision of future growth. Metro worked with local governments to select “rural reserves” that will not be developed for half a century and “urban reserves” that make good candidates for growth.

The Metro Council has changed not just *what* the agency does, Bragdon says, but also the way it does business. He pushed a conservative approach to budgeting; called for a more efficient, collaborative staff structure; and emphasized Metro’s role as a convener rather than a regulator.

In the coming months and years, Bragdon says, he’ll follow Metro’s Community Investment Initiative – a shift toward working with the private sector to invest in the region’s future, rather than just planning for it.

“A lot of times, in this job, you’re thinking about things that won’t come to fruition for 20 or 30 years, long after you leave office,” Bragdon says. “That’s part of the appeal that makes this an interesting agency. There are always things left undone.”

Before coming to Metro, Bragdon worked in the transportation industry. He served as marine marketing manager at the Port of Portland and worked in India, China and the Soviet Union as a

cargo sales manager for Evergreen International Airlines.

Bragdon, who moved to Oregon with his family at age 12, was born in New York City. In his new job, he'll lead sweeping initiatives to improve his hometown's urban environment and establish New York as a global environmental leader.

The mayor's PlaNYC incorporates five key dimensions: land use, water, transportation, energy and air quality. Bragdon will incorporate solid waste into the plan while coordinating city agencies' work on more than 100 initiatives, such as planting 1 million trees, creating a public plaza in every community and reducing emissions from taxis and school buses.

For such a far-ranging plan, Bloomberg said, Bragdon's background at Metro was a perfect match. "With nearly a decade of experience as the leader of a respected regional planning agency, David has a rich experience looking across agencies and entities to create a vision for a sustainable future, just as we have done with PlaNYC," the mayor said.

Bragdon will officially step down as council president at noon on Sept. 7, naming Metro Councilor Carlotta Collette the acting president. After that, councilors have the option of voting on an interim president - including Collette, another one of themselves or any eligible resident of the region. Whoever serves as president will fill Bragdon's role until Jan. 6, when the winner of the November election takes over.

Bragdon is on a whirlwind trip to New York, where he will be formally introduced and meet his new staff. He returns to Portland on Thursday, in time to attend the weekly Metro Council meeting, trek to Eastern Oregon for friends' 50th wedding anniversary celebration - and start packing.

"I bet at some point this weekend, on the way to or from Baker City, it's going to start to sink in," Bragdon said. "And I'll probably get a little wistful about it."

[Learn more about David Bragdon's work at Metro](#)

[Learn more about David Bragdon's new job](#)

[**Metro chief calls for unprecedented collaboration, investment to address community needs**](#)

August 11, 2010 2:58 PM

On Aug. 10, Metro Chief Operating Officer Michael Jordan released a Community Investment Strategy that calls for our region to:

- invest in safe, livable communities
- promote economic development and good jobs
- protect our natural areas
- reduce inefficiency, foster innovation and demand accountability.

[Read the Community Investment Strategy](#)

The recommendations call for cities, counties, service districts, Metro, the state of Oregon, and businesses throughout the region to find innovative and cooperative solutions to the challenges we face; to tackle financial gaps and inefficiencies that slow progress and increase costs; to improve coordination of state, local and federal investments in roads, bridges, water systems, parks and other public structures; and to create a strategic investment plan to better leverage taxpayer dollars with private investments.

You can do your part by adding your voice to this important conversation. Learn more online, attend an open house in September and share your views with the Metro Council.

[Find out how to get involved](#)

To make it easy for you to follow our progress, Metro created a new online news service. You can now subscribe to a daily, weekly or monthly digest of Metro news; use an RSS newsreader to get items from Metro's newsfeed; or view Metro news using a web browser.

[Visit Metro news](#)

As a Metro councilor, I am keenly interested in your viewpoints on how and where we should invest as well as how, where and if we should expand the urban growth boundary to accommodate future residential and employment growth.

As a region, we all have the ability and responsibility to shape the communities we want and the economy we need. I look forward to hearing your comments and suggestions.

[Metro grants available to improve air quality, address community health issues](#)

August 3, 2010 3:33 PM



Bikers enjoying the car-free street at Sunday Parkways, funded in part by a Metro Regional Travel Options grant

Wondering how to install bike lockers in your community? Interested in creating activities that encourage people to get out of their cars and walk, ride or take transit? If so, your city, public agency or nonprofit organization may be eligible for a Regional Travel Options grant.

Metro will fund projects that improve air quality, address community health issues, reduce auto traffic and create more opportunities for walking and bicycling. Federal transportation funds are used for the grants. The grant application process begins this month to fund projects that begin in July 2011. A total of \$533,000 is available.

Previous projects funded by these grants include: the City of Portland's Sunday Parkways, the Carefree Commuter Challenge and the Bike Commute Challenge. The grants also support projects such as the installation of bike lockers at the Beaverton Transit Center, bike racks for businesses in Tigard and TriMet's Open Trip Planner, which will allow users to plan trips that combine biking, walking and transit.

Grant applicants can learn more at an informational meeting on Monday, August 16 from 10 a.m. to noon at the Metro Regional Center, 600 NE Grand Avenue in Portland. For more information, contact Regional Travel Options at 503-813-7566 or rto@oregonmetro.gov.

Regional Travel Options carries out strategies that encourage and support alternatives to driving alone, such as the Drive

Less/Save More awareness campaign, the Walk There! and Bike There! programs, MetroVanpool and CarpoolMatchNW.org. Reducing the number of vehicles on the road cuts vehicle emissions, decreases congestion, extends the life cycle of existing roadways and promotes a healthier community.

[Learn more about Regional Travel Options grants](#)

[A personal message from Rex Burkholder – Public asked to shape climate prosperity strategy](#)

July 30, 2010 2:28 PM

I'm inviting you to provide feedback on an emerging regional strategy to turn the climate change challenge into an economic growth opportunity. You may remember reading in a previous message about the draft strategy being developed by the Portland Metro Climate Prosperity Project. This draft strategy, referred to as the "Greenprint" has been released and we now need your feedback.

The "Greenprint" was first released at Greenlight Greater Portland's third annual economic summit on June 23. Developed by a working group formed in 2009, it outlines a strategy to simultaneously strengthen the regional economy, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and maintain a focused leadership position in the global green economy. I hope you can participate in a listening session that takes place Thursday, Aug. 12 from 3 to 5 p.m. at Nike's Nolan Ryan Building, 1 Bowerman Dr., Beaverton, to hear more about it. To learn more about the event or to RSVP, go to Portland Sustainability Institute's website at www.pdxinstitute.org/climateprosperity. This link will also lead you to a survey to provide feedback if you are unable to attend the session on Aug. 12.

The Portland Metro Climate Prosperity Project is a partnership of businesses, educational institutions, nonprofit organizations and governments, including Metro. Portland is one of four pilot regions participating in the national Climate Prosperity Project, and is only the second to release a "Greenprint," following Silicon Valley and preceding Denver and St. Louis. Priorities identified in the draft were developed after consulting more than 150 business, higher education and work force leaders.

It is my hope that moving forward as outlined in the "Greenprint" will keep the Portland metropolitan area on the

cutting edge of urban sustainability and clean technology while making our region more prosperous for everyone. We have the leadership and the capability to be a national model of innovative, profitable and clean economic development. By focusing resources on green technology and talent, we will maintain livable communities, attract jobs and develop a sustainable economic industry.

[Read a summary of the Greenprint strategy](#)

[Download the full report](#)

[Learn more about the Climate Prosperity Project](#)

[Visit the Portland Sustainability Institute's website and take a survey](#)

[**Councilor Burkholder wins annual legislative paddle race**](#)

July 23, 2010 3:44 PM



Metro Councilor Rex Burkholder wins first place in solo division. (photo courtesy Tualatin Riverkeepers)

Metro continued its dominance at the 4th Annual Mayor's Challenge and Legislative Paddle race hosted by Tualatin Riverkeepers and Tigard Mayor Craig Dirksen. Metro Councilor Rex Burkholder brought home the honorary paddle for his first place performance in the solo division of the annual race organized to raise awareness and encourage conservation of the Tualatin River's natural beauty. Previous winners Council President David Bragdon and Councilor Carl Hosticka placed third in the tandem division.

For the past four years, the Tualatin River Keepers have invited local elected officials to compete in the mile-long competition to promote their conservation efforts on the Tualatin River. This

year's race aimed to advocate for the Tualatin River Water Trail, a concerted effort by the Riverkeepers to provide public launch points every five miles along the river. By increasing public access to the river, people will have greater opportunities to explore previously hidden parts of the scenic area. Tualatin Riverkeepers hopes to install public launch points at four locations along the river, including one in Metro's natural area off of Munger Lane.

"The Tualatin River is one of the most beautiful areas in our region. It's pretty amazing to be able to paddle on a river like this yet be in an urban setting. The close-by location of this river makes it even more important to make it accessible so that more people can enjoy its beauty and peacefulness," said Councilor Burkholder.

Other elected officials participating in this event were Washington County Commissioner Dick Schouten, Mayor of Durham Gery Schirado, Mayor of Beaverton Dennis Doyle, Mayor of Hillsboro Jerry Willey, and in a show of cross-county cooperation, Clackamas County Chair Lynn Peterson teamed up with incoming Washington County Chair-elect Andy Duyck.

[Learn more about the Tualatin River keepers and the Tualatin River Water Trail](#)

[Get outside and enjoy Metro's unique events: July 23 – 28](#)

July 20, 2010 1:24 PM

If you're looking to help restore native plants or simply want to take a relaxing nature hike after work, Metro has an activity for you. This week, join Metro to explore the new Chehalem Ridge Natural Area, learn about river bugs at Oxbow Park and check out wild animals at Smith and Bybee Wetlands. Most of the events are low-cost or free, and registration can be completed online. Follow the links below for more information.

[Around the campfire at Oxbow: Old-time music with Dave and Will Elliott](#)

8:30 to 9:30 p.m. Friday, July 23
Oxbow Regional Park
Note: advance registration required

[Chehalem Ridge nature walk](#)

9:30 a.m. to noon Saturday, July 24
Chehalem Ridge Natural Area
Note: advance registration required

[Native Plant Center volunteer venture](#)

9 a.m. to 1 p.m Saturday, July 24
Metro's Native Plant Center
Note: advance registration required

[Chehalem Ridge restoration walk](#)

1 to 3 p.m. Saturday, July 24
Chehalem Ridge Natural Area
Note: advance registration required

[Lone Fir Cemetery twilight heritage celebration](#)

6 to 10:30 p.m. Saturday, July 24
Lone Fir Pioneer Cemetery

[Around the campfire at Oxbow: Folk tales, true tales and stories in between](#)

8:30 – 9:30 p.m. Saturday, July 24
Oxbow Regional Park

[Oxbow Adventures: River bugs and volcano rocks](#)

10:30 a.m. to noon Tuesday, July 27
Oxbow Regional Park
Note: advance registration required

[Twilight Tuesday at Smith and Bybee](#)

7 to 9:30 p.m. Tuesday, July 27
 Smith and Bybee Wetlands Natural Area
Note: advance registration required

[Oxbow Explorers: Survivor](#)

10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Wednesday, July 28
 Oxbow Regional Park
Note: advance registration required

More things to do brought to you by GreenScene

Metro GreenScene provides a comprehensive calendar of free and low-cost nature activities, gardening workshops, volunteer ventures and community events offered all around the region by Metro and dozens of other organizations.

[View the online calendar](#)
[Visit the GreenScene page](#)
[Follow on Facebook](#)
[Follow on Twitter](#)

[Last-minute route change for July 18th East Portland Sunday Parkways](#)

July 14, 2010 2:55 PM



Updated Sunday Parkways East map.

Springwater Corridor repaving delay forces route revision; Lents Park and Ramona Street Fair plans don't change

The City of Portland has changed the route for this weekend's Sunday Parkways in East Portland after late June rains led to delays in the repaving of the Springwater Corridor. The original four-and-a-half mile route included a loop on the Springwater

trail that Sunday Parkways organizers had hoped would be freshly repaved. The late June rains, however, pushed repaving behind schedule and that section of the trail will be closed on Sunday.

While the route change does separate Lents Park from the main loop, don't let that stop you from heading to the park or to the second annual Ramona Street Fair at 92nd and Ramona Street. You can get to the park along Steele Street, which will be closed to automobile traffic, or the I-205 biking and walking path. The fair takes place 10 a.m. until 6 p.m. despite no longer being on the Sunday Parkways loop.

Making the trek to Lents Park will sure be worth it. Stop by Metro's Drive Less, Save More booth to take advantage of free biking and walking resources including maps and safety lights as well as our popular Bike There! free souvenir photo station powered by solar and wind energy.

There will also be great food, music and activities at Lents Park including a circus for kids and Tikes Bikes, a setup with ramps and balance bikes for children ages one to five.

The City of Portland, Metro and Kaiser Permanente host the car-free Sunday Parkways events to encourage people to get outdoors, exercise and connect with their community.

[Visit the Sunday Parkways website](#)

[Get more information on the Ramona Street Fair](#)

[Learn why the Sunday Parkways event has a big impact in East Portland](#)

[**Get ready to roll on July 18 East Portland Sunday Parkways**](#)

July 14, 2010 9:33 AM

Put on a smile, grab your friends and family and stop by Metro's Drive Less/Save More booth at Lents Park on Sunday, July 18 when Sunday Parkways rolls into East Portland.

The car-free festival celebrates walking, biking, jogging, and rolling, and helps you practice using active transportation in your community. Instead of driving for your next trip or errand,

try using your own two feet (or wheels). Biking and walking are good for your health and the planet's health too.

Come to Sunday Parkways and learn more about how to get around without a car. Metro and Drive Less/Save More will have free resources, bike maps and safety lights. Also, be sure to get your photo taken at Metro's Bike There! free souvenir photo station.

The photo station is powered by a hybrid renewable energy power trailer.

Wind and sun provide the energy to run the camera, lights and computer so photos can be printed on site.

Visit many other booths, grab a bite to eat, enjoy music and the fun activities that will stretch along the East Portland route. It will make a four and a half mile loop connecting Ed Benedict, Bloomington and Lents Parks.

Two more Sunday Parkways, hosted by Metro, the City of Portland and Kaiser Permanente, will be held in August in Southeast and in September in Northwest Portland.

[Read more about Sunday Parkways](#)

[Drive Less, Save More!!!!](#)

[Metro's Lone Fir Cemetery celebrates heritage trees, tributes to Oregon settlers](#)

July 12, 2010 11:05 AM



Lone fir Cemetery preserves trees, cultural heritage.

Ceremony to include tribute to interred settlers, screening of

film on cemetery's history

Bring a picnic and enjoy an evening of music and festivities at Metro's Lone Fir Pioneer Cemetery July 24. The City of Portland is designating three trees in the 30-acre cemetery as Heritage Trees because of their historical significance. Metro, the city, and the Friends of Lone Fir are celebrating with an event on Saturday, July 24, from 6 to 10:30 p.m., during which there will be screenings of two short films about the cemetery's history and music by local artists.

The trees, to be dedicated in a 6 p.m. ceremony, include the cemetery's namesake Douglas fir; the General Joseph Lane maple; and a 100-foot incense cedar.

After the ceremonies President Bragdon will host an evening of music and movies in the cemetery. Featured artists include Ms. Onnie Irby and the Emmanuel Temple Gospel Choir performing the national anthem and gospel music. Portland musicians, Leigh Marble and Matt Sheehy will perform their original songs from the Friends of Lone Fir compilation CD, "Dearly Departed," about residents buried at Lone Fir. Proceeds from the CD are donated to a memorial planned for Block 14 in the southwest corner of the cemetery.

At twilight two documentaries featuring the cemetery will be shown. A short film "For the Living and the Dead," which debuted at this year's Portland Women's Film Festival, was created by St. Mary's Academy students Mackenzie Berkman, Erica Deffebach and Anna Klos. "Come Together Home," directed by Ivy Lin, examines the history of the Chinese community's connection to Lone Fir, including a look at how the remains of early Chinese settlers and rail workers buried at the cemetery were exhumed and returned to China.

Sponsors for the event include Metro, the City of Portland, Hui Lin Temple, the Multnomah County Cultural Coalition, Ferguson Wellman Capital Management, and the Oregon Cultural Trust.

The partners are expecting a large gathering, as they've made extra efforts to reach residents by working with neighborhood associations surrounding the cemetery. The event is free, but Metro encourages guests to bring canned food donations for the Oregon Food Bank. Pets are not allowed in any of Metro's parks or natural areas, including cemeteries. Alcohol is not

allowed at the event.

Founded in 1855, Lone Fir is located between SE 20th and SE 26th Avenues; SE Stark and SE Morrison Streets. This is a car-free event. Off street parking only, bike parking will be available or Tri-Met stop IDs 4023, 4024 and 7216.

[Get directions to Lone Fir Cemetery](#)

[Learn the history of Lone Fir](#)

[Read about the Block 14 memorial](#)

[Bike the bridge! Metro's new video takes you over the I-5 Bridge](#)

July 8, 2010 3:23 PM



Kathryn Sofich hosts Metro's "Crossing the I-5 Bridge" video.

No need to rely on a car and sit in traffic to cross the I-5 Bridge. Ride a bike instead! Metro wants you to feel safe and comfortable biking between Portland and Vancouver.

Metro and Drive Less/Save More just released the "Crossing the I-5 Bridge" video showing how to safely cross the bridge by bike. Host Kathryn Sofich of Metro brings you along as she rides the I-5 Bridge and makes her way through the Hayden Island interchange. You'll feel like you're in the rider's seat as she shows where to go, points out cautions and highlights critical areas.

The bridge does pose some challenges like narrow paths, curving railings and traffic noise. The video provides riders with important knowledge of the bridge. It gives you the sensation of what you'll experience first hand. It also shows the crossings you'll need to navigate and where not to ride as you make your way through the Hayden Island area.

Biking is a great option for getting around your community. The City of Vancouver estimates some 200 cyclists ride across the bridge daily. Riding over the bridge to commute to work or for recreation keeps you healthy, is good for the planet and saves you money and time by avoiding traffic jams.

[Check out the new "Crossing the I-5 Bridge" video now](#)

[Metro recognized for Outdoor School support – a message from Rex Burkholder](#)

July 2, 2010 12:48 PM

I'm proud to share with you that one of Metro's newer programs has received another award! The Association of Oregon Recyclers recognized the innovative and effective partnership between Metro and Outdoor School when they presented the Education Program of the Year award to Metro's waste reduction education program.

In 2008, I asked my fellow Councilors to support on-going funding for this program that works with Outdoor Schools in the region to teach young people about conserving resources and reducing how much we throw away. Since spring 2009, more than 12,000 sixth grade students learned about reducing waste as part of their Outdoor School experience. Activities are integrated throughout the week in all aspects of the programs including meals, duties, field study, recreation and evening programs. Surveys used to assess the effectiveness of the program found that students who participated were more interested and willing to increase waste reduction behaviors such as using refillable water bottles, taking reusable bags to the store and donating used items to thrift shops. Special thanks goes to program manager Freda Sherburne.

I worked hard to get this funding approved because I believe the additional waste reduction education programming will help reduce the amount of waste entering the landfills. At the same time, the additional funding for Outdoor School will ensure schools that are currently sending students to Outdoor School will be able to continue doing so as well as provide an incentive for those schools that are currently not sending students to start up their Outdoor School programs again. I will continue looking for new potential partners to leverage additional

funding to provide a stable source of funding for the region's Outdoor School program. These kinds of partnerships are an invaluable way to ensure that we are reaching the young people, who will be the environmental stewards of the future.

[Learn more about Metro's role in Outdoor School](#)

[Biking across the I-5 Bridge: Metro shows how it's done](#)

June 30, 2010 11:38 AM



Ask most people if they've ever ridden a bike outside their neighborhood, and the answer tends to be very positive. Ask people, even avid cyclists, if they've ever ridden across the I-5 Bridge, and most often you're met with raised eyebrows. Metro's new "Crossing the I-5 Bridge" video will help remove any doubt that you can safely cross, and even have fun on your way.

The City of Vancouver estimates some 200 cyclists ride across the bridge daily. What they know, and what Metro wants to show others, is that you can bike across the bridge safely and without getting lost as long as you know what to expect and where to go.



Metro and the Drive Less/Save More Campaign are producing a how-to video for crossing the I-5 Bridge on bike whether for commuting, running errands or recreation. Based on route information from the new edition of Metro's Bike There! map

and the City of Vancouver's I-5 Bridge Map, the video will show people the best way to get across the bridge and what they'll encounter as they ride.

Avid cyclist and Metro employee, Kathryn Sofich, serves as the host for the video. Although this wasn't her first time crossing the bridge on a bike, Sofich did gain new insight riding back and forth across the bridge several times on the day of production.



In the video, Sofich shares her experience, such as just how loud the traffic roaring by really is and how close the cars and trucks seem despite the metal supports that separate the bike and pedestrian path from the vehicle lane.

While biking across the bridge and through the Hayden Island interchange did pose a few difficulties, Sofich found her biggest challenge wasn't the riding.

"Creating the video was both one of the most fun as well as hardest experiences I've had here at Metro," said Sofich. "I'm used to talking bike routes with my friends and coworkers, but talking about the I-5 Bridge route to the camera was a totally new and challenging experience."



The video will take cyclists along with Sofich so they feel like they are in the driver's seat, or better yet, the rider's seat. It will explain the routes and highlight critical areas, such as where to

use crosswalks at traffic signals on Hayden Island and how to avoid accidentally merging on to the ramp to Interstate 5.

"I ride this bridge about once a month," said Metro Councilor Rex Burkholder. "For me, its a fun ride, a chance to see a new part of the region, to visit historic Vancouver, go to the Farmers Market. What most people don't realize is that Vancouver and Jantzen Beach are only a short bike ride apart and an easy commute or shopping trip. This video is a way to dispel the myth that it is too far, too hard or too dangerous to cross the Columbia by bicycle."



The video will be released next week. Visitors to both the Metro and Drive Less/Save More websites will be able to watch it and get a feel for riding across the bridge before even leaving home. While biking the bridge isn't for everyone, especially those who have a child in tow, the video may encourage other cyclists to give it a try.

"Doing the video helped me realize how easy it is to get across once you do it a time or two," said Sofich. "It will be a piece of cake now!"

[Visit Metro's Bike There! page](#)

[Learn about the Drive Less/Save More campaign](#)

[**Metro Councilors on hand for unveiling of green economic development strategy**](#)

June 24, 2010 4:14 PM

A new regional strategy for green economic development in the Portland metropolitan area identifies six action areas to grow green jobs. A working group of the Climate Prosperity Project released what is called the Greenprint strategy Tuesday, June 23, at Greenlight Greater Portland's third annual economic summit.

The Climate Prosperity Project is a partnership of businesses, non-profit organizations and local governments, including Metro. Its Greenprint draft report recommends actions ranging from identifying finance mechanisms for green innovation to developing a pipeline of green talent.

Metro Council President David Bragdon and councilors Rex Burkholder, Carlotta Collette and Kathryn Harrington were among the more than 500 local leaders and business representatives on hand to learn about the need to foster green economic development.

"We have the leadership and the capability in this region to be a national model of innovative, profitable and clean economic development," said Metro Councilor Rex Burkholder. "By focusing resources on green technology and talent, we will maintain livable communities, attract jobs and develop a sustainable economic industry. "

Although the region boasts statistics that point to a leading role nationally, other regions are poised to take over our lead with better coordination, stated Rob Bennett, executive director of the Portland Sustainability Institute. To assist with implementation of the Greenprint strategy, a Climate Prosperity Leadership Council is planned to launch this fall.

Beaverton Mayor Denny Doyle, speaking along with four other local mayors, highlighted the need for a regional focus to support local jobs and the opportunity to send a consistent message about the region. "Partnerships are the key to pulling us through tough times," he stated.

Portland Mayor Sam Adams emphasized the need for the public and private sectors to work collaboratively to attract and retain businesses and Vancouver Mayor Tim Leavitt stated that businesses want political leadership that transcends political boundaries.

The economic summit also focused on successful public-private collaborations, innovative and clean tech business products, and the release of the Greater Portland Prosperity Index.

[Read a summary of the Greenprint strategy](#)
[Download the full Greenprint report](#)
[Learn more about the Climate Prosperity Project](#)

[View the Greater Portland Prosperity Index](#)

[Drive less and get out in your community at the North Portland Sunday Parkways](#)

June 24, 2010 4:05 PM

Stop by Metro's Drive Less/Save More booth in Kenton Park



Metro's Drive Less/Save More booth at the Northeast Portland Sunday Parkways event in May 2010

Bring your enthusiasm but leave the car at home as Metro, the City of Portland and Kaiser Permanente host the next Sunday Parkways event on Sunday, June 27 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., returning to North Portland where the car-free festival had its start.

The first Sunday Parkways closed North Portland streets to vehicle traffic and opened them exclusively to cyclists, walkers, joggers and rollers for the day in June 2008. It was such a huge success, and since then, the Sunday Parkways events have become a yearly attraction.

The events provide a great opportunity to get out, explore your community, meet neighbors, exercise, have fun with the family and enjoy the many activities, music, food and booths that fill the streets and parks.

This year's route in North Portland stretches seven and a half miles with two loops connecting Kenton, Arbor Lodge and Peninsula Parks, plus the beautiful Willamette Bluff.



Be sure to stop by Metro's Drive Less/Save More booth in Kenton Park. Check out the many free biking and walking resources and maps available in the region, learn how active transportation benefits both your pocketbook and your health, and enjoy free souvenirs including a Bike There! photo as well as Bike There! and Walk There! safety lights. You can also pledge to reduce your car trips and be entered to win several biking, walking and transit prizes.

The first Sunday Parkways event of the year was held in Northeast Portland in May. Other events will be held later this summer in East, Southeast and Northwest Portland.

[Visit the Sunday Parkways website](#)
[Learn more about Drive Less/Save More](#)

[Motivate your green thumb at Metro's Native Plant Center](#)

June 21, 2010 10:17 AM



Learn about native plants, find inspiration for your own yard and dig in to restore and preserve natural areas throughout the Portland metropolitan region.

Metro's Native Plant Center is hosting the first of several volunteer workshops on Saturday, June 19 from 9 a.m to

1 p.m. Participants will help with seed collection, seed harvesting, maintaining grow-out beds and composting while learning about native plant reproduction. No prior gardening experience is necessary.

The plant center, located near Wanker's Corner in Tualatin, provides an essential supply of rare native seeds, plants and saplings for Metro's natural areas restoration projects. In one year alone, more than 4,650 native trees and shrubs grown at the center went into the ground at ten different Metro natural areas.

Advanced registration is required for this volunteer venture so call right now, 503-638-7240. Volunteer workshops will also take place July 10, July 24, Aug. 21 and Aug. 28. There's no cost to take part. Metro is happy for the help and participants get a great learning experience. Gloves, tools, water and a snack will be provided.

[Learn more about Metro's Native Plant Center](#)
[Check out the calendar of volunteer workshops at the plant center](#)

[A personal message from Councilor Rex Burkholder](#)

June 16, 2010 2:37 PM

Last Thursday was historic for me. After four years of hard work, the Metro Council adopted the 2035 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) update. The plan guides how federal, state, regional and local transportation funds (almost \$700M a year!) will be invested in highway, transit, bicycling, pedestrian, local streets and other facilities so we can make our region more prosperous, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and provide affordable choices for getting around the region and meeting everyday needs. In the coming years, we face a lot of challenges – from climate change and population growth to funding shortfalls and changes in the economy. The RTP is an important part of the strategy needed to meet these challenges while protecting the character and values of the region and of our local communities.

The updated plan is founded on the knowledge that how we get around affects how we live and how we succeed at creating a livable and prosperous region. The RTP is a 25-year strategy

that directs how the region invests in our transportation network to support jobs, promote safety, protect clean air, improve our health and enhance neighborhoods. The two-pronged investment strategy calls for a focus on the most effective mix of land use and transportation solutions to improve mobility, and cultivates great communities by investing in the assets essential to making downtowns, main streets and employment areas better places to live and work.

Many thanks to all the residents, local government staff and my fellow elected officials for their ideas, commitment and energy to make this strategy bold, innovative and successful.

[Read about the Regional Transportation Plan](#)

Events and Activities to Make your Summer Great

And speaking of increasing transportation choices, I want to remind you that the second of five Sunday Parkways will be taking place in North Portland on June 27th from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. This route will offer 7.5 miles of streets closed off to traffic between Kenton, Arbor Lodge and Peninsula Parks, and the Willamette Bluff. If you're a North Portland resident or someone interested in the area, this is a great opportunity to explore the community, meet neighbors, eat some great food from local restaurants and vendors, and enjoy the day with family and friends while being active outside. Join us on the ride or consider volunteering some of your time. Sunday parkways also take place in East, Southeast, and Northwest Portland during July, August, and September.

[Read more about Sunday Parkways](#)

If live music is more your tune, remember to check out the Oregon Zoo summer concert series. This season features more than 15 shows from June through August. And don't forget about the Music on Main Street sponsored by the Portland Center for Performing Arts. A range of local musicians will be performing for free every Wednesday from 5 to 7 p.m. beginning June 30th. The music ranges from sounds from Zimbabwe to local folk music.

[See the Zoo's concert schedule](#)

[Get the Music on Main Street schedule](#)

If getting out into nature is more your speed, there are a number of opportunities in District 5, with two good ones on Saturday June 19th, alone. On that day, you can help the Forest Park Conservancy maintain trails during a volunteer work party. Also on June 19th, the Columbia Slough Watershed Council is hosting its annual Explorando el Columbia Slough – a free, bilingual, family environmental festival that offers activities in Spanish and English. There will be guided canoe trips, live music, folk dancing, storytelling, arts and crafts, workshops and more.

[Learn more about Explorando el Columbia Slough](#)

This is just a taste of activities happening in District 5 and around the region. Check out Metro's online calendar for a full range of events or become a fan of Metro's GreenScene on Facebook.

[Metro's calendar of events](#)

I encourage you to get out and enjoy the summer. See you out there!

– Rex Burkholder

[Metro' s natural gardening workshops continue in June](#)

June 3, 2010 9:25 AM

Metro is offering nearly a dozen of its popular natural gardening workshops and seminars in June. From gardening for kids to creating a healthy compost bin, residents throughout the region have a variety of choices to learn how to grow flowers and food naturally.

Metro and its partners offer the gardening sessions at no cost. They're led by local garden experts and take place on weekends in communities across the region. Participants can learn how to grow organic vegetables, avoid pesticides and save money while doing so.

The events are sponsored by Metro, the Oregon State University Extension Service and several local organizations.

Complimentary coupons and publications will be given to participants, and drop-ins are welcome if space is available unless noted. For more information or to register, follow the link below or call Metro Recycling Information at 503-234-3000.

[See a full listing of workshops](#)

[Metro helps Community Cycling Center understand cultural and economic barriers to bicycling](#)

June 1, 2010 9:23 AM

Although the Portland metropolitan area is renowned for being one of the most bike-friendly cities in the world, the Community Cycling Center found that low-income communities and communities of color are struggling to see themselves as part of the two-wheel revolution. Gaining access to a bike and learning to ride it is anything but simple.

With a \$78,625 grant from Metro's Regional Travel Options program, the Community Cycling Center studied the cultural and socioeconomic barriers that prevent people from biking. This research will help the organization develop culturally-specific programs to help remove these roadblocks. Alison Hill Graves, executive director of the Community Cycling Center, presented the findings on Wednesday, May 26 at Metro.

"We share the vision of a vibrant city," said Graves. "We believe the bicycle is a great tool to build a healthy community, but to make bicycling an affordable and healthy transportation option we need to make bicycling more accessible. For many people in this community, that is simply not the case."

"It's important to ensure more parents and children in this region can enjoy biking to school and other destinations, not just those families who live in certain neighborhoods that have quality bike facilities," said Metro Councilor Rex Burkholder. "Barriers such as a lack of appropriate information, cost and accessibility are very real issues that need to be addressed before cycling can be a viable option for everyone."

About the study

The Community Cycling Center conducted outreach in partnership with Hacienda Community Development

Corporation in Northeast Portland and New Columbia in North Portland. Using a combination of surveys and focus groups involving more than 260 people, the groups discussed interests in bicycling and prioritized concerns that keep people off of bikes. Focus group participants were African American, Latino and African immigrants.

It is important to note that while the study focused on what participants said were their greatest concern, many indicated more than one barrier to bicycling. While this research is a critical first step in understanding the issues that keep people from riding bikes, it does not represent all the possible barriers nor does it reflect an entire cultural group's perspective.

The opportunity

More than 50 percent of survey participants indicated they rode a bike as well as used other modes of transportation including driving, walking and taking public transit. Almost 100 percent of focus group participants were interested in or did ride a bike. Most people indicated that their children rode bicycles.

Cost barriers

Sixty percent of the people interviewed identified the cost of purchasing and repairing a bicycle as a major obstacle. Even those who could obtain a low or no cost bike were concerned about maintenance. Many participants said they were interested in riding a bicycle and would ride if they knew how to fix their bike.

Safety barriers

Safety concerns fell into three categories: traffic safety, personal safety and bicycle security. Most of the safety concerns expressed centered on potential conflicts with moving vehicles. Regarding personal safety, some participants feared that as an immigrant or person of color they were more visible and vulnerable on a bicycle. Many also raised concern about not having secure places to store their bicycles.

Information barriers

More than 50 percent of participants said they were interested in riding a bike, but they worried about not knowing the rules of the road. Many also discussed not having or knowing where the safe routes are, particularly bikeways separate from cars. More than half of respondents discussed an interest in riding with a group and with their children.

Infrastructure barriers

A lack of streets with adequate room for bicycling or even adequate surface discourages bike riding. In the Cully neighborhood where the Hacienda development is located, dirt and gravel roads as well as paved streets without curb improvements pose a deterrent. A Portland State University bicycle network gap analysis, conducted in June 2009 for the Portland Bicycle Plan for 2030, found the city's bicycle network is the weakest in areas with high populations of people of color.

Next steps

The Community Cycling Center is working with partners to develop programs that help remove these barriers. A pilot program for bike repair education will begin this fall at Hacienda. The Community Cycling Center is also encouraging other organizations that serve diverse communities to start or increase efforts to foster cultural awareness and remove barriers.

Metro Regional Travel Options is also working to remove these barriers by providing grants and collaborating with organizations, such as the Community Cycling Center and the Bicycling Transportation Alliance, to promote cycling safety. Metro provides thousands of free Bike There! maps to education programs and low-income communities. The map provides safety information and indicates most suitable roads to help people get around.

[Learn more about the Community Cycling Center project Find out about Metro's Regional Travel Options grant program](#)

[JPACT moves toward new flexible funding program](#)

May 14, 2010 3:08 PM

At its May 13 meeting, a committee of local elected officials and transportation leaders discussed how to reshape the way the region allocates a limited amount of federal transportation dollars to support jobs, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and provide more choices for how people get around.

The Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation once again considered refinements to the Regional Flexible Fund Allocation program to develop a more collaborative process for identifying transportation investments that provide the greatest regional benefit. The program seeks to improve mobility for people and freight, provide expanded opportunities for active transportation (bicycling, walking and transit use), and reduce emissions of greenhouse gases and other pollutants.

The challenge is in determining how best to spend a limited amount of money (about \$20–24 million per two-year period) in a way that generates significant benefits for the region.

Bill Wyatt, executive director of the Port of Portland, made a plea for strong investments in freight movement. "It is important that there be an unambiguous message that we will support jobs in this economy."

Clackamas County Chair Lynn Peterson stressed that it is important for the region to maintain its current level of support for active transportation but the region needs to better define which types of freight projects will likely attract greater federal dollars and generate greater economic returns.

Staff will refine the policy proposal to better focus limited funding on the types of projects more likely to generate more substantial federal funding. JPACT is scheduled to finalize its work on this proposal at its June 10 meeting. The solicitation of projects for the next round of the Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program is scheduled to begin later this summer.

[Learn more about the regional flexible fund program](#)
[Learn more about the Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program](#)
[Learn more about JPACT](#)

[Sunday Parkways kick off the season in Northeast](#)

Portland this weekend

May 13, 2010 1:41 PM

Visit Metro's Drive Less/Save More booth in Alberta Park

Cars will give way to cyclists, runners, walkers, skaters and rollers this Sunday from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. in Northeast Portland for the first of this year's Sunday Parkways.

Metro is proud to help sponsor the Sunday Parkways which are put on by the City of Portland. The events encourage people to get out and explore their neighborhoods, meet their neighbors, exercise and have some fun.

A 5.8-mile stretch of Northeast Portland will be blocked off to cars for this Sunday's event. The route will have two loops connecting Woodlawn, Alberta, Fernhill and Wilshire parks.

Be sure to visit Metro's Drive Less/Save More booth in Alberta Park to learn about bicycling and walking routes throughout the region as well as how choosing two feet or two wheels for your travels really can save time and money, benefit your health and create a healthier environment for everyone. Get your picture taken at the Bike There! souvenir photo station, and register to win a package of prizes for bicycling, walking or traveling by transit.

The Sunday Parkways also feature food booths, music and other activities that are fun for the entire family.

This is the third year for the events. The first Sunday Parkways was held in North Portland in June 2008 and was a huge success. Attendance grows with each event and reached 25,000 people at one gathering last year. Future Sunday Parkways will be held this summer in East, Southeast, North and Northwest Portland.

For more information about all of this year's Sunday Parkways events, including routes, activities and volunteer opportunities, visit the City of Portland website.

[Learn more about Sunday Parkways](#)
[Learn more about Drive Less/Save More](#)

[Help preserve a piece of Portland's history – a personal](#)

[message from Rex Burkholder](#)

May 4, 2010 2:46 PM

Metro certainly has a variety of responsibilities in its portfolio – from building great communities to taking good care of the resources we already have. In making our region a great place to live, we take a long look into the future, as well into the past. One way Metro does this is through the management of 14 pioneer cemeteries in the region.

These historic burial grounds offer incredible insight into the history of their surrounding neighborhoods as well as the entire region. Formerly managed by Multnomah County and transferred to Metro in 1997, the cemeteries are also managed as active facilities, serving nearly 200 families per year. One such place is Lone Fir Cemetery, located at SE 20th Ave. and Morrison St. in Portland, which has been in operation since 1850. There are more than 25,000 people buried at Lone Fir, many of them with familiar family names including Curry, Dekum, Hawthorne, Lovejoy and Macleay.

A portion of the 30-acre cemetery, referred to as Block 14, is also the burial ground for a group of Chinese railroad workers, many of whom lived in the area in the late 1800s and early 1900s, as well as patients of a nearby mental health hospital which operated around the same time and was managed by Dr. James C. Hawthorne. To honor these groups, Metro is working with members of the community to build a memorial in Block 14, located at the southwest corner of the cemetery.

A group of local experts convened by Metro recently met for the first time to discuss a \$2 million campaign to develop the memorial. The committee is comprised of leaders from the Chinese Benevolent Association of Portland, Friends of Lone Fir Cemetery, Portland Fire & Rescue, Lango Hansen Landscape Architecture, Dr. Hawthorne's family, former member of the Oregon Pioneer Cemetery Commissioner Stan Clarke, former Multnomah County Commissioner Maria Rojo de Steffey, and former Multnomah County Commissioner and Metro Councilor Tanya Collier.

The committee is not yet complete, and we would very much like to have representation from the neighboring area. I encourage those of you who live nearby to think about serving. If you are interested contact Rachel Fox, Cemetery Program

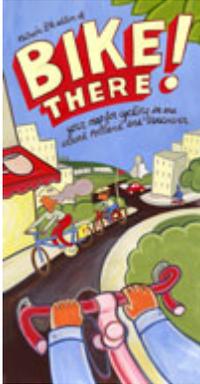
Manager at 503-797-1856 or e-mail
rachel.fox@oregonmetro.gov

[Read about Lone Fir Cemetery](#)

[Read about plans for the memorial](#)

[Celebrate National Bike Month with Metro's new Bike There! map](#)

May 4, 2010 1:46 PM



May is National Bike Month and Metro is encouraging you to bike there, whether you are commuting, exercising or just having fun. To help you find the safest and most direct routes, Metro's new eighth edition Bike There! map, which is printed on durable, waterproof paper, is hot off the press and available at area retailers for \$9.

Since 1982, the Bike There! map has helped local cyclists find their way around Portland and Vancouver. In the new edition, those using two wheels instead of four for their daily travels will find commuter maps of downtown Portland along with 21 local cities. The map also gives bike riders of all types – recreational, commuter and beginners – the knowledge to choose the most suitable routes.

The new map features more routes – a total of 600 miles of on-street bike routes and 235 miles of off-street trails. Users will also notice an expanded regional map directing them to popular recreational cycling destinations where they can get exercise and enjoy the area's natural beauty, an improvement inspired by feedback from local riders. While designing the new edition, Metro watched cyclists use the map. Planners quickly realized the map's legend could be clearer on which routes are

the truly the best for bikes.

Metro is marking the release of the new map and National Bike Month with several events including a Bike There! celebration on May 13 that will feature local media celebrities going for the gold in a goldsprint cycling competition, free bike tune-ups and other fun opportunities. Learn more at www.oregonmetro.gov/bikethere.

[Find out where to get a Bike There! map](#)
[Learn more about the May 13 event](#)

[**Metro, local leaders seek better ways to maintain and build public structures**](#)

April 30, 2010 2:15 PM

Jobs, safety and the environment become focus of preparing new land for growth

With decisions about where the Portland region's urban growth boundary may be allowed to expand in the future largely complete, the focus is now on making the most of existing public structures and systems to serve new urban areas and on ensuring that any expansions improve existing neighborhoods, protect farmland and create good jobs.

Historically, the region added land to the urban growth boundary without making agreements about who would pay for or manage needed roads, bridges, pipes, parks and other public structures. Without plans or agreements in place, land added to the urban growth boundary often remains undeveloped for years. Metro and its partners are working to change that.

At an April 28 dialogue convened by Metro, a committee of local elected and community leaders and citizen representatives will have an opportunity to weigh in on important questions that will shape how new communities develop in the future. The questions include:

- How can we ensure that areas brought inside the urban growth boundary have the ability to pay for adequate public structures and services?
- How will existing neighborhoods and communities be given a voice in planning new urban areas before they are

brought inside the urban growth boundary?

- How will new communities provide for safe neighborhoods for children and seniors, outdoor recreation opportunities and jobs?
- How can the development of new communities protect environmental quality and natural beauty?
- How can new communities provide well-connected streets, bikeways, parks and trails so they don't make traffic worse for existing neighborhoods?

The Metro Policy Advisory Committee will provide its recommendation on proposed policy changes to the Metro Council on Wednesday, May 12. The Metro Council is currently scheduled to vote on the proposed policy changes and formal urban reserves designations on Thursday, June 3.

[Learn more about MPAC](#)

[Learn more about new area planning](#)

[Metro acquires 20 acres of forest to protect water quality, elk habitat in Rock Creek area](#)

April 28, 2010 3:53 PM

New natural area is adjacent to another parcel protected by voter-approved bond measure

Metro acquired a 20-acre natural area this month along Alder Creek, one of the most important headwaters of Rock Creek.

Combined with an adjacent 20-acre parcel that Metro purchased last year, this property begins to build a swath of protected land in the Rock Creek area in western Multnomah County. Both properties are situated immediately beyond the region's urban growth boundary, the cutoff point for urban-style development.

"As the population grows, it's critically important that we protect forest habitat and the wildlife that depends on it," said Metro Councilor Rex Burkholder, who represents this area in District 5. "Protecting this land also provides an important scenic resource for people living nearby."

The property, which was acquired for about \$245,000, will play a key role in safeguarding water quality. It includes 1,700 feet along Alder Creek, which supports winter steelhead and flows

into Rock and Abbey creeks one mile south.

Alder, maple and red cedar trees are common on the forested property, a frequent stopping point for an elk herd that roams the area. There is also a wide diversity of native plants, including sword fern, Oregon grape, vine maple and salmonberry.

Metro's acquisitions in the area complement efforts by the West Multnomah Soil and Water Conservation District to protect stream health and promote restoration.

"Caring for waterways like Rock Creek brings together the whole community," said Metro Council President David Bragdon.

"Thanks to voters, the Metro Council is teaming up with other governments, conservation groups and private citizens to protect the region's clean water and native wildlife."

[Metro honors volunteers during National Volunteer Week](#)

April 22, 2010 2:06 PM

"Celebrating People in Action" is the theme for National Volunteer Week, commemorated April 19–25, and Metro certainly has a lot to celebrate. Because of its corps of volunteers, Metro is better able to deliver services to residents of the region – and beyond.

More than 2,750 people donate upwards of 248,000 hours of their time each year at the Metro Regional Center, the Portland Center for the Performing Arts, the Oregon Convention Center, Metro's parks and natural areas and the Oregon Zoo. (That's the equivalent of nearly 120 full-time employees.) These community minded experts help guide Metro policy, restore wildlife habitat, build vibrant neighborhoods, connect children to nature, and make sure national and international guests see the best of this place we call home.

"Metro volunteers are deeply committed to this community and this region truly would not be the same place without them," said Metro Council President David Bragdon. "From park naturalists to zoo guides to guest services staff at conventions and arts events, virtually all of us have been served by a Metro volunteer at one time or another."

OCC's volunteer coordinator Peri Muchich agrees. "I could not

do my job without the help of the volunteers," she says, who assist guests at conventions and meeting throughout the year. OCC's volunteers keep up to date on area information so guests can fully enjoy the region between sessions and before and after conventions. The group has even organized a monthly "Restaurant Research" event, in which volunteers visit restaurants accessible from the convention center either on foot or by transit to help future guests.

The Oregon Zoo has several categories of volunteers. ZooGuides is in an ongoing program for adult volunteers involved in more than 100 different programs. Youth Volunteer Leadership Corps volunteers are high school students who commit to the zoo year round and take leadership in several conservation projects. Project Volunteers share a specific talent with the zoo, such as volunteer divers. ZooTeens manage seasonal programs; about 300 teens operate the Family Farm and provide interpretation at various exhibits. ZooAmbassadors, a family volunteer program, support seasonal exhibits. This year they'll get to help with the Prehistoric Predators exhibit.

Slogging through wetlands in winter to count amphibian eggs, monitoring birds at dawn and caring for hundreds of ancient headstones at historic cemeteries are just some of the out-of-the-ordinary jobs that volunteers in Metro's parks and natural areas perform. Perhaps it's the uniqueness of the opportunities, but community involvement manager John Sheehan says he's seen a steady increase in the number of volunteers and the hours they donate over the years. For example, volunteer hours were up 25 percent at Metro's Native Plant Center alone this year.

Over at the Portland Center for the Performing Arts, volunteers serve as ushers, greeters and tour guides. They also coordinate the PCPA Noontime Showcase, which draws about 1,000 people every year for free hour-long performances. Shows have included the Portland Opera, Dickens Carolers, Portland Taiko and Oregon Children's Theatre.

"About 150 of our 600 volunteers have been with PCPA for more than 10 years," said volunteer coordinator Margie Humphreys. "With close to a million people visiting our venues every year, our volunteers are a group that I trust will help make our patrons have the best experience possible."

While Metro celebrates volunteers throughout the year, it's time to give back. In the next few months, Metro, the Oregon Zoo, PCPA and OCC will honor these remarkable people at separate volunteer appreciation dinners and events where staff, Metro councilors and commissioners from MERC can thank them for their generous contributions of time, energy and ideas.

[Volunteer for Metro](#)

[Intertwine Alliance partners unveil bi-state trails plan](#)

April 15, 2010 3:38 PM

An extensive network of 37 trails connecting people from Wilsonville to Vancouver and in between has been released. The new Bi-State Regional Trail Systems plan includes 20 trails in the Portland metropolitan area and 17 in Clark County that will connect cities and suburbs to other communities. The plan is the product of The Intertwine Alliance, a coalition of businesses, nonprofits and public agencies that have committed to linking trails, parks and natural areas with homes, jobs and schools to create one of the greatest parks networks in the world.

The 37 trails were selected based on previous regional and state trail planning that stemmed from 100 years of research. More than 250 miles of regional trails on both sides of the Columbia River already provide bicyclists, pedestrians, equestrians and paddlers access to nature and a safe, enjoyable means of transportation. The long-term vision for the region includes 950 miles of trails that will link 32 cities, six counties and two states.

Metro and the Vancouver/Clark County Parks System wrote the plan, with technical assistance from the National Park Service's Challenge Cost Share Program, which supports groups who work to preserve natural, recreational and cultural resources.

[See the Bi-State Regional Trails Plan](#)

[Learn about The Intertwine Alliance](#)

[Natural Areas Program reports on busy quarter](#)

April 13, 2010 12:57 PM

Metro's Natural Areas Program doesn't believe in the winter doldrums. The first three months of 2010 were filled with big

news, from the historic acquisition of Chehalem Ridge Natural Area to the announcement of \$1.9 million in Nature in Neighborhoods capital grants. Plus, the Metro auditor and an independent citizen oversight committee both praised Metro's work in carrying out the voter-approved 2006 natural areas bond measure.

[Download the natural areas quarterly report](#)
[Learn more about the Natural Areas Program](#)

[**Bike to the Blazers game - a personal message from Rex Burkholder**](#)

April 12, 2010 12:13 PM

Join me to help promote alternative transportation Wednesday April 14, at the Bike to the Blazers event. The evening will begin with a rally at Salmon Street Fountain in Waterfront Park beginning at 5:30 p.m., where Mayor Sam Adams, Rob Sadowsky, the new Bicycle Transportation Alliance executive director, and I will energize the crowd for the ride across the river. At 6, we'll ride to the Rose Garden via Waterfront Park and the Steel Bridge.

Some highlights of the evening include a Bill Walton look-alike contest (winner gets an autographed Bill Walton helmet), the Bike Fun Zone and activities at booths by several vendors at the Commons area in front of the Rose Garden main entrance. Our Drive Less Save More "street team" of cyclists will be there to distribute information about alternative transportation including Bike There! and Walk There! maps.

Tickets for the bike section have sold out but there might still be general seating available. Cyclists will be allowed on the court after the game to shoot a free-throw. You can find more details on BikePortland.org.

Hope to see you there.

- Rex Burkholder

[**Talking sustainability: Tell Metro what you think**](#)

April 7, 2010 9:07 AM

Where do you look online for green-living tips and trends? What types of sustainability information do you seek on the web? How

do you share ideas with others? Metro has launched a web survey to learn this and more from folks across the region as the agency updates its online resources. [Go to the survey](#)

From recycling waste and protecting habitat to driving less and building green, Metro wants to make it even easier for people to find information, exchange ideas and take action toward sustainable living at home, in the office or on the go. Survey results will help guide development of web content and tools to further promote regional sustainability.

Take the five-minute survey, available through Sunday, April 11, at www.surveymonkey.com/s/oregonmetro.

[**Metro measures the region's carbon footprint and leads the effort to shrink it**](#)

March 31, 2010 3:14 PM

April 2 workshop brings local leaders together to address climate change as a region

Metro has a long history of working to limit its carbon footprint through its sustainability programs such as recycling education, making and selling MetroPaint and composting animal manure at the Oregon Zoo. Now Metro is taking a leadership role in climate change, hosting a local workshop to find ways to significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions on a regional level.

A new study by Metro found Portland area residents create 31 million metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions in 2006. That's nearly 68 billion pounds of pollution. But the main contributor is not coal fired plants and automobile emissions. It's the consumption of materials such as goods and food, much of which is produced outside the area.

In putting together the Regional Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory, Metro planners used information from a recent Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) report to get a comprehensive view of emissions. The inventory shows 48 percent of the total Portland-area pollution comes from extracting, manufacturing, shipping, recycling and disposing of products and food which are produced and grown both inside and outside the region. Residential and business energy

consumption creates another 27 percent, with the final 25 percent coming from local transportation.

"We need to highlight what consumers can do," said David Bragdon, Metro council president. "This is an opportunity to show people that by making informed choices and changes in the items we buy and the way we get around, we can be part of the solution to climate change."

Metro has been mandated by the Oregon legislature to develop long-range plans for meeting state climate pollution reduction goals for transportation and land use. The agency has invited local jurisdictions to begin addressing how to meet those goals at an April 2 workshop headed by Dr. William Moomaw, professor and founding director of the Center for International Environment and Resource Policy at Tufts University. Moomaw is a lead member of the Nobel Prize-winning Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), a United Nations sponsored group of scientists.

At the workshop, members of the Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation and the Metro Policy Advisory Committee will work to develop a common understanding of the science of climate change and the impacts of land use and transportation strategies. The groups will begin developing tools to forecast climate pollution as well as identify shared goals, expectations and policy options for achieving a healthy climate and region.

[Learn more about the Regional Greenhouse Gas Inventory and climate change](#)

[How the 2010 Census can help us in "Making the Greatest Place"](#)

March 30, 2010 1:01 PM

By now everyone has received the 2010 Census in their mailboxes. We've heard the many significant reasons to participate in this event: ensure adequate representation for your city and state; help the state get its fair share of valuable federal dollars; participate in a civic duty and play a role in shaping the policies of the federal government for the next ten years. I've also recently ran across some information showing Oregon and our region lagging in completing and returning the census questionnaire.

Much of the research and planning that Metro performs is based on census information. Your response helps inform a broad array of social programs and services provided by local, state and federal agencies. Not only is the data helpful in administering government grants and programs, companies use census information for business plans too.

The census has immense value at all level. Using census data, a small town might lobby for more representation in the state government. A city might use the data to convince new businesses to move into a particular area, thereby creating more jobs for residents. Communities can attract new services and amenities using census data as evidence of need.

But what exactly does the 2010 Census mean for Metro? One of Metro's key functions is to plan for the future of the region which ensures that we have safe, livable communities for this and future generations. Effective planning requires an understanding of the region and how it is changing, which is where the census comes in. The population and demographic information collected gives us a better picture of who we are, where we live, and how we move around in the region. Knowing more about who Metro is serving allows us to target our investments more effectively and make better planning decisions in such areas as transportation, land use and sustainability, as well as management of parks and natural areas.

Many of Metro's highest level decisions and initiatives have their foundation in data made available through the census. For example, the data helps us determine regional population forecasts and trends. This, in turn, allows us to estimate the need for residential land and areas for business development, which leads to informed decisions about expanding the urban growth boundary as well as designating urban and rural reserves. Similarly, being able to estimate population shifts and changing employment needs in the region helps us design and implement a Regional Transportation Plan that makes the best use of taxpayer dollars to get you where you need to go and encourage job growth. Finally, the information you provide through the 2010 Census will be critical to honing and implementing our "Making the Greatest Place" initiative which aims to create more livable communities and enhance economic prosperity across the region.

When it comes to the 2010 Census, every voice counts. Those ten minutes you spend today to provide basic information about your household could have a big impact on your future and the future of our region.

[See a message from President Obama about the 2010 Census](#)
[Learn more about Metro's Making the Greatest Place initiative](#)

[The Portland Metro Climate Prosperity Project](#)

March 25, 2010 9:41 AM

Metro Councilor Rex Burkholder has been leading Metro's efforts on bringing climate change response into Metro's operations and regional planning. He is also Metro lead on the Climate Prosperity Project, which seeks to turn the challenge of climate change into an economic growth opportunity. He shares this report in advance of release of the Portland Metro Region's Greenprint, a draft Climate Prosperity Strategy (due out in spring 2010).

About the Climate Prosperity Project

The challenges of climate change present opportunities found at the intersection of economic development and climate protection. Capitalizing on them, the Portland Metro Climate Prosperity Project seeks to create a robust green economy that produces new jobs and talent, products and technologies, as well as energy and cost savings. Climate Prosperity will knit the region's existing initiatives together, providing a framework to drive rapid transformation. Businesses, local governments, nonprofits and academic institutions are all in the mix to create green savings, green opportunities and green talent.

Green Savings

Green savings results from reducing carbon-based energy use and re-investing savings in our region. Within the City of Portland, carbon emissions have dwindled to 1990 levels, while the economy has grown 30%. This makes Portland a national leader, but these measures aren't enough.

Our region needs to reach drastically lower levels of emissions, putting savings into our economy instead of carbon into the air. As Joe Cortright detailed in Portland's Green Dividend: compared to the national average, a reduction of 4 vehicle miles

traveled per person every day in the region adds up to \$1.1 billion saved – and reinvested locally – every year. Imagine what a comprehensive fossil fuel reduction strategy would bring.

Green Opportunities

Green opportunities come through creating new and exportable technologies, products and services that reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

The Portland region has a robust green building cluster, recently joined by a number of renewable energy companies attracted to our region. To deeply ingrain these companies in the region – and to grow the base of clean technology and sustainable industries – we need an influx of venture capital investment.

Regional coordination around climate planning will develop markets to lure companies and capital in our direction. It will also grow opportunities for our existing businesses.

Green Talent

Green talent means growing jobs and training in our region to supply the workforce for our emerging low-carbon industries.

The workforce development programs at universities and community colleges across the state have set us on the right track. We need to cultivate talent here, and provide jobs to ensure our trained people can stay and prosper locally, creating a regional advantage of an educated and specialized workforce.

Regional Approach

Climate Prosperity provides a mechanism to partner disconnected organizations around clear, common and urgent goals.

To begin, a working group of business, government, nonprofit, and academic representatives is taking stock of our current situation. We are creating an inventory of organizations and initiatives working on facets of a regional green economy.

We are developing a Greenprint to guide our actions going forward. This Greenprint was informed by a series of four focus groups that took place in fall 2009. More than 100 people participated representing area businesses, governments,

nonprofits, and educators. These groups focused on:

- growing the regional market for green goods and services
- enhancing the regional environment for green innovation
- nurturing the green workforce and growing green jobs
- attracting and growing green companies region-wide.

With this Greenprint in place, our team will connect with organizations throughout the region, engaging them on to work towards Climate Prosperity's goals.

Are you interested in participating in this exciting new initiative? Contact Liz Hopkins at lhopkins@pdxinstitute.org to get on the list. Once we release the Greenprint we will be soliciting feedback from those of you in the community working on these issues and will use our contact list to send it out. We will then form teams to work on implementing our strategies.

[More about the project](#)

[Metro grant helps rare Oregon white oaks stand tall in North Portland](#)

March 23, 2010 4:26 PM



*The Baltimore Woods
Connectivity Corridor in North Portland*

Metro has awarded an \$184,600 Nature in Neighborhoods grant for the continuing efforts to preserve Oregon white oaks in what is known as the Baltimore Woods Connectivity Corridor. The Corridor is a 30-acre stretch of woods and undeveloped land between the residential and industrial areas of the St. Johns and Cathedral Park neighborhoods in North Portland.

The Friends of Baltimore Woods and the Three Rivers Land Conservancy are working to secure parcels along the corridor to preserve, restore and expand the woodlands. The Metro grant will help buy five separate properties totaling one acre. The lots

could have been developed for housing but the Oregon white oak habitat is rapidly disappearing in the Willamette Valley, so much so, that the Department of Fish and Wildlife's Conservation Strategy Plan considers preservation a high priority.

"We need to protect rare habitat like this before it is gone," said Metro Councilor Rex Burkholder. "It is important for the region and the environment. Preserving this woodland will also provide a natural setting for a trail people can use for recreation, commuting and to connect to the area's larger network of trails."

A trail through Baltimore Woods will connect Cathedral Park to Pier Park, and will become a section of the overall North Portland Greenway trails plan. The North Portland Greenway is a network of trails that stretches from downtown Portland through North Portland to Kelley Point Park. The Greenway will accommodate commuting, walking, running, cycling, fishing, wildlife viewing and more.

The Oregon white oaks found in the Baltimore Woods provide homes for a number of unique species including acorn woodpeckers and the western grey squirrel. The trees also make up a natural filtration system, cleaning storm water from the Cathedral Park neighborhood before it reaches the river and preventing erosion from the steep embankment.

The restoration of the Baltimore Woods will include removing invasive plants such as Himalayan blackberry and English ivy, and replacing them with new trees and native shrubs. Litter is also scattered through the vegetation so plans call for organizing cleanups that will include neighbors in the restoration process and in maintaining the corridor.

Metro is working with the City of Portland's Bureau of Environmental Services and parks department to acquire several other large lots in the Baltimore Woods corridor. Once restored, the healthy oak woodland will create a natural divide between residential and industrial areas. The woods is also visible from across the which river and provide a visual break to dense development in the area.

Metro's Nature in Neighborhoods capital grants program is funded by the natural areas bond measure approved by voters

in 2006. The program encourages the restoration of natural habitats of concern in communities.

[Learn more about Metro's Nature in Neighborhoods capital grants program](#)

[Learn about Metro's 2006 natural areas bond measure](#)

[Region turns planning spotlight on Southwest metro corridor](#)

February 26, 2010 2:50 PM

The Metro Council has approved several major planning efforts to improve connections and offer transportation choices in the Southwest metro corridor. The transportation corridor, or travel demand area, includes Barbur Boulevard and Interstate 5 as the main travel routes from Portland to Tigard and Barbur Boulevard/Highway 99W as the main travel route on to Sherwood.

Metro and its partners will be taking two-phased, holistic approach to analyzing and planning for transportation. The first phase includes planning broadly for auto and freight movement, transit, bicycle and pedestrian access and facilities, land use goals, and employment and housing density. The second phase will focus on examining high capacity transit improvements in the corridor, as Metro Council has approved the corridor as the next regional priority for light rail, commuter rail, rapid streetcar or bus rapid transit expansion.

The corridor was identified as near-term priority under the Regional High Capacity Transit System Plan. Though referred to as the Barbur Boulevard corridor, it is too early in the process to determine where in the general vicinity of Barbur Boulevard that an actual, final high capacity transit alignment would be located.

Since a new high capacity route may not run on Barbur Boulevard itself, Metro has begun to refer to the area as the Southwest metro corridor. There is still a lot of work ahead of to determine the type of high capacity transit (light rail, bus rapid transit, commuter rail or rapid streetcar) and route will work best meet the needs and goals of this corridor.

Southwest metro corridor investment analysis

Metro, Oregon Department of Transportation, TriMet, Multnomah County and the cities of within the corridor will begin the process by confirming the area of study and defining the needs and goals of the corridor. The analysis will most likely begin late this year.

The investment analysis will build on the Regional High Capacity Transit System Plan and lead to an evaluation of different types of transportation and transit solutions. The most promising solutions will advance to further study of environmental, transportation, community and costs benefits and trade-offs, which will be shared for public review and comment. Throughout the process, project partners will share information with the public, work closely with property owners and interested persons and announce project milestones and opportunities to provide input.

Only after the project partners identify alternatives, study their benefits and trade-offs, and gather input from residents in the corridor will decision-makers determine the final project or projects and the final mode and route that high capacity transit will consist of in the Southwest metro corridor. These decisions could potentially happen in 2014. Construction could begin, at earliest, in 2017.

High capacity transit readiness

The Regional High Capacity Transit System Plan includes a system expansion policy framework to establish corridor readiness. Targets in the framework are designed to ensure successful high capacity transit lines while leveraging regional investments to achieve land use and economic goals that create vibrant communities and meet the challenges of climate change, rising energy costs and population growth.

The Southwest metro corridor meets the system expansion policy targets in:

- transit supportive land use
- community support
- partnership and political leadership
- regional transit network connectivity
- housing needs supportiveness
- financial capacity – capital and operating finance plans

- integrated transportation system development
- ridership – current potential and projected growth.

Southwest metro corridor ridership and cost estimates

- Daily ridership estimate (2035): 38,000
- Increase in corridor transit ridership estimate (2009 to 2035): 12,000
- Estimated annual operating and maintenance cost: \$10.4 million (in 2009 dollars)
- Capital cost estimate: \$1.93 to \$2.31 billion (in 2009 dollars)

Note: Though the mode and alignment of a high capacity transit line in the corridor would be determined through the public involvement and planning process, estimates were calculated based on light rail service for the comparison of corridors during the Regional High Capacity Transit System Plan process.

The Metro Council adopted the Regional High Capacity Transit System Plan in July 2009 for addition to the 2035 Regional Transportation Plan.

[Learn more about the Regional High Capacity Transit System Plan](#)

[Learn more about the Regional Transportation Plan](#)

[A message from Rex Burkholder about the urban and rural reserves decisions](#)

February 25, 2010 6:26 PM

As a Metro Council, we all recognize that there are key decisions we face that will greatly affect the lives of our children and our grandchildren. This is clearly one of those moments.

We need to get this right. During the worst economic downturn in 80 years, Oregon can't afford to be in caught up in years of litigation. We need an agreement that provides certainty for both development and agriculture and gets people working again. We need to resolve this problem, not create a new problem in our haste.

I strongly supported the region's request to the Legislature to create a more rational process for making urban growth decisions. The law and rules we worked to get adopted

promised to reduce conflict between urbanization and rural interests by focusing the discussion on the best places to grow while protecting high quality farmland and natural resources. This has not occurred.

Oregon cannot afford to risk stalling economic recovery by passing a rushed and flawed proposal. I believe with even a little more time and discussion, we can come to an agreement that will actually stand the test of the next 50 years, giving our industries and farms a clear roadmap for growth, and putting our people back to work again.

I have approached this important decision with three principles, principles which I shared with my colleagues at the beginning of this process and have maintained since:

- **Be cautious.** While I support providing land needed for employment and population growth, urbanization is a one-way street. Designating land as urban will make it more difficult for farmers to make long-term investments. There is also the very real problem of creating demand for infrastructure when we have challenges maintaining the roads, sewers etc that we have.
- **Protect the best.** Willamette Valley farmland is some of the best in the world and supports a healthy industry that provides us with fresh food year round. This will be all the more important in the future as petroleum becomes more scarce and more expensive.
- **Provide certainty for everyone.** Both employers and farmers need to know that they can safely make investments. For urban reserves, we should not designate more than we can expect to serve. We already have thousands of vacant acres within the urban growth boundary that sit fallow for lack of infrastructure. Rural reserve designation allows agribusiness to make long term investments.

Unfortunately, the proposal before us today fails on all three counts.

It is not cautious: It proposes 28,086 acres for urban reserves, counter to the recommendations we received from the Metropolitan Policy Advisory Committee (MPAC) and those included in the letter from the nine state agencies as well as counter to the Metro Council's original direction to target a 40

year planning horizon. All these point to designating between 18,000 and 20,000 acres for urban reserves.

It includes too much foundation farmland and prime natural areas: While this process was designed to let the region consider good urban development opportunities even if that land was foundation farmland, because of the designation of too large a supply of urban reserves, far too much prime agricultural and natural resource lands are included.

The decision will be strongly contested: Because the proposal fails the first two principles, I fear we will not settle the issue of how to grow, as I had hoped we would. By overreaching, we have violated the spirit of the reserves statute and administrative rule and will probably be ruled as violating the letter of these, as well.

I see my role as representing the interests of the region as well as those of my own district, and I note that the jurisdictions represented at MPAC as well as those within my own district agree in their strong support of a much smaller designation of urban reserves than proposed. They do so based on their assessment of the opportunity for considerable growth of both population and jobs within their communities and the recognition that providing services to new urban areas will add additional demand on limited regional resources.

For these reasons I voted no on the agreement with Washington County, as too much foundation farmland and natural resources were proposed for urban reserves. My effort to improve this agreement failed. I am proud of my effort; yet, it is time for us to move on and get back to our most important duty, which is to get people back to work.

[See the maps and agreements](#)

[Oregon Convention Center continues to lead industry in sustainable, salmon-safe practices](#)

February 23, 2010 4:25 PM

The Oregon Convention Center added one more "green" accomplishment to its list when it received word in January from Portland-based Salmon-Safe that the facility's design features and standards of operation demonstrate sound efforts to protect the Willamette River watershed and salmon habitat.

[Learn more about sustainability practices at OCC](#)

OCC was the first convention center in the country to earn Salmon-Safe certification in 2007, in part due to its innovative rain garden designed to serve as a catch basin and a contaminant filtering system for roof runoff before entering the nearby Willamette River. Since then, OCC has invested in landscaping improvements by adding drought tolerant plants and utilizing weather-sensing irrigation equipment scheduled to maximize irrigation while minimizing water use. In addition, all facility restroom fixtures have been upgraded to dual-flush valves and low-flow hand faucets, and the interior and exterior integrated pest management program focuses on preventative actions to curtail chemical pesticide use.

"I am proud that one of our region's largest public facilities continues to lead by example in practicing sustainability," said Metro Councilor Carlotta Collette. "These small, consistent steps to become more efficient add up to a sum greater than its parts. Our community will benefit from these investments for years to come."

Metropolitan Exposition Recreation Commission chair Ray Leary added, "OCC has kept its nose to the grindstone on achieving the most sustainable operations among the convention industry and it continues to pay off in rich dividends. These actions help sell Portland as the leading green destination."

The Oregon Convention Center is the largest convention center in the Pacific Northwest and a top meeting destination. It leads the industry in sustainable operations and business practices as the first to earn LEED-EB (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design - Existing Building) in 2004 and in 2008, the first to be recertified LEED-EB Silver. Totalling 1 million square feet of space, it hosts an average of 650 events and more than 700,000 visitors annually.

"Achieving optimal energy efficiency and protecting our precious natural resources not only makes good business sense, in terms of reducing operating costs, it is the right thing to do for our clients and our community," stated Jeff Blosser, OCC executive director.

[Metro's regional venues continue to contribute millions to local economy despite recession](#)

February 23, 2010 4:22 PM

Throughout one of the most challenging business climates in decades, Metro and its Metropolitan Exposition Recreation Commission (MERC) continued to infuse hundreds of millions of dollars into the local economy in 2008 and 2009.

A recent study concluded that the Oregon Convention Center, Portland Expo Center and Portland Center for the Performing Arts generated more than \$522 million in direct and indirect spending throughout Clackamas, Multnomah and Washington counties during fiscal year (FY) 2009. The independent analysis, conducted by Crossroads Consulting Services, LLC, also estimated that 5,540 local jobs with more than \$203 million in employee earnings were supported, and that \$18.2 million in tax revenues were distributed to state and local governments as a result of the venues' business.

FY 2009 was the second year that economic and fiscal data was collected across all MERC venues. In FY 2008, the facilities generated nearly \$535 million in direct and indirect spending, supported 5,810 jobs and nearly \$206 million in earnings, and generated \$18.2 million in tax revenues. The consulting firm attributed the FY 2009 decreases to implications that industry experts anticipated would arise from the economic downturn, including fewer people attending smaller events compared to prior years.

The 2009 MERC Economic and Fiscal Impact Report includes information about the number of events and visitors hosted at each venue.

[Read the report](#)

[**Counties, Metro scheduled to vote on historic agreements**](#)

February 19, 2010 4:56 PM

Unprecedented planning, compromises, will guide public and private investments, provide certainty for farmers, governments, service providers and landowners

After more than two years of research, study and public input, Metro and the three counties in the Portland metropolitan region are nearing the end of an unprecedented process to

agree on where and how our region will grow in the next several decades. Next week, the commissions of Clackamas, Washington and Multnomah counties and the Metro Council will vote on approximately 270,000 acres of land for rural reserves and 28,000 acres for urban development. The individual agreements between each county and Metro, scheduled to be adopted next week, will specify urban and rural reserve lands in each county.

Each of the counties has established agreements with Metro that outline where cities within their boundaries will grow when urban growth boundary decisions are made in the next 50 years, and where they will not – preserving the land for farms, forests and natural areas. The proposed regional maps and the legal agreements – reached after tremendous amounts of study, public input and compromise – are the basis for the land designations. [Go to the agreements and maps](#)

The Washington County commission is expected to adopt its final map and intergovernmental agreement (IGA) with Metro on Feb. 23; Multnomah and Clackamas counties are expected to adopt their IGAs with Metro on Feb 25, and Metro will vote on all three agreements Feb. 25. In the next two to three months, the Metro Council will pass an ordinance to amend its Regional Framework Plan to designate urban reserves and the three counties will also amend their comprehensive plans to formally designate rural reserves.

The reserves process is unique in the nation – never before has a metropolitan area mapped out a decades-long plan that identifies areas for urban growth and lands that should be set aside as rural reserves.

Under Oregon's land use system, Metro maintains the urban growth boundary surrounding the Portland metropolitan area. Every five years the agency calculates how much acreage is needed to maintain a 20-year supply of land to accommodate projected population and job growth and expands the boundary if necessary to respond to that need. Once designated, urban reserves will be the focus of consideration for future urban growth boundary expansions. Rural reserves will be off limits to urban development for 50 years. Metro has already embarked on the region's next urban growth boundary decision, which is expected to be completed by the end of this year.

Representatives of the four elected bodies who worked in consultation with their council and commissions to craft the final agreement-- the Core 4--are Multnomah County Commissioner Jeff Cogen, Washington County Chair Tom Brian, Clackamas County Commissioner Charlotte Lehan and Metro Councilor Kathryn Harrington.

Metro, the regional government that serves 1.5 million people who live in the 25 cities and three counties of the Portland metropolitan area, provides planning and other services that protect the nature and livability of our region.

[MPAC recommends adoption of alternative reserves map](#)

February 12, 2010 12:34 PM

At its meeting Wednesday night the Metro Policy Advisory Committee recommended the Metro Council and the Clackamas, Multnomah and Washington county commissions adopt an urban and rural reserves map that reflects the suggestions made by MPAC at its Jan. 27 and Feb. 1 meetings.

Representatives from each county commission and the Metro Council - a group called the "Core 4" - approved a map this week that reflects their consensus on 99.5 percent of a 400,000-acre study area. The Core 4 map includes more than 270,000 acres of rural reserves and 27,000 acres of urban reserves while leaving a total of 2,753 acres yet to be resolved in three main areas: West Multnomah County, south of Sherwood, and north of Cornelius.

[Download the map](#)

[Learn more about the Core 4 and the reserves decision-making process](#)

Concerns were raised by several MPAC members that their committee's recommendations were not discussed by the Core 4 at its Feb. 8 meeting, and that MPAC's recommendations may have been ignored in the development of the final Core 4 consensus map.

"There has been so much time put in on this," said Fairview Mayor Mike Weatherby, who represents the cities of Fairview, Wood Village, Troutdale and Maywood Park at MPAC. "I'm frustrated. I can't go back [to East Multnomah County cities] and say nobody really cared."

Clackamas County Commissioner Charlotte Lehan, who serves on both MPAC and the Core 4, shared her perspective on the discussion at the Core 4 meeting. "People were so eager to go home and declare victory," she said. "I felt like I was the wet blanket on Monday, saying that we had not come to agreement on many levels."

Portland City Commissioner Amanda Fritz expressed similar disappointment. "I would like some communication [from Core 4] back to MPAC on why our views were not discussed."

Metro Councilor Carl Hosticka countered that many of MPAC's recommendations – particularly on areas for which Core 4 had specifically asked for input – were incorporated.

That did not satisfy Portland Mayor Sam Adams. "I disagree that MPAC was treated well in Core 4, regardless of how the map turned out," he expressed. Adams made the motion to advance the previous MPAC recommendation on reserves. "I think we should honor our own work by moving forward our previous recommendation." In the end, the MPAC recommendation was advanced on a 15–2 vote.

Following discussion of the reserves map, the committee discussed language and principles contained in the draft intergovernmental agreements between Metro and each of the three counties. The language of the draft IGAs describe the conditions and principles for planning urban reserve areas before they are added to the urban growth boundary as well as conditions guiding the protection of rural reserves. MPAC supported the IGAs and recommended additional refinements:

- The agreements should require (not merely suggest) that concept planning include certain elements.
- The protection of natural resources should be strengthened by reducing assumptions about urban density in areas with significant natural features.
- The agreements should assure that existing cities are included and can participate in urban reserves concept planning.
- The agreements should address urban form, density and transportation circulation.
- Priority should be given to large lot employment land in particular urban reserves.
- The principles for concept planning should be consistent

across all three IGAs.

It is anticipated that representatives of the Metro Council and the three county boards will reach agreement on the final reserve areas within the next week. The county commissions and the Metro Council are scheduled to consider adoption of the IGAs, including final reserves maps, by the end of February.

MPAC and Core 4 recommendations side by side

Several of MPAC's recommendations were incorporated partially or fully into the Core 4 map. In some cases, where the designations differ, conditions were placed by Core 4 on its recommended designations to address many of the issues of concern to MPAC.

- **Area 1F** (north of Highway 212 near Boring): MPAC recommended an urban reserve, and the Core 4 map changed from an option area to urban reserve.
- **Area 1D** (Boring/Damascus): MPAC recommended placing the buttes east of Damascus in rural reserve. Core 4 included the area in urban reserve but proposed a set of principles for concept planning to address the known environmental and topographic constraints in that area.
- **Area 6B** (Cooper Mountain): MPAC recommended reducing the size of the proposed urban reserve. Core 4 retained the full area as an urban reserve with principles for concept planning to address the known environmental and topographic constraints.
- **Area 4A** (Stafford north, triangle): MPAC recommended an undesignated area, whereas Core 4 included the area as urban reserve with a set of principles for concept planning to address the known environmental and topographic constraints.
- **Area 4D** (Stafford south): MPAC recommended reducing the amount of land in urban reserve and using Stafford Road as boundary between urban reserve to the east and rural reserve to the west. Core 4 reduced the size of the proposed urban reserve but kept urban reserves on both sides of Stafford Road.
- **Areas 8D, 8E, 8F** (near Banks and North Plains) and **3H** (Canby): MPAC recommended general reduction of acreage in undesignated areas around Banks, North Plains and Canby. Core 4 reduced the acreage of undesignated lands

in these areas.

MPAC recommendations and Core 4 recommendations differed completely in two areas.

- **Area 1A** (east of Troutdale): MPAC recommended this area be included as urban reserve, but the Core 4 map proposed an undesignated area of 186 acres.
- **Area 8B** (North of Highway 26 near Hillsboro): MPAC recommended surrounding this urban reserve with rural reserve, whereas the Core 4 map retained an undesignated area between Highway 26 and West Union Road.

MPAC also made recommendations on the three areas where Core 4 consensus has not yet been reached.

[Learn more about MPAC](#)

[Restoration under way at Collins Sanctuary](#)

February 11, 2010 5:15 PM

Restoration is under way at Collins Sanctuary in Forest Park. Metro purchased the 86-acre property with money from the natural areas bond measure passed by voters in 2006. Metro Council President David Bragdon and Metro Councilor Rex Burkholder spoke about the rehabilitation efforts after a recent tour of Collins Sanctuary.

[Go to the video](#)

[Learn about Metro's natural areas program](#)

[Visit the Friends of Trees Growth Rings blog to learn more about Collins Sanctuary](#)

[Core 4 agrees on 99.5 percent of reserves map; counties, Metro to work out remainder](#)

February 9, 2010 11:35 AM

The four elected officials representing the Metro Council and Clackamas, Multnomah and Washington county commissions – the Core 4 – agreed to protect more than 270,000 acres of the region's best farmland and key natural features in rural reserves while securing just over 27,000 acres in urban reserves to accommodate efficient regional growth for the next 40 to 50 years. Two years ago the counties and Metro began studying a 400,000-acre study area encircling the region's urban growth

boundary. Today, these four governments are down to negotiating the final 2,357 acres before establishing urban and rural reserves for the next half century.

"It's gratifying to see how far we've come as a region," said Metro Councilor Kathryn Harrington.

Multnomah County Commissioner Jeff Cogen noted, "we're near consensus on about 398,000 of those acres," and that areas left unresolved represent less than one-half of one percent of the total study area. Cogen made a proposal to endorse a revised map presented this morning and enable each county to work directly with Metro to reach agreements on remaining unresolved option areas.

[Download the map](#)

[Learn more about urban and rural reserves](#)

Each of the other Core 4 members agreed to Cogen's proposal, though Clackamas County Commissioner Charlotte Lehan expressed concerns with issues that remain unresolved, particularly the total number of acres in urban reserves and the conditions and principles under which they will be planned and developed over time. "There are a lot of issues that are more global that we really haven't wrestled with," she said.

Since the last Core 4 meeting on Jan. 11, Metro and the counties held six open houses across the region, as well as four Metro Council hearings, where members of the public expressed their views on proposed urban and rural reserve areas. More than 850 people attended the open houses, 237 people offered testimony at the four public hearings and nearly 2,000 people viewed maps and commented online at a "virtual open house" on Metro's web site. Changes in the proposed reserve map reflect comments received as well as the results of discussions and negotiations between county commissioners and Metro Councilors.

Over the next two weeks, representatives of the Metro Council and the boards of county commissioners will work to reach agreement on the remaining option areas and on final language of the intergovernmental agreements to designate reserves. The commissions and council will adopt the IGAs, including the final maps, before the end of February, with the Metro Council

currently scheduled to vote on all three on Thursday, Feb. 25.

No further Core 4 meetings are currently scheduled, though facilitator Debra Nudelman asked Core 4 members to leave the morning of Monday, March 8, open for an additional meeting if needed.

[Metro helps locals take the Polar Plunge and raise money for a cool cause](#)

February 4, 2010 1:49 PM



The 2010 Polar Plunge hosted by Metro at the M. James Gleason Boat ramp on the Columbia River



The IC Rangers and our "flagship"

A personal message from Councilor Rex Burkholder

A big thank you to the over 1,000 warm-hearted souls who braved the chilly rain-and cold waters of the Columbia River-to take the plunge for Oregon Special Olympics!

Metro hosted Polar Plunge, the annual fundraising event, at the M. James Gleason Boat ramp last weekend. We had an enthusiastic crowd come out to support those of us who, for better or worse, took a dip in the river. I had to remind myself

that plunging into 40 degree water, on a rainy Saturday in Portland seemed like a great way to support a great cause.

My team, called the IC Rangers (as in "icey" rangers), was made up of 14 dedicated Metro staff including park rangers, a computer programmer, an engineer and an arborist. Howard Rasmussen, the arborist, built our team's "ship" (seen in the bottom right photo) with recycled PVC pipe that was originally the water line at Blue Lake Regional Park, and cut up an old uniform to make the flag.

The Polar Plunge is a nationwide fundraiser for Special Olympics and is sponsored by Law Enforcement Torch Run as well as local businesses and agencies such as Metro. The money raised during Portland's Polar Plunge stays here in Oregon to help provide year-round sports training and athletic competition for children and adults with intellectual disabilities. Thanks to all those who made donations to the IC Rangers we raised more than \$2000 for Special Olympics Oregon. More than \$140,000 in pledges total were collected for the Portland area.

So who is up to take the Polar Plunge next year? Come on, it's a unique way to enjoy the Columbia River and raise money for a cool cause. If you'd like to learn more about Special Olympics Oregon or make a donation, visit their web site

[Share your voice, get involved in planning our region's future](#)

January 20, 2010 10:41 AM

A personal message from Metro Councilor Rex Burkholder

Throughout my career in advocacy and public service, I have been motivated to protect the places we love: the farms and forests, rivers and streams, parks and playgrounds that define our region and enhance our quality of life.

My work at Metro has been consistent with our shared values of thoughtful, long-term planning and preparing for future growth in a way that is consistent with our goals of transportation choices, dense, walkable urban centers, and open space preservation.

After two years of discussion and negotiation, the region is poised to make a very important decision about our future:

where future urban growth may occur. Our opportunity to engage in such a long-range discussion is unique: nowhere else in this country do we have a public discussion of this nature. Elsewhere it's a case of "farm today, subdivision tomorrow." Our commitment to deliberate and transparent decision-making makes our region so different from the rest. This measured approach to growth maintains the value of our homes and is less costly, because we have more efficient patterns of growth.

Metro, along with the three metropolitan counties (Clackamas, Multnomah and Washington) will be designating **Urban Reserves**—areas that could be added over the next 40–50 years to the urban growth boundary to accommodate growth as well as **Rural Reserves**—land that will not be developed for the same time. As you can imagine, there are strong feelings on all side. [Learn more about urban and rural reserves](#)

I take my responsibility very seriously and approach this important decision with the following three principles:

- **Be cautious:**
Urbanization is a one-way street. Where we allow urban reserves will impact working farms in the region. We must protect the ability of farmers to make long-term investments free from unnecessary cost and inconvenience.
- **Protect the best:**
Willamette Valley farmland is some of the best in the world and supports a healthy industry that provides us with fresh food year round. We literally cannot afford to lose this bounty in our backyards.
- **Provide certainty for everyone:**
Lands near the urban growth boundary face incredible pressure to develop and all should be clearly designated either for future urban growth or long-term protection.

There are two proposals under consideration. The official map currently released for comment (known as the "Core-4 Map" for the four government sponsors) recommends about 30,000 acres for urban reserves. This would be about an 11% addition to the urban growth boundary if all the land is urbanized. A coalition of conservation and agricultural groups has proposed a total of about 16,000 acres in urban reserves. This is about a 6% increase in urbanized area. [Learn more about the Core 4 Map](#)

Oregon's long history is full of people coming together to solve

tough problems. I am heartened by how many citizens have shared their concerns and ideas with the Council at our hearings. I am confident we will successfully complete this important task.

[Go to a list of upcoming meetings](#)
[Comment online](#)

As always, I will continue to look for solutions that protect farms and open space and achieve smart planning goals without compromising to our overarching need to address climate change, promote rail, bike and pedestrian mobility and of course protect the places we love.

Please lend your voice to this important effort.

[Metro protects Chehalem Ridge Natural Area in the Tualatin Valley](#)

January 8, 2010 12:09 PM



View more photos of the Chehalem Ridge Natural Area on Metro's GreenScene Facebook page. [Go](#)

Metro's Natural Areas program started 2010 with big news – literally – by purchasing 1,143 acres of forestland in the Chehalem Mountains of the Tualatin Valley. It's the largest acquisition in the history of the Portland region's two voter-approved natural area bond measures.

The new Chehalem Ridge Natural Area, south of Forest Grove, is one of the metropolitan area's biggest remaining swaths of undeveloped forest. At about the size of Oxbow Regional Park, the property is positioned to protect water quality and wildlife habitat in the Tualatin River Basin and serve as a scenic and recreational resource for the region.

"This acquisition nearly doubles the amount of land the Metro Council has protected with the latest bond measure, but

Chehalem Ridge is much more than a number," Metro Council President David Bragdon said. "It's also a milestone in terms of scenery, restoration potential and partnerships."

The acquisition was a team effort. Metro bought the property on Thursday from The Trust for Public Land, a nonprofit conservation group. The Trust for Public Land negotiated a deal with the land's longtime owner, Portland-based Stimson Lumber Co.

Straddling the top of Chehalem Ridge, the new natural area provides panoramic views of surrounding farmland and five Cascade mountain peaks: Rainier, St. Helens, Adams, Hood and Jefferson.

A young Douglas fir forest dominates the property. Cedar, hemlock and grand fir can be found in the drainages on the cooler, eastern side of the ridge. Oak-madrone woodlands, which are increasingly rare in the northern Willamette Valley, make an appearance on south- and west-facing slopes.

Chehalem Ridge is the starting point for a network of streams that flow to the Tualatin River, which provides drinking water for 200,000 people. This feature creates opportunities for Metro to improve water quality beyond the natural area's property line.

"This property is extraordinary," said Metro Councilor Kathryn Harrington, who represents the western part of the region in District 4. "It's exciting to think that we've protected another natural area of this size, scale and quality in Washington County. It's a success for residents of the entire region."

Chehalem Ridge will complement bird and wildlife viewing opportunities planned at the nearby U.S. Fish and Wildlife Refuge at Wapato Lake.

The Metro Council's goals for land acquisition in this area include the potential for recreational uses. At Chehalem Ridge, an existing gravel and dirt road network could form the basis for a future trail system. For now, Metro's science staff will develop a plan to guide forest management practices, habitat restoration and appropriate interim opportunities for the public to experience Chehalem Ridge. (For details, stay tuned at www.oregonmetro.gov/chehalemridge.)

The Trust for Public Land has pledged \$90,000 toward land management and stewardship during the first three years. Helping secure the acquisition and continuing to support Chehalem Ridge makes sense as the Portland metropolitan area invests in its natural environment, said the group's Oregon director, Geoff Roach. A diverse coalition is collaborating on The Intertwine, a movement to connect the region's parks, trails and natural areas and create a common identity. (Find details about The Intertwine at www.theintertwine.org.)

"We are delighted to be working in a region where business leaders, local government and nonprofits are encouraged to collaborate on land conservation," Roach said. "Love of nature is at the core of this region's outstanding quality of life. The Intertwine is leading the country in breaking down organizational and jurisdictional barriers to create, protect and enhance a world-class system of parks, trails and natural areas for everyone to enjoy – and Chehalem's a result."

The Metro Council's voter-approved 2006 Natural Areas Program funds land acquisition and capital improvements that protect water quality and fish and wildlife habitat, enhance trails and wildlife corridors and provide greater connections to nature in neighborhoods throughout the Portland metropolitan area.

[Learn more about Metro's Natural Areas Program](#)

[Politicians beware: Support for Metro is on the upswing](#)

January 6, 2010 11:53 AM

The Oregonian feature editorial for Jan. 5, 2010

The election for council president in 2010 could be the most thoughtful and provocative in the history of the regional government

This year, the Metro regional government will make a momentous decision, perhaps the most important in its history. But the principle behind it is surprisingly simple: Minimize waste.

Oregonians detest waste. Increasingly, they understand that land can be wasted as surely as money can be wasted – and, in fact, that wasting land is a form of wasting money.

This year, along with Clackamas, Multnomah and Washington counties, Metro will distinguish land that it would be smarter to develop eventually, called urban reserves, from land that it would be smarter to set aside for generations, called rural reserves.

Years ago, Metro made a run at doing something similar. But nothing on this scale requiring the counties and Metro to reach a consensus has been attempted before. That the process might have a few hiccups, or even threaten to implode a time or two, is only to be expected. So many future investments – those of farmers, developers and taxpayers – depend on these critical decisions.

By designating urban and rural reserves carefully, Metro and the counties can boost the Willamette Valley's agricultural industry, spark economic development, encourage the reuse of empty and wasted land inside the urban growth boundary – and save money on extending roads, sewers and waterlines.

Coincidentally, in 2010, David Bragdon will be finishing up his last year as Metro Council president, and three Metro-savvy candidates have already jumped into the race.

Rex Burkholder, a former high school science teacher now in his third term as a Metro councilor, is an expert on regional transportation. Tom Hughes, the affable former mayor of Hillsboro, has considerable expertise in economic development. And Bob Stacey, former director of 1000 Friends of Oregon, is an expert on conservation of farm and forest land.

If these three can't spark a vigorous – and, yes, exciting – debate on the future of the region, no one can.

The decision about urban and rural reserves will likely be settled before a new president is elected. So it will really be up to Bragdon to shepherd this inherently contentious process to a successful conclusion. This is a legacy issue for him.

Not surprisingly, the counties don't all see eye to eye on the reserves. There have even been a few mutterings about Metro disintegrating over the issue.

But that's extremely unlikely. If anything, public opinion is moving in the opposite direction. Surveys by Davis Hibbitts &

Midghall Inc. show support for regional land-use planning – what Metro does – has only intensified.

Oregonians are strapped and in a frugal mood, yes. But as the firm's Adam Davis recently told the City Club, people increasingly view compact development as financially smart, preventing waste, lessening the need for taxpayer-funded services and saving families both in money (fuel and other transportation costs) and in commute times.

Pay attention, politicians. Density is no longer the dreaded d-word, easy to demonize. Not so long as it comes, Davis says, with public safety and a few things Metro helps to provide – ample parks, "open spaces and walkability."

People in this region increasingly identify themselves as "Portlanders" and see Metro as a positive force. If you're looking for the usual suspect drawn to a Metro race—the candidate who runs against the very idea of a regional government?

Hey, for 2010, that candidate has yet to emerge.

That's progress.

[How should we grow?](#)

December 31, 2009 8:49 AM

A personal message from Metro Councilor Rex Burkholder

To read [The Oregonian headlines](#), one might think that people are taking to the streets with pitchforks and banners, marching on the Metro headquarters near the Oregon Convention Center, demanding the end to regional government. Well, it's just the periodic flare up of tempers and ideologies around the question of "how should we grow?"

It is a great question, and one that we spend a lot of time asking around the Metro table. The great irony is that if we were Phoenix or Dallas or Atlanta hundreds of acres of farmland would have been paved over in less time than we take for our discussion.

After contentious growth decisions in 2002 and 2004, Metro led a regional delegation to Salem seeking a more reasoned and rational approach, resulting in the current process to designate

areas for the next 40–50 years of growth, and areas to be protected for farming and forestry for the same amount of time. This is known as the "designation of urban and rural reserves."

[Learn more about urban and rural reserves](#)

Multnomah, Clackamas and Washington counties and Metro have been working for two years to figure out where urbanization might make the most sense and where farming and forestry as well as special natural features should be protected. Decision time is upon us.

I approach this important decision with three principles first and foremost:

1. **Be cautious.** Urbanization is a one-way street. Even creating urban reserves will make it more difficult for farmers to make long-term investments.
2. **Protect the best.** Willamette Valley farmland is some of the best in the world and supports a healthy industry that provides us with fresh food year round.
3. **Provide certainty for everyone.** Lands near the urban growth boundary face incredible pressure to develop and all should be clearly designated either for future urban growth or long term protection.

Along with Councilors Rod Park and Robert Liberty, I support designation of a modest amount of urban reserves, recognizing that there are about 15,000 acres of vacant land within the existing urban growth boundary. There also are very good reasons – economic, environmental and social – to re-invest in our existing communities rather than start anew on farmland.

A detailed map as well as the public hearing and open house schedule is available on the Metro web site. You can also sign up for the Metro newsfeed to receive updates. Public hearings and open houses are scheduled during the month of January. Materials including maps, descriptions of landscapes and the reserves proposals and an online survey will be posted during the public hearing period from January 11–22 so check our web site then to learn more and to send in your comments.

[Download the proposed map](#)

[Find out how to share your views](#)

[Visit Metro's planning and policy newsfeed](#)

Metro and the three counties will continue to discuss possible designations on the map in an effort to reach agreement by the last week of February 2010.

Happy New Year,

Rex

[Metro announces new director for the Oregon Zoo](#)

December 29, 2009 11:24 AM



New Oregon Zoo director Kim Smith

Metro is excited to welcome new Oregon Zoo director Kimberly A. Smith beginning March 1. Smith brings 25 years of comprehensive zoo experience to the position. She has built an exceptional reputation for her commitment to wildlife conservation and has worked closely with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, along with state and local wildlife officials, on several local conservation initiatives. Smith also has a solid track record in overseeing and implementing strategic and master plans and will lead the Oregon Zoo as it undertakes \$125 million worth of bond-related improvements over the next 10 to 15 years.

"We are very pleased to have recruited such an outstanding zoo director," said Michael Jordan, Metro's chief operating officer. "She is a proven community leader, manager, conservationist and educator – and is well positioned to lead us into a new era of excellence." The zoo is a service of Metro and is dedicated to its mission to inspire the community to create a better future for wildlife.

[Go to the news release](#)

[A sustainable region; a visionary Regional Transportation Plan](#)

December 17, 2009 4:04 PM

A personal message from Metro Councilor Rex Burkholder

Last week, the Portland metropolitan region's transportation leaders put their stamp of approval on a transportation and livability blueprint for this region – a proposed list of projects and innovative policies collectively known as the Regional Transportation Plan. And today the Metro Council – in its federally recognized role as this region's transportation planning agency – also gave its approval to this plan.

Adoption of the RTP marks a major milestone in Metro's Making the Greatest Place effort. We now have a bricks-and-mortar plan shaped by values created by the people – not traffic models – that will create a sustainable region through smart investments.

There will be many challenges ahead associated with increasing population, rising petroleum prices, shortages of public funds and, in particular, reducing carbon emissions.

This plan sets us on the right path toward a sustainable future through projects and policies that help us use land inside the urban growth boundary more efficiently, which prevents sprawl, protects farm and forest lands, attracts jobs and housing to urban centers, encourages more transit use, and creates places where people can choose to walk and bike for pleasure or to meet everyday needs.

This RTP reduces – *on a per capita basis* – carbon emissions from where we are now.

It also helps a rapidly growing population sustainably thrive. The smart investments and policies in this plan will create vibrant, bustling urban centers where we want them, and keep farm and forestland protected from undesirable and expensive sprawl. Its policies on freight mobility support our economic competitiveness. It also commits more resources to safety, high-capacity transit, and pedestrian-oriented projects than ever before. It prioritizes \$1 billion in bicycle investment opportunities alone.

However, aggressive targets for reducing GHG emissions – in

Oregon's case, *a 75 percent reduction below 1990 levels by 2050* – puts tall demands on even the greenest of future plans to be even greener. Even with technological advances in cleaner fuels and engine efficiency, we will constantly need to improve our plans and practices.

I believe we can get there. This RTP not only continues our strong legacy of sustainability, it also improves our strategic position.

To begin with, we can all be encouraged that the Portland region already leads the United States in reducing transportation emissions. Our vehicle miles traveled per capita have been declining, transit and bike use are increasing, and we enjoy shorter trips due to our compact urban form. So we're already on the right path. Because of Metro's smart land use and transportation policies the average resident drives 17 percent less here than our counterparts around the country. That's big savings in money, too, estimated at over \$1 billion a year!

Furthermore, this RTP puts us ahead of the national curve by putting carbon emission reduction explicitly and directly into our planning so we can address any state or federal requirements without delay.

Just a few weeks ago after discussions with other regional leaders we adopted a "RTP Climate Action Plan," which outlines additional steps to be completed by January 2012:

- **Consistency across the board** – Make sure that all local plans are consistent with the regional ones, namely in how they reduce GHG emissions;
- **More multi-modal transportation** – Metro will use flexible federal funding to bring more car-free choices, enhancing residents' daily experiences and improving air quality;
- **Activity areas** – We'll be prioritizing plans to more fully develop centers and corridors, a key to lively urban landscapes and job creation, which also minimizes GHG emissions and saves money;
- **Improved cities, protected farms** – In December 2010, Metro will adopt rules committing everyone to specific land use actions that keep housing, jobs and amenities closer together in order to minimize trips and GHG emissions.

Despite all this trend-setting work and positive results, we will need to do more. I welcome efforts to push even harder to reduce carbon emissions.

Fortunately, with a plan in place that improves upon our solid foundation of sustainability, we'll be able to meet immediate needs and make real-time adjustments, whether with new ideas, technologies or economic trends, to bridge the gap toward increasingly climate friendly practices. And that, ultimately, will help us turn our current and planned per capita decline in carbon emissions into drastic overall reductions in order to meet our aggressive goals.

I am very proud that the Metro Council has adopted this plan and I look forward to working with my Metro Council colleagues in the years and months ahead to keep this region at the forefront of sustainability.

[Learn more about the Regional Transportation Plan](#)

[**Adopt the RTP for greater sustainability - a personal message from Rex Burkholder**](#)

December 8, 2009 1:58 PM

This week, the region's policy makers are deciding on a transportation and livability blueprint for this region – a proposed list of projects and updated policies collectively known as the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP).

More than just a list, this plan makes smart use of transportation investments to create a sustainable community as we prepare to welcome about a million more people to this part of the country in the next 25 years.

This has some concerned about greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from the transportation sector. Some have even inferred that we should abandon this plan.

I maintain that adopting a plan that actually reduces – *on a per capita basis* – GHG emissions from where we are now, and one that helps a rapidly growing population sustainably thrive, is responsible stewardship.

All the challenges of growth aside, this plan includes projects and policies that help us use land inside the urban growth

boundary more efficiently, which prevents sprawl, protects farm and forest lands, attracts jobs and housing to urban centers, and creates places where people can choose to walk for pleasure or to meet everyday needs. Its policies on freight mobility support our economic competitiveness. It also commits more resources to safety, high-capacity transit, and pedestrian-oriented projects than ever before. It prioritizes \$1 billion in bicycle investment opportunities alone.

However, aggressive targets for reducing GHG emissions – in Oregon's case, *a 75 percent reduction below 1990 levels by 2050* – puts tall demands on even the greenest of future plans, such as ours, to be even greener. Even with technological advances in cleaner fuels and engine efficiency, we will constantly need to improve our plans and practices.

But transportation policies and investments alone won't get us there; we need to strengthen our commitment to land use policies that support more compact, walkable urban communities and develop other strategies that will reduce demand on our roads and people's need to drive places.

I believe we can get there.

To begin with, we can all be encouraged that the Portland region already leads the United States in reducing transportation emissions. Our vehicle miles traveled per capita have been declining, transit and bike use are increasing, and we enjoy shorter trips because of the way our urban areas are planned and have been developed. So we're already on the right path. Because of Metro's smart land use and transportation policies, the average resident drives 17% less here than our counterparts around the country. That's big savings in carbon and in money.

Furthermore, the proposed RTP puts us ahead of the national curve by putting GHG reduction explicitly and directly into our planning so we can address any state or federal requirements without delay.

Just a few weeks ago after discussions with other regional leaders we adopted a "RTP Climate Action Plan," which outlines additional steps to be completed by January 2012:

- **Consistency across the board** – Make sure that all local

plans are consistent with the regional ones, namely in how they reduce GHG emissions

- **More multi-modal transportation** – Metro will use flexible federal funding to bring more car-free choices, enhancing residents' daily experiences and improving air quality
- **Activity areas** – We'll be prioritizing plans to more fully develop centers and corridors, a key to lively urban landscapes and job creation, which also minimizes GHG emissions and saves money
- **Improved cities, protected farms** – In December 2010, Metro will adopt rules committing everyone to specific land use actions that keep housing, jobs and amenities closer together in order to minimize trips and GHG emissions.

Despite all this trend-setting work and positive results, we will need to do more. I welcome pressure to push even harder to reduce GHG emissions, but we cannot abandon a plan that improves upon our solid foundation of sustainability.

We should keep a good thing going by adopting this transportation blueprint. It will help meet immediate needs, bridge the gap toward increasingly climate friendly practices, and continue our per capita decline in GHG emissions.

This RTP will also create vibrant, bustling urban centers where we want them, and keep farm and forestland protected from unwanted sprawl.

[Regional Transportation Plan](#)

[Making the Greatest Place](#)

[Metro helps advance Gateway Green project](#)

November 27, 2009 10:50 AM

With the help of Governor Ted Kulongoski's Oregon Solutions team, Metro Councilor Rex Burkholder and other community leaders met recently to advance Gateway Green, a project aimed at turning an unused swath of land between two freeways in Portland into a recreational area for off-road bicycle riding, hiking and other activities.

A leadership team convened by Burkholder, Jay Graves from the Bike Gallery and the Oregon State Parks Commission also

includes representatives from Oregon Department of Transportation, Portland Parks & Recreation, Oregon Parks and Recreation, the City of Maywood Park and Friends of Gateway Green.

The vision of Gateway Green is to convert an 35-acre parcel between Interstates 205 and 84 into a bicycle recreation area. Sustainability a key focus in the concept plan, which includes a stormwater treatment facility to be designed as an aesthetic rain garden, alternative energy demonstration projects, erosion prevention and management, and other components for environmental benefit.[More about Gateway Green](#)

Oregon Solutions helps projects that are a high priority for the state and that have a strong sustainability component. The projects also must bring together a wide range of community stakeholders. Graves and Burkholder are working with Oregon Solutions and serving as public champions of the project. As conveners of the Gateway Green project, Burkholder and Graves are working to create a formal work plan and strategy among Portland Parks & Recreation, Metro and other agencies for the development, operation and maintenance of the project.[More about Oregon Solutions](#)

"The project is noticeably significant because it is focused on making the most of some seriously underused land right in the middle of a major urban area," Burkholder said. "By working together, government and citizens can create outdoor recreation opportunities in the heart of a city. People won't have to travel to the edge of the urban growth boundary to take advantage of the numerous natural and recreation resources our region has to offer."

At a meeting on Nov. 20, the Leadership Team agreed to develop information to help tell the story and highlight the challenges and opportunities associated with the project. They also identified subcommittees to work on various aspects of the project, which include sustainability, design and programming; community engagement, partnerships and branding; and governance, finance and resource identification.

Gateway Green project team members

Tom Archer, Northwest Trail Alliance

Bill Barber, Central NE Neighbors
Steve Bryant, Oregon Solutions
Rex Burkholder, Metro (co-convener)
Jenn Cairo, Oregon State Parks & Recreation
Jeff Cogen, Multnomah County Commission
Jim Desmond, Metro Sustainability Center
Jillian Detweiler, Tri-Met
Chris DiStefano, Chris King Components
Mark Ellsworth, Governor's Economic Revitalization Team
Jean Fike, East Multnomah Soil & Water Conservation District
Warren Fish (alternate for Jeff Cogen)
Kim Freeman, Mt Hood Community College Maywood Park
Campus
Meyer Freeman (alternate for Drew Mahalic)
Ted Gilbert, Friends of Gateway Green & Gateway Urban Renewal
PAC
Jay Graves, Oregon Parks Commission & Bike Gallery
(co-convener)
Mayor Mark Hardie, City of Maywood Park
Brian Heron, East Portland Action Plan Advisory Committee
Emily Hicks, Office of Commissioner Nick Fish
Alison Hill-Graves, Community Cycling Center
Brett Horner, Portland Parks & Recreation
Denver Igarta, Portland Bureau of Transportation
Glen Lewis, A-loft Hotel at Cascade Station
Drew Mahalic, Oregon Sports Authority
Marci Marshall (alternate for Mayor Mark Hardie)
Gail McEwen, Oregon Solutions
Ted Miller, Oregon Department of Transportation
Mary Rose Navarro (alternate for Jim Desmond)
Linda Robinson, Friends of Gateway Green & Gateway Urban
Renewal PAC
Shelli Romero, Oregon Department of Transportation
Zari Santner, Portland Parks & Recreation
Chris Scarzello, Portland Bureau of Planning & Sustainability
Tim Smith, SERA Architects
John Sygielski, Mt Hood Community College
Jason Tell, Oregon Department of Transportation
Kim Travis, Oregon Solutions
Jill Van Winkle, International Mountain Biking Association
Scott West, Travel Oregon

[Getting young people involved – A message from Metro
Councilor Rex Burkholder](#)

November 19, 2009 1:04 PM

As part of our update of the region's 50 year plan, what we call "Making the Greatest Place," Metro Councilors have been traveling around the region, talking with groups large and small, of all interests. Of all of these, perhaps the most interesting and challenging to me was my visit with the Multnomah Youth Commission. The Commission has about 40 members, ranging from middle school to young college students, representing the hundreds of thousands of young people in this region.

I went to talk with them because I thought them to be a forgotten constituency, especially when we are talking about a future that will be theirs to inherit. I know that I won't likely be here in 50 years but my children and grandchildren will.

Being over 50 means that I have lived two to three times as long as any of these young people. I have read a lot, traveled and met thousands of people of many cultures and places. But one thing that I have learned over the years is that I don't have all the answers, that everyone has a fresh perspective on what it means to live a good life. So, it was with some trepidation as well as with high hopes that I went that rainy night to Gresham Civic Center to talk with the Youth Commission.

My presentation covered the basics of the Metro Chief Operating Officer's recommendations Making the Greatest Place, which includes protecting farmland by holding the urban growth boundary tight, investing in our existing communities, providing transportation choices and being accountable in all our actions. The young people dove right into the material, asking challenging questions such as, "What do you want us to do with this information?" and "If this plan doesn't solve global warming, why would you even consider adopting it?" and "If Metro is a 'green agency' then why did you hand out so much paper tonight?" and, finally, "How do you communicate with the public and with youth in particular?"

The Commission members really wanted to know how they could stay involved with this and other issues that Metro deals with: recycling, natural area protection, and job creation, among others. I have pledged to work with them and the Metro Committee for Citizen Involvement to engage young people throughout the region, using the Youth Commissions in other communities as well as in Portland–Multnomah County, to

identify the issues of concern to young people. If you have any suggestions on how I can further this pledge, feel free to send them my way.

All the best, Rex

[Youth Commission](#)

[Making the Greatest Place](#)

[Metro Council supports International Day of Climate Action](#)

October 22, 2009 3:59 PM



Oregon Zoo polar bears Tasul and Conrad join in the celebration. [More](#)

As a way to raise awareness about the significance of global climate change, the Metro Council has passed a resolution calling for Oct. 24 to be an international Day of Climate Action.

The resolution voices Metro's support for global grassroots efforts to reduce greenhouse gas pollution and to focus attention on the December United Nations Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen where world leaders will gather to create a new treaty on climate protocol. The current Kyoto Treaty is set to expire in 2012.

"The importance of a focused effort on climate change cannot be overstated," said Metro Councilor Rex Burkholder, who introduced the resolution. "All nations, non-governmental organizations and citizens should learn the facts about climate change and unite in finding solutions to reducing greenhouse gas emissions."

The Metro Council is working to reduce pollution through

actions in transportation and land use planning, solid waste and recycling, and conservation education. The Council's Climate Initiative works to provide regional leadership in coordinating the efforts of local governments, civic groups, university systems and business representatives to meet the State of Oregon's greenhouse gas reduction goals. Metro's current "Making the Greatest Place" initiative, which calls for limited expansion of the urban growth boundary, alternatives to transportation including transit, walking and cycling infrastructure, and development of urban centers will help reduce pollution associated with global warming.

Metro joins the City of Portland in endorsing an event taking place Saturday, Oct. 24 in Pioneer Square. The "350 Awareness Rally", which runs from 1 to 3 p.m., is one of several events endorsed by 350.org, a grassroots organization that promotes awareness of global warming, and supports scientific research that argues that the earth is in extreme danger when atmospheric concentrations of carbon dioxide are above 350 parts per million. Currently, the concentration of CO2 in the Earth's atmosphere is 390 ppm.

Saturday's events include music and speakers, and will feature cyclists, kayakers and walkers who took part in a 350-mile coastal trek to call attention to the effort. An aerial photo will be taken during the rally and sent to the Copenhagen Climate Conference delegates and large-screen televisions in Manhattan's Times Square.

As one of the many species adversely affected by global warming, Oregon Zoo's polar bears – Tasul and Conrad – have made their "voices" heard and have also joined the international campaign. [Learn how](#)

[Burkholder receives award from environmental education group](#)

October 12, 2009 2:42 PM

A personal message from Councilor Burkholder

On Oct. 6, I was honored and humbled to receive the Environmental Education Association of Oregon's Excellence in Environmental Education Awards at its annual international conference which took place in Portland.

Though generally reserved for environmental educators, Kim Silva and Dan Prince of the Multnomah Education Service District (ESD) and Friends of Outdoor School submitted my name because of the work the Metro Council and I have done in providing support for the ESD's long-standing Outdoor School program. I first suggested Metro support Outdoor School in 2006.

Metro's fiscal year 2008-09 budget included \$1.4 million to provide partial reimbursement to approved Outdoor Immersion Program Providers for including 6.5 hours of waste reduction curriculum and activities during each week at outdoor school. Several schools in the region - from Beaverton to North Clackamas - were able to participate for the first time in Outdoor School because of this funding; others were able to increase the length of their programs by a day, and still others would have had to cancel if funding was not provided.

The award I received was for an outstanding individual dedicated to advancing or providing quality environmental education in Oregon. Outdoor School is particularly proud of its partnership with Metro, which has created a reliable funding stream for teaching sixth graders throughout the region about waste reduction and recycling. Up to 15,000 sixth graders from throughout the region can keep attending this very important residential environmental education program which is has been described by some students as a life-changing experience.

The Environmental Education Association of Oregon is dedicated to creating an environmentally literate citizenry composed of people who have the skills and knowledge necessary to make informed decisions regarding natural resources. [Learn more](#)

Outdoor School is an environmental education program for sixth-grade students and has nearly 40 years experience offering science-based, environmental education.

[Portland hosts environmental education conference](#)

October 6, 2009 3:47 PM

A personal message from Councilor Burkholder

This Wednesday I have the honor of welcoming environmental

educators from around the country to Portland. The 38th Annual North American Association for Environmental Education (NAAEE) conference is taking place at the Oregon Convention Center from Oct. 7 to 10 in partnership with the Environmental Association of Oregon. This year's conference, entitled "The Power of Partnerships: Creative Leadership in Environmental Education," will bring together environmental educators, providers, researchers and supporters to celebrate and discuss the power of environmental partnerships in life, work and most importantly education.

Metro has developed partnerships with a number of regional organizations to educate residents about the environment. The conference will give us the opportunity to showcase some of that work and to learn about programs in other areas. I look forward to meeting new people and hearing about what great work is going on around the country.

Nearly 300 conference events include plenary panels, an exhibit fair, networking opportunities, field trips and a fundraising auction. If you are interested in attending, register at the NAAEE office in the Oregon Convention Center, room C126, or visit the conference website.

[Go](#)

[A personal message from Councilor Burkholder](#)

October 1, 2009 6:05 PM

In case you are tempted to put your bike away as the rain and chilly air arrive – don't do it. Bike fun will continue through the fall. Contributing to this fun is a 6-week event called Oregon Manifest, running from Oct. 2 through Nov. 8. The goal of this event is to engage a wide audience with cycling. A range of activities are planned to introduce people to the art of bicycling, including recreational riders, commuters, racers and families. It is this diverse audience base that excites me the most. In the city of Portland, there are a lot of people who say they are "interested but concerned" about using their bike as a mode of transportation. The range of events at Oregon Manifest can help convince some of those "interested but concerned" to become

bike riders. [Visit the Oregon Manifest site](#)

Some of the highlights of Oregon Manifest are:

- The event kicks off with the Constructor's Design Challenge. Thirty-two hand-built bike builders from across the nation will compete to make the ultimate modern commuting bike. The frame builders were challenged to create an innovative, purpose-built rig for the everyday rider that can handle different cargo and terrain. The bikes will be revealed on Friday October 2 between 7 and 10 p.m. at a gala event at the Oregon Manifest Bike Union, 539 NW 10th Ave. at Hoyt Street in the Pearl District. Attendees will get a chance to look at the finely crafted machines and meet the craftsmen who built them. Bikes will be judged earlier in the day. The event is followed by a Constructor's Race on Saturday. The course leads the riders on a 77-mile jaunt including dirt, gravel, elevation climbs and urban technical trails. Winning riders are expected roll into the bike union by 4 p.m. The top 12 winners will be displayed at the union for the full 6-weekend run. [More about the challenge](#)
- Throughout this 6-week event the Dreams on Wheels, a Danish cycling culture exhibit, will be shown at the Oregon Manifest Bike Union. This exhibit is a showcase of Danish cycling culture and Denmark's commitment to sustainability via urban design and shows how cycling can be an integral part of cities and communities. [More about Dreams on Wheels](#)
- Ready to Roll, a Cycling Lifestyle Fashion Show, is happening on Oct. 10 at 4 p.m. at 5555 N. Channel Ave., Vigor Industrial Shipyards on Swan Island. The fashion will showcase bike style that performs on both the morning commute and at the evening's big event. Bringing some extra action to the runway are special guests and style icons Team Beer and Tina Brubaker. [More about Ready to Roll](#)
- I'll be at the Family Bicycle Transportation Day on Oct. 25. This event will include a huge selection of family biking products in a fun atmosphere at a single convenient location. We'll have many easy and flexible options on hand, including bakfiet and cargo bikes, trail-a-bikes, front-loading child seats child seats options, bike trailers, tandems, electric-pedal assist electric-assisted bikes,

helpful accessories and more. You can sign up to attend the Solutions Workshop where parents and caregivers will share their experiences. There will also be information and resources covering safe routes to school and work, tips on riding with children, and bicycle maintenance. The Product Demo will be going on from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. and the Solutions Workshop will go from 4 to 7 p.m. and take place at the Oregon Manifest Bike Union. [More about family day](#)

- This 6-week event will end with celebrating the Single Speed Cyclocross World Championship qualifiers. The qualifying races are taking place Nov. 7 and 8. There will be a party to celebrate the cyclocross crescendo of the season at the Oregon Manifest Bike Union on Nov. 7 from 7 to 10 p.m. [More about Cyclocross](#)

[View the full schedule of events](#)

Perhaps I'll see you there!

[Cycling advocates generally positive about Metro growth recommendations](#)

October 1, 2009 5:37 PM



Metro Councilor Rex Burkholder meets with the Bicycle Transportation Alliance.

Despite a few specific complaints, the members of the Bicycle Transportation Alliance board were generally receptive Tuesday to Metro staff's growth report, saying it emphasized goals of reducing greenhouse gases, protecting the environment and making transportation more usable.

"I find it really exciting, the way Metro is thinking," said Mary Roberts, the board's chair. "It's not just about bicycle transportation. It's about what we want as a community and as a state."

The board met with Metro staff and District 5 Councilor Rex Burkholder to discuss Metro chief operating officer Michael Jordan's report, "Making the Greatest Place: Strategies for a sustainable and prosperous region." The report encourages channeling most growth inside the existing urban growth boundary, investing in repairing and maintaining existing buildings and infrastructure, and holding Metro and its local government partners accountable for the goals they put in place for themselves and the region. [Read the report](#)

But putting the ideals of Metro's growth report into practice is an ongoing process, and some issues still need to be addressed. Some board members reserved particular rancor for crowding on Portland's Eastbank Esplanade bike corridor.

"I am so mad by the time I get home, I'm like 'what was the point of cycling?'" said Mary Fetsch, who chairs the board's recruiting and nominating committee.

And board member Susan Otcenas said bike trails in Vancouver, British Columbia, act as major thoroughfares for bicyclists, not out-of-the-way recreation areas. She wants to see more of that in Portland, she said.

"The trails go through places that people want to be," Otcenas said. "They actually take you places."

The Regional Transportation Plan has an answer for Otcenas. Calling it "the backbone of bicycle transportation" through the region, Metro transportation planner John Mermin said Metro's planned Bicycle Parkway is a highlight of the plan.

One concern was coordinating Metro's efforts with those of the City of Portland. Mermin said local plans will be updated to reflect the new regional plan, though he added that there would be "a little bit of lag time." Mermin is also involved with Portland's bicycle planning efforts. Burkholder said the city must update its own plan within a year after Metro adopts the new Regional Transportation Plan.

Board member Hugh Bynum, a Portland photographer and member of the Oregon Freight Plan Steering Committee, asked about freight traffic and how large trucks would be directed around a city that caters heavily to bicyclists. Burkholder said

the freight industry has been very helpful in targeting specific areas that trucks need to go. Usually, they're not where cyclists are, Burkholder said.

"Most freight goes to very specific places. They don't just drive around city streets," he said.

[Visit the Bicycle Transportation Alliance site](#)

– by Sean Breslin

[Opinion survey gauges public views about growth](#)

September 25, 2009 3:31 PM

Metro today released the results of a public opinion survey designed to develop valid and statistically reliable information regarding the attitudes of residents about the quality of life in the region and growth management principles. Six hundred voters in the Metro region were randomly selected and interviewed on the phone between July 31 and Aug. 3, 2009. The margin of error for the survey is +/- 4 percent.

Summary of findings prepared by Davis, Hibbitts & Midghall, Inc.

Residents are optimistic about the direction of the region, and enjoy the quality of life they have. A majority of voters (58 percent) think things in the region are headed in the right direction. As found in other surveys for Metro about the quality of life in the region, residents value the environment, landscape and the types of activities and lifestyles these things provide. They also value the small community feel, access to a variety of activities and type of people living in the region.

There is widespread support for the region's urban growth boundary, smart growth and protecting the region's farmland, natural areas and standing forests. The environment is one of the top things that contributes to residents' quality of life in the region, and many communicated they do not want population growth and new development to jeopardize it. Residents strongly support development within the current urban growth boundary, including along transportation corridors, building on vacant lots, redeveloping old buildings and creating higher density neighborhoods (if they

have parks, natural areas and access to convenient shopping and public transit) to preserve farm and forestland.

Residents across the three counties feel similarly about the quality of life they have in the region. They like the same things (e.g., outdoor recreation opportunities, environmental quality, weather and people/sense of community). They also have similar concerns (e.g., traffic congestion, public safety, government, employment).

While there are differences in priorities and the acceptability of planning principles across age, education, and income groups, the starkest demographic differences are by residency type and county. Residents in Multnomah and Washington counties showed stronger support for the urban growth boundary, higher density growth and alternative modes of transportation than those in Clackamas County. Even so, a majority of Clackamas County residents supported new development to accommodate population growth coming through the redevelopment of land within the current urban growth boundary, reusing and revitalizing old buildings and vacant lots in already developed areas resulting in more people and increased activity in those areas, and development of public transit biking and walking as an alternative to the automobile.

Importantly, during the past decade Washington County residents, whose views were once more uniform with those living in Clackamas County, have identified closer to or in many cases almost equally with their counterparts in Multnomah County. Residents with higher levels of education and income levels also showed the most support for the urban growth boundary and the planning principles tested. While those ages 18 to 34 had strong support for high density development and public transit infrastructure, they were less likely to have strong opinions about whether or not the urban growth boundary is expanded.

Resident support for the urban growth boundary and higher density development is dependent on certain things:

- understanding the potential for redevelopment of vacant lots within the urban growth boundary and revitalizing old buildings, and being assured that this kind of development will precede or be done concurrently with the development of any undeveloped land within the boundary

- being assured that new development of any kind is carefully designed, accompanied with parks, natural spaces and easy access to public transit, and is walkable
- knowing the location of any new development relative to nearby neighborhoods and the level of increase in population density and activity level; otherwise, residents will assume the worst
- understanding that higher density development is a way to conserve farm and forest land and natural spaces, and is an alternative to urban sprawl.

[Download the full report](#)

[A personal message from Rex Burkholder](#)

September 16, 2009 4:14 PM

During the next three decades, about 1 million more people will call the Portland–Vancouver metropolitan region home, with 700,000 of them living within the urban growth boundary. To plan for this growth, Metro and its partners have focused on an effort called Making the Greatest Place. Its focus is to help us continue making good choices so we maintain our quality of life and plan how our region grows. [Learn more](#)

In the next few months, the Metro Council and other local governments will make decisions about how much farm and forest land to protect, where we should grow during the next 50 years and the best way to invest our limited money on creating jobs and making the most of our existing bridges, roads, trails and public transit.

Yesterday, Metro's chief operating officer Michael Jordan released a set of proposed strategies to inform those decisions and to inspire a regional dialogue about our future:

Strategy 1: Make the most of what we have

Invest to maintain and improve our existing communities.

Strategy 2: Protect our urban growth boundary

To the maximum extent possible, ensure that growth is accommodated within the existing boundary to protect farm and forest land and the outdoor recreation opportunities we enjoy with our families.

Strategy 3: Walk our talk

Be accountable for our actions and responsible with the public's money.

[Review the recommendations, plans and reports](#)

We can't "make the greatest place" alone. We need to hear from you. Please let me know what you think and what is most important to you by attending an open house, commenting online, sending mail or e-mail, or testifying before the Metro Council.

[Find out how to share your views](#)

Thanks for your interest and for weighing in about how best to preserve our urban growth boundary and the farm and forest land it protects; how to make the most of our existing cities and neighborhoods; and how to ensure we create enough good jobs for the people who live here now and the people who will come in the future.

[Welcome from Councilor Burkholder](#)

September 15, 2009 4:24 PM

Starting today, I'll be delivering Metro news to you as it occurs, sometimes on a daily basis here on my new online newsfeed. My goal is to make it faster and easier for you to stay informed about issues you and your family care about, and to provide you a way to give me feedback whenever it's most convenient for you. Please check the site regularly and take advantage of the subscription features that let you choose the way you want to stay updated. Let me know what you think of this new way to deliver information, and if you have any ideas for how to make it better.

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[Transportation speaker series: Global experiences in congestion pricing](#)

September 9, 2009 4:36 PM

Join the regional discussion about innovative solutions to transportation planning challenges. The latest installment of Metro's transportation speaker series welcomes Naveen Lamba, an international expert on congestion pricing. The lecture is from noon to 1 p.m. this Thursday, Sept. 10, at Metro Regional Center.

The need to reduce congestion will become more important as the region's population increases and puts more pressure on our infrastructure. One solution that has been successful in other cities is congestion pricing, which shifts the cost of peak demand for the public transport network to the users. Learning from the experiences of other cities is the first step in the discussion on how, or if, our region could use these tools to meet our future needs.

Naveen Lamba from IBM's Global Business Services will address examples of successful and unsuccessful congestion charging programs from around the world. He will also discuss the development of the next generation of congestion pricing solutions.

[View calendar](#)

[1,000 acres and counting](#)

August 8, 2009 4:21 PM

Since 2006, Metro's voter-approved Natural Areas Program has funded land acquisitions and capital improvements that protect water quality, preserve fish and wildlife habitat, enhance trails and wildlife corridors and provide greater connections to nature throughout the Portland metropolitan area. With the addition in June of three new properties, the total acreage of protected natural areas has reached the 1,000 acre mark, moving the program closer to the goal of protecting up to 4,000 acres in urban areas and areas where development is likely to occur. With nearly nine miles of stream and river frontage included in the new total, habitat quality for fish and wildlife can be

preserved and improved. [More](#)

[A message from Rex Burkholder](#)

July 1, 2009 8:30 PM

Summertime is a great time to get out into your neighborhood and explore. And there is no better way than to jump on your bike, strap on some skates or take a stroll. Portland is so beautiful this time of year (makes up for the long, gray winters, kinda) and it's really worth your while to do an evening or weekend outing.

To help you along, the City of Portland is sponsoring two more Sunday Parkways, where certain streets are closed to traffic, car traffic, that is, and open for you to move around some of Portland's best neighborhoods on bike, foot, stroller or skates. The next Sunday Parkway is in Northeast Portland on July 19 from 9am-4pm. Click here to look at where the route will be. This route will be a 6.6-mile two-way route showcasing portions of the Vernon, Concordia, Cully, Alameda, Sabin, and Beaumont-Wilshire neighborhoods. The route will also feature the Ainsworth parkway, Alameda bluff and will cross the Alberta, Beaumont and 42 Avenue business districts.

On August 16th, Southeast Portland is featured, including Mt. Tabor Park, a great place to look out over the city or gaze at Mt. Hood. Click here to take a look at the route. This route will be a 9-mile two-way route featuring two loops. A 5-mile relatively flat loop through portions of the Buckman, Kerns, Laurelhurst, Richmond, Sunnyside neighborhoods. A second, more challenging, 4-mile Mt Tabor loop will be optional to summit the only volcano in the City limits. The route will also cross the SE Hawthorne, Division and Belmont business areas.

Sunday Parkways is also a great event to volunteer for, either in the neighborhood parks where there is music, info booths and activities, or on the route, helping to direct traffic by being an Intersection Superhero. To find out more about volunteering check out their website, or contact Janis McDonald at Janis.McDonald@pdxtrans.org or call 503-823-5358.

Hope to see you there!!

--Rex Burkholder

[Waste Management of Oregon opens recycling center near Hillsboro](#)

June 30, 2009 8:13 AM

Waste Management of Oregon christened an expansive and ultra-green recycling center that will dramatically increase recycling and reduce landfill waste across Washington County. The recycling center will accept construction and demolition castoffs that, in the past, have ended up in landfills. It will collect, sort and reclaim these materials – concrete, asphalt, wood, and metals – for use in new ways.

The new facility is a \$10 million investment for Waste Management. The project involved 100 construction jobs and has resulted in 20 permanent jobs. The new facility is at 3205 SE Minter Bridge Road near Hillsboro, where Waste Management also operates a landfill and manages more than 100 acres of certified wildlife habitat and wetlands. The landfill is permitted to accept primarily construction and demolition debris. It does not accept household garbage or hazardous waste.

[Metro Council budgets for design and construction of Blue Lake Nature and Golf Learning Center](#)

June 28, 2009 11:00 AM

The Metro Council has budgeted \$10.6 million to complete design, engineering and construction of an environmentally-focused nature and golf learning center at Blue Lake Regional Park in Fairview, Oregon. The master plan includes a nine-hole family golf course, a six-hole pitch and putt course, a pre-engineered golf and operations building, and a covered driving range. Plans also include replacement of the aging Lake House Events Center, restoration of an existing wetland and other improvements to Blue Lake Park.

The Nature and Golf Learning Center will be built in a sustainable manner and will be designed to protect and improve water quality, wildlife and native habitat. The center will offer educational programs, and the golf courses will provide individuals of all ages and golf abilities the opportunity to learn and play on a fun, challenging and unique course. Designers have located holes to respect the environment and the Native American history in the area, and have routed the course to take advantage of river, lake and wetland views as well as contribute

to their protection.

Located in an 85-acre undeveloped Metro parcel on the east side of Blue Lake Road, the golf course will use minimal water and no harmful chemicals. Because no direct streams feed into the 64-acre Blue Lake, the land-locked body of water suffers from algae growth and other factors that contribute to lowered water quality, which has been mitigated somewhat by the introduction of solar-powered water circulators through a partnership between Metro and the Blue Lake Improvement Association. As a further improvement to water quality, Metro hopes to employ a system in which the golf course is watered from the lake and fresh water is pumped into the lake, helping to create a more natural circulation of water.

The anticipated opening for the facility is summer 2012. The contract for design and construction was awarded to Waterleaf/Design Works of Portland.

Blue Lake Regional Park is located 20 minutes east of downtown Portland and is open from 8 a.m. to legal sunset every day except Dec. 25 and Jan. 1. Metro, the regional government that serves 1.4 million people in the Portland, Oregon metropolitan area, provides planning and other services that protect the nature and livability of our region.

[High Capacity Transit System Plan nears completion](#)

June 15, 2009 9:00 AM

The High Capacity Transit System Plan will go before the Metro Council on July 9 for a vote on the corridor tiers and framework for the system expansion policy. The tiers and policy will then be incorporated into the Regional Transportation Plan, which will be available for public comment this summer before finalization in the fall.

The tiers designate the studied corridors into near-term, next phase, developing and regional vision priorities. The tiered approach allows Metro and local partners a framework in which to work in order to better prepare areas around the potential lines to be supportive of high capacity transit, ensuring continued success in our regional investments. During the summer, the RTP will set the system expansion policy targets and processes for corridors to advance to a higher priority tier.

For more information about the High Capacity Transit System Plan, visit www.oregonmetro.gov/goingplaces.