

Barbara Roberts

Metro Council District 6 News

[Timely break for Untimely tour lets volunteers focus on restoration at Lone Fir](#)

October 1, 2012 4:14 PM



This Halloween, a seven-year staple in Southeast Portland is closing its gates: Lone Fir Pioneer Cemetery's Tour of Untimely Departures.

But this doesn't mean the cemetery's pumping the brakes on other major projects – or that the popular Halloween tour won't return in the future.

Instead of committing to months of preparation for the tour, Friends of the Lone Fir Cemetery, the nonprofit behind the event, is turning its attention to work that has been put on the back burner by the October event.

Representatives say they couldn't be more relieved.

"I usually start preparing for the tour in May," said Frank Schaefer, who has been the tour's event coordinator for four years. "It was exhausting, and took time away from other projects on the verge of derailment."

Instead of rounding up volunteers, tour guides, decorations and other event necessities, Schaefer says the organization now has

time to focus on other priorities. One of those is the One Stone at a Time project, an effort to reinforce and refurbish old, unstable gravestones, funded in part by the cemetery's proprietor, Metro.

"It's time we give back to the cemetery," said Rachel Fox, Metro's cemetery manager.

The Friends of Lone Fir Cemetery kicked off the tour in 2005, both to cut down on Halloween vandalism and educate the community on the important – and at times, creepy – history buried underneath. The tour became a quick tradition, with last year's event drawing a record 1,600 attendees.

That translated to \$14,000 for preservation, restoration and education efforts in the cemetery. Another \$4,000 goes to Metro's cemeteries fund.

While Fox is also glad the tour is taking a hiatus to pursue different projects, she sees it returning to the cemetery in the near future.

"It's just suspended for a year," Fox said. "With more community support, perhaps help from a professional actor group, it can live on."

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

[Visit Lone Fir Pioneer Cemetery](#)

[Learn about the Friends of Lone Fir](#)

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

October 1, 2012 4:12 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](#)

[Engaged community members talk about Southwest corridor project screening results](#)

October 1, 2012 4:10 PM

Residents interested in the Southwest Corridor Plan are invited to a community planning forum on Oct. 9 for a preliminary look at a narrowed list of projects being considered for the corridor area between Sherwood and Portland. Business owners and neighbors engaged in local land use and transportation planning processes will gather at the forum to provide feedback on the list and consider which projects should advance to construction most quickly and which should wait a bit longer. Community information and insight provided at the event will add to the work being done by technical experts in order to generate a community driven, technically sound corridor plan.

The list of projects will be used in conjunction with an interactive website that will go live in early November. The interactive website and survey will allow people to create shared investment packages based around themes like health or prosperity. To do this, individual projects will be prioritized and combined to support community-building by investing in sidewalks, bicycle paths, roadways, transit, parks and habitat improvements. For example, people may wish to emphasize investments on parks over pedestrian improvements, they may focus on one or two large projects or spread their investment across multiple smaller-scale improvements. A series of questions will follow the packaging activity to seek input on why certain investments are most valuable to each participant.

The narrowed list of projects was culled from a list of more than 500 project ideas for the corridor, which came from community input (160 ideas from 543 comments), planner recommendations to meet specific needs in the corridor, and approved city, county, regional and state plans.

The narrowing process focused on three key factors:

- Identifying projects that support the community's vision – input from previous public outreach tells us that Southwest Corridor communities are looking for "...a thriving place for employment centers, for commercial areas, for small businesses and local businesses and have (the corridor) accessible to people of all ages of all abilities."
- Providing transportation choices – making sure, "the transit alternative (is) flexible enough to meet changing conditions" and "a 10 year old and a 90 year old [can] walk to a store, buy orange juice, and get home safely."

- Minimizing costs and impacts – considering whether "resources (are) being spent wisely to get the most bang for the buck."

The Oct. 9 community planning forum will continue the discussion about what kind of communities we want to have and how transportation can facilitate community-building and improve quality of life.

Community Planning Forum details:

6–8 p.m., Tuesday, Oct. 9, 2012
Multnomah Arts Center, 7688 SW Capitol Hwy, Portland
Bus 44 Capitol Hwy/Mocks Crest at Southwest Capitol Highway
and SW 33rd

[Learn about the Southwest Corridor Plan](#)

[Learn about the Barbur Concept Plan](#)

[Learn about the Tigard High Capacity Land Use Plan](#)

[Visit Linking Tualatin](#)

[See Sherwood's Town Center Plan](#)

[Saturday program will serve as tribute to women's suffrage pioneers](#)

July 19, 2012 4:31 PM

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."

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[Metro news archives: Pioneer cemeteries](#)

[Find out more about Suffragists Among Us](#)

[Learn about Lone Fir Pioneer Cemetery events](#)

[Independent panel will consider additional investment in parks, natural areas](#)

July 2, 2012 9:49 AM

Starting this week, a community advisory panel will consider whether the Metro Council should ask voters to invest more in the long-term health of the region's parks and natural areas.

The 15-member panel, which will meet for the first time today, is expected to make a recommendation in August. Metro chief operating officer Martha Bennett appointed the group at the request of the Metro Council, which is studying challenges and opportunities at Metro's 16,000 acres of parks and natural areas.

During the past two decades, Metro has grown into the region's largest owner of protected land. Metro took responsibility for Multnomah County's developed parks and boat ramps during the mid-1990s; two voter-approved bond measures have protected an additional 12,000-acres-and-counting of natural areas, from the forested Chehalem Ridge on the west side of the region to the Sandy River Gorge on the east.

As this portfolio of land grew, resources to care for it did not. Metro works to protect water quality and wildlife habitat at its properties by controlling weeds, helping rare and native plants thrive, and engaging partners in long-term restoration projects.

This spring, a survey of likely voters showed that 56 percent would support a levy to care for natural areas and parks if it cost the typical homeowner about \$20 per year.

Chaired by former Portland General Electric vice-president Fred Miller, the panel includes business, conservation and community leaders:

- Fred Miller, Chair, former Portland General Electric vice-president
- Josh Alpert, The Trust for Public Land
- Marcelo Bonta, executive director, Center for Diversity & the Environment
- Tom Brian, former Washington County Board of Commissioner chairman
- Craig Dirksen, Tigard mayor and incoming Metro councilor
- Stacey Dycus, campaign strategist

- Donita S. Fry, Native American Youth & Family Center
- John Griffiths, Intel and Tualatin Hills Park & Recreation District board member
- Lori Luchak, president, Mile Fiberglass & Composites, Inc.
- Mike Miller, Gresham Sanitary
- Wilda Parks, North Clackamas Chamber of Commerce
- David Pollock, Metro Natural Areas Program Performance Oversight Committee
- Jazzmin Reece, Reece Consulting LLC and Urban League of Portland
- Stephanie Routh, executive director, Willamette Pedestrian Coalition
- Pam Wiley, Meyer Memorial Trust

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

[Get outside! Visit Metro parks and other places you can enjoy nature](#)

[Nature projects across the region get \\$1.7 million boost as Metro Council awards six Nature in Neighborhoods grants](#)

May 17, 2012 5:03 PM



Tony DeFalco and Jane Van Dyke take a walk at the future Cully Park, which will be transformed with the support of a Metro Nature in Neighborhoods grant.

From four distinct parks and natural areas to an urban creek to a stone bridge, the landscape will be transformed by \$1.7 million in Nature in Neighborhoods capital grants awarded Thursday by the Metro Council.

Financed by the region's 2006 natural areas bond measure, the grants are designed to help nature thrive in urban communities. Now in its fifth year, the program has invested a total of \$6.6 million in projects across the region.

"There's no end to what could be done, but we've made a lot of progress," said Metro Councilor Carl Hosticka, who has served on a grant review committee since the program launched. "It reaches all the way from the east side to the west."

Every project must be accessible to the public, and a Metro grant can foot the bill for a maximum of one-third of the total cost. Recipients typically buy land, restore it, improve neighborhood livability or fuel an urban transformation – and this year's six projects represent all those categories. Recipients will expand Lily K. Johnson Park in Beaverton and the Baltimore Woods corridor in North Portland, develop Cully Park in Northeast Portland and Nadaka Nature Park in Gresham, replace a stone bridge at Tryon Creek State Park and restore a creek in central Beaverton.

[Read about the projects](#)

Nature in Neighborhoods projects often nurture nature in areas where people least expect it, such as a 650-foot section of Hall Creek in Beaverton between Southwest 114th and 117th avenues. Surrounded by apartments, parking lots and businesses, with a MAX line to the north, this stretch of water is as urban as it gets. The City of Beaverton is teaming up with five property owners and more than a dozen community groups to improve the health of the creek.

The theory: While improving habitat for fish and wildlife, the project can make the area more attractive for visitors and redevelopment, too.

"We're trying to turn this creek into something more livable for ecology, something people will want to come and visit and have

a picnic," said Debbie Martisak, project manager for the city. "We also felt this would be a step toward working with eager property owners."

After hosting charrettes and engaging the community during the next year or two, the city plans to realign the creek and a trail that runs alongside it, expand the floodplain to store more water, remove invasive plants and impervious surfaces, anchor the banks with native plants and install cascading swales. With \$354,000 in support from the Metro grant, the Beaverton City Council is committed to the project and could start construction as soon as 2014.



Restoring a section of Hall Creek in central Beaverton is designed to make the area healthier for fish and wildlife, people and redevelopment.

Restoring Hall Creek ties together many aspects of the Beaverton Civic Plan, Martisak said, such as promoting a vibrant downtown and making it easier for people to get around. "We want to bring some life to this area," she said.

Across the region, the Columbia Slough Watershed Council and dozens of community groups will build gateways to Nadaka Nature Park in Gresham. With \$239,000 in support from Metro, they plan to create a nature-based play area, gathering spaces and sustainable landscaping and street improvements, to complement a community garden that will be planted.

A transformation has long been part of the vision for this park serving the Wilkes East and Rockwood neighborhoods, said Friends of Nadaka organizer Lee Dayfield. Three years ago, supporters secured their first Nature in Neighborhoods grant, helping pay for an expansion of the hard-to-find nature park along Northeast Glisan Street – one of the areas that will now get a makeover. Along the way, the project has won support

from neighborhood associations, conservation organizations and nearby churches and businesses, all collaborating with the City of Gresham.

"It's big enough for everybody," Dayfield said. "There are enough things to be done, people contribute whatever part they can."

Added visibility has already attracted more visitors to Nadaka, Dayfield said. The park is regularly used by residents of a nearby Alzheimer's care facility and by students at H.B. Lee Middle School. Enthusiastic crowds turn out for volunteer restoration events, which create a sense of community.

"Life in general today, people don't talk to each other that much," Dayfield said. "When you're in this beautiful forest and you've got your hands in the dirt, people just seem to open up."

The barn-raising model will also be in full force at Cully Park in Northeast Portland, where a \$577,000 Nature in Neighborhoods grant will help reinvent the former landfill as a community hub for its namesake neighborhood. Sandwiched between Columbia Boulevard to the north and Killingsworth Street to the south, this future park is at a crossroads of industry and nature. You're as likely to see a killdeer take flight as you are to hear a plane swooping down toward Portland International Airport. Either way, you might have Mount Saint Helens as a backdrop on a clear day.

But, for now, a chain link fence keeps people out. The City of Portland acquired the land in 2002 and began work on a master plan to bring ballfields, walking paths and two large parking lots to this park-deficient neighborhood. Trouble is, building this 25-acre park on a former landfill was projected to cost \$12 to \$18 million - money the city didn't have.

A diverse collection of residents and civic organizations involved in the master plan were determined to see it through, said Tony DeFalco, coordinator of Let Us Build Cully Park. The coalition came together under the leadership of Verde, a Cully-based nonprofit that engages and supports diverse, low-income communities through nature and environmental projects. More than a dozen other members signed on, including the Native American Youth & Family Center, the Cully Association of Neighbors, Hacienda CDC, the Portland Community

Reinvestment Initiatives and the Columbia Slough Watershed Council.

At first, the coalition encountered a lot of skepticism. "It's too expensive to build; how are you guys going to build it?" DeFalco remembers people asking. "We put our heads down and went to work."

Supporters began to secure grants and engage the community in a plan to transform Cully Park at a lower cost. At least for now, that translates to one modest parking lot instead of two bigger ones, fewer ball fields and a lot of hands-on help from neighborhood residents. The coalition brought a nature-based aesthetic to the plans, and promised to provide jobs, training and environmental education to low-income residents and people of color.

With Verde acting as general contractor, work will get under way this summer when a community garden goes in. Next summer, the team will tackle the four projects supported by Metro's grant: a one-and-a-half mile trail network, with fitness stations along the way. Habitat restoration, both on top of the landfill and on the north slopes descending toward Columbia Boulevard. A tribal plant gathering area. And a "green streets" transformation of Northeast 72nd Avenue between Killingsworth and the park, which will become the main entrance. As part of the first phase, which will cost about \$3 million, the coalition also plans covered picnic areas, a basketball court and a youth soccer field.

The whole project is "triple bottom line," DeFalco says, achieving three important values for the community. "You've got the environmental aspect, where we're doing restoration and creating habitat. You've got the economic piece, where we're putting money in people's pockets in the neighborhood. And you've got the equity piece, where we're bringing a park to a neighborhood that really is park-deficient."

Nature in Neighborhoods projects are galvanizing their communities in a way that creates long-term success, said Jane Van Dyke, executive director of the Columbia Slough Watershed Council. She's involved in both the Nadaka and Cully projects, and sees them attracting far-ranging, cost-effective support – and investing nearby residents in these community assets.

"The more you get people engaged," Van Dyke said, "the more they care."

Laura Oppenheimer Odom can be reached at laura.odom@oregonmetro.gov or 503-797-1879. Follow Metro on Twitter [@oregonmetro](https://twitter.com/oregonmetro).

[Learn about Nature in Neighborhoods capital grants, including information about how to apply](#)

[Get involved in Metro's voter-approved Natural Areas Program](#)

2012 Nature in Neighborhoods capital grants recipients

Baltimore Woods

Recipient: Columbia Land Trust, Friends of Baltimore Woods

Partners: Portland Bureau of Environmental Services, Portland Parks & Recreation, SOLVe, Port of Portland, Cathedral Park Place LLC

Grant amount: \$381,000

Bit by bit, a once-neglected strip of land in the St. Johns neighborhood is being reinvented as a haven for nature and a future trail. The Columbia Land Trust and Friends of Baltimore Woods will purchase four parcels totaling nearly two acres in the Baltimore Woods corridor, which stretches from Cathedral Park to an industrial area along the banks of the Willamette River. This new addition - to be owned by the City of Portland - builds on the success of neighboring land bought with support from Metro's Natural Areas Program and Nature in Neighborhoods grants. Partners are protecting valuable oak trees while giving the community a chance to help remove invasive blackberry bushes and replant native trees. The Baltimore Woods corridor is also envisioned as part of the North Portland Greenway trail, which will allow more people to experience the transformation of Baltimore Woods while they enjoy the outdoors, commute and exercise.

Hall Creek water quality enhancement project

Recipient: City of Beaverton

Partners: Arts and Communications Magnet Academy, Beaverton Police Department, Clean Water Services, Tualatin Hills Park & Recreation District, Friends of Trees, Kiwanis Club, SOLVe, Friends of Beaverton Creek, property owners providing easements (Assistance League of Portland, Carr Subaru, Realvest Lynn Marie Apartments, TriMet, and Robert Zukin/Louis Busch)

Grant amount: \$354,304

When you think of nature, central Beaverton probably isn't the first place that comes to mind – but that's about to change. The City of Beaverton is teaming up with local businesses, schools, civic organizations and governments to show that restoring a 650-foot section of Hall Creek can help the environment and attract redevelopment, too. Working with six property owners, the city will realign the creek and adjacent trail, excavate sections of the floodplain, remove invasive plants, stabilize the banks with native plants, remove impervious surfaces and install a rain garden. The end result? Better wildlife habitat, better flood storage and a better place to do business. The project, which has generated strong community support, is part of the Beaverton Civic Plan.

Let Us Build Cully Park

Recipient: Verde

Partners: Native American Youth & Family Center, Hacienda CDC, Portland Community Reinvestment Initiatives, Columbia Slough Watershed Council, Coalition for a Livable Future, Portland Youth & Elders Council, City of Portland (parks, environmental services, transportation), Oregon Department of Environmental Quality, Oregon Office of Environmental Public Health, Harvey Scott School, Vigil-Agrimis, Terrafluxus, GeoDesign, National Association of Minority Contractors-OR, Metropolitan Contractor Improvement Partnership, Jordan-Ramis, Probit Builders, Emma's Garden

Grant amount: \$577,000

Cully Park today is a 25-acre landfill, closed and gated with chain-link and razor-wire fencing to keep people out. But it will soon welcome Northeast Portland residents with walking trails, a small soccer field and basketball court, play and picnic areas,

community gardens, parking and a sidewalk connecting the park to a safe crossing of Northeast Killingsworth Street. The nonprofit organization Verde will take the lead in this transformation, engaging diverse community groups and neighbors in their new park. While carrying out the first phase of a master plan developed by the community with Portland Parks and Recreation, Verde and its partners will create a much-needed destination in a neighborhood without many places to enjoy nature. This project will also bring jobs and skills training, health benefits and a new model of park development to a low-income community.

Lily K. Johnson Park expansion

Recipient: Tualatin Hills Park & Recreation District

Partners: Washington County and Friends of Beaverton's Johnson Creek

Grant amount: \$344,681

Nestled south of Farmington Road, Lily K. Johnson Park serves as a neighborhood destination and a potential wayside along the future Westside Trail. It will more than double in size – and grow exponentially in wildlife habitat – with a 5.6-acre addition funded in part with Metro's Nature in Neighborhoods grant. The expanding natural area includes scenic forested areas and a wetland, serving as a magnet for migratory birds. It also helps store floodwater from surrounding neighborhoods, providing water quality benefits to Beaverton's Johnson Creek. But buying land is only the beginning of a new chapter for Lily K. Johnson. The Tualatin Hills Park & Recreation District envisions the new section as a trigger to restore habitat and engage the community in the future of this neighborhood gem.

Nadaka Nature Park and Garden

Recipient: Columbia Slough Watershed Council

Partners: Audubon Society of Portland, Wilkes East Neighborhood Association, Rockwood Neighborhood Association, City of Gresham, East Multnomah Soil & Water Conservation District, St. Aidan's Episcopal Church, Verde, H.B. Lee Community School, Snowcap Charities, Police Activities

League, Pacific Gardens Alzheimer's Special Care Center, Metropolitan Family Services, Human Solutions, Grow Portland, El Programa Hispano, Eastrose Fellowship, Coalition for a Livable Future

Grant amount: \$238,806

Three years ago, a Metro Nature in Neighborhoods grant helped expand hard-to-find Nadaka Nature Park so people could access it from Northeast Glisan Street in Gresham. Now, a second grant is supporting its evolution into a sustainably designed park with gathering spaces, nature-based play, a community garden and a gateway into the natural area. Pulling together more than a dozen groups, this project carries out a master plan and creates a park that will serve the diverse, low-income Wilkes East and Rockwood neighborhoods. The team will develop a five-year operations and maintenance plan, involving the community in actively caring for its park. By helping build Nadaka Nature Park, this grant is also building new advocates for public parks and natural areas.

Stone Bridge Fish Passage on Nettle Creek

Recipient: Tryon Creek Watershed Council

Partners: Tryon Creek State Park, Henderson Land Services, Friends of Tryon Creek, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife

Grant amount: \$47,090

At Tryon Creek State Park, erosion is threatening a stone bridge across Nettle Creek – and, along with it, an important regional trail connection. The Tryon Creek Watershed Council will replace the bridge, making sure it doesn't become a missing link for walkers and joggers. In this case, what's good for trail users is good for wildlife, too. The existing bridge sits atop an undersized culvert, which makes it hard for fish such as cutthroat trout to traverse the creek; the replacement will be a free-spanning bridge or open bottom culvert. This project will also regrade the stream, stabilize its banks and enhance wildlife habitat.

[**Multifamily, transit-oriented developments create jobs, boost economy**](#)

May 3, 2012 2:11 PM



The Couch Street Apartments under construction are changing the skyline of lower East Burnside.

The news in March from Oregon's Office of Economic Analysis is no news.

Although Oregon's economy is recovering, it has not recovered. The baseline employment forecast remains essentially unchanged over the last six months. Slow growth will continue to be the norm.

But growth is happening.

Communities in the Portland metropolitan region are seeing streetscapes and skylines change with multifamily, mixed-use developments located near transit that not only provide needed rental housing, but create jobs and generate economic activity.

Two transit-oriented projects at different stages of development tell a story repeated throughout the region and the nation: the smart money – in both public and private dollars – is on development projects that push economic recovery.

80 jobs for every 100 units

According to the National Association of Home Builders, for every 100-unit multifamily property of affordable or market rate apartments, 80 jobs are created by new construction, 42 jobs are supported by spending locally earned wages, and 32 jobs are supported after construction by households in the new apartments.

For a close-in North Portland area with a diverse collection of historic communities, commercial and industrial corridors, parks, trails and natural features, it's a formula for revitalization that is generating opportunity in a flat economy.



Metro Councilor Carlotta Collette teams with developers to break ground on The Prescott.

The Prescott rides out market collapse

The vacant corner lot in the up-and-coming neighborhood just north of the Portland downtown core was a placeholder for development longer than expected.

Purchased in 2007 by Sierra Construction Co., an established Seattle-based firm, the block on North Interstate Avenue, between Prescott and Skidmore streets, falls within the Interstate Corridor Urban Renewal Area.

Working with Myhre Group Architects, the developer drew up plans for The Prescott, a five- and six-story building with 155 market-rate rental units and almost 9,500 square feet of ground floor retail.

But like hundreds of other construction projects in the region, the project hit a wall with the collapse in 2008 of the real estate market. The developer sold the land in 2010 and the project was canceled.

A new buyer stepped up in 2011, retaining Sierra Construction as developer. Financing was secured through a Department of Housing and Urban Development loan guarantee and a combination of private equity and \$400,000 invested by Metro's Transit-Oriented Development program. The Prescott broke ground in April 2012.

[Learn how Metro's Transit-Oriented Development program spurs private investment](#)

Rebounding with new jobs and spending

The impact on the local economy in dollars spent during construction of The Prescott and after homes are occupied is estimated to be \$39.8 million, with the added economic activity generating 115 jobs.

The Prescott will be located directly across from a light rail stop on the MAX Yellow Line, connecting residents to downtown Portland and Portland State University to the south and the Portland Expo Center to the north. The development's residential units, combined with its retail activity, are expected to generate 103 additional transit trips per day, producing \$1.9 million in fare revenues over 30 years.

"Opportunity is not always so clear in this economy and market," says Metro Councilor Carlotta Collette. "(The Prescott) is going to be a great model for us to look at in terms of what can get done."

Another vacant lot a mile to the east of The Prescott is the future site of New Seasons Market, expected to bring more than 150 new jobs upon completion in 2013 and provide an option for residents of The Prescott to keep dollars local.



Construction on the Couch Street Apartments creates local jobs.

Smaller, closer in and near transit

Reflecting real estate trends identified in the Urban Land Institute's 2012 annual report, smaller homes located closer to work and near mass transit hold increasing appeal as more

people look to manage expenses.

When housing and associated costs such as transportation and utilities are affordable, families have more income to spend on local goods and services.

The Couch Street Apartments, the first new housing development in the lower East Burnside area in nearly two decades, will offer working families more rental options in a rapidly emerging commercial area with amenities close by.

Couch Street Apartments construction supports local economy

When completed in the fall of 2012, the Couch Street Apartments will provide 70 apartments, 11 ground floor retail/office spaces, a roof deck and a bike room for repairs and cleaning.

Located on the corner of Northeast Couch Street and Sixth Avenue, the mixed-use development is a half-block from the new eastside Portland Streetcar line on Grand Avenue, scheduled to open at the same time as the apartments.

The development's retail tenants will add to East Burnside's growing commercial, office and retail district, home to the bside6 office building and Noble Rot dining, retail, and office space – both projects of the Metro TOD program – and the Jupiter Hotel, Rontoms lounge and Burnside Brewing.

Research shows that low- to moderate-income households are more likely than others to spend the money they save on rent for basic household and other unmet needs. In this East Burnside neighborhood, local businesses stand to gain.

Using local workers and suppliers

Spending during and after the construction of the Couch Street Apartments is estimated at \$15.6 million and will generate approximately 115 jobs.

Josh Ring, construction supervisor with Bremik Construction for the Couch Street Apartments, estimates on a day-to-day basis, he employs anywhere from a dozen to 50 crewmembers and trades people over the course of the construction timeline,

estimated to be 12 months.

"We make a real effort to use local trades people and suppliers," says Ring. "It just makes sense for the lifecycle of the project to have your suppliers close by."

Metro's TOD program invested \$300,000 in the project and anticipates returns in increased transit ridership as a result of the development to generate more than \$500,000 in fare revenues over the next 30 years.

[See also: Couch Street Apartments connect residents to safe, reliable travel options \(Sept. 27, 2011\)](#)

Three additional transit-oriented multifamily developments supported by the Metro TOD program are scheduled for completion in the region in the next 12 months.

[Metro, Centro Cultural celebrate Dia de los Ninos on April 28](#)

April 20, 2012 3:29 PM



Join Metro and Centro Cultural on Saturday, April 28, for the 12th Annual Children's Day Celebration. The festivities will take place from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Echo Shaw Elementary School in Cornelius.

The theme for this year is "celebrating education." The goal of the event is to promote a stronger and safer community by coming together, celebrating kids, having fun and interacting with family, friends and neighbors.

This family event includes a parade, talent show, music, dancing, singing, clowns, food, games, arts and crafts, information booths, activities for children with special needs and more. There will also be a soccer tournament hosted by Hillsboro Futsal & Soccer Academy. All activities are free.

More than 5,000 community members attended the event last year, and Centro is hoping to exceed this number in 2012. For more information, call Centro Cultural at 503-359-0446.

Metro is proud to sponsor this event. Metro's bilingual outreach team will be there with fun activities and giveaways to educate families about reducing their use of toxics, recycling, biking, walking and other healthy lifestyle choices.

Metro encourages people of all ages to practice sustainable behaviors such as limiting waste, reusing items and reducing the amount they buy, so they can help keep the region's air and water clean for our children and future generations to come.

[Learn more about Centro Cultural](#)

[OSU horticulturist gets busy planning a yard that prevents pesticides](#)

April 20, 2012 3:23 PM



Weston Miller's garden

As spring turns to summer, the yard at Weston Miller's house is "in transition." The Oregon State University horticulturist just built a fence and is now in the process of selecting plants for a large bed that will attract beneficial insects and birds to his yard, and also will require minimal maintenance or pesticides.

Weston will start with a mix of native plants, and a few fig, persimmon and scab-resistant apple trees. He'll also incorporate sedums that attract honey bees and bunch grasses that create habitat for beneficial insects like ground beetles. Lastly, he'll include hearty herbs like lavender, rosemary, bee

balm and thyme, loved by all kinds of critters (from hummingbirds to humans). Natural pest-eaters help maintain a healthy balance in your garden – much safer for families and waterways than toxic chemicals.

Is your yard in transition, too? Whether you're upgrading like Weston, or starting fresh at a new place, facing a blank slate can be overwhelming – and expensive. Weston offers his expert tips to help you get your new garden off to an effective and economical start:

Prepping and planting

Start with the soil. Fork or lightly shovel at least six inches of compost into new beds, getting it in as deep as you can. But time this around the rains; soil that sticks to a shovel is too wet to dig in.



Choose the right plants. Weston says Metro's [native plant guide](#) is a great place to start. And the Sunset Western Garden Book is a good one-stop shop for regional plant and growing information.

Plant densely. Weston suggests planting most perennials 18 inches apart from center to center to fill space around trees and shrubs. Thick planting allows plants to grow into each other and crowd out weeds. Later, plants can be thinned and moved to

other places in the yard.

Water plants in and give them a boost with an organic slow-release fertilizer.

Don't break the bank

Buy smaller plants and buy in bulk. Purchasing flats can save money and allows you to pop in filler plants, which discourage weeds when your plants are small and tie your beds together with a consistent look and feel.

Bulk compost is cheaper than bags. Share a delivery with a neighbor if you don't think you can use it all. Look for landscape supply companies in your neighborhood that provide economical delivery, but remember: all compost is not the same, so make sure you know what's in it and whether it's organic before you purchase it. (And veggie gardeners take note: you'll want the best quality, highest nutrient compost you can find, preferably made with animal manure or food-based compost in the mix.)

Download a free gardening coupon. Valid toward compost, native plants or hand-weeding tools at more than 30 retailers around the region.[Go](#)

Sign up for a free workshop with Weston and other gardening experts

Learn how to grow a robust garden, from flowers to veggies to grass, without chemicals.[Go](#)

[Read more about Weston Miller's gardening expertise](#)

[Learn more about gardening without pesticides](#)

Get Centered! workshop helps transform main streets into business destinations

April 13, 2012 11:44 AM

"A destination business is a business that is so compellingly different, a customer says, "I have to go to that place."

Becoming a consumer destination, continues Jon Schallert, nationally known marketing coach for independent business, retail and service providers, can change an entire city.

Ready to drive that change, seventy-five business and property owners from the Portland region's downtowns and main streets turned out in March for a workshop with Schallert to learn how to reposition their businesses – and communities – as consumer destinations.

Schallert is the first speaker as part of Metro's Get Centered! series, designed to provide tools, training and technical expertise to help communities attract investment and revitalize the region's downtowns and main streets.

Business owners from Hillsboro, Lake Oswego, Oregon City, Milwaukie, Beaverton, Gresham, Portland and Corbett locked in on the animated Schallert as he hit the highlights of his trademarked 14-step destination business process in a three-hour, rapid-fire presentation.

The art of the destination business

Workshop participants Dawn and Doug Sellers blew through the first tier of steps for establishing their wine shop as a consumer destination within one year of opening in historic downtown Hillsboro.

The Sellers launched Primrose and Tumbleweeds Boutique and Wine last year with plans to expand into a restaurant and wine bar by early 2012. But the overwhelming response to their wine shop prompted them to move up their timeline. By the fall of 2011, they were serving food, wine, beer and cocktails.

Applying a strategy picked up at a Schallert workshop they attended last year, the Sellers created a unique positioning statement that distinguishes their business from every other in the industry: "The world's largest selection of Oregon wine."

Primrose and Tumbleweeds opened with 47 types of Oregon wine. One year later, their selection tops 2,000 – with plans to keep adding.

"There's so much to constantly learn," says Doug Sellers, who's been in retail all his life. "You can't possibly know everything. We're taking advantage of everything we can. We're just one of the little boats that want to rise with the tide – businesses with their anchors down will just sink."

Targeting distant markets

The Sellers are creating change in downtown Hillsboro by using another tactic Schallert promotes: pulling customers from distances up to two hours travel time from their front door.

"You have to convince the consumer (your business) is the only place you can get it – not online, not from a catalogue," says Schallert. "You have to get them to wait and check your store first."

While the Seller's estimate 67 percent of their customer base lives within a five-mile radius of their store, the rest come from up to 20 miles away, often as overflow from events in nearby Willamette Valley wine country.

"People coming from 15 to 20 miles outside the area are coming to buy," says Sellers. They're also more likely to stay and shop other businesses in the area, he adds.



Accessories from the Heart in downtown Lake Oswego attracts mostly local customers.

For Carol Winston, owner of Accessories from the Heart in downtown Lake Oswego, attracting customers from Portland's more than half million residents represents both the potential and the challenge of her location, less than 10 miles south of the city.

Estimating 70 percent of her customer traffic to be local, Winston would like to change that. "We'd love to attract more people from Portland," says Winston. "But it's not that easy." She cites all the shopping distractions between Portland and Lake Oswego as a barrier to bringing new customers through her door.

Power in numbers

Winston, a fan of Schallert's program and already taking many of the steps he recommends at her upscale accessory boutique, finds the economy to be the biggest challenge in growing her business.

"It thwarts what I would do product wise," says Winston. "Gas prices impact shopping. We can almost see the gears turning (in our customer's minds) – fifty dollars for a pair of earrings or a tank of gas?"

Schallert's strategy for combining efforts of several businesses from one community to create a destination district resonates with Winston. "You tend to see the same people at these workshops," she observes, noting the more businesses involved from one shopping area, the stronger the pull on customers from out of town.



A historic building in downtown Gresham with multiple businesses can become a destination for customers outside the city.

Reinventing business for a new economy

Larry Landgraver, property owner of a historic building on the corner of First Avenue and Main Street in downtown Gresham, knows it will take a group effort to make Gresham a destination.

Landlord to six or seven retail businesses in his building at any given time, Landgraver encouraged his tenants to sign up for the Schallert presentation.

Although none attended, Landgraver shared the highlights of what he learned from the Get Centered! event with members of the Historic Downtown Gresham Business Association.

"People in our area are struggling – and so are the retailers," says Landgraver. "A lot of business owners open their doors and really don't know much about running a business. They may have been successful in the beginning but now they're not," he says. "Businesses need to reinvent themselves."

Landgraver believes Gresham as a destination has a lot to offer visitors from around the region. "I want to get more traffic into downtown Gresham," says Landgraver. "Visitors can come out and spend the afternoon, walk around, get a drink, drive up the Gorge."

Sitting in Schallert's presentation, Landgraver was motivated to consider marketing his building on First and Main as a destination.

According to Schallert, reinventing a business as a consumer destination isn't as much work as it sounds. At the close of his presentation that jumped in rapid succession from product placement to signature items to Pinterest – the latest social networking platform – he put the challenge in perspective.

"Everything you're doing now as independent business owners is harder than this," he promised.

Get Centered!

Get Centered! events help build the capacity of business and property owners, and nonprofit and city staff to make investments

Workshops are funded through Metro's Development Center, which works to support innovative infill development and spur additional investment in the region's centers and corridors.

[Learn more about Get Centered!](#)

[Polling says region's voters could support natural areas levy](#)

April 13, 2012 11:42 AM

Portland-area voters offered fairly broad support for an operating levy to maintain Metro's natural areas, according to a survey conducted for the regional government.

In a March survey of frequent voters by DHM Research, 56 percent of respondents said they'd support an operating levy to maintain natural areas if it cost \$20 a year for the owner of a home with an assessed value of \$200,000.

Poll data

DHM Research presented data from its poll at Tuesday's Metro Council worksession

[View the presentation \(PDF\)](#)

Metro is eyeing a levy that could raise between \$8 and \$9 million a year for maintenance of the region's 15,000 acres of natural areas, which were purchased after bond measures approved by the region's voters in 1995 and 2006. Money from Oregon bond measures can't be used for maintenance.

Support for the potential levy, which is being targeted for the May 2013 election, was fairly even across county lines – 52 percent of Clackamas County respondents said they would support a \$20 a year levy, compared to 54 percent from Washington County and 59 percent from Multnomah County. Opposition ranged from 36 to 40 percent.

That's not terribly surprising – Jim Desmond, who oversees Metro's natural areas programs, said the numbers are similar to polling conducted before the two capital bond measures, which passed with 67 and 59 percent of voter support in 1995 and 2006, respectively.

"The same thematics of preservation for future generations were strong then," Desmond said. "The thing that's moved a little bit... is a trend toward taking care of what we have. That resonates a little more, particularly going back to '95."

But the surveys had some surprises. Key among them, survey respondents were more concerned about preservation than recreation.

One of the survey's questions asked whether respondents would vote for a levy because "we need to preserve them (natural areas) for people who live here now and for future generations." In that question, 61 percent of respondents said they'd vote for the levy, versus 11 percent against.

Another question asked whether respondents agreed that "we need to have low-cost recreational opportunities close to home where families can experience nature." That garnered 55 percent support; again, 11 percent said they'd vote no.

"They want to preserve it but they don't care about access," said Metro Councilor Carlotta Collette, "or they're willing to pay taxes to preserve it, but someone else can pay for recreation."

Desmond said he also found it odd that voters were unlikely to oppose the levy based on the notion that Metro should be maintaining the natural areas out of its existing resources.

In response to the notion that Metro should reallocate its resources to fund preservation and accessibility of natural areas with money it already has, only 22 percent of voters said that makes them more likely to vote against the levy; 33 percent said it makes them more likely to support the levy.

Fiscal responsibility was the biggest mover to get respondents to oppose the measure; 34 percent said they were more likely to oppose the levy because "many of us just can't afford any more tax increases at this time;" more than 30 percent were moved against it because of other priorities like schools, public safety and roads.

With polling indicating the levy's key goals are supported by voters, the Metro Council and Metro staff are left to figure out exactly what to pitch beyond the abstract of "preserving natural areas."

For example, Desmond said, proponents could say "X percent of our land today is dominated by exotics, and we want to reduce that by 60 percent in the next five years. That would be measurable and deliverable."

Councilor Shirley Craddick said the tangible benefits are a key for residents.

"As a frequent user of the Springwater Corridor Trail, I see people discussing the mitigation that's occurred around the trails," Craddick said. "They can see that."

Part of that would fall on a task force of stakeholders from around the region, Desmond said, to advise what goes on the

2012 ballot. While some councilors expressed concern about overcomplicating the issue by adding a committee to make suggestions, Metro chief operating officer Martha Bennett suggested another benefit.

"If you do decide as a council to go to the ballot at some point, you're going to want to have some folks who are engaged in a campaign," she said. "We won't be able to engage in a campaign."

That campaign is unlikely to come this year – despite the support in the survey, Desmond said he didn't think Metro and proponents could have adequate public process in time for a November 2012 vote.

The DHM Research survey, conducted in early March, included 200 people from each of the three counties in the Metro area.

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:

[More specifics discussed about natural areas tax levy proposal \(Feb. 7, 2012\)](#)

[Scott Cruickshank appointed Oregon Convention Center executive director](#)

April 6, 2012 12:57 PM



Metro announced Thursday that Scott Cruickshank will serve as the new executive director of the Oregon Convention Center, marking the end of an exhaustive national search and extensive community stakeholder evaluation process.

Currently the general manager of the Grand Heritage Hotel Group, Cruickshank is responsible for the management of the Governor Hotel and Avalon Hotel and Spa in Portland. He holds more than 30 years of experience serving in various management positions throughout the tourism, meeting and hospitality industries in Oregon.

"Scott quickly emerged as a leading candidate throughout the selection process because of his vast management experience at renowned properties across the region," said Teri Dresler, general manager of Metro's visitor venues. "Combined with his expertise in convention sales and destination marketing, he is the top choice to lead the Oregon Convention Center now and into the future."

Cruickshank previously served as director of operations for Martin Hospitality, a management company overseeing popular properties in Cannon Beach, including the Stephanie Inn, Surfsand Resort, Wayfarer Restaurant and Lounge, and The Lumberyard Rotisserie and Grill. Prior to that, he was general manager of The Resort at the Mountain in Welches, and general manager of Stuart Anderson's Restaurants in various locations.

He holds a Bachelor of Science in Communications Management from the University of Portland and is certified by the American Hotel and Lodging Association. He has served on the Travel Portland Board of Directors and Clackamas County Tourism Development Council, chaired the Villages of Mt. Hood Tourism Marketing Alliance, Tri-County Lodging Association and Oregon Lodging Associations, and currently serves on the Mt. Hood Community College Advisory Council. In 2005 he was named Oregon Lodging Association's Lodging Operator of the Year.

Cruickshank begins at the Oregon Convention Center on April 23.

[Visit the Oregon Convention Center](#)

[Native American leaders: It's time for action on poverty in the region](#)

March 30, 2012 12:40 PM

The region's Native American community is struggling and needs more support and engagement, Metro leaders were told Thursday in a lunchtime presentation.

Representatives from the Native American Youth Family Center and the Coalition of Communities of Color gave an hour-long presentation to about 30 Metro staff members, as well as councilors Rex Burkholder and Shirley Craddick and Metro Council President Tom Hughes.

Most of the presentation focused on data, showing that many of the Portland region's 40,000-plus Native Americans are struggling with poverty, equity and education.

"The information that's contained in this report is unsettling," said Donita Fry, an organizer at the Native American center, "but we ask that you see the resiliency and strength of our native community."

It was the rare time that Metro leaders were urged not to try to debate numbers, the unusual challenge that wasn't faced with well-meaning solutions from planners and politicians. Most of the hour was devoted to listening.

The numbers, presented by Nichole Maher, the center's executive director, don't just show that Native Americans in

Portland are facing challenges. Maher's presentation showed that support for children is particularly lacking.

Nearly half of Native American children in Multnomah County live in poverty, Maher said, compared to 14 percent of white children. Native American couples with children in Multnomah County average \$50,540 in income; the same white couple averages \$80,420. Native Americans are 23 percent less likely than whites to graduate from high school in Multnomah County, and their unemployment rate was 70 percent higher.

Rey España, the center's community development director and a policy advisor to the [Community Investment Initiative's](#) equity group, said solutions involve more than just talking about equity. He urged Metro to measure progress, so there's accountability to back up the regional government's talk about equity as a goal.

"If we can't measure this, it's not going to matter," he said.

And, España said, the conversation goes astray when people talk about being colorblind. While Metro's goals for a successful region say the benefits and burdens of growth and change will be distributed fairly and equally, support for communities of color has historically been lacking.

"They've suffered where they live," España said. "The lack of access. The lack of accountability in public structures. That's the kind of environment we live in."

Maher pointed out that the underrepresentation of Native Americans in social service programs, like affordable housing and Head Start, means that those programs and others will need to re-think their priorities if they want to be equitable.

"With diminishing resources, I don't think the answer is going to be 'Can we get more resources?'" she said. "There will have to be some redistribution of resources, and that's hard for people."

The group had some praise for the regional government, particularly its long-term planning work. But the key is thinking about that work on a human scale, España said.

"The 2040 Plan begins to address the [Seventh Generation Concept](#), the long-term vision," España said. "In that positive

spirit, I think the challenge today is... in an equitable way, how do we move forward while recognizing the disparities?"

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 Rey España's role in the Community Investment Initiative. España is a policy advisor for the initiative's equity group. This version has been corrected.

[Let Metro help your neighborhood with its spring 2012 clean up](#)

March 23, 2012 2:08 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 Saturday, March 31, 2012, 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, 2012, to Aidan Gronauer, Sustainability Center, Metro, 600 NE Grand Avenue, Portland, OR 97232.

[Learn more about Metro's neighborhood cleanup matching grants program](#)

[What's your opinion on important transportation projects in East Metro?](#)

March 16, 2012 4:59 PM

Don't worry if you missed the March 14 open house for East Metro Connections Plan. It's not too late to help shape future transportation investments in Gresham, Fairview, Troutdale, Wood Village and Multnomah County.

This winter, about 120 transportation projects were evaluated to understand how they perform across seven factors:

- **Access and mobility:** Connectivity and travel time
- **Economic development:** Job retention, growth and investment
- **Safety and security:** Features that increase safety
- **Healthy communities:** Health benefits
- **Equity:** Distributed benefits and burdens
- **Natural environment:** Access to and protection of natural features
- **Feasibility:** Cost, funding potential and support

In order to prioritize some projects over others, the steering committee will decide at its April 2 meeting if some factors are more important than others.

Share your input with the steering committee. What do you think? The survey will be open until Thursday, March 29.

[Take the survey](#)

[Review open house materials](#)

[Learn more about East Metro Connections Plan](#)

Upcoming steering committee meetings

The canceled March 14 steering committee meeting has been

rescheduled. The public is invited to attend. Public comment is heard at the end of each meeting.

Monday, April 2

11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.
Fairview City Hall, council chamber
1300 NE Village St., Fairview

[Map it](#)

The steering committee will discuss the projects that are beginning to emerge as priorities. The East Metro Connections Plan is a group of local governments working together to advocate for the East Metro area. They will develop an agreement on near- and long-term transportation investments that make the area more attractive to employers while protecting neighborhoods, making roads safer and promoting treasured natural areas.

Wednesday, April 18

2 to 4 p.m.
Mt. Hood Community College
Town and Gown Room (Academic Center, room 2057)
26000 SE Stark St., Gresham

[Get directions to MHCC](#)

[View a campus map](#)

The steering committee will begin to prioritize transportation projects and form a preliminary recommendation. The recommendation will include an action plan that identifies local and regional actions to implement prioritized transportation projects, associated timeline and partnerships to support near- and long-term actions. The committee will refine and confirm that recommendation in May. It will then go to local elected councils for endorsement.

[**Metro deputy COO Scott Robinson to speak at League of Women Voters meeting**](#)

March 9, 2012 2:23 PM

The League of Women Voters of Portland will welcome experts

and government leaders in management and administration to its March meeting to discuss theory and practices related to the shifting of functions and responsibilities from the government to the private sector.

The meeting is scheduled for 7 p.m. March 13 at the Multnomah County Building Board Room, 501 SE Hawthorne Blvd. in Portland.

Loss of financial capacity within government entities and expanding missions has increased the extent and variety of ways the public and private sectors work together. The League of Women Voters is conducting a nation-wide study of the parameters and policy issues to be considered when a governmental entity proposes a shifting or transfer arrangement to the private sector.

Phillip J. Cooper, a professor of Public Administration at Portland State University, will lead the panel. Cooper is a fellow of the National Academy of Public Administration. He will provide framework for the discussion, reviewing the history and variety of transfer arrangements and the circumstances driving the increase in these government practices.

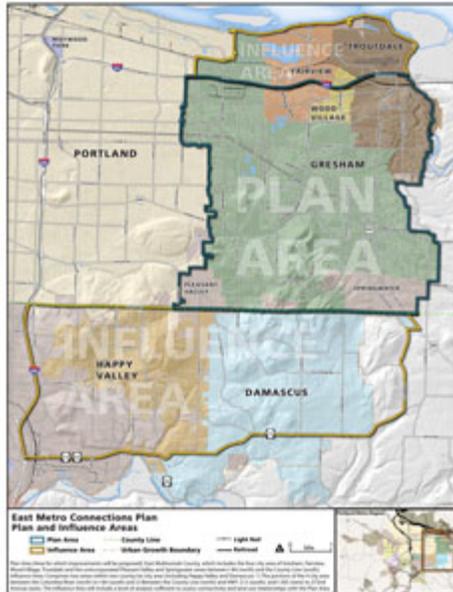
Discussing the policy and management approach of their entities to transfer arrangements to the private sector and reviewing examples from their portfolio of responsibilities will be Metro deputy chief operating officer Scott Robinson, Multnomah County chief operating officer Joanne Fuller and retired Portland chief administrative officer Kenneth Rust.

The League of Women Voters is a public policy organization. It works to promote political responsibility through informed and active participation in government.

This event is free and open to the public. It will be taped and televised on MetroEast Community Media during the several weeks following the meeting. It will also be available on www.lwvpdx.org.

[Panel prepares to weigh in on East Metro transportation plan](#)

March 2, 2012 2:03 PM



Metro planners will give government, business and nonprofit leaders a first peek next month at draft recommendations for improving commerce and transportation in the region's northeastern corner.

A solid grid of streets overlays much of Gresham, Fairview, Wood Village, Troutdale and pockets of unincorporated Multnomah County, yet there are significant gaps in the transit, bicycle and pedestrian network. What's more, there are spots where cars and trucks speed by or bottle up because of poor road configuration and traffic light timing.

The East Metro Connections Plan will consider increasing bus service, adding sidewalks, coordinating traffic signals, changing road widths, and re-designating freight routes – "small fixes" to the existing web of arterials that connect commercial centers and Interstate 84 and U.S. 26, explained Dana Lucero, a spokeswoman for Metro's corridor planning department. The plan will also consider recommendations for improving road access to Springwater, a proposed industrial, commercial and residential area southeast of Gresham.

The growth east Metro will likely experience as a result of new jobs or residents can be accommodated by the existing road network, Lucero said. Planners didn't see a need based on traffic volumes for a new or drastically widened road, she said.

"This represents a distributed system of gives and takes," said Lucero, who will provide a project steering committee recommendations for review at the group's March 14 meeting.

"It's small fixes to the existing system."

The committee includes representatives from state and local government agencies, as well as private-sector organizations, such as the East Metro Economic Alliance, Columbia Slough Watershed Council and FedEx Corp., which operates a major distribution facility in Troutdale.

Choosing the roads forward

The plan is the fruit of a 2007 agreement between Multnomah County and the four cities to work together on helping the economy by improving north-south transportation. The cities have a checkered history of cooperation, and that's a major reason why the east part of the region is not as prosperous as the west, said Metro Councilor and steering committee member Shirley Craddick.

"Most of the people who live in east Multnomah County commute 10-to-15 miles to their job," said Craddick, whose Metro district includes the study area.

There were roughly 47,000 homes and 32,000 jobs in the plan area in 2010, according to Metro. The region forecasts that the area will have about 60,000 homes and 62,000 jobs in 2035. Local leaders contend that transportation fixes will help alter the jobs-housing balance, but officials haven't been able to agree on a road forward.

A long-held assumption was that a single, major connection – either a new route or expanded arterial – was needed between I-84 on the north and U.S. 26 on the south. The political sticking point was where the connection would go and who would bear the traffic burden.

Rather than focusing on one north-south connector, Metro planners will suggest improving traffic flow on several arterials in the area. That could include Halsey, Burnside and Division streets for east-west traffic and 181st, 182nd, 223rd, 238th, 242nd and 257th avenues for north-south traffic. The strategy is part of a focus at Metro on achieving one of its so-called desired outcomes for the region: fairly spreading the benefits and burdens of growth and change.

[View a map of the study area](#)

"One north-south thoroughfare is not really the answer here," said Steve Entenman, a member of the steering committee and East Metro Economic Alliance board. "It has to be a combination of things."

Fairview Mayor Mike Weatherby, who signed the 2007 agreement, said his fellow steering committee members must prioritize transportation projects so as to get the biggest bang for the buck. Among Weatherby's top priorities is extending Fairview Parkway south from Glisan Street to Stark Street in Gresham. The parkway's northern stretch connects with Sandy Boulevard and I-84.

"Everybody keeps talking about limited funds," Weatherby added. "If we improve every street, the money gets diluted."

A Metro transportation analysis shows that trucks make up just 3 percent of the area's daily traffic. Further, truckers traveling through the area generally don't prefer 181st and Burnside – which the planners designated as a main freight route – as much as 257th and Kane Drive, and other north-south routes. Truckers reported safety concerns, conflicts with light-rail trains and slower travel times as reasons they avoid the Burnside and 181st route.

"As (we've) gotten into the data, we've realized there is a good grid system in this part of Multnomah County, and that it isn't really necessary to focus on one corridor," Craddick said. "It is really better to enhance the corridors that currently exist so that they work better."

Lucero said Metro planners may recommend that Burnside, between 181st and 223rd, be removed from the Regional Transportation Plan's list of freight corridors to reflect the route's actual usage and resolve safety concerns. Taking the route's place in the plan would be 223rd, between Glisan and Burnside, as well as 257th and Kane.

Active transportation ideas being discussed include improving pedestrian infrastructure in Rockwood and downtown Gresham, introducing bus rapid transit along the Division/Powell corridor, and creating better transit connections with Mt. Hood Community College, Lucero said.

Planners' recommendations will also focus on ways to spur economic development in existing and planned commercial and industrial hubs. Among the roadway projects to be evaluated is the widening of Halsey Street to a three-lane minor arterial with a center turn lane and median, sidewalk and bicycle lanes, consistent with the Halsey Street Conceptual Design Plan. Halsey passes through all four cities.

"Economic development follows transportation improvements ... active and vehicular," Entenman said.

Preparing for change in Springwater

Planners will also evaluate street improvements, including a U.S. 26 interchange, amid the 1,272-acre Springwater area that was brought into the urban growth boundary in 2003 but has not been annexed by Gresham. Undeveloped lots, farms and single-family homes dot Springwater today, but the city's 20-year master plan for the area envisions a village center, residential community and high-tech and industrial campuses supporting 15,000 jobs.

"The city has significant challenges to opening it up because of the financial burden - getting sewer, water and road infrastructure there," Craddick said. "Industry isn't necessarily just going to drop in there; they want shovel-ready."

The East Metro Economic Alliance ranks developing Springwater among its top priorities. But Carol Rulla, a stakeholder committee member and president of the Coalition of Gresham Neighborhood Associations, called the Springwater development plan a double-edged sword.

"It would be great if we had those jobs," added Rulla, who lives in southeast Gresham. "But it'd be difficult for the people who are here already and on the route because of all the traffic development would bring."

Metro staffers will convene the steering committee three times between now and the end of May and ask the Metro Council and Gresham, Troutdale, Wood Village and Fairview city councils to approve a plan by July. If elected officials can agree on an equitable way to spread transportation benefits and burdens, Rulla predicted, the area will become less congested and more

attractive to employers and residents.

"If you want to make it so businesses want to come to the community, you need to make it an attractive place to live," she added.

[Learn more about the East Metro Connections Plan](#)

Michael Burnham can be reached at michael.burnham@oregonmetro.gov or 503-813-7538. Follow Metro on Twitter @oregonmetro

[Trustee says California company is 'further along' than Metro on Blue Heron site](#)

February 24, 2012 4:40 PM



Willamette Falls

The principal of a California-based company says a plan for the Blue Heron mill site near Willamette Falls will bring thousands of jobs and new homes to downtown Oregon City.

Humboldt Bay Energy, [a corporation registered in Nevada](#) but operating out of Eureka, Calif., has come forward as interested in buying the site, and the bankruptcy court trustee charged with selling Blue Heron's assets said the company is furthest along in the process of buying the property.

Metro has also expressed interest in buying the mill site, and is continuing its environmental and structural review of the site before deciding whether to place a bid.

"Humboldt has made specific offers with specific numbers and Metro has not done that," said trustee Peter McKittrick. "In that respect, I'd have to say Humboldt is further along."

But Garison Russo, a principal of Humboldt Bay Energy, said he's cautiously optimistic his company will reach a deal to buy the site.

"There's still a huge amount of work to be done," Russo said. "We still have to do a lot of environmental testing," checking on toxins like asbestos and the level of soil contamination. It could be millions of dollars, Russo said.

"We're prepared to make that kind of investment, subject to what the applicable government regulatory agencies say," he said.

Russo said he's working on a mixed-use development plan for the property, which could include renewable energy and indoor farming, both of vegetables and seafood. The project could also include affordable housing. Foreign investors are subsidizing the endeavor, he said.

McKittrick said Humboldt Bay Energy also submitted a bid for the former Blue Heron lagoon on the West Linn side of the river, outbidding the \$1.75 million offer two Clackamas County sewer districts put forth last month.

"We're looking to make a long term investment," said Humboldt Bay Energy's Russo. "The nature of the project we're proposing, I don't think it's ever been done before, anywhere on the planet. The secondary revenue streams we're going to create from tourism will be worth millions of dollars, not only to Portland but to Oregon City, in the form of filling up hotel rooms and that kind of thing."

Russo had made a pitch for Portland's Centennial Mills development, but the company's focus shifted south, he said. His plans for the Willamette Falls site could support more than 1,000 jobs, he said.

"It's the end of the Oregon Trail, but it's the start of something that potentially could revolutionize eco-friendly neighborhoods and communities," he said.

Metro continues research

Meanwhile, Metro is continuing to study the property to decide whether to put in a bid of its own on the site. Metro Sustainability Center director Jim Desmond emphasized that the region isn't trying to keep private sector parties from looking at the site, and is doing its due diligence on the risks associated with putting a bid forth.

The agency recently signed a license agreement with the trustee, formalizing access rules for the site so that it can continue studying the environmental effects of nearly two centuries of industrial use. Experts from the Oregon State Historic Preservation Office will also look at the site's historic preservation potential. Grants from the state will cover most, if not all, of the cost of the environmental and historic studies.

Desmond said he didn't know how long it would take before his staff was ready to recommend a course of action to the Metro Council, but said it would be a matter of months, not weeks, before the environmental and structural review is completed.

"We think the best result for the public would be for the property to be redeveloped by private as well as public, and we don't want to stand in the way of any private development," Desmond said.

As for Humboldt Bay Energy, Desmond said Metro has not been in any contact with the company. He had no comment on the potential bid.

"We're going to continue with the due diligence," Desmond said. "Until the property is under contract to somebody else... we're not slowing anything down at this time."

See also:

[Willamette Falls site presents risks, opportunities for Metro and the region](#) (Sept. 22)

[Metro Council tells staff to continue researching Willamette Falls site](#) (Oct. 4)

[Metro files 'letter of interest' on Willamette Falls site](#) (Dec. 15)

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Metro on Twitter [@oregonmetro](#).

[House committee OKs changes to Metro cemeteries bill](#)

February 24, 2012 4:38 PM

Reporting from Salem

A bill to change the way Oregon cemeteries declare empty graves to be abandoned is headed for a floor vote in the Oregon House of Representatives.

The Oregon House General Government and Consumer Protection Committee voted unanimously Friday to send the bill to the full house for a vote – after making some changes to the timelines in the bill.

Senate Bill 1537 would create a new way for cemetery owners to re-claim empty graves whose owners have not been heard from in decades. It was sponsored by Metro, which has hundreds of such graves – many of which were originally purchased in the 19th century – in its [14 pioneer cemeteries](#).

[See also: Cemetery rules top Metro's 2012 legislative agenda \(Feb. 6, 2012\)](#)

The bill originally called for graves whose owners have been silent for 50 years to be eligible for re-claiming, and gave owners 90 days to respond to notifications via postal mail, email and telephone.

On Friday, house members amended the bill to extend back 75 years, and give grave owners four months to respond. That would take the "silence period" back to 1937, before World War II.

"If some World War II vet went away and came back and lost his plot, well that'd be sort of unfortunate. So, that was part of the rationale behind 75 years," said Rep. Jefferson Smith, D-Portland. "With this, nearly every World War II vet ought to move through their circle of life."

Rep. Paul Holvey, D-Eugene, said an extension on response time seemed appropriate when considering who is most likely to be impacted by the bill.

"When people are maybe 95 they're a little bit slower so it

seemed prudent to move it from 90 days to 120," said Holvey, the committee's co-chair.

Paul Slyman, the director of the Metro department that manages the pioneer cemeteries, said he didn't think many graves would be affected by the 25-year extension.

"We're pleased that the bill is moving forward in its amended form," Slyman said.

Metro lobbyist Randy Tucker said he expects the bill to go to the floor for a vote next week. The Senate, which approved the original version of the SB 1537 by a 28-0 vote, would then have to vote on the House's changes.

The committee hearing wasn't all business. Rep. Brian Clem, D-Salem, had some fun with the bill's nickname, the "Zombie Bill."

"Are zombies living or not?" asked Clem after Tucker's testimony.

"Like this bill," Tucker said, "they are undead... so far."

[Track SB 1537 on OregonLive.com](#)

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

[Metro seeks public comment on updated Regional Travel Options Strategic Plan](#)

February 17, 2012 12:47 PM

Metro invites comments on the updated Regional Travel Options Strategic Plan. The comment period begins Tuesday, February 21 and runs through 5 p.m., Wednesday, March 21.

The Regional Travel Options program encompasses the work of regional partners, including cities, counties, transit agencies, Transportation Management Associations and non-profit organizations.

These partners' programs improve air quality and reduce car traffic by helping people drive less and use travel options, such as walking, biking, taking transit, vanpooling or carpooling.

Reducing the number of cars on the road cuts vehicle emissions, decreases congestion, extends the life cycle of existing roadways and promotes healthier communities.

Components of the Regional Travel Options program include a coordinated marketing and outreach effort; an employer outreach program; a regional rideshare program; a grant program to support and catalyze partner's efforts across the region; and measurement and evaluation of Regional Travel Options program investments and projects.

The program is guided by a five-year strategic plan developed in partnership with stakeholders. The program is funded primarily by grants from the U.S. Department of Transportation allocated by the Regional Flexible Funds Program.

Regional Travel Options is currently in the process of updating its five-year strategic plan with help from Nelson\Nygaard and stakeholders. The updated strategic plan will:

- make efficient use of existing roads and transit investments
- streamline services to save money
- achieve greater outcomes with current funding
- apply triple bottom line framework to align with Metro goals
- reduce administrative burden on Metro and its grantees

The draft version of the Regional Travel Options Strategic Plan is available online at the link below. For paper copies, call 503-797-1757. Comments can be submitted by mail to Metro, RTO, Planning and Development, 600 NE Grand Avenue, Portland, Oregon, 97232, or by email at Pamela.Blackhorse@oregonmetro.gov. The hearing impaired may call TDD 503-797-1804. Comments will be accepted through Wednesday, March 21.

The Metro Council is scheduled to consider the 2012-2017 RTO Strategic Plan the document in April 2012. Prior to the Council's consideration, the public comment report will be submitted to Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation on April 12, 2012 for consideration. JPACT will discuss comments received during the comment period at this meeting.

[Download a copy of the updated RTO Strategic Plan](#)

[Learn more about the Regional Travel Options program](#)

[Supreme Court upholds LUBA's review of Columbia River Crossing](#)

February 17, 2012 12:45 PM



COURTESY COLUMBIA RIVER CROSSING PROJECT

The Columbia River Crossing would replace the Interstate Bridge connecting Portland and downtown Vancouver.

The Oregon Supreme Court upheld a state board's review of the land use order on the Columbia River Crossing, rejecting most of the arguments made by opponents of the CRC.

In upholding the Oregon Land Use Board of Appeals' ruling on the Land Use Final Order, the Supreme Court sent back the portions of the CRC land use review that pertain to the Columbia River.

[Read the Oregon Supreme Court ruling](#)

Metro approved the Land Use Final Order in August, effectively fast-tracking the land use review of the CRC project in Oregon. But state rules say the order's jurisdiction ends at the urban

growth boundary, which is on the north shore of Hayden Island. Metro's order extended all the way to the Washington state line, and both LUBA and the Supreme Court said that was, so to speak, a bridge too far.

The respondents in the Supreme Court case, Metro and TriMet, did not dispute that claim.

Metro land use attorney Dick Benner said the council could move the urban growth boundary to the Washington state line – a move which would likely be appealed by Columbia River Crossing opponents – or it could amend the land use order to end at the north shore of Hayden Island.

He said the latter is less likely to be appealed.

If the Metro Council amends its land use order, the Portland City Council would have to approve the land use conditions of the CRC project over the Columbia River.

Appeals of any amendment to Metro's land use order would be limited, and would go directly to the Oregon Supreme Court, Benner said.

CRC opponents tried to convince the Supreme Court that the political justifications for expanding Interstate 5 over the Columbia River were counter to the principles of the Land Use Final Order process, established in 1996 to speed land use review of any light rail project connecting Oregon City and Vancouver.

But the Supreme Court, in an opinion from Chief Justice Paul De Muniz, said "it was politically impossible for the light rail project to proceed without also building new interstate bridges across the Columbia River."

The opponents argued that the highway improvements were unnecessary from an engineering perspective, meaning they were outside the scope of the Land Use Final Order.

But the court said the complicated political history of the CRC – essentially, that Vancouver won't support extending light rail into Washington without also widening Interstate 5 – means the highway improvements were indeed necessary to build the light rail project.

"Because we already have concluded that political necessity was a permissible reason for Metro to authorize those highway improvements contained in its land use final order, evidence of that political necessity is relevant," the court said.

Calls to the Northeast Coalition of Neighborhoods a CRC opponent who appealed Metro's land use approval, was not immediately returned.

Update 4:12 p.m.: Coalition for a Livable Future policy director Mara Gross said this in reaction to the ruling: "I stil think it's bad policy to shortcut the land use process on a project this big. It's a major investment and we want to look at all the issues."

See also:

[Metro's Columbia River Crossing review largely upheld; UGB review could be needed \(Oct. 27, 2011\)](#)

[Council approves land use for Columbia River Crossing, delays environmental approval \(Aug. 11, 2011\)](#)

[An explanation of the land use final order \(July 15, 2011\)](#)

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[Councilors support Opt In, but still learning best ways to use Metro's year-old survey tool](#)

February 17, 2012 12:43 PM

Metro councilors expressed support for the agency's Opt In survey tool at a Tuesday work session one year after the program's launch.

The program, which periodically polls nearly 11,000 of the region's residents, has been pitched by Metro staff as a way to get more input from the public, which traditionally have been reluctant to offer thoughts on the agency's policy goals. It also could be used for scientific polling if enough people sign up and participate.

In both cases, said Metro communications director Jim Middaugh, the effort will save Metro money. (Metro News is part

of Middaugh's communications department.)

Metro spent \$76,000 on Opt In in 2011, generating more than 20,000 responses – about \$4.50 per completed survey.

By comparison, said a staff report for Tuesday's work session, Metro spent about \$400 per open house attendee during the 2010 roll-out of then-Metro chief operating officer Michael Jordan's growth and policy recommendations; those numbers soar to \$2,800 per completed survey at each of those open houses. The agency also spent \$35 per attendee at the dozens of stakeholder meetings Jordan attended.

"We did a lot of work and it was very expensive," Middaugh said, "and we didn't get the (breadth) of feedback we wanted."

The panel is still far from perfect. Much of the discussion was centered around the underrepresentation of conservatives and suburban residents on the panel. It also under represents blacks and Latinos, and is dramatically short on participants who never went to college.

[See Opt In's demographics](#)

That doesn't demean the project's purpose, said Rebecca Ball, an associate at [DHM Research](#), which manages Opt In. She pointed out that of the 4,000 participants of a recent survey, 90 were Latino, 79 were Native American, 100 were Asian and 36 were African American.

"That's by far more than we would have gotten had we done a scientific survey," she said. "We have enough comments from these groups to look at them in a way that is meaningful."

Most of the council's discussion involved the nature of the new tool, and how it could be best used for them as elected officials.

Metro Council President Tom Hughes expressed concerns about the possibility of the tool undermining the elected officials' power to use judgment in representing their constituents.

"If we doubled the size of it now, it would still be a small slice of the population," Hughes said. "There is a tendency to say 'If 85 percent of people who responded to a survey said you ought to do X, and you did Y, what's the value of the survey? Or how come you don't do what the people told you they wanted?'"

On a similar track, two Metro councilors disagreed about the importance of offering breakdowns of survey responses by Metro Council districts.

Councilor Rex Burkholder said he'd like to see the district-based data, instead of the county-by-county breakdown now offered in survey results.

"The county boundaries aren't very good boundaries in terms of analyzing this data for us," Burkholder said.

But Councilor Kathryn Harrington said the councilors' charge isn't to vote for their districts.

"We are making regionally-based decisions," she said. "There are some folks who say 'You represent your district,' and yes – but I'm supposed to look at the regional context when I make those decisions."

Neither the council, nor staff, [addressed recent controversies regarding the content of a January Opt In survey on transportation funding](#).

[Visit Opt In's website](#)

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[Southwest Corridor vision statement focuses on support, connectivity](#)

February 17, 2012 12:40 PM

Reporting from Beaverton

A nascent study looking at the region's Southwest Corridor should "support, strengthen and connect livable and prosperous places," from Portland to Sherwood, according to a vision statement crafted today by a committee of state and local government representatives.

The regional planning effort, launched by Metro last year, aims to integrate land-use, transportation and economic development strategies across parts of Multnomah and Washington counties, as well as the cities of Beaverton, Durham, King City, Lake Oswego, Portland, Sherwood, Tigard and

Tualatin. The Southwest Corridor Plan Steering Committee gathered at Beaverton City Hall today to hammer out the plan's vision, goals and objectives for the socially and economically diverse area, which had a population of roughly 200,000 and 121,000 jobs as of 2010, according to Metro.

"We're still at a very conceptual level," Metro corridors planning manager Elissa Gertler told committee members, the bulk of whom are city councilors. "These goals and objectives set the framework of what we're going to measure and evaluate and how we're going to make decisions over the long-term life of the plan."

A scoping public involvement report published by Metro this month notes that the plan will integrate:

- Local land-use plans to identify actions and investments that support livable communities, including Portland's Barbur concept plan, Sherwood's town center plan, the Linking Tualatin land-use plan and Tigard's high-capacity land-use plan;
- A transportation plan to examine potential roadway, transit, freight, bike and pedestrian improvements; and
- Strategies for improving the built environment, such as economic development, housing choices, parks, natural areas and community health.

Steering committee members devoted the bulk of today's meeting to ironing out the plan's written goals and objectives for supporting such a broad range of issues and concepts across multiple municipalities.

Tualatin Mayor Lou Ogden underscored that the regional plan and its overarching vision, goals and objectives should maintain cities' flexibility to make decisions and secure funding for local projects that don't have an explicit regional benefit.

"I'm concerned that ... the overall corridor plan is one that's broad enough so that individual locales could have their own local flair, and I'm also concerned that many of the interpretations of the standards might in fact preclude Tualatin's ability to get funding to do a certain kind of project if we're not able to prove that it improves health," Ogden said.

Lake Oswego City Councilwoman Donna Jordan asked for Metro

planners to strike the word "create" from the plan's draft vision statement.

"Rather than having 'create' in the first statement, it would seem to me that [the plan] 'supports, strengthens and connects,'" she noted. "Individual communities have to be the ones that 'create' what supports this corridor."

Metro staff will rework the language of the vision, goals and objectives based on today's comments and circulate an updated draft of the document in advance of the committee's next meeting, on April 9. The agency has not set a meeting location.

"There's a high degree of agreement, I think, on what we're trying to achieve," Metro Councilor and committee Co-Chair Carl Hosticka said. "We'll give the staff the task of trying to put words around that."

On Jan. 31, Metro hosted a forum to allow community members to discuss what they'd like to see in the corridor plan. The agency plans to create an online tool that will enable members of the public to "package" together corridor improvement strategies, explained Metro public involvement manager Karen Withrow.

"What we hope to really understand from people is, as they build these packages, what is it that they're trying to maximize," she explained. "Are they looking for efficient movement, above all else? Are they looking for low costs? Are they looking for health?"

In the fall, Metro will have another series of public-engagement events and period for comments. In December, the steering committee will be asked to identify commitments and an implementation strategy.

[Learn more about the Southwest Corridor](#)

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[**Metro Council president 'deeply concerned' about House committee vote to end dedicated transit, air quality funding**](#)

February 10, 2012 1:21 PM

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](#)

[**Cemetery rules top Metro's 2012 legislative agenda**](#)

February 10, 2012 1:19 PM



METRO FILE PHOTO

Under current Oregon law, a cemetery owner must essentially go through foreclosure to reclaim an abandoned, empty grave. Metro staff believes nearly 400 empty graves are abandoned at the agency's pioneer cemeteries, including Lone Fir Pioneer Cemetery, above.

Bills on cemetery management and employee background checks are the highlights of Metro's legislative agenda for the short 2012 session.

The cemetery bill is probably the most substantive bill Metro will push for this year; it would change the way the state declares a vacant grave to be abandoned.

[Senate Bill 1537](#) would allow cemetery owners, including Metro, to declare an empty grave abandoned if the cemetery hasn't heard from the grave owner in 50 years, and if attempts to contact the owner are unsuccessful.

The bill stems from a series of incidents in 2010, when [a former Metro employee was mistakenly re-selling empty graves that had been purchased in the 19th and early 20th centuries](#) without going through proper procedure to declare a grave abandoned.

Metro staff said about 400 graves are believed to be abandoned at [Metro's 14 pioneer cemeteries](#). Agency cemeteries manager Rachel Fox said the agency has declared a grave abandoned once since she took over the program in 2009.

Oregon law has a fairly cumbersome procedure for declaring an unused grave abandoned. The law only applies to empty graves that have been abandoned for 40 years, or unkempt and unused for 20 years. Cemetery owners must sue the owner of the grave in court, search property tax rolls for the owner, declare the site to be a nuisance, foreclose on it and then sell it in an auction on the courthouse steps.

"We don't intend to use the current law. The law is so poorly written and confusing as it is that it took us time to read the law and understand what we needed to do," Fox said. The agency put a moratorium on grave sales at two pioneer cemeteries after the 2010 controversy.

The lawsuits and foreclosures would be buried under SB 1537, instead allowing cemetery operators to contact a grave owner at his or her last known address, and post notice in the newspaper and at the cemetery, among other notification procedures. The space can be declared abandoned after 90 days of silence from the plot owner.

[Read Metro's SB 1537 fact sheet](#)

The bill's bipartisan co-sponsors include Sen. Rod Monroe, D-Portland, a former Metro councilor. Metro lobbyist Randy Tucker said it's supported by the [Cemetery Association of Oregon](#), the League of Oregon Cities and the Oregon Funeral Directors Association. It's scheduled for a hearing in the [Senate General Government, Consumer and Small Business Protection Committee on Wednesday](#).

The two other pieces of legislation called out by the Metro Council are relatively noncontroversial. [House Bill 4024](#) would allow the Oregon Zoo and other Metro departments to continue to use the Oregon Employment Department's Central Background Registry to conduct background checks on job applicants who work with children. A pilot program was approved by the Legislature in 2009; the House Judiciary Committee has already approved the proposed extension.

"Screening through the Central Background Registry is thorough and reliable," said Oregon Zoo director Kim Smith in testimony to the committee. "It utilizes highly accurate law enforcement databases and includes review of relevant records of child protective services agencies."

Senate Concurrent Resolution 208 memorializes the late Steve Apotheker, a Metro recycling and waste reduction expert who died in 2011.

[See also: Apotheker remembered as a visionary, Metro's "captain" on recycling \(June 27, 2011\)](#)

The resolution has 31 co-sponsors in the House and Senate.

Note – *An earlier version of this story incorrectly reported the number of graves believed to be abandoned in Metro's pioneer cemeteries. This post has been updated with the correct number.*

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Planners moving toward regional look at active transportation

February 10, 2012 1:17 PM

Bicycles are common in downtown Portland, but odds are you're more likely to spot a deer munching than a cyclist commuting along the region's urban edge.

Metro's 25 cities and three counties have a patchwork of policies and plans for bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, and getting around without a car can be cumbersome in spots without sidewalks, bike lanes and highway crossings. To connect cycling and walking routes with buses and trains, Metro planners are developing the region's first standalone active transportation plan.



METRO FILE PHOTO

While some regional active transportation planning efforts, like the Springwater Corridor, have been successful, the region has yet to develop a comprehensive strategy for pedestrians and cyclists.

Defined simply, active transportation is using human energy to

get around. Riding public transit is also considered active because it usually involves walking or cycling as an essential connection between stations and other locations.

Metro's Active Transportation Plan will identify a main network of on- and off-street bicycling and walking facilities, as well as develop policies that support active transportation. The plan will also prioritize projects and recommend a funding and implementation strategy.

"We're looking at (creating) the kind of high-level, regional network that is going to be the backbone of the entire web" of bike lanes and small, community trails, said Lake McTighe, a Metro planner tasked with managing the \$336,000 project, which is supported with a \$280,000 Oregon Department of Transportation grant. "It's going to be knitting together a lot of facilities."

The region's network could integrate major trails, such as the Springwater Corridor, with bike boulevards and other facilities that link up with MAX trains. The goal is for commuters to be able to get across the region without the use of a car.

McTighe is scheduled to brief the Metro Council on the plan during a Feb. 9 work session. On March 15, she plans on convening a stakeholder advisory committee of bicycle, pedestrian, trail, transit, youth and elderly issues advocates.

During the ensuing year, McTighe and other Metro planners will draft the Active Transportation Plan based on policy recommendations from public forums and the agency's standing Executive Council for Active Transportation. A visualization tool, to be posted on Metro's website this fall, will enable residents to evaluate the costs and benefits of active transportation network options.

"Our investment so far has been very piecemeal and opportunistic," McTighe said. "We've been able to accomplish a lot with that strategy. But because we don't have any dedicated funding, beyond the 1 percent gas tax from the state, we don't have a pipeline of projects ready to go."

Bicycle Transportation Alliance Executive Director Rob Sadowsky, who will serve on the stakeholder advisory committee, said his Portland-based bicycle advocacy

organization would like the plan to build policymaker and community member support for a dedicated funding source for regional active transportation projects. The BTA would also like the plan to include sample design standards and policies that municipalities could use to improve street safety.

"So many people are dying on roads, so we need to make streets safer; that means slowing traffic down," Sadowsky said. "When you start talking about slower streets, you start talking about bike lanes" and other active transportation infrastructure.

McTighe and her colleagues plan to hand the Metro Council the plan and amendments for adoption in spring 2013. The plan would be amended into Metro's Regional Transportation Plan in 2014, as well as help shape the agency's climate change mitigation efforts.

Metro would have several options for putting a prioritized list of active transportation projects into place, said Metro Councilor Rex Burkholder. The agency could reallocate roadway space to accommodate bike lanes or reallocate money for bigger projects. Yet another alternative would be to raise new money through a bond measure, much like the agency did to restore natural areas, Burkholder said.

"Because of the demand for (active transportation), you could do a similar thing and have a regional pot of money used by local governments to go out and do this kind of work," he said.

Increasing active transportation could boost the region's economy, Burkholder said, by reducing the amount of local dollars spent on imported petroleum as well as attracting new businesses. Keen Footwear, bike makers and other companies have clustered in the region, he contended, because of its active lifestyle brand.

"Look at almost any advertisement of Portland; there's a bike in it," he added.

Other active transportation advocates say that simply getting people out of their cars and moving has quantifiable social benefits. During a presentation at Metro last fall, University of British Columbia transportation professor and Brookings Institution fellow Larry Frank cited primary and secondary research that suggests investments in bike, pedestrian and

transit infrastructure induce active transportation and reduce healthcare demands and costs.

[Learn more about active transportation planning](#)

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[Metro Council accepts findings report on climate scenario planning](#)

February 3, 2012 2:03 PM

Local policies designed to preserve farmland and make livable neighborhoods have made the Portland area well prepared to reduce emissions related to climate change, but more work will be needed to meet state targets and maintain the quality of life the region is striving for.

Those are some of the findings of a report the Metro Council accepted unanimously on Thursday. The report concludes the first phase of a multiyear effort, the Climate Smart Communities Scenarios Project.

"What's great is, it's consistent with what we've been doing as a region anyway," said Metro Councilor Carlotta Collette. "This has been a regional process. It's going to ramp up from here and become more of a conversation with our local governments."

The scenarios project will help the Portland area meet state targets for reducing emissions, while also figuring out ways the region can grow the economy, save money and preserve air quality. During Phase 1, Metro researched land use and transportation strategies that had been implemented in other urban areas. This work resulted in a Scenarios Planning Toolbox describing major strategies and the side benefits to public health and the local economy.

Metro also conducted in-depth analysis of whether the region could meet the state emissions reduction targets at all. The analysis studied 144 scenarios – combinations of land use and transportation policies – and found that more than 90 scenarios could meet the target. The analysis is found in a report, "Understanding our Land Use and Transportation Choices."

With the findings report approved by the Metro Council, it can be submitted to the Oregon Department of Transportation and the Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development as part of a report to the legislature.

[Learn more about the scenarios project](#)

[Learn more about Metro is doing to address climate change while creating great communities](#)

[Read the Metro Council resolution and materials approved Jan. 26](#)

[New natural areas beyond Forest Park forge connections for wildlife, people](#)

January 27, 2012 3:20 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](#)

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

January 20, 2012 1:34 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, and \$4 million is forecast to be spent on the convention center hotel, according to the Portland Development Commission. 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."

***Note:** This version has been updated to include information about the Portland Development Commission's forecast expenditures on the convention center hotel project.*

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[Metro seeks public comment on four-year federal transportation projects schedule](#)

January 20, 2012 1:30 PM

Metro invites the region to view and comment on the upcoming four-year schedule of federal transportation investments in the Portland area. The four-year schedule, known as the 2012-2015 Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program, encompasses all federal spending on transportation, including highways, public transit, pedestrian and bike projects in the three-county metropolitan area.

Public comments are being accepted through noon, Monday, Feb. 13.

The MTIP includes all federally funded transportation projects in the Portland metropolitan area, including projects planned by TriMet, the Oregon Department of Transportation and local agencies receiving federal funds allocated by Metro.

The comment opportunity also describes Metro's determination

that the region will continue to meet federal and state air quality standards. The period also provides an opportunity to comment on the capital program of Wilsonville's SMART transit agency.

The documents are online at www.oregonmetro.gov/mtip. If you are unable to download the documents, call 503-797-1750.

[View the documents](#)

Some discussions of the MTIP are controversial and involve decisions about how much to spend on highways or public transit or bike facilities. That's not what this comment period is about - instead it's intended to let the public weigh in on project schedules. The Federal Highway Administration requires Metro and other regional agencies nationwide to gather public comment on the schedules.

Local agencies may find the schedule particularly informative and may have comments about the appropriate timing of project phases. The general public may find the document helpful in tracking the progress of transportation projects that are years in the making.

The Air Quality Conformity Determination estimates carbon monoxide emissions and precursors of smog (volatile organic compounds and oxides of nitrogen) from cars and trucks in the greater Portland airshed to the year 2035, assuming all the transportation facilities in the Regional Transportation Plan are built. The estimate must not exceed a budget approved for the region by the Oregon Environmental Quality Commission and the United States Environmental Protection Agency.

The capital program for SMART shows Federal Transit Administration funded projects and the federal amount to be expended, as well as the time period established for public review of and comment on these projects.

Comments on all the MTIP, air quality and SMART documents can be made by email to trans@oregonmetro.gov with "MTIP Comments" in the subject line, or by mail to MTIP Comments, c/o Dylan Rivera, Planning Department, Metro, 600 NE Grand Ave., Portland, OR 97232-2736. Comments must be received by Metro by noon, Monday, Feb. 13.

[Learn more about the Metropolitan Transportation Improvement](#)

[Program](#)

[Learn more about air quality and transportation planning](#)

[Learn more about SMART](#)

[Cities want updates as climate scenarios work moves forward](#)

January 20, 2012 1:27 PM

Some regional leaders are asking for more information as Metro inches closer toward a suggested path for curbing greenhouse gas emissions.

Metro planners are wrapping up the first phase of their study of the region's greenhouse gas emissions, focusing primarily on exhaust from cars and light trucks. The work was prompted by legislation at the state, which required the Portland region to reduce its per capita vehicle emissions by 20 percent by 2035.

Even though the planners are finishing the preliminary phases of their work, mayors at two committee meetings last week expressed concerns that local elected officials, and community members, could feel blindsided by Metro's climate work.

"We don't want to be in a position of, in December 2012 or February 2013, of 'Why didn't you tell us?'" said Lake Oswego Mayor Jack Hoffman at the Jan. 11 meeting of the Metro Policy Advisory Committee. "We need to have some sort of milestone, (such as) by April 1, every city council will have gone through this with staff."

The climate study has been a years-long process, with preliminary work on a regional climate strategy beginning even before House Bill 2001 was passed by the 2009 Legislature. After brainstorming any number of ways to curb the Portland region's carbon emissions, the first phase of work, essentially a feasibility study of realistic options, is almost complete.

[Read the draft Phase I report](#)

At the Jan. 12 meeting of the [Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation](#), Metro Councilor Carlotta Collette said the first phase was like getting the menu of options for the region to choose from.

"What's the menu of choices? And what are the likely implications of some of those choices?" Collette said. "This was the initial analysis piece, so it's a little bit more academic, but when we hit the streets we have to hit the streets with people understanding."

That understanding, or a perceived lack of it, prompted Cornelius Mayor Jef Dalin to cast the lone vote against accepting the findings from the first phase at JPACT. Dalin represents the cities of Washington County at JPACT.

"They (elected city officials) own part of the responsibility of trying to digest this information, but we've struggled to get them to understand the explanation," Dalin said. "Most of the mayors of the cities of Washington County are unclear of what the repercussions and the impacts of the study are at this point."

Kim Ellis, Metro's coordinator for the Climate Smart Communities project, said agency staff planned on using the Phase I report as a baseline for discussions with local elected officials.

"The first phase we focused primarily on MPAC and JPACT members," Ellis said at Wednesday's MPAC meeting. "As we move through the process, we'll continue to expand that circle."

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[Oregon Zoo to open new Veterinary Medical Center Jan. 19](#)

January 20, 2012 1:24 PM

Zoo visitors can take behind-the-scenes tours of vet center Jan. 20-22



Oregon Zoo visitors can tour the zoo's newly completed Veterinary Medical Center Jan. 20–22.

The Oregon Zoo's new Veterinary Medical Center has been designed to meet the needs of the zoo's diverse residents, whether they be tiny turtles, long-limbed orangutans or prickly porcupines. After 16 months of careful construction and equipment installation, the facility will open its doors to these unique patients on Thursday, Jan. 19. The public can peek inside Jan. 20–22, when the zoo will offer behind-the-scenes tours.

"While the Veterinary Medical Center will not be a public building, we want our community to be involved in its grand opening," said Kim Smith, zoo director. "Public support made this incredible facility possible, so we encourage visitors to take a tour and see what they've helped us achieve."

The medical center is the first major new facility to be completed with funding from the community-supported Oregon Zoo bond. Finished on schedule and under budget, the facility is designed to keep zoo animals and the environment healthy. Patients will benefit from specialized features like a climate-controlled intensive care unit – reptiles, birds and mammals need different temperature and humidity levels to be comfortable – and the building meets LEED silver certification standards for sustainability.

Visitors who tour the center should keep an eye out for the large surgery table strong enough to accommodate a zebra, rolling skylights that provide animals with fresh air and views of the sky, and powerful solar tubes that light the building naturally. Tours will depart regularly from in front of the medical center – between the Family Farm and wolf exhibit – and are free with zoo admission.

"We are very excited to show off our new hospital," said zoo veterinary technician Margot Monti. "The tours are a great

opportunity for us to show the public how their support is helping zoo animals, and to get visitors excited about the other great changes that will happen at the zoo as we work on projects like the new elephant habitat."



Oregon Zoo veterinary and animal-care staff perform a checkup on Palus the cougar in the zoo's newly finished Veterinary Medical Center.

Monti and other zoo veterinary staff worked with Peck Smiley Ettlin Architects and contractors Skanska USA at every stage of design and construction to develop the 15,000-square-foot Veterinary Medical Center. The facility includes spacious treatment and surgery rooms as well as holding areas that will make animals of all types feel comfortable, whether they fly, swim, prowl or swing from branch to branch. Aquatic animals will have access to temperature-controlled pools; primate areas include climbing structures and fold-down sleeping platforms.

Sustainable elements are woven throughout the medical center, but its most noticeable "green" feature is located outside: A 20-foot-tall, 27,000-gallon cistern sits on the building's west side and captures rainwater from the roof, which can then be used for irrigation, washing down animal areas and flushing toilets. Other environment-friendly features include a water-efficient landscape of native plants, solar-heated tap water, and an energy-saving electrical system.

As with all public works construction in Oregon, 1 percent of the medical center's construction budget went toward art. Two sets of tiles by Seattle artist Steven Gardener adorn the entryway: The outside walls feature terra cotta tiles patterned like snake scales, leopard fur and other animal markings; inside, glass tiles

depicting cell structures and microscopic organisms have been incorporated into a bank of windows. Portland artist Margaret Kuhn has contributed colorful glass mosaics for the lobby floor, which show both external and X-ray views of zoo animals.

"The overall theme of the artwork is how we look at animals – both as humans in general and as veterinary professionals," said Mitch Finnegan, lead veterinarian. "In the tiles and mosaics, we see both the surfaces of animals as well as X-ray and microscopic views."

Several of the microscopic images on the tiles were taken from Oregon Zoo cases, and one of the floor mosaics depicts Charlie, the well-loved Oregon Zoo chimpanzee who passed away in 2009.

[Learn more about the Oregon Zoo](#)

[Learn more about the Oregon Zoo bond measure](#)

[Drive Less Connect saves commuters \\$307,000](#)

January 13, 2012 2:12 PM



Drive Less Connect users spared 902,215 pounds of pollutants from being emitted by simply carpooling.

The typical American household spent 8.4 percent of its income, or \$4,155, buying gasoline this year. According to The Oregonian, that's the highest it has been since 1981. The average American family now works one month each year to buy fuel for the car, SUV or pickup.

[Read more in The Oregonian](#)

Metro, the Oregon Department of Transportation and other transportation partners around the state are helping residents put more cash in their pockets and less down the gas tank by

implementing Drive Less Connect, the state's new online ride-matching tool that connects carpoolers and bike buddies.

Since the launch of Drive Less Connect in June 2011, commuters in the Portland metropolitan area avoided using 48,518 gallons of gasoline and saved \$307,931 collectively by joining carpools, biking and riding transit.

The 1,700 users are saving thousands of dollars and helping keep the region's air clean. Since the launch of the tool, Drive Less Connect, carpoolers and bikers kept 902,215 pounds of pollutants out of the air.

Want to save money on gas? Just add a couple passengers to your commute. Reducing the number of miles you travel alone is far more effective at saving fuel and money than buying a new car just to get better gas mileage.

[Start saving money today with Drive Less Connect](#)

[Oregon Zoo to ring in new year with free admission Jan.](#)

[2](#)

December 30, 2011 2:49 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](#)

[Bridges, boundaries, bosses and birds – Metro's 2011 stories of the year](#)

December 30, 2011 2:47 PM

You know it's been a busy year at Metro when a list of the Top 10 stories in regional governance has an urban growth boundary expansion at No. 6.

But 2011 was just that – a year of new faces, big decisions and even a bit of pop culture. Here's a look back at what made news at Metro in 2011.

[Columbia River Crossing](#) – [Urban and rural reserves](#) – [New faces](#)

[at Metro](#) – [Glendoveer](#) – [Willamette Falls](#) – [Urban growth boundary](#) – [Mark Bosworth](#) – [Put a bird on it](#) – [Show me the money](#) – [Excitement at MPAC](#)

1. The Columbia River Crossing

Remember the story of Goldilocks and the three bears? Imagine if there were three Goldilocks, too, and they all had to agree on porridge temperature, chair size and bed comfiness before anyone ate, sat or slept.



How long would the debate rage on before one of the Goldilockses got hungry, weary or sleepy enough to give in?

That's the essence of the Columbia River Crossing debate, which worked its way through Metro in 2011. It seems like no matter where people live or how they prefer to commute, they can find something to dislike about the proposed replacement for the Interstate Bridge.

The Metro Council had two key votes on the Columbia River Crossing in 2011: Approving the land use conditions for the project, under a 1996 law called the Land Use Final Order, and signing off on the project's environmental review. The order was approved in August, and the environmental study was approved a month later.

But the council appeared to err in its passage of the land use order. Several parties appealed Metro's approval of the order, and Oregon's Land Use Board of Appeals upheld the complaints on one count: Land Use Final Orders only can be used within the urban growth boundary. Metro's urban growth boundary ends at the north shore of Hayden Island, not at the Washington state line, meaning much of the proposed Columbia River Crossing bridge was ineligible for the land use process.

What's next

Metro attorneys say the council has two ideal options for the order – it can move the urban growth boundary to the Washington state line, annexing the bridge's footprint on the Columbia River, or TriMet can amend the Land Use Final Order so that the urban growth boundary is no longer the edge of the order's domain. A decision on that is expected by spring.

2011 CRC stories

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

[A week from Columbia River Crossing vote, Metro Council discusses funding, community impacts](#) (June 1)

[Even with concerns, council passes Columbia River Crossing resolution](#) (June 9)

[Quality of life on Hayden Island one of the concerns about Columbia River Crossing](#) (June 9)

[Aug. 11 vote would be Metro's final sign-off on Columbia River Crossing](#) (July 15)

[Metro Council talks about CRC financing, land use and enhancement fees](#) (July 28)

[Sticker shock? Most of CRC's cost estimates in line with national averages](#) (Aug. 9)

[Council approves land use for Columbia River Crossing; delays environmental approval](#) (Aug. 11)

[Council pushes Columbia River Crossing for Hayden Island protections](#) (Sept. 7)

[Hughes signs CRC environmental study after council's vote for approval](#) (Sept. 8)

[Metro's Columbia River Crossing review largely upheld; UGB review could be needed](#) (Oct. 27)

2. Urban and rural reserves

After years of negotiations about setting the path for 50 years of growth in the region, the Oregon Land Conservation and Development Commission in late 2010 sent Metro and Washington County into extra innings to finalize urban reserves on the westside.

The agreement came in March, after a marathon joint meeting

of the Washington County Commission and the Metro Council, which agreed to designate a little more land north of U.S. 26 as urban reserves to make up for the urban reserves lost by LCDC's remand. In August, LCDC met at Metro to decide whether the new proposal passed muster.

It did, and Metro was able to use urban reserves for an urban growth boundary expansion for the first time.

What's next

Appeals of the Land Conservation and Development Commission's acceptance of reserves are expected once LCDC issues its final order.

2011 reserves stories

[Washington County, Metro leaders close to deal on reserves](#)

(Feb. 18)

[After marathon meeting, Washington County and Metro agree on reserves plan](#) (March 16)

[Washington County commission hears concerns about reserves agreement](#) (April 19)

[State commission approves region's urban, rural reserves plan](#) (Aug. 19)



3. New faces at Metro

The year brought a lot of transition in Metro's leadership – some expected, some surprising. Two new Metro councilors, Shirley Craddick and Council President Tom Hughes, took the oath of office in January. One day before the inauguration, Councilor Robert Liberty announced he was resigning to lead the Sustainable Cities Initiative at the University of Oregon; former Gov. Barbara Roberts was appointed to serve the last two years of Liberty's term.

Just as surprising was the March announcement that chief operating officer Michael Jordan would head to Salem to serve in a similar role at the state. Former Ashland City Manager Martha Bennett started Oct. 31 as Jordan's successor, concluding a months-long search for the agency's new staff director. Metro Attorney Dan Cooper was acting chief operating officer during the search.

What did the change mean? The agency didn't seem to have many dramatic changes in the first year of Hughes' presidency. His focus on economic development led to more involvement in Greater Portland Inc., a regional business recruitment effort, as well as three overseas trips for business recruitment and retention.



What's next

There are three open seats on the Metro Council, and all will likely be decided in the May primaries. Councilors Rex Burkholder (northern Portland) and Carl Hosticka (southern Washington and southwest Clackamas counties) are term-limited; Councilor Barbara Roberts (southern Portland) won't seek re-election.

2011 transitions stories

- [Liberty says new role will have broader impact](#) (Jan. 3)
- [Jobs, natural assets at the fore at Metro inauguration](#) (Jan. 4)
- [Former Gov. Roberts' last-minute application makes eight for council vacancy](#) (Feb. 9)
- [Barbara Roberts Q&A](#) (June 20)
- [Hughes' choice for COO plans to bring candor, experience to Metro](#) (Aug. 31)
- [Martha Bennett Q&A](#) (Nov. 3)

4. Glendoveer



It's a gem in East Portland – and it needs some work. The Glendoveer Golf Course has a leaking irrigation system, sometimes–water–logged tennis courts, a clubhouse that still reeks of stale cigarette smoke and a trail that is occasionally loved to death. It also has a management contract that's up for renewal next year.

At a Metro Council work session about Glendoveer in June, Councilor Rex Burkholder suggested a brainstorming session, wondering whether all or part of the facility should be used for something other than golf.

The mere mention of thinking about downsizing golf at Glendoveer was enough to set off alarm bells in East Portland, a community that is notoriously skeptical of any ideas coming out of the city center. At an Aug. 1 open house, hundreds of people, many angry, turned out to protest even the thought of adding a park to the Glendoveer site.

Burkholder's brainstorming bubble was quickly popped, and golf is likely to remain the main attraction at Glendoveer.

What's next

Metro's contract with operator Glisan Street Recreation ends in 2012, and the agency is expected to put management of the course out to bid this year.

2011 Glendoveer stories

[Does Glendoveer need a touch-up or an overhaul?](#) (June 10)

[Council gets the bottom line: golf likely to remain No. 1 at Glendoveer](#) (July 19)

[In the wake of tense open house, Metro Council discusses Glendoveer](#) (Aug. 17)

5. Willamette Falls



The Blue Heron mill site in Oregon City has the potential to be one of the marquis attractions of the Portland region, with one of the world's highest-volume waterfalls attracting tourists, residents and businesses. But it's also a 170-year-old industrial site built on a riverbed, hugging a cliff, with a railroad running through it and a historic hydro power plant on the grounds.

With Blue Heron in bankruptcy and its assets controlled by a court-appointed trustee, Metro, along with Clackamas County, Oregon City and the state, started working on a plan to open up Willamette Falls to public access. Metro could use some of its natural areas bond measure money to purchase the site, if the price was right and the risks were low.

There wasn't enough time to assess the risks before the trustee's December deadline for bids, and Metro submitted a letter of interest on Willamette Falls rather than submitting a formal proposal.

What's next

Talks with the trustee will continue into 2012, with Metro and the partners trying to get a better feel for the site's stability and environmental conditions.

2011 Willamette Falls stories

[Willamette Falls site presents risks, opportunities for Metro and the region](#) (Sept. 22)

[Metro Council tells staff to continue researching Willamette Falls site](#) (Oct. 4)

[Metro files 'letter of interest' on Willamette Falls site](#) (Dec. 15)

6. The urban growth boundary

The fact that the urban growth boundary is this low on the list says something about the 2011 review cycle. The Metro Council's urban growth boundary review had very little drama to it, in large part because a lot of the region's energy for land use battles went into the designation of urban and rural reserves (see above). Adding South Hillsboro, South Cooper Mountain and some land north of Hillsboro, all already in urban reserves, to the urban growth boundary was a unanimous Metro Council vote that caused little drama.

So what ruffled feathers? The Metro Policy Advisory Committee suggested adding industrial sites near Forest Grove and Tualatin to the boundary; the Metro Council didn't vote on either recommendation; nor did it take up Portland Mayor Sam Adams' suggestion, also endorsed by MPAC, to require new housing developments in UGB expansion areas to have 20 housing units per acre, making them denser than most Portland neighborhoods.

What's next

The next urban growth boundary review is scheduled to begin in 2014; the state is reviewing the 2011 boundary expansion, with a decision expected in May.

2011 urban growth boundary stories

[Hillsboro, Tigard request urban growth boundary studies](#) (May 24)

[Traffic, modeling and jobs all topics at forum on growth boundary](#) (July 29)

[Metro Council says discussion on housing need will start at about 15,000 units](#) (Aug. 5)

[Two proposals for industrial development get nod from MPAC](#) (Aug. 12)

[MPAC asks Metro Council to consider about 2,600 acres for residential growth](#) (Sept. 15)

[MPAC gets heated as leaders talk about density on the edges](#) (Sept. 29)

[More than 40 speak about urban growth boundary at Washington County hearing](#) (Oct. 4)

[UGB FAQ: All about the Metro Council's look at the urban growth boundary](#) (Oct. 5)

[Cities frustrated with limited UGB expansion; Cornelius asks](#)

[governor for help](#) (Oct. 19)

[Unanimous vote makes UGB expansion official](#) (Oct. 20)

[Metro won't change UGB review cycle; agency now focusing on industrial inventory](#) (Dec. 22)

7. Mark Bosworth



On Sept. 16, Metro GIS analyst Mark Bosworth was at a campsite for Cycle Oregon volunteers in the Douglas County town of Riddle. That night, he vanished.

In the weeks that followed, hundreds of volunteers, including many Metro employees, scoured the Douglas County countryside, searching for any sign of Bosworth, a 54-year-old married father of two. National media reported on Bosworth's disappearance.

Despite the efforts, Bosworth seemed to vanish without a trace. Complicating the search was a belief that Bosworth's cancer, which had twice gone into remission, could have relapsed, maybe to the point of causing disorientation or amnesia.

On Nov. 8, Bosworth's family sent a message thanking Metro employees for their help in the search. "The most likely scenario is that the cancer he battled successfully twice before returned in his brain, causing him to lose track of where he was and perhaps who he was, and most likely claiming his life by now," Julie Bosworth wrote. She asked employees to consider donating to Mark Bosworth's favorite causes: the Community Cycling Center, Planned Parenthood and the Friends of Outdoor School.

8. Put a bird on it



It's not too often a Metro program crosses into the realm of pop culture, but that's exactly what happened earlier this year when "Portlandia" debuted on the Independent Film Channel. In the series debut, characters played by Fred Armisen and Carrie Brownstein go to a hippie commune in search of the origin of their dinner entrée, a chicken named Colin.

The sketch was filmed at the Wealth Underground farm, a leased parcel of a Metro natural area near Forest Park. Colin's poultry pals are alive and well at the 58-acre farm that sells community supported agriculture shares. Metro leases 580 acres of natural area properties to farmers.

What's next

Season 2 of "Portlandia" launches Jan. 6, and the series has already [previewed a spoof, called "Sanitation Twins," lampooning](#) how Portland-area residents have myriad options for disposing of waste.

2011 Portlandia story

[Fictional hippie farm on 'Portlandia' is actually a Metro natural area](#) (Feb. 1)

9. Show me the money



Metro can plan for transportation projects all day long. Without money, they'll never break ground. The agency can buy thousands of acres of natural areas for preservation; without cash, the public's access to the sites will be limited.

So where does the cash come from?

In transportation, much of the money for large projects comes from the federal government. But a Republican proposal in the U.S. House of Representatives for a new highway funding bill caused serious concerns at Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation in July. "The outlook," the committee's agenda said, "is grim."

In November, Rep. Earl Blumenauer, D-Ore., told the Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation that the region needed to be targeted in its selection of projects to push. "The rest of the country has been inspired by your work, which means there's more competition," he said. "It's not clear what our regional transportation funding strategy is."

Meanwhile, Metro began looking at how to pay for maintenance of its natural areas. A bill in the 2011 Oregon Legislature would have allowed Metro to create a regional tax district so it could maintain the natural areas; that idea was spiked after opposition from Tigard. Later in the year, staff began looking at other ways to pay for maintaining the natural areas.

What's next

Congress still has not passed a highway bill. Metro is deciding how to pursue funding to maintain and open up access to its natural areas.

2011 funding stories

[Senate bill would let Metro create regional natural areas district](#)

(March 4)

[Taxes, benefits and a water trail: A look at Metro's 2011 budget](#)

(June 27)

[Federal spending priorities have transportation planners concerned](#) (July 14)

[Blumenauer says lack of consensus, regional funding strategy hurt Portland competitiveness for federal grant](#) (Nov. 10)

10. MPAC – Diversity, cyclists' fair share, mayors meet

Two people arrive at a doorway at the same time. One politely yields to another.

Two drivers try to get in the same lane at the same time. One screams at the other, "Don't you ever do that to me again or I'm going to throw my banana at you!"



"Same people, different environment, acting irrationally," said Tualatin Mayor Lou Ogden. "That's kind of what happens at MPAC."

Metro Policy Advisory Committee, a group of the region's elected officials convened to advise the Metro Council, occasionally chases some of the region's political sacred cows; its meetings were perhaps the most politicized Metro-related gatherings of 2011.

There was the May meeting when Portland City Commissioner Amanda Fritz talked about increasing MPAC's diversity by adding more non-elected representatives, leading to pushback from some suburban mayors who already feel their voices are diluted enough. Later that month, Hillsboro Mayor Jerry Willey

made waves by suggesting that cyclists should have to pay for infrastructure improvements.

And in September, Portland Mayor Sam Adams' suggestion that the new urban growth boundary expansion areas have 20 housing units per acre was one of the catalysts for Ogden to summon a monthly gathering of the region's mayors – not necessarily to replace MPAC, but to try and become more familiar with each others' issues.

What's next

Willey, one of MPAC's more outspoken members, gets his turn in the rotation as chair in 2012.

2011 MPAC stories

[Fritz talks about MPAC diversity, committee debates balance](#)

(May 16)

[MPAC discusses financial aspects of greenhouse gas reductions](#)

(May 26)

[MPAC gets heated as leaders talk about density on the edges](#)

(Sept. 29)

[Increasing frustration with MPAC leads mayors to convene their own group](#) (Nov. 29)

Honorable mention:

Metro launches Opt In and [a bunch of Multnomah County Democrats sign up for it](#), leading to targeted outreach to [suburban residents and Republicans](#).

Rose-Tu is pregnant [at the Oregon Zoo](#), and, if all goes well, will deliver a baby elephant late in 2012.

Bones discovered at Blue Lake Regional Park, [believed to have been moved there in excess dirt piles](#) from some of Metro's pioneer cemeteries.

The Community Investment Initiative, supported by Metro staff, [starts meeting to discuss the region's infrastructure challenges](#).

Bills in the Oregon Legislature to change Metro go nowhere;

[one would have studied merging Metro and the counties,](#)
another [would take away Metro's planning authority](#)

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[A world away from war, transit helps her get her life back](#)

December 30, 2011 2:35 PM



For some people, taking transit is a choice; for others, it's a necessity. For Diana Mirkovic, transit provided the lifeline for making a fresh start some 5,800 miles from her home. Diana came to the Portland area in February 1996 with only her daughter, a few belongings and the desperation to put years of horror behind them.

Four years prior, Diana, then age 32, was organizing fashion shows, going shopping at the mall, enjoying time with her friends and her parents and watching her daughter grow into a teenager. On April 5, 1992 – with a flash of gunfire, mortars and rocket-launched bombs – life changed.

Diana was living in Sarajevo, the capital city of Bosnia and Herzegovina, when Serbian forces surrounded the city and launched a massive assault. The Siege of Sarajevo, as it became called, was the longest siege of a capital city in the history of modern warfare. It turned Diana's homeland into ruins.

The people of Sarajevo lived under a constant bombardment of gun- and shellfire. Virtually all the buildings in city were damaged or destroyed. Diana and her family had some shelter, but no electricity, no water and no food. A year into the

onslaught, NATO forces were finally able to airlift in food. The supplies had to be dropped from the sky; it was too dangerous to land. The rations, Diana says, saved them. Before then, she and her family, including 12-year-old daughter Maya, had been forced to eat grass just to survive.

Despite the hardships and the months Diana spent in a concentration camp, the hardest moment of the war came when she watched a sniper gun down her daughter Maya. "The bullet stopped just a few millimeters next to her heart," Diana recalls. "It was a miracle she survived." Doctors removed the bullet, but since hospitals – a main target of the bombers – had mostly been destroyed, there was no room for Maya to stay. So Diana took her home every night and then back to the facility every day to have Maya's bandages changed and the wound checked.

The Bosnian war ended on Feb. 29, 1996, but there wasn't much left of Sarajevo. Diana and her daughter said goodbye to Diana's parents, who choose to stay behind, and with help from a United Nations relocation program, set off for a new life. They ended up in Portland.

What a culture shock, Diana remembers. Maya, then a sophomore in high school, spoke some English, but not Diana. Through the program that brought them here, Diana took courses in English and received training on how to survive in her new home. The instructions included how to look for a job and how to use public transit to get around.

She wouldn't have been able to make it here without public transportation, says Diana. They rented an apartment in Beaverton and she relied on the TriMet bus system to get everywhere – especially while working two jobs at once.

Diana wanted more for herself and her daughter, so she went to the Western Business College. For a year, she went to school during the day and worked nights at a bank – the bus her only transportation.

Now, she has a job she loves as a translator at Epiq Systems. The company has an incentive program and provides its employees with a free transit pass, something Diana definitely appreciates. She gets on the bus just steps from her apartment, and has a short walk from the bus stop to her work.

"Public transportation is great," says Diana. "You can go everywhere." For those new to the area or just starting to use transit, the TriMet system is easy to learn and convenient, according to Diana. "The frequency of the buses and trains going into downtown is good."

Diana's life today is a world away from the Siege of Sarajevo in which about 10,000 people died and another 56,000 – including her daughter Maya – were injured. They still live together and both work at Epiq Systems. They are just now financially able to buy a car. Still, Diana says, she'll mostly be using TriMet to get around town, and she'll keep commuting by bus. "It's just easier," she says. After all, she's had her fill of hard.

[Metro won't change UGB review cycle; agency now focusing on industrial inventory](#)

December 23, 2011 11:45 AM



Local groups and Metro are studying the availability of large industrial sites in the Portland region.

The Metro Council won't be looking at urban growth boundary expansions more frequently than its current 5-year cycle, after a concept called industrial replenishment proved unworkable.

The concept, introduced in 2010, called for the Metro Council to expand the urban growth boundary within a year if a large lot industrial site had been taken off the market, so that major employers would have an inventory of land to look at for factories and warehouses.

[See also: How annual industrial replenishment could work \(Sept. 28, 2010\)](#)

But the logistics of putting the plan into place, along with a thorough look at the inventory of the region's industrial land, showed that the system wouldn't have a tremendous benefit,

said acting Metro planning director John Williams.

"When we started talking about what the mechanism (for replenishment) might be, it got really complicated, really fast," he said. That was particularly true in terms of site specifics – would a large lot in Gresham have to be replaced by another one in Gresham, or could you replace it with one in Troutdale or Tualatin or Hillsboro? If a marine terminal was sold, Williams said, would Metro have to make another marine terminal available within the growth boundary?

That was a concern of Hillsboro planning director Pat Ribellia, who emphasized in an interview that different employment sectors have different kinds of needs.

With the next urban growth boundary review only a few years away, he said, it's a good time to see if the region can successfully get industrial sites already in the boundary closer to shovel-readiness.

"Let's give it a try – we'd like to see that outcome," Ribellia said. "Can we get these shovel-ready, and will new companies, based on getting them shovel-ready, want to locate there? If that's true, great. If not, when we go back to the next UGB round, perhaps the focus should be on and driven by a replenishment system."

The replenishment concept had other problems besides sub-market analysis. What would happen, Williams said, if a landowner temporarily took a site off the market? Would that force Metro to expand the urban growth boundary to make up for it?

"There were a lot of mechanism things that made people think this could be a lot of effort spent for not very much reward, when what we should be talking about is taking advantage of those sites that exist and solving the problems on them," Williams said.

Council gets industrial lands report

The scope of the region's industrial lands inventory became clear in late November, when the Metro Council was briefed on a project to make an inventory of the region's employment sites. The inventory was developed with the Port of Portland, the

Portland Business Alliance, the National Association of Industrial and Office Properties and Business Oregon, the state's economic development agency, and it was produced in partnership with the Group Mackenzie consulting firm.

Bernie Bottomly, the Portland Business Alliance's vice president for economic development, said the first phase of the inventory study found there were 56 industrial sites in the region that were on parcels 25 acres or larger. Of those, nine would be shovel-ready within six months.

"That's not 180 days to construction on the mitigation the site will need," Bottomly told the Metro Council, "that's 180 days to break ground on the project the company would want to start."

Five of the sites were in western Washington County; there was one site each near the port's Terminal 5 and east of Portland Airport, and one site each in Gresham and Wilsonville.

The preliminary analysis said there were another 16 sites that were seven to 30 months from being shovel-ready; 31 sites were 30 or more months from turning dirt. The sites were relatively evenly split between Multnomah and Washington counties; Clackamas County has just three sites, all near Happy Valley, in the mid- and long-range timeframe.

"I look at that map and I think, 'Ouch!'" said Councilor Carlotta Collette, who represents much of Clackamas County. "That's deeply bad news, not just on the surface."

What's the magic number?

While it was fairly clear that urban Clackamas County was behind compared to the other two Portland-area counties, it was less clear where the region was compared to others hoping to attract new industry.

"There is no bright line about how many sites is the right number of sites," Bottomly said. But, he said, "the smaller you draw the target, the harder it is to hit."

Keith Leavitt, a business development manager for the port, said the vacancy rate in the industrial market in the Portland region is between 6 and 9 percent. He said the Portland region's urban

planning and limited outward expansion buffered the market from having the bubble characteristics of other West Coast markets.

But, that's got a trade-off, he said, citing the recent decision by SoloPower to come to set up shop in Portland.

"SoloPower, when they went into Rivergate, they were down to a couple of sites," Leavitt said. "Where's the next one if you had another SoloPower come to this market?"

He said there are strong opinions that the Portland region has missed out on opportunities for new businesses because of a lack of available sites.

"We're going to quickly run out of anything to show someone who has interest," Leavitt said.

Councilor Rex Burkholder wondered whether there was a demand for the large sites that the Portland region was unable to meet, and whether companies that were, as he put it, kicking the tires on the region's land supply, should be counted as "lost" if they decide to set up shop elsewhere.

"Is it real demand, or is it we're curious and what have you got – and we're not really moving and we're going to China anyway?" Burkholder said.

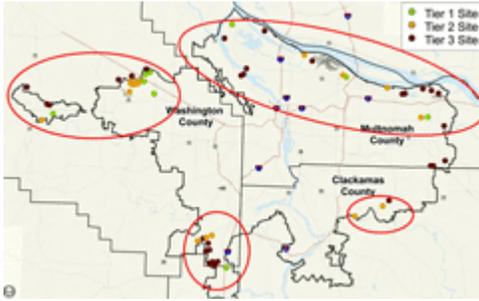
Bottomly offered a metaphor to explain that he thinks the opposite is true – the Portland region isn't even hearing from potential employers because company representatives know the land isn't available for them.

"If I go to a store to buy a tie, I don't go to a store with just one tie – and that would be a poor strategy, as a retailer, to try to match the market to one option," Bottomly said. "We're getting pretty close to that point, where we basically have one tie, and we're hoping the whole world will beat a path do our door to buy that one tie. The fact is they won't, and we'll miss those opportunities, and we'll never know."

The next phase of the project is to get more details on the specific things that cities, counties and landowners can do to get sites closer to being shovel-ready. That's expected in February.

[View a PowerPoint that accompanied the inventory report](#)

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).



The Portland region has 56 lots that are 25 acres or larger and planned for industrial use. Click to enlarge.

[Grant connects neighbors to nature in St. Johns](#)

December 23, 2011 11:40 AM



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 Council applauds collaboration, equity in allocation of transportation projects**](#)

December 23, 2011 11:38 AM

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](#)

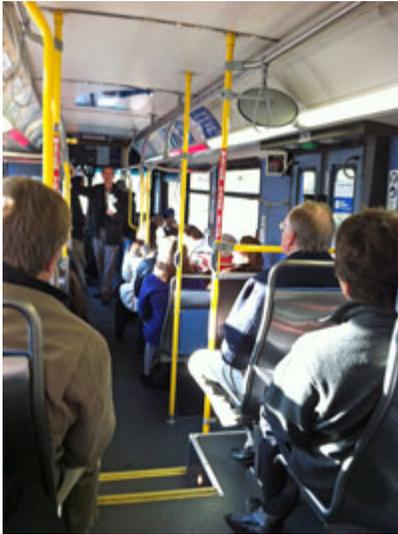
[Learn more about the flexible funding program and the two federal programs that comprise it](#)

[Read the public comment report](#)

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

[Decision-makers explore on the ground conditions in the Southwest corridor](#)

December 16, 2011 10:31 AM



To get a first-hand sense of the communities in the Southwest Corridor between Sherwood and Portland, Metro councilors Carl Hosticka and Barbara Roberts led the Southwest Corridor Plan Steering Committee on a bus tour of the area Monday morning. The committee, made up of elected and appointed officials from the 13 partner jurisdictions, is responsible for guiding the plan to a final recommendation to create livable and sustainable communities through the corridor. As they explored, tour participants shared stories about each place and observations about the connections between communities.

Learning from improvements in other communities

On the fly, the bus re-routed in Sherwood to experience Langer Farms Parkway, a new roadway connection from downtown to Highway 99W. The road opened on Nov. 19. Seeing the double-wide sidewalks on one side of Langer Farms, along with improved bike lane striping through Tualatin along Lower Boones Ferry Road, highlighted local efforts to make it easier to get around on foot or by bike.

Focusing on key connections

At Portland Community College's Sylvania campus, 26,000 students come and go throughout the day. The school operates its own shuttle between campuses to make it easier for students using multiple campuses. Students are already walking, biking and using transit, but better road, bike and pedestrian and transit connections in this hilly area could make it much safer and easier to get around. Participants saw busy transit centers in Southwest Portland, Tigard and at Bridgeport Village.

Employees and residents are already taking advantage of transit, but there are more opportunities, especially for east-west transit connections to existing and planned employment areas in Tigard and Tualatin.

Considering local goals when planning for the whole corridor

Learning that the "Tigard Triangle" area between Interstate 5 and highways 99W and 217 is half as big as downtown Portland surprised some. Others knew the scope and had heard that Tigard leaders have been considering a citywide land use plan that includes a vision for long-term change in the triangle - a balance of urban residential, mixed-use buildings and community-friendly retail along with green and natural spaces.

Lake Grove residents and Lake Oswego officials are already thinking through a community vision that includes road improvements on Lower Boones Ferry and a development application for more mixed-use development across I-5 near Bridgeport Village. Lake Oswego and Beaverton are seeking ideas on how to extend activity in the Kruse Way and Washington Square areas - maybe adding more and higher-density residential housing within easy distance from existing amenities and roadway access.

Developing opportunities for public-private partnerships

As they talked throughout the tour, the group contrasted existing conditions and potential future changes. They noted private sector investments, like the redevelopment projects at Fred Meyer and Safeway in Southwest Portland, and considered how current and future private and public investments might benefit the area. On-the-ground knowledge and thoughtful consideration of ideas prepare them for the investment and action plan decisions they'll make in 2012.

The Southwest Corridor Plan is a partnership between Metro, Multnomah County, Washington County, the Oregon Department of Transportation, TriMet and the cities of Beaverton, Durham, King City, Lake Oswego, Portland, Sherwood, Tigard and Tualatin. The planning integrates multiple efforts: local land use plans to identify actions and investments that support livable communities; a transportation plan to examine high capacity transit alternatives and potential roadway, bicycle and pedestrian improvements; and strategies

Today**Regional reset provides opportunity to look at local priorities**

[Transportation a priority for the region's leaders](#)

Wednesday

[Leaders say trust, coordination are key for regional collaboration](#)

Thursday

[Cities vary in planning, funding priorities](#)

Friday

Metro Councilors respond to cities' needs

Why now? Two reasons. First, the Community Investment Initiative Leadership Council, a regional think tank first proposed by former Metro chief operating officer Michael Jordan, is researching many of these issues, and is expected to release recommendations on ways to improve the Portland region sometime next spring.

[See also: A month after first meeting, Community Investment Initiative's Leadership Council sends its first message \(March 4, 2011\)](#)

We also wanted to see what the region's elected leaders thought before the Leadership Council released its recommendations.

Beyond the Initiative, though, it's simply an important time in Portland regional politics. For the first time since 2008, the ongoing discussions about adding land to the urban growth boundary have come to a close. The urban and rural reserves process that ended in 2010, and the boundary expansion decision of 2011, dominated conversations about regional politics and investments.

With those books closed, it seems like the region could be approaching a reset of priorities. We were curious what those

priorities might look like.

Nearly four hours of interviews took place in October and November, and we attempted to get a good geographic sampling of the region's mayors. We talked to Beaverton Mayor Denny Doyle, Fairview Mayor Mike Weatherby, Hillsboro Mayor Jerry Willey, Lake Oswego Mayor Jack Hoffman, Oregon City Mayor Doug Neeley, Portland Mayor Sam Adams, Tualatin Mayor Lou Ogden and Washington County Chair Andy Duyck. Happy Valley Mayor Lori DeRemer also answered questions via e-mail.

We also made several attempts to schedule interviews with the mayors of Gresham and Milwaukie. Through a spokesman, Clackamas County Chair Charlotte Lehan declined to be interviewed.

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[Oregon Zoo to illuminate the holidays at 23rd annual ZooLights](#)

November 23, 2011 1:23 PM



The light-bedecked Oregon steam engine chugs through a winter wonderland during ZooLights at the Oregon Zoo. ZooLights, presented by Fred Meyer with support from The Boeing Company, begins Friday, Nov. 25 and runs through Jan. 1 at the zoo. Photo by Carli Davidson, courtesy of the Oregon Zoo.

Popular display opens Nov. 25 with more than a million colorful lights

The Oregon Zoo invites visitors to brighten their holiday nights at ZooLights, where sparkling lights and brilliant hues transform the zoo into a winter wonderland. Presented by Fred Meyer with

support from Boeing Co., the traditional holiday light show begins Friday, Nov. 25, and runs through Jan. 1 at the zoo.

ZooLights has delighted visitors for more than two decades with its dazzling life-size animal silhouettes, moving sculptures, forests of lighted trees and light-bedecked train. Covered in holiday finery, the zoo's famous "Oregon" steam engine takes guests on an express jaunt around the grounds to see light displays visible only from the train.

"ZooLights is a great way to start the holiday season," said zoo director Kim Smith. "We're looking forward to unveiling some spectacular new light displays on Thanksgiving weekend."

New to ZooLights this winter are strings of lights that depict cascading snow. Visitors should also keep an eye out for silhouettes of gnomes: The fantastical garden-dwellers are part of a scavenger hunt that can win sharp-eyed visitors a prize at the Zoo Store.

Much-loved displays from previous years make an encore appearance. Life-size 3-D beasts linger on the zoo's concert lawn, which is transformed into a 180-foot-long meandering river of light. Hippos graze near the water while crocodiles lie in wait, ready to snap their jaws on unsuspecting prey. Other returning favorites include leaping reindeer, trumpeting elephants, playful penguins and tobogganing polar bears.

In keeping with the zoo's commitment to sustainability, most of the lights displayed are light-emitting diodes, or LEDs, which use only about 1 percent of the power of standard holiday lights, and about 10 percent of the power in mini-lights. LEDs don't burn out the way traditional bulbs do, ensuring a long lasting, eco-friendly ZooLights experience.

Costumed animal mascots and elves will provide entertainment as well as fun photo opportunities, and sounds of the season will resound throughout the Elephant Plaza, with more than 100 groups performing holiday musical selections. The Tualatin Valley Model Railroad Club is continuing its popular model train exhibit in the Elephant Museum.

Some of the zoo's favorite animals will be visible at night as well. Guests can visit sea otters, polar bears, penguins,

mountain goats, leopards, tigers, some primates and elephants.

ZooLights hours are Sunday through Thursday, 5 to 8 p.m. and Friday and Saturday, 5 to 8:30 p.m. ZooLights will be closed Dec. 24 and 25. ZooLights package tickets, which include admission and a train ride, are \$10.75 for adults (12–64), \$9.25 for seniors (65 and older), \$7.75 for children (3–11) and free for children 2 and under. Admission-only prices are \$9 for adults, \$7.50 for seniors, \$6 for children and free for children 2 and under.

[Blumenauer says lack of consensus, regional funding strategy, hurt Portland area competitiveness for federal grant](#)

November 18, 2011 1:55 PM



U.S. Rep. Earl Blumenauer

The Portland area's failure to come together to support a top priority transportation project has hurt its chances to win federal money from a highly competitive federal grant program.

That was the tough message delivered Thursday by U.S. Rep. Earl Blumenauer to a panel of local elected officials who control transportation spending in the three-county area. Blumenauer reacted to the committee's endorsement of five projects competing for federal money, including the Sellwood Bridge in Portland and industrial site improvements in Clackamas and Troutdale.

Rather than help the region compete for money, the letter from the Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation to the secretary of the U.S. Department of Transportation "moved us

down a rung," Blumenauer said.

[Download the letter from JPACT to Secretary Ray LaHood](#)

"It had five projects and no priorities," Blumenauer said. "We as a region need to be very clear about what we're doing."

In a rare appearance at the committee's monthly meeting at Metro, Blumenauer applauded the region's decades of innovation in building light rail and streetcar projects and revitalizing urban neighborhoods. He recounted many tough choices made when local political leaders "stretched" to get projects like a MAX light rail extension all the way to Hillsboro, for example, rather than settling for a shorter line.

He warned, however, that other metropolitan areas have caught on to the same ingredients and are more competitive. Los Angeles, Phoenix and Charlotte have passed sales or other tax measures to raise money for transportation investments on a large scale, he said.

"The rest of the country has been inspired by your work, which means there's more competition," he said. "It's not clear what our regional transportation funding strategy is."

The committee reacted quietly and seemed to take the message seriously. Comprised of mayors, county and transportation agency officials from across the region, the transportation committee had openly struggled in recent months with how to handle applications for the federal grant program known as TIGER III.

The prospect of endorsing a single highly competitive project as a region seemed to force members to forgo advocating for their own community's projects in favor of the region's favorite, a hard thing to ask of local elected officials. It might force their own political will to take a back seat to technical rankings of projects. Or it could open the door to political deals building consensus – but on projects that might not be the best ones for the grant program.

"The delegation will support anything the region does ... even if it is suboptimal," Blumenauer said.

Washington County Commissioner Roy Rogers, who has served

on the transportation committee for decades, asked Blumenauer for guidance in figuring out which projects to endorse.

"What's the flavor of the month in Washington D.C.?" he asked. "Is it a rail project? We have lots of those. Is it safety?"

Blumenauer said the relatively new federal program is "an effort to get away from the flavor of the day" and look at multidimensional ways transportation projects can have a big impact. The program, known as TIGER III, Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery, provides \$527 million for road, rail, public transit and port projects nationwide.

In two previous rounds, the program received applications for \$79 billion in projects, even though it had only \$2.1 billion to spend.

To be fair, the transportation committee's members have for years called for more investment in infrastructure. The panel approved a 2035 Regional Transportation Plan last year that said "the region's economy and livability" depend on finding solutions to transportation funding. Local leaders also pushed the legislature to pass House Bill 2001, a 2009 bill that raised the state gas tax for the first time since 1993.

A Community Investment Initiative Metro helped start is looking at ways to improve the effectiveness of the region's transportation system. But it's also looking at other investment priorities.

In the Westside MAX Blue Line extension in the 1990s, Blumenauer said, "it was right to stretch" politically and financially to get the project to Hillsboro rather than stopping in Beaverton.

"We can talk about other areas where we have done that as a region," he said. "Which begs the question: Where are we now?"

[View Metro staff's rating of the five projects from the Portland area seeking TIGER funding](#)

[Learn more about House Bill 2001, the Jobs & Transportation Act of 2009](#)

[Read how transportation Secretary Ray LaHood describes the TIGER program on his blog](#)

[Learn more about the details of the TIGER grant program](#)

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

[Frank talk about community design and health](#)

November 10, 2011 2:06 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](#)

[**Metro Council approves new master plan for Oregon Zoo**](#)

November 10, 2011 2:03 PM

Plan's 20-year vision is aimed at guiding zoo to greener future

The Oregon Zoo is looking to become a truly "green" zoo. A new 20-year master plan approved by unanimous vote of the Metro Council on Thursday will help guide that vision.

A zoowide geothermal heat exchanger, rain-harvesting systems and green roofs are among the elements of the new plan that will save energy and water, as well as reduce operating costs. On each new facility, the zoo is striving for silver certification or better from the U.S. Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification program.

At the same time, the master plan will help the zoo implement a new vision of expanded, more natural habitats in which animals can make choices about how and where to spend their day. Each habitat will be larger, include more natural materials and be open to the air and sky, with sheltered areas for colder seasons. The plan was developed through a close collaboration between animal keepers and designers to ensure the new facilities support and accommodate animals' natural behaviors.

"This plan is a bold step into the future for the Oregon Zoo and zoos in general," said Kim Smith, zoo director. "We're grateful for the vote of confidence from the Metro Council and support from the community in helping to achieve this vision."

Improvements spanning 20 years

The master plan lays out 20 years of improvements to guest and animal spaces across the zoo, initially focusing on replacing and upgrading the oldest areas of the zoo campus. The most critical need is for a new veterinary medical center, which is already under construction and due to be completed by the end of the year. A water-saving filtration system for the penguin pool is also close to completion.

Habitats for elephants, polar bears, rhinos and primates will come next. Some of these animals' current exhibits and facilities are more than 30 years old, even dating to the opening of the zoo in its present location in the 1950s. A new education center and an entirely new condor habitat are also part of the first phase of projects. These projects make improvements to nearly a third of the zoo campus.

The \$125 million bond, passed by voters in 2008, is funding this first phase of master plan implementation. Plans and designs for these projects were approved by the Metro Council on Sept. 22.

The remaining projects identified in the master plan will be funded through future sources. Projects include further expansion of the primate habitat, a new Northwest carnivore zone (where cougars, wolves and bears will reside) and a multispecies Africa savanna habitat, where giraffes, rhinos and gazelles will live together. The master plan also better defines Asian and South American habitat zones.

"This is an outstanding plan that provides a solid framework for the Oregon Zoo's future," said Metro Councilor Shirley Craddick, who introduced the resolution. "We are pleased to reach this exciting milestone and look forward to working with the zoo's staff and The Oregon Zoo Foundation to bring this vision to reality."

'Greener' learning venues

Students, campers and visitors who take part in zoo programs will appreciate the bright, enticing educational spaces slated to replace the classrooms, currently scattered across the zoo campus. The new conservation education center will be constructed on the site of the zoo's former entrance at Tiger Plaza, where it will provide easy schoolbus access and serve as a central location for visitors seeking a deeper understanding of the zoo's animals and their habitats. An expansive ecoroof, visible from a number of vantage points and changing through the seasons, will integrate the zoo's natural surroundings into the developed campus and will retain, filter and slowly release stormwater.

The zoo's vision for animal care includes open-air habitats with weather protection, giving them the choice to be inside or out, with others or alone. Flooring will be natural soil, grass or other porous, well-drained material. Additionally, each new habitat will provide a stimulating environment with daily opportunities for discovery, problem-solving and play.

[Learn more about the zoo's vision and master plan](#)

The 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 endangered California condors, Columbia Basin pygmy rabbits, Oregon silverspot 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. Zoo 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.

[Visit the Oregon Zoo for more information](#)

[A personal message from Barbara Roberts: Autumn news and events](#)

November 9, 2011 4:32 PM

September and October marked several important and exciting events for Metro and the region

Beginning in late September, the Southwest Corridor Plan kicked off with a steering committee meeting and early community outreach. The goal of this project is to create livable and sustainable communities between Portland and Sherwood. This is the second corridor project Metro is leading in the region, with the other focusing on eastern Multnomah County. I will serve as the co-chair for the steering committee along with Councilor Carl Hosticka. During our first steering committee meeting, we discussed each jurisdiction's goals for the project and set the stage for continued collaboration. Our first community event was an open house at the Tigard Public Library on Sept. 28. The cities of Tigard and Portland provided updates on components of the Southwest Corridor Plan, the Tigard High Capacity Transit Land Use Plan and Barbur Concept Plan, respectively. Metro and its partners continue to reach out to communities in the area, bringing Southwest Corridor Plan informational booths to community events – including events like Sherwood's Great Onion Festival and Tualatin's West Coast Giant Pumpkin Regatta. Steering committee meeting dates, agendas and materials are available online one week prior to the meeting, and all meetings are open to the public.

[Learn more about the Southwest Corridor Plan](#)

Oct. 19 marked the 20 year anniversary of Metro's Chinook Landing Marine Park. Twenty years ago, when I was the Governor of Oregon, I led the dedication ceremony at this unique facility. It was very exciting to return to the boat launch

as a Metro Councilor and celebrate two decades of unique services to the citizens of the region. I am proud to see that the strong partnerships between the Oregon Marine Board, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, Multnomah County Commission and the James River Corporation created a truly regional, public asset that has provided over 3.4 million people with access to the Columbia River. Facilities like Chinook Landing are vital to ensure a safe, healthy environment for everyone. I was pleased to, once again, play a small role in the history of Chinook Landing.

[Learn more about the Chinook Landing Marine Park](#)

On Oct. 20, the Metro Council voted to approve Ordinance 11-1264A, officially expanding the urban growth boundary by 1,985 acres, all within Washington County. Three areas of residential expansion were added, including South Cooper Mountain, South Hillsboro, and west of Tigard at Roy Rogers West. In addition, an expansion that included large-lot industrial parcels was added in North Hillsboro. This decision marked the conclusion of years of dedicated work on the part of Metro staff, and collaboration with local governments and communities. It will take effect on Jan. 18, 2011, and will be reviewed by the Oregon Land Conservation and Development Commission in the coming months. The Metro Council could consider a future expansion of the urban growth boundary in as early as three years.

[Learn more about the urban growth boundary](#)

National Geographic ranked Metro's Lone Fir Pioneer Cemetery as one of the top 10 cemeteries to visit in the world. Their list includes cemeteries from France to Argentina, with Lone Fir singled out for its historic value and natural setting. Founded in 1855, Lone Fir Pioneer Cemetery's rich history and collection of 71 different species of trees make it a vital community resource.

[Learn more about Lone Fir Pioneer Cemetery](#)

[Read more on Metro News](#)

[**Roberts commemorates women's suffrage at Metro Council meeting**](#)

November 4, 2011 1:02 PM



Three Metro councilors "got sashed" in a surprise ceremony during Metro's weekly council meeting Thursday. Councilor Barbara Roberts, Oregon's first female governor, presented her three female colleagues on the council with white sashes embossed with "Votes for Women."

The sashings were part of ceremonies across the state commemorating the 1912 law allowing Oregon women the right to vote. After five unsuccessful attempts, Oregon voters finally passed the law and became the seventh state granting women suffrage through a ballot initiative process.

Roberts, who was governor from 1991–95, was appointed to fill a vacancy in District 6 in February.

Century of Action: Women Vote, 1912–2012 is a project of the Oregon Women's History Consortium, which was developed to lead the centennial celebration and to promote women's history.

[Visit Century of Action](#)

[Martha Bennett Q&A: New chief operating officer talks about expectations](#)

November 4, 2011 12:59 PM

Martha Bennett has had plenty of time to see Portland's regional government from the outside, working for Milwaukie and leading staff for the Columbia River Gorge Commission before her most recent post, city manager in Ashland.

On Monday, Bennett got her first look at the inside, starting her tenure as the agency's second chief operating officer. While she says she's going to miss working with the front-line, direct services like police, fire and public works that she managed in Ashland, she's looking forward to the challenges that await Metro in the coming years.

Bennett sat down with Metro News on Tuesday morning to talk about her experiences and expectations. Portions of the interview have been edited for brevity.

How was day one?

People here are very welcoming. Every person I met expressed gladness I was there, which is great. It's obviously uncertain, you're walking into a new environment. I was grateful to everyone who welcomed me and said they were happy I was here.

How have you been preparing for this job through the last few weeks?

I've been doing a lot of reading. There's a lot of issues where I might have some surface background. I might know what The Oregonian or (Metro news) said about it but I don't have the institutional history. I've been trying to do some reading just to get smart about those things. And I've been trying to get my own head focused on how I want to come into this position.

I know that turnover creates organizational anxiety, both with individual people but also departmentally – what's going to be different and what's going to be the same.

I have to have a plan as I enter the organization to sort of let Metro get to know me a little bit before they have to decide whether they like me or don't like me.

When do you think they'll decide that?

It'll happen over time.

Sometimes you walk into a situation in a new position, where you need to make changes right away – they're in some form of crisis. I don't think that's the situation here. Yes, there's things that eventually I'm going to look at and say "We could make this better."

Essentially the organization is running pretty well. So what I'm going to do is watch and learn for a long time, get to know people, get to understand and appreciate the organizational culture but try to maintain my fresh eyes.

This is the challenge – how do you absorb and understand the

organization's culture, but not lose the perspective that's the benefit of having turnover?

What are your first impressions?

There's a very professional staff that cares very passionately about what they do; a new council full of very smart elected officials, and I don't mean all of them are new, but it's a new group.

I see a lot of really difficult issues have just been wrapped up.

Good time to come in.

Good and bad! Here's the good news – I don't have to become brilliant about the urban growth boundary expansion. The bad news is, now it's a "What next?" kind of question.

I would guess that when you finish projects like that there's this moment where you step back and go "Now what?" That's good as far as I'm concerned because that's fun – as long as we do it.

The Oregonian called you "livewire." What does that mean?

I have a well-developed sense of humor and I sometimes think you can keep perspective on an issue and do a better job on analyzing it and making a decision about it if you can find the humor in a situation.

Not every situation has humor, but sometimes if you just relax a little bit, the absurdity of a situation can help us solve the problem. I think what Eric (Oregonian land use reporter Eric Mortenson) was saying is I sometimes see that humor before other people do, and point it out.

And sometimes, if I do that effectively, it makes people laugh and we're able to move on. I'm pretty spontaneous and quick. I don't think he was saying I'm deadly to touch... "A livewire, great. I'm lying in the ground, you should call PacificCorp and tell them to come pick it up before kids kill themselves!"

Are we going to see this more in staff interactions? In council meetings?

I use humor as a way to help – either to take the stress level down or to give us an angle on a problem. If it will increase the

tension, or not help us, I'm not going to use it.

Of course, here's the other reality, and this is probably true of all of us – I sometimes use humor when I'm under stress. So sometimes you'll see it when you really shouldn't because I'm under stress and I'm hoping people will forgive me for those moments.

Would you have been selected if folks didn't know that was going to happen?

Oh, they know. And they know I can be incredibly blunt – not because I'm trying to be rude but because I'm not good at avoiding a confrontation. If we have to confront something, I pretty much do it. I don't beat around the bush. Mostly, people find that refreshing because a lot of conflicts go unresolved because we're not willing to acknowledge them, but every once in a while people find that rude and I think people here at Metro know that can happen too.

How do you encourage engagement in a way that's positive, so that people aren't throwing eggs at the last minute?

I try to be somebody that, whether you're a property rights advocate or an environmentalist or a land use planner – whoever you are, you don't feel like somehow you can't talk to me.

I'm really not afraid of anyone's opinion. I think if you talk to people in the Gorge or in Ashland about me they'd say she sincerely listened and understood what I had to say. I follow a Covey-esque model in that regard – first, you have to understand what the other person's saying. Sometimes what the other person's saying is on top of some bad thing that happened to them years ago.

You can't always make them happy – that's not what you're after. But if you go into it with a preconceived notion that their opinion is wrong or bad, you won't ever hear what they have to say.

In terms of how do you engage people? Most people, hopefully, are living their lives.

If they don't care, you're doing it right?

Not necessarily. Certainly when doing sewer, that's true. If you

don't hear from anybody about sewer? Everything's good.

I think you have to have a realistic expectation about citizen involvement in discussions that are abstract. So to the extent that we can put ourselves in the place of people who are leading real lives – getting their kids to school and going to work and whatever it is they're doing, and try to put ourselves in their shoes and say, "Why would they want to get involved in (a town center) plan?" Why would you want to get involved with doing whatever you're doing in the evening – playing guitar, playing with your kids – and engage with us on something that is future-looking and abstract?

I think with citizens you've got to give them something back – and I think Metro does an OK job with that. It's not perfect because you're dealing with the abstract a lot. But my experience with their citizen involvement in the past is they really wanted to hear from people. They wanted to know before the end of the decision what people thought about something.

There will be some people who don't learn about an important decision until it's in its final stages. I once had a citizen tell me the only way she got news from the city is if we doorhanged her. If it wasn't on her front doorknob, she didn't read it in the paper, she didn't see it on our website. And what I think she was trying to tell me is that she was just so inundated with other pieces of data that it had to be something different for it to get her attention.

Is there any function at Metro you're really looking forward to working with?

All of them. I'm definitely a career public servant and I think there are fascinating public policy questions about every public service. I think the biggest challenge of running Metro and the biggest opportunity for me is the diversity of the services that Metro provides.

There's some really cool things happening right now. The discussion about Willamette Falls and Blue Heron – wow. What an interesting, fascinating, exciting and frightening project. It's all of those things, isn't it?

Thankfully the UGB's done, and I think the CRC too, except for one technicality.

That depends on how big of a deal the stakeholders want to make of that technicality.

I'm sure the citizens will want to come back. But if you involve people early, they can really make a difference in the CRC. If they're at the end, protesting a minor technicality, their opportunity to really leverage change is gone – then all they can do is block or stall.

What about conservatives in this region? There's an ivory tower mentality, and that kind of lends itself to progressivism; how do you convince the 40 percent of this region who vote Republican that you're listening to them?

You listen to them! That's how you do it. A lot of it is an attitude. Some of Metro's agenda isn't going to resonate with some of those folks but much of the rest of it does.

When I worked in Ashland we had an aggressive green business program, not because we were hippie liberals but because we thought we could save money. Frankly, I think of that as a conservative value.

So the first thing you do is you don't slap a label on it. You don't say "This person's a conservative and this person's progressive" because then you're judging people, and that's a bad thing. I think you listen to them. And the truth is, it is a region, it's not Portland and everything else.

I had the opportunity to work in a suburban community in Clackamas County and sometimes it was a challenge because Portland was a dominant force. Certainly people in Milwaukie had the perception that it didn't matter what they wanted, it was what Portland wanted, so they fought a lot of stuff. If you have the attitude that it takes every community in the region to make the region what it is, I think it'll be better. Wilsonville's not like Gresham. Hillsboro's not like Troutdale. So it's not just Portland versus everybody else. It's everybody.

Expectations are high that I'm going to listen. I don't know if Tom or I created that expectation but it's out there.

Hughes ran, to a degree, on the platform of "I'm a suburban candidate." I think a lot of detractors would say the attitude hasn't changed that much from a year and a half ago.

Meaningful change takes five to seven years in the best of circumstances.

And one should never expect that change is linear – the pendulum swings back and forth. We're never going to go in a straight line toward being more whatever. It's not going to be that way – we're going to take little bites at it.

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[Earn your Halloween chills at the Tour of Untimely Departures](#)

October 28, 2011 10:25 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](#)

[Roberts, Metro commemorate 20 years of Chinook Landing](#)

October 28, 2011 10:23 AM



Two decades ago, then-Gov. Barbara Roberts celebrated the opening of Multnomah County's newest boat launch.

Both Chinook Landing Marine Park and Roberts are tied to Metro now, and the former governor - now a Metro councilor - was on hand Oct. 20 to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the opening of the facility.

"As the governor of the State of Oregon, I led the grand opening dedication here at Chinook Landing Marine Park on Oct. 4, 1991," Roberts said. "I am proud to be back here 20 years later. To be honest, this is my first time back since the dedication 20 years ago and I'm proud to see the facility looking so great."

More than 3.4 million people have used Chinook Landing, an average of 171,400 visitors each year, mainly during the busy fishing season and warm summer months. Many of the ramp's users come from around Oregon and Washington, making it truly a regional facility.

It took a unique private-public partnership to build this 67-acre marine park, which has six launching lanes and parking for more than 300 vehicles. Chinook Landing is the largest public boating facility on the Columbia River in Oregon.

"Today we celebrate 20 years of history with this wonderful facility. Taking care of community investments demonstrates Metro's values and priorities. What we may not have in money to maintain our facilities, we make up for in sweat equity," said

Paul Slyman, Metro's director of parks and environmental services.

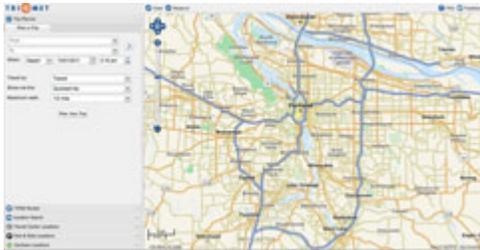
The ceremony ended at the viewpoint overlooking the Columbia River. The viewpoint was once the location of a Native American village called Nichaqwli.

[Learn about Metro Parks, Natural areas and boating facilities](#)

[Purchase an annual parks pass](#)

[New TriMet tool helps you plan transit, biking and walking trips in any combination](#)

October 28, 2011 10:22 AM



—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](#)

[Opt In asks: 'How do you get around?'](#)

October 21, 2011 9:15 AM

How important are projects that improve bicycling, walking and public transportation in your community? Metro wants your opinion.

Next year, Metro and its partners will be developing a regional plan for active transportation. With an anticipated influx of a million new residents over the next two decades, it is vital to plan ahead so all residents have access to safe, easy and affordable transportation options. In order to ensure the plan represents the diverse and varied viewpoints of Clackamas, Multnomah, Washington and Clark county residents, Metro created a survey for the Opt In online opinion panel.

[Learn more about Opt In](#)

Opt In is one of many ways Metro is working to listen to residents' opinions on regional issues. Participants take quick surveys delivered once or twice a month to their email inbox that are convenient and anonymous. This month, Opt In users topped 6,400 – progress toward Metro's goal of at least 10,000 resident participants.

Please take seven to eight minutes to share your thoughts, and

let Metro know what makes the region great.

[Join the Opt In panel](#)

[National Geographic recognizes Lone Fir Pioneer Cemetery](#)

October 21, 2011 9:13 AM

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](#)

[Honoring the forgotten: Advocates work toward a new memorial at Lone Fir](#)

October 21, 2011 9:12 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 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.

[Visit the Block 14 initiative website](#)

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](#)

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Metro on Twitter [@oregonmetro](#).

[Metro Council completes urban growth decision](#)

October 21, 2011 9:04 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](#)

[**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](#)

[Learn more about what your property taxes pay for at Metro](#)

October 10, 2011 10:03 AM

It's that time of year again: property tax statements will arrive in mailboxes starting in mid-October.

Property taxes support essential services provided by schools, counties, cities, special districts and other local governments, including Metro, but property tax statements don't provide

detailed information about what tax money to a particular government gets spent on.

To better illustrate how revenues from property taxes are spent at Metro, the agency maintains a website, at www.oregonmetro.gov/propertytaxes, to describe exactly how Metro assesses property taxes and what the money pays for.

Many taxpayers may be surprised to learn that Metro receives a small percentage of its total annual revenues—only 18 percent—from property taxes. Most of the property tax revenue collected by Metro pays for voter-approved capital projects with very little of it supporting day-to-day operations.

Since 1986, the region's voters have approved five bond measures that enabled Metro to borrow against future property tax revenues to pay for capital projects such as the building of the Oregon Convention Center, the purchase and protection of natural areas and improvements to the Oregon Zoo.

These projects are initially funded through bonds sold to investors. The investors are repaid, with interest, from revenues received through additional property tax assessments. These assessments remain on property tax statements until the bonds are fully paid.

Additionally, Metro has a permanent operating levy of 9.66 cents per \$1,000 of assessed value that provides five percent of Metro's operating revenues. The remainder of Metro's operating revenues comes from state and federal grants, enterprise revenues such as Oregon Zoo admissions and fees paid by users of venues such as the Oregon Convention Center, excise taxes paid by users of Metro-operated facilities like Metro South garbage and recycling transfer station, and other sources.

[Learn more about how property tax dollars are spent at Metro](#)

[**Share your thoughts about efforts to shrink Oregon's greenhouse gas footprint at a Global Warming Commission workshop on Oct. 11**](#)

October 10, 2011 10:02 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](#)

[Urgency increases in the search for missing Metro employee](#)

September 30, 2011 9:58 AM



Mark Bosworth, with daughters Kelly and Claire, and wife Julie

Despite local and increased national news coverage, there has

still been no sign of missing Metro employee Mark Bosworth. Mark's wife Julie made an impassioned plea to her public after learning from his doctor that Mark's condition is likely deteriorating rapidly.

After discussing Mark's behavior and incidents that occurred in the weeks and days leading up to his disappearance, Mark's doctor told Julie he is all but certain that the lymphoma Mark has battled and survived twice, has now moved to his brain. It is affecting the frontal lobe, the seat of memory, reasoning and judgement. While this is something that has been feared for days now, the doctor told Julie that the progression of Mark's symptoms indicates growing pressure on his brain. If not treated soon, that pressure will reach his brain stem and his vital organs will begin shutting down.

Mark Bosworth's wife pleads for help finding her husband

In a written statement on www.FindMark.org, Julie begs, "PLEASE redouble your efforts today to look for him, and to spread his photo and his story to others. One of you will see Mark and bring him home to his daughters Kelly and Claire, and to me so we can put our arms around him and care for him."

[Read Julie's full statement](#)

[Watch video of Julie's emotional messages to Mark and the public](#)



Despite Mark's dire medical condition, the doctor did tell Julie that Mark could still be getting around: talking, walking, moving, trying desperately to get where he thinks he is supposed to be.

Mark, age 54, went missing on the night of September 16 in Riddle, Oregon while volunteering with Cycle Oregon. He had been disoriented in the weeks before, and the night of, his disappearance. Mark is a two-time cancer survivor and his doctor believes the cancer is back and in his brain. It is putting increasing pressure on his brain that, if not treated soon, will reach his brain stem, and his vital organs will begin shutting down.

Columbia Sportswear sends out newsblast to all employees in the U.S.

Portland-based Columbia Sportswear, Julie's former employer, sent out an email blast this week to all its employees in the U.S. about Mark's disappearance. "Columbia Sportswear has always been a 'family' business, in more ways than just the Lamfrom/Boyle lineage," it said. "This Newsblast is a plea to help one of our former family members, Julie Bosworth, who worked for Columbia from 1993–2008 in international marketing. Julie and her family are searching for her husband, Mark Bosworth..."

Saturday bike ride supports Mark and family

Cycle Oregon director Jerry Norquist has organized a bike ride to raise awareness and support for Mark and his family. The ride will be 10 a.m. on Saturday, October 1, beginning and ending at North Portland's Peninsula Park, 700 North Rosa Parks Way. The ride will wind 9.6 miles along North Portland streets and paths. Following the ride, people are encouraged to have a picnic lunch at the park.

[Keep up on developments in the search for Mark at www.FindMark.org](http://www.FindMark.org)

[Visit the Find Mark page on Facebook](#)

[Follow @FindMarkB #findmarkbosworth on Twitter](#)

[New information available about urban growth boundary options](#)

September 30, 2011 9:57 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](#)

[Southwest Corridor Plan kicks off with community events](#)

September 30, 2011 9:54 AM

Beginning this month, the Southwest Corridor Plan launches the collaborative planning effort to create livable and sustainable communities along the Barbur Boulevard/Highway 99W corridor connecting Portland and Sherwood. The kickoff begins with an open house Wednesday, Sept. 28 at the Tigard Library. The City of Tigard will update residents on the Tigard High Capacity Transit Land Use Plan, and the City of Portland will give information on the Barbur Concept Plan. Both local land use plans are components of the Southwest Corridor Plan.

In addition to the open house, Metro and its partners will be participating in a variety of community events throughout October. Look for Southwest Corridor Plan informational booths at Sherwood's Great Onion Festival, Tualatin's West Coast Giant Pumpkin Regatta and at farmers' markets in Southwest Portland and Tigard. Project staff will share project information and ask residents what they value about their communities, challenges they would like to see addressed, their vision for the future of the area, and what they would like included in the plan as it moves forward.

Early October is also when the project steering committee will meet for the first time, giving these elected and appointed officials from the project partner jurisdictions the chance to

discuss their aspirations and set the goals for the Southwest Corridor Plan. The meeting will also allow the steering committee to begin to review information collected during a series of focus and discussion groups that occurred August through September.

Focus and discussion group participants included residents and commuters who live or travel in the corridor and experts in the areas of equity, environment, safety and security, alternative transportation and freight movement. Discussions were designed to get a general perspective of valued aspects within each community along the corridor, the types of improvements participants would like to see, and the best way to keep residents informed as the plan moves forward. Future outreach will build on these discussions to explore specific challenges and opportunities in the corridor and aid in the development of the Southwest Corridor Plan priority goals.

The Southwest Corridor Plan is a partnership between the cities of King City, Portland, Sherwood, Tigard, and Tualatin, Clackamas and Multnomah counties, ODOT, TriMet and Metro. For more information visit www.swcorridorplan.org.

You're invited

Residents can get involved by visiting the Southwest Corridor Plan booth at the following community kickoff events.

Tigard Open House

6:30 to 8:30 p.m.
Sept. 28, 2011
Tigard Library,
13500 SW Hall Blvd., Tigard

PSU Farmers' Market

8:30 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Oct. 8, 2011
SW Park Avenue and Harrison Street, Portland

25th Annual Great Onion Festival

9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Oct. 8, 2011
Archer Glen Elementary School,
16155 SW Sunset Blvd., Sherwood

Tigard Area Farmers' Market

9 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Oct. 16, 2011
11831 SW Pacific Hwy, Tigard

8th Annual West Coast Giant Pumpkin Regatta

10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Oct. 22, 2011
Tualatin Commons
8325 Nyberg St., Tualatin

[Find events on the Metro calendar](#)

[Suggest improvements, refine \\$22 million in transportation projects](#)

September 30, 2011 9:50 AM

Cities and counties across the region have nominated 11 biking, walking and freight projects for Metro to fund – 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, East Portland and Wood Village.

[Learn more about the projects and comment online through Oct. 13](#)

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 intersection safety projects in Forest Grove and the St. Johns area in Portland, and high tech traffic enhancements in the Clackamas area.

During an official 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.

Metro is also seeking comments on region-wide transportation programs. These programs use advanced technology to reduce traffic and increase road safety; offer assistance to employers who encourage workers to get around without driving alone; and plan and help build the next generation of light rail lines.

In December, a list of final projects and programs with revisions responding to public input are scheduled to be approved by the council and the Joint Policy Advisory Committee for Transportation.

[Learn more about the projects and post your comments online by Oct. 13](#)

[Learn more about the regional flexible funding program](#)

[Report highlights three years of bike and pedestrian activity throughout the region](#)

September 23, 2011 10:00 AM



Every September for the past three years, volunteers have gathered along the Intertwine – the Portland metropolitan area's system of trails, parks and natural areas – to count and survey people walking and biking. The count is part of the National Bicycle and Pedestrian Documentation Project's ongoing effort to gather accurate trail use data to help decided where and when to build new trails and respond the needs of trail users.

An analysis of the counting results is now available with information about who uses the trails and why. Among the findings it is estimated that more than 11 million trips were made on the 25 trails selected for the study last year.

Do more men or women bike to work? What attributes make one

trail more appealing than another? Which trails are used most often?

Find out the answers to these and other questions in the Intertwine trail use snapshot: An analysis of National Bicycle and Pedestrian Documentation Project data from 2008 to 2010. Find out more information about the trail count project and how to get involved at www.oregonmetro.gov/trailcounts.

[Download the report](#)

[Metro Council approves plan for implementing Oregon Zoo bond projects](#)

September 23, 2011 9:58 AM



In a decision hailed as great news for Oregon Zoo animals and visitors alike, the Metro Council today voted unanimously to approve early-phase designs for new animal exhibits, educational facilities and sustainability measures funded by the \$125 million bond measure passed by local voters in 2008.

The resolution also authorized the zoo to proceed in securing land-use and development permits and approvals, procuring detailed design and construction services, and following through on its designs for the remainder of its bond-funded projects.

"We are extremely gratified that the Metro Council has approved this plan," said Kim Smith, the Oregon Zoo's director. "Our staff has spent months working with international experts in zoo design and sustainability to plan the best habitats for our animals and the best experiences for our visitors. We can't wait to get started on these projects."

In the not-too-distant future, Oregon Zoo elephants will roam through a greatly expanded habitat of meadows, forest and pools. Polar bears will patrol a much larger territory, taking in views of the zoo and exploring a varied shoreline of pools and

beaches. Chimpanzees and mandrills will swing above visitor pathways along overhead "treeways."

New habitats are designed to provide animals with more choices over where and how they spend their day. They will live in more natural family groups and have greater access to the outdoors. Each habitat will be larger, made from natural materials and open to the air and sky, with sheltered areas for colder seasons. Flooring will be natural soil, grass or other well-drained, porous material. Animals will be able to see outside of their habitats to adjacent exhibits, visitors and other parts of the zoo. Additionally each exhibit will be a stimulating, intriguing environment, providing animals with daily opportunities for discovery, play and problem solving.

With the goal of becoming the greenest zoo in the country, the Oregon Zoo is striving for LEED silver certification or better from the U.S. Green Building Council on each new facility. Across the zoo, visitors will see water- and energy-saving measures, including green roofs, rain-harvesting systems and a geothermal loop heat-exchange system. This campus-wide innovation will draw heat from areas that require cooler temperatures, such as the polar bear habitat, and reuse it to warm temperate or tropical habitats like Forest Hall, a multistory elephant-viewing shelter.

Since last October, a team of designers and sustainability experts has worked with zoo staff on a 20-year master plan and exhibit designs, as well as identifying ways to save water and energy, reduce waste and improve sustainability across all zoo activities and departments. Bond-funded projects comprise the first phase of this master plan. Additional master-plan projects not funded by the bond will be presented to the Metro Council for approval in November.

The zoo hopes to begin construction on a perimeter road and new zoo train route in spring of 2013 in preparation for construction of the new six-acre elephant habitat, beginning in autumn 2013. Metro issued its request for proposals for design consultants for this project on Sept. 20 and anticipates completing the design and development phase by spring 2013.

Previously, the council had authorized two zoo bond projects to proceed prior to completion of the zoo's master plan: construction of a new veterinary medical center and

improvements to the water–filtration system at the penguin exhibit. Both of these projects are now nearing completion.

Construction on a modern veterinary center, the zoo's highest-priority bond project, began last November, and the center is expected to open in January. A new water–filtration and treatment system at the zoo's Humboldt penguin exhibit is also nearly complete; the penguins, which have been living in one half of the polar bear exhibit during construction, will return to their own habitat this fall. The new system will recirculate and clean water in the penguin pool, saving millions of gallons of water each year.

"The master–planning process has been absolutely essential in helping us determine the right location and proper timing for each bond–funded project," Smith said. "Thinking about the zoo's future needs has kept us mindful of our resources and the need to be efficient in organizing and phasing construction. It also has produced some dazzling designs."

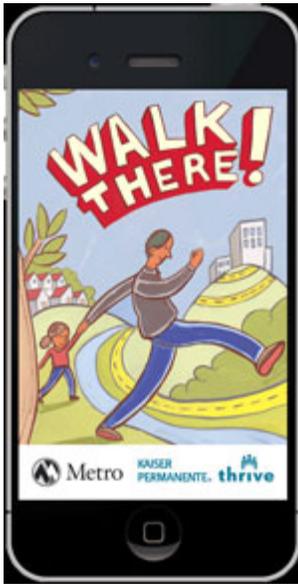
[Learn more about the projects and zoo master plan](#)

[Free Walk There! iPhone app helps you get moving](#)

September 16, 2011 1:42 PM

Ten treks from the "Walk There!" guidebook go mobile with the launch of Metro and Kaiser Permanente's new Walk There! iPhone app

The app, which is available for free at www.oregonmetro.gov/walkthere, features maps, turn–by–turn directions, photos and audio stories to help people get out and experience parks, neighborhoods and trails from their own two feet.



At the touch of a finger, users can explore:

- The tree-filled Pacific University campus in Forest Grove
- The Springwater Trail through Gresham
- Orenco's historic start in Hillsboro
- Milwaukie's riverfront
- Historic Oregon City
- Portland's beautiful Irvington neighborhood and the 4T (trail/tram/trolley/train) excursion
- Tigard's section of the Fanno Creek Greenway Trail,
- A unique land bridge in Vancouver
- Habitats of Graham Oaks Nature Park in Wilsonville

Not up for apps? Download free maps of all 50 walks or purchase the Walk There! guidebook at local retailers for \$9.95.

Metro and Kaiser Permanente encourage healthy living. Walking is one of the most effective ways to stay healthy, lose weight and increase your energy level.

The Walk There! app is the third joint venture between the organizations to help people get out and get moving. Metro and Kaiser Permanente collaborated to produce the "Walk There!" guidebook in 2008. Tens of thousands of copies have been given out or sold to help people explore the region. The book featured 50 treks in and around the Portland and Vancouver area.

In the spring and summers of 2009 and 2010, the agencies

hosted free guided walks pulled from the pages of the book. Now, Metro and Kaiser Permanente teamed up to create the Walk There! iPhone app, providing it free to the public.

[Download the Walk There! iPhone app](#)

[Watch a video to learn more about the app](#)

[Download free walks and learn about the guidebook](#)

[¡Camina o anda en bicicleta en tu próxima salida!](#)

[Reduce, reuse, reART](#)

September 16, 2011 1:37 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](#)

[A personal message from Barbara Roberts for September 2011](#)

September 14, 2011 3:00 PM

With summer coming to a close, I wanted to provide a brief update on some of the work we've completed over the last few months and let you know what's in store for the near future. But first I wanted to tell you about an event I recently attended.

On Sept. 2, I joined members of the community to celebrate 25 years of MAX service from Gresham to Portland. To commemorate this significant milestone, I gave a short speech

to fellow attendees and related how the celebration reminded me of two other significant days in the history of the Blue Line.

Back in the fall of 1978 while I was serving as Multnomah County Commissioner, the four government boards who would vote on the new light rail line began making their decisions: The TriMet board, the Portland City Council, the Gresham City Council and the Multnomah County Commission. I remember seconding the motion to approve the light rail line. It was a vote I consider one of the finest in my public career.

The second special day I remember was in September of 1986 when the Portland–Gresham light rail traveled its inaugural 15-mile run. What a day of celebration it was for the entire community. What we learned then and we know well today – 25 years later – is that this community is a national transportation leader. Those transportation choices have led the way in creating vibrant neighborhoods along the MAX line. People live, work and play in the region using MAX to get there and back. Former Mount Hood Community College students use the MAX to get to Portland State University. Portland citizens work in Parkrose. Gresham lawyers and retail clerks work in downtown Portland. Blazer fans come from across the region to watch an NBA game in the Rose Quarter. They all have access to one of the finest light rail transportation systems in the nation – fifty-two miles of high quality, dependable rail going east, west, north and south with new construction now underway in the Milwaukie corridor. As the Oregonian Editorial Board wrote, the MAX system is "far more than lines and rails and trains. It's part of the mortar that holds [this] community together."

[Read the Oregonian editorial](#)

I was honored to play a part in the early decision-making and remain a strong advocate for light rail transportation for our community's future.

In other news, many of you may have heard that Metro now has a new chief operating officer. After former COO Michael Jordan left Metro to work for the State of Oregon, I participated in a small committee which led the recruitment effort to find his replacement. After reviewing over 50 applications, conducting an intensive series of interviews with internal and external stakeholders, and soliciting input from the public via Opt In, Metro's online opinion panel, Metro President Tom Hughes

recommended Martha Bennett to the rest of the Metro Council for confirmation as the new chief operating officer. I cast my vote in favor of Martha coming onboard, as I was impressed by her candor and her experience leading public organizations similar to Metro. In particular, prior to working in Ashland as their city administrator, she served as the executive director of the Columbia Gorge Commission, which works with several jurisdictions including the federal government, two states, four tribes, six counties and multiple cities to make land use decisions that affect this national scenic area. As a former Columbia Gorge commissioner, I know how challenging that position is and I am certain this experience leaves her well equipped to work across political boundaries and bring the region together. I greatly look forward to working with her. [Join Opt In, Metro's online opinion panel](#)

Another project I am involved in is a comprehensive planning effort to identify land use and transportation options for the southwest corridor, a portion of the region that includes southwest Portland, Tigard, Tualatin, Sherwood, King City and Multnomah and Washington counties. Representatives from Metro, TriMet, ODOT and the jurisdictions identified above comprise the project's steering committee, which will hold its first meeting this fall. While Metro is in the very early stages of this effort, I am excited to be involved in a process that will use local land use plans and community aspirations to determine what kinds of transportation options best serve these areas. I will be sure to let you know how this project develops. In the meantime, if you would like to learn more, visit the project's web page. [Learn more about the Southwest Corridor Plan](#)

Finally, as the 2012 campaign season nears, you should know that there are three open seats on the Metro Council subject to next year's election. This includes a seat in District 3, which encompasses the southwest portion of the region, in District 5, which largely includes northwest and northeast Portland, and District 6, the seat I was appointed to last spring, which includes southwest and southeast Portland. Those interested in running for one of these seats should visit the Metro website to learn about the recent redistricting effort we concluded, as well as the county elections division web page to learn about important filing deadlines for each respective district. [Read about Metro Council district boundaries](#)

[Southeast Portland Sunday Parkways – a time to get out and celebrate](#)

August 26, 2011 10:54 AM



Sunday Parkways rolls, rocks and dances into Southeast Portland this Sunday, August 28. Streets will shut down to automobile traffic along the route so people can get out and enjoy walking, biking, running or rollerblading along the streets instead.

This year's Southeast Portland Sunday Parkways event coincides with the [Hawthorne Street Fair](#).

Check out all or just part of the 6.2-mile route which connects Laurelhurst, Colonel Summers and Ivon parks. Get moving and have a good time with music, dancing, fitness events and other fun activities. There's also tempting food to enjoy.

If you'd like to bike the route, but you don't have a bicycle, rent one. Pedal Bike Tours and Portland Bike Tours will have bikes on hand for rental at Laurelhurst and Colonel Summers parks.

Metro, the Portland Bureau of Transportation and Kaiser Permanente are proud to bring Sunday Parkways to local communities. The car-free festival is a great opportunity to exercise, explore your area and meet your neighbors. Parking the car for the day also is great for the planet.

[Check out the map and list of activities for the Southeast Portland Sunday Parkways](#)

[Let Metro help you get rolling by bike](#)

[LCDC acknowledges Washington County urban and rural reserves](#)

August 19, 2011 5:30 PM

On Friday, Aug. 19, the Oregon Land Conservation and Development Commission approved the urban and rural reserves map for Washington County, which was approved by the Metro Council and the Washington County Board of Commissioners last spring.

This decision, combined with LCDC's decision last year to approve the urban and rural reserves for Multnomah and Clackamas counties, completes four years of collaborative effort to provide significant protections for farmland and natural areas while supplying enough land for good jobs and vibrant neighborhoods for the future. No other metropolitan area in the United States has ever attempted – let alone achieved – such a thoughtful and far-reaching plan.

Credit for this success goes to many people in our region who were engaged in this effort: citizens, farmers, land owners, business leaders, advocates, local elected officials and community leaders. This package was informed by the ideas and perspectives of hundreds of people who participated in crafting this proposal for our region's future.

Now that the urban and rural reserves have been acknowledged, our work continues on another front: How can we ensure the right investments are made in our communities to grow jobs and sustain great urban places across our region? How can we make the most of the investments and resources we already have in our region to protect the quality of life we enjoy? These are the questions the Metro Council will be focused on as we seek to make our region a great place to live, work and raise a family.

[Local leaders to shape future investments in the Southwest Corridor](#)

August 10, 2011 3:21 PM

On Aug. 4, the Metro Council designated stakeholders for the Southwest Corridor Plan Steering Committee.

The committee will be made up of elected and appointed officials from partner jurisdictions and agencies, and will shepherd the development of an implementation strategy for coordinated land use and transportation investments in the travel corridor connecting Portland, Tigard, King City, Tualatin and Sherwood. The Southwest Corridor Plan will promote

economic prosperity and mobility in and between existing communities while protecting clean air and water and improving equity.

According to the Metro Council resolution, members of the committee will include the Metro councilors from districts 3 and 6, elected officials from Portland, Tigard, Sherwood, Tualatin and King City, county commissioners from Multnomah and Washington counties and representatives from the Oregon Department of Transportation and TriMet.

To make the most of the corridor's assets, Metro and the cities are analyzing existing land use, economic, market readiness and equity conditions along with current bike, pedestrian, road and transit system capacity.

The steering committee will use technical information and input from the community to define goals and identify barriers, determine a range of alternatives, prioritize strategies and identify an implementation strategy. The jurisdictions, partner agencies, regional advisory committees and Metro Council will review and take action on the recommendations for the Southwest Corridor Plan in spring or summer 2013, which will lead to on the ground improvements in the corridor.

[Learn more about the Southwest Corridor Plan](#)

[Opt In panel reaches 5,000 participants](#)

August 5, 2011 4:28 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](#)

[Community nature projects blossom, showing reach of Metro Natural Areas Program](#)

August 5, 2011 4:26 PM



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](#)

[Greater Portland Pulse: Equitable access to education paves the way to economic prosperity](#)

July 28, 2011 9:13 AM



The project's goal is to track the region's progress – economically, socially and environmentally.

With the U.S. Census Bureau's "Portrait of America" campaign concluded, results of the 2010 census are fueling marketing, fundraising, lobbying and promotional campaigns for public and private sector initiatives across the nation.

The face of America is changing.

Census bureau data indicate that the leaders and workforce of tomorrow are today's children from low-income, communities of color. This is as true for the Portland-Vancouver area as it is for the rest of the country.

Yet a just-released report of regional indicators – the product of a partnership between Portland State University's Institute of Portland Metropolitan Studies, Metro and more than 100 organizations – reveals the bigger story behind the region's increasingly diverse population.

"The Path to Economic Prosperity: Equity and the Education Imperative," the first report of Greater Portland Pulse, says that the children upon whose shoulders the region's future economic prosperity rests come from families that are most likely to experience low levels of education and income.

The region's future leaders and workforce are already falling behind.

[Download the report](#)

The 60-page report and companion website – www.portlandpulse.org – provide the hard data for what every educator, parent, businessperson, community leader and elected official already know: providing high-quality education

for all children is critical to the region's economic future.

Barriers to success

The data tell the story: Inequities in access to a quality education become barriers to the economic, social and environmental resources essential for every leader, worker and citizen to succeed – health care, affordable housing and transportation options, quality K–12 education, safe communities, a healthy environment and opportunities for civic engagement.

“This is exciting work,” said Rex Burkholder, Metro Council liaison for this project. “We've expanded our thinking on key issues such as health and equity through working with broad and diverse partnerships. What we find out about our communities through this project will inform and improve the critical decisions we make about future growth and transportation investments in the region.”

Measuring results

Teams of volunteers drawn from public and private sector agencies and institutions identified, collected and measured data over the last year for 72 indicators in nine areas to track progress across the region. The areas include economic opportunity, access and mobility, arts and culture, civic engagement, education, healthy people, healthy natural environment, quality housing and communities and safe people.

To address concerns about how traditional data sets, sources and methodologies often fail to adequately account for diverse populations and their issues, a 15–member equity panel was formed to provide guidance as the indicators were chosen and developed.

“Greater Portland Pulse is an important project and tool for anyone who wants to guide our region to a more prosperous and sustainable future,” said PSU president Wim Wiewel, co–chair of the advisory team. “Looking at the data in great detail allows us to see and address the equity issues that emerge.”

Inspiring action

By tracking the data over time and making the results accessible through their website, Greater Portland Pulse provides elected officials, community leaders and the public resources to engage in informed regional and community decisions, coordinated action and citizen involvement.

The report is the first of many point-in-time summaries of how the region progresses. Long term, the project's goal is nothing short of achieving better all-around results for the future of the region – economically, socially and environmentally – and the children who will lead the way.

Detailed data from the report is available in an interactive format at the Greater Portland Pulse website.

Greater Portland Pulse supports the region's six desired outcomes by providing data to inform decision-making that supports vibrant communities, economic prosperity, safe and reliable transportation systems, and leadership on climate change.

[Visit the website](#)

[View a list of people involved](#)

[Endorse the Greater Portland Pulse](#)

[**Offer your ideas and opinions about Metro's fall growth management decision**](#)

July 22, 2011 9:12 AM

This fall, the Metro Council will decide whether to expand the urban growth boundary and, if so, where.

This decision will not just be about lines on a map. It will affect how the region's communities develop and thrive. It will have an impact on investments in good jobs and safe neighborhoods, protection of farms and forest land and getting more out of investments in existing schools, parks, sidewalks, streets and other public structures.

A proposal has been released for public comment. Learn more about that proposal, ask questions and share your ideas at an open house on July 28.

Open house

5 to 8 p.m.

Thursday, July 28
Hillsboro Civic Center Auditorium
150 E. Main St.
[Get directions and details](#)

More information about this proposal can be found online at www.oregonmetro.gov/greatplaces.

Also, a survey is now available through Metro's Opt In panel. Through this survey, participants can also provide feedback on this fall's decision and offer their opinions on the individual areas that are being considered.

If you would like to take this survey and are not already enrolled in Opt In, you can sign up at www.optinpanel.org before Monday, Aug. 1, to take the survey. (Those who are already enrolled in Opt In should have received an email message on July 15 asking them to take the survey.)

[**Lake Oswego to Portland Transit Project to delay action from counties, TriMet, Metro**](#)

July 15, 2011 10:28 AM

The process to approve a streetcar as the Locally Preferred Alternative for the Lake Oswego to Portland Transit Project is on hold. In a response to concerns raised by the Lake Oswego and Portland city councils, Lake Oswego Mayor Jack Hoffman, Portland Mayor Sam Adams and Metro Council President Tom Hughes have requested a stay in action by the other project partners.

In April, the Lake Oswego and Portland city councils both affirmed the recommendation of the project steering committee for the streetcar alternative to progress as the Locally Preferred Alternative. Through the affirmation process, both city councils raised questions that had not been resolved in the project's Draft Environmental Impact Statement and current level of design.

Hoffman and Adams sent a joint letter to Hughes on June 16, requesting that further partner agency action on the Locally Preferred Alternative decision be delayed until resolution of the questions raised by the city councils. Council President Hughes agreed with the mayors that resolving these questions in advance of further partner action would be valuable to project

team, local communities and the region as a whole, leading to a successful and fiscally responsible project. Project staff is now building a plan to investigate and respond to the cities' questions.

The selected Locally Preferred Alternative, once affirmed by the Metro Council, would proceed for further engineering work and the Final Environmental Impact Statement.

Learn more about the Lake Oswego to Portland Transit Project and read the correspondence between the mayors and Council President Hughes. [Go](#)

Learn about redevelopment planning in Lake Oswego and a July 14 open house focused on the Foothills area, which is closely related to the streetcar project. [Go](#)

[Time to comment on bike, pedestrian and freight project proposals](#)

July 11, 2011 9:41 AM

Want to help decide which bike, pedestrian and freight projects would best help Washington, Clackamas and east Multnomah County residents get where they need to go? Events coming up as soon as Monday, July 11 will let residents provide input on a variety of transportation projects.

Elected officials from those three counties are trying to decide which of 18 projects they should nominate for funding from Metro in August. Projects on the list so far span the metropolitan area, from Forest Grove to Gresham. There's not enough money to fund all the proposed projects, so some will be marked off before final proposals are due to Metro Aug. 29.

Area counties and the City of Portland have held several events to take public comment, and more are planned:

Washington County

At a meeting on Monday July 11, the Washington County Coordinating Committee intends to take public comment and discuss which projects the community should support. Four projects would improve bike, pedestrian and public transit access and safety. Three would improve access for the freight trucks that speed goods vital to our economy. Public comment

will be taken at the beginning of the meeting, which starts at noon, in the conference room, Beaverton Library, 12375 SW Fifth St., Beaverton.

[Click here to see the agenda for the July 11 WCCC meeting](#)

Another meeting is scheduled for Aug. 8. For more information on projects proposed in Washington County, contact Clark Berry, senior planner, at 503-846-3876 or clark_berry@co.washington.or.us

Eastern Multnomah County

The East Multnomah County Transportation Committee has held an open house to gather public comment and will continue to take comments by noon on Monday, July 11, using a downloadable comment form. The comment form and information about proposed projects are available online.

[Click here to view Multnomah County's site with information and a comment form](#)

The committee will meet to discuss projects and feedback received on Monday, July 11, 3 to 5 p.m., in the Oregon Trail Room, Gresham City Hall, 1333 NW Eastman Parkway, Gresham.

The committee will make its final project selection on Monday, Aug. 8. The committee sets transportation planning priorities for unincorporated areas of eastern Multnomah County and the cities of Fairview, Gresham, Troutdale and Wood Village.

For more information, contact Jane McFarland, 503-988-5050 extension 29620, jane.mcfarland@multco.us, or [click here to see the web site](#).

Clackamas County

On July 21, the Clackamas County Coordinating Committee plans to take public testimony on its proposed projects. The meeting will be held from 6 to 8 p.m. at the Clackamas County Development Services Building, Main Floor Auditorium, Room 115, 150 Beaver Creek Road, Oregon City.

[Click here to view Clackamas County's proposed flexible funds projects](#)

Portland

The City of Portland has had comment opportunities for eight projects that are proposed for within the city limits. As with the county coordinating committees, the city's final proposals are due to Metro by Aug. 29. For more information on Portland projects, contact Paul Smith, transportation planning manager, paul.smith@portlandoregon.gov

[Learn about the flexible funding program and upcoming milestones, including a public comment period this fall](#)

[Learn about all 28 projects proposed by local agencies.](#)

[Proposal reflects region's success in protecting farmland, investing in communities](#)

July 11, 2011 9:39 AM

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.

[Portland–Milwaukie Light Rail Project breaks ground](#)

July 11, 2011 9:38 AM



"It is a partnership with the federal, state, local and private sector," said Rep. Earl Blumenauer.

Congressional and local leaders commemorated the start of

construction on the region's sixth light rail project on June 30.

"This is the type of project that will show the rest of the country that infrastructure spending is not, 'just spending', it's actually building the future. It's creating the jobs, building the economic opportunities for the next generation," said Rep. Kurt Schrader, D-Ore., whose district includes the southern end of the Portland-Milwaukie Light Rail Project.

His sentiment was echoed by Rep. Earl Blumenauer, D-Ore., Metro Councilor Carlotta Collette and other local elected leaders at a ground-breaking ceremony for the light rail project. Collette acknowledged the continued support and participation of community members and cited her involvement in the project's early days as the beginning of her public service.

The construction phase of the \$1.5 billion project will create as many as 14,000 jobs and, in the long-term, contribute to the six desired outcomes for communities throughout the region - vibrant communities, economic prosperity, safe and reliable transportation, leadership on climate change, clean air and water, and equity.

The new MAX line will travel 7.3 miles, connecting Portland State University in downtown Portland, inner Southeast Portland, Milwaukie and north Clackamas County. MAX service on the alignment is scheduled to begin in 2015. By 2030, when this future light rail line is forecast to carry as many as 27,400 daily riders, there could be up to 22,000 households and 85,000 employees within walking distance of its light rail stations.



Metro Councilor Carlotta Collette can trace her political roots as a neighborhood leader back to the

early days of the Portland–Milwaukie Light Rail Project.

See it live

Construction on the project begins with the new bridge over the Willamette River, the first in more than 40 years. It will span the river between the Marquam and Ross Island bridges and will carry light rail, pedestrians, bikes, buses and future streetcar. Watch live footage of the bridge's construction and time-lapse footage of daily construction progress on the project's website. On the west side of the Willamette River, a camera is positioned on the Oregon Health & Science University Center for Health and Healing in South Waterfront. On the east side, a camera is mounted on the Oregon Museum of Science and Industry. As construction activity increases, the project will send out regular email notifications.

[Watch the bridge construction](#)

[Learn more about the Portland–Milwaukie Light Rail Project](#)

[Sign up for email notifications from TriMet](#)

[New film captures Metro's work to protect our nature](#)

July 1, 2011 2:44 PM



Metro scientist Elaine Stewart gets ready to discuss plantings at Graham Oaks Nature Park in this behind-the-scenes production photo.

Hit the “play” button, and you’ll be transported to a few of the forests and trails, clearings and creeks protected by Metro’s voter-approved Natural Areas Program.

A new film makes you a virtual tourist on a handful of the 11,000 acres that voters have protected over the course of 16 years and two bond measures. You’ll experience the transformation of Graham Oaks Nature Park in Wilsonville, which

leaves a legacy for future generations. You'll plunge into Clear Creek, where protected land keeps plants, animals and drinking water healthy. And you'll peek into the oasis of hiking trails at Mount Talbert Nature Park, which is surrounded by busy shopping centers and neighborhoods.

You might get goosebumps. And you might be inspired to get outside for real.

"It's hard-wired into us as Oregonians," Metro scientist (and film star) Elaine Stewart says. "We want our water quality. We want our wildlife. And we want to be able to get out in it and enjoy it."

[Watch more videos exploring Metro's natural areas](#)[Discover nature nearby with an interactive regional map of Metro's natural areas](#)

[Metro Council adopts 2011-12 budget](#)

June 24, 2011 9:01 AM

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.

[Learn more about the adopted 2011-12 Metro budget](#)

[Calling all East County residents](#)

June 16, 2011 4:02 PM

Did you know your city government is working to prioritize how it will spend its share of state and federal dollars over the next 20 years? This process is called the East Metro Connections Plan, and it will result in agreement on near- and long-term investments.

In your neighborhood, these improvements should help you and your neighbors better meet your daily needs. For example, you

may see new or safer crosswalks and better traffic flow at intersections. For employers and community developers, the plan will provide certainty and incentive for long-term investments. Agreement on near- and long-term investments also increases local government's ability to leverage regional, state and federal funds for our communities.

You are a critical part of the East Metro Connections Plan. By mid-2012, your feedback will contribute to agreements and an implementation plan for future investments in Fairview, Gresham, Troutdale, Wood Village and Multnomah County. Visit the East Metro Connections Plan webpage below to see the latest fact sheet, subscribe to plan updates and sign up to learn about opportunities to get involved.

The plan's timeline includes multiple opportunities to participate in key decisions this year.

- Spring 2011- Identify the problems we need to solve
- Summer 2011- Develop potential solutions
- Fall 2011- Evaluate and prioritize solutions
- Winter and spring 2012 - Agree on local and regional actions to implement solutions

The East Metro Connections Plan brings governments together to develop a community investment strategy that supports the prosperity and livability of the East Metro area. Born out of a transportation focus, it breaks new ground by linking previously separate efforts on jobs, parks, housing, equity and transportation. In this way, different investments reinforce each other and can add up to more than the sum of their parts.

[Learn more about the East Metro Connections Plan](#)

[**Metro Council says Columbia River Crossing on track to address concerns**](#)

June 10, 2011 3:47 PM

In a 5-1 vote, the Metro Council on Thursday affirmed that many of the concerns it has raised about the Columbia River Crossing project have been addressed and said that others will be worked out.

Councilor Kathryn Harrington expressed a common sentiment when she said many elements of the proposed 10-lane

Interstate 5 bridge and light rail line over the Columbia River were not ideal, including its financing. But, she said, “We’ve taken steps to form a good solution.”



Fred Nussbaum, of Portland, speaks against the Columbia River Crossing project.

“No matter where you live in the state, this project supports jobs and getting goods to market,” Harrington said.

Council President Tom Hughes said he discussed the project extensively during the nine-month campaign that put him in office last year.

“The thing that gave them the least faith in government is that we have talked about it for so long,” Hughes said. “We need to move to the next phase.”

Proposed by the Oregon and Washington transportation departments, the \$3.6 billion project would replace the Interstate Bridge, rebuild several highway interchanges, extend light rail into Vancouver and build a much better bicycle and pedestrian network. Though it is not a Metro project, the Metro Council and its Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation control federal transportation spending in the Portland area.

Comprised of elected officials from across the region, JPACT endorsed the project unanimously, with one abstention, earlier Thursday.

At issue for the council and JPACT this week was whether bridge planners have addressed 11 concerns they both listed in 2008, when they approved the project’s main elements. The 11 conditions include providing a fund for community enhancements to mitigate for pollution, designing a bridge

worthy of the majestic river and prioritizing freight access in the corridor.

The council wants to ensure that all major transportation investments make the best use of our limited dollars, boost the region's economic competitiveness and ensure the needs of low income communities are addressed.

Councilor Carl Hosticka was the lone no vote, saying he doubted the council would be able to convince bridge planners to address its remaining concerns. According to a Metro staff report, five of the council's conditions have been resolved and six are "on track" but require action beyond the federal record of decision expected later this year.



Jonathan Schlueter, of the Westside Economic Alliance, says that the project would speed access to the Port of Portland.

The project's \$3.6 billion price tag seems unrealistic, he said.

"I'm not sanguine that the project will happen, even with the best intentions," he said.

Councilor Rex Burkholder said the council had been involved in the decision-making on the project for years and that it would continue to be engaged on it.

Other councilors said they felt torn about the decision.

Councilor Barbara Roberts, former Oregon governor, said she has "never been enthusiastic" about the project but had faith that the project staff would respond to council concerns as planning continues. Councilor Shirley Craddick said if she "had her druthers" she would vote against it, but said she felt it would be wiser to vote yes and stay watchful that her concerns about design and air pollution are addressed.

Councilor Carlotta Collette was absent, attending a workshop on climate change in Washington D.C.

The vote came after about an hour of public comment from about 35 speakers, most speaking against the project.

Donna Murphy of the Hayden Island Livability Project, said construction staging planned to take place next to her neighborhood would adversely impact the elderly and low income residents. Several speakers said the project would increase pollution and greenhouse gas emissions. And many said they doubted whether the states would come up with their share of the money, expected to be \$450 million from each.

“The legislature is not with you yet,” said Fred Nussbaum, urging the council to vote no.

Jonathan Schlueter, executive director of the Westside Economic Alliance, urged support of the project, saying many Washington County businesses would benefit from improved access to the Port of Portland.

Walter Valenta, a neighborhood activist and real estate investor who has followed the project for years, said he was disappointed by the bridge type that was recently selected. But he’s seen reason for optimism that a world class architect would be chosen soon to make the most of it.

“There’s still a lot of work to be done and we need this council,” Valenta said. “We need your help to be firm.”

[Learn more about the Columbia River Crossing](#)

[Clackamas County to take action on Lake Oswego to Portland Transit Project](#)

June 3, 2011 3:46 PM

The Clackamas County Board of County Commissioners is now scheduled to take action next week on the Lake Oswego to Portland Transit Project Steering Committee’s recommendation for the streetcar alternative to advance for further study. The county action follows affirmation of the steering committee recommendation by the cities of Lake Oswego and Portland and the Portland Streetcar Inc. Board of Directors earlier this spring. Public testimony will be accepted at the meeting, which will

begin at 10 a.m. Thursday, June 9.

[Visit the county's site to view the agenda](#)

The Lake Oswego to Portland Transit Project Steering Committee, made up of elected and appointed officials from each of the project jurisdictions, based its recommendation on recommendations from the community advisory committee and the project management group, and the nearly 500 public comments received by the project between Dec. 3, 2010 and Jan. 31, 2011. The recommendations and public comments were in response Draft Environmental Impact Statement, which presents information about both the adverse and the beneficial potential impacts of the three alternatives: no-build, enhanced bus and streetcar. The analysis includes the future effects that each alternative would have on communities, traffic, travel options, parks and the natural environment.

Multnomah County has not scheduled time to discuss the project; TriMet will most likely address the recommendation this summer. The recommendation will then move to the regional transportation committees and the Metro Council for final action. If the streetcar is adopted as the Locally Preferred Alternative, preliminary engineering and work on a Final Environmental Impact Statement would follow, potentially beginning later this year.

[Find out more about the Lake Oswego to Portland Transit Project](#)

['It's Our Nature' outreach initiative brings Metro natural areas to you, and vice versa](#)

June 3, 2011 3:45 PM



Like any good hike, the journey to preserve the Portland metropolitan area's natural treasures warrants a stop along the way to reflect on where the region has come from and where it's going.

That's why Metro is engaging the community this summer with the "It's Our Nature" outreach initiative. You might catch a short film during movie previews, hear a message on the radio or chat with the natural areas team at your local farmers market. You can get out in the wild with Metro's naturalists, or ponder the meaning of place at an outdoor event series co-hosted by Oregon Humanities. And you'll find lots of new photography and videos on the natural areas web pages, where you can explore an interactive storytelling map.

There's a big story to tell: By approving natural areas bond measures in 1995 and 2006, voters have allowed Metro's Natural Areas Program to preserve 11,000 acres and counting, protect 90 miles of river and stream banks and open three major nature parks. The program has also planted 1.7 million trees and shrubs and supported hundreds of community projects.

Across the region, salmon are returning to streams where they haven't been seen in decades. Oak trees are getting the sunlight they need to survive into old age, helping reverse their dramatic decline in the Willamette Valley. Families are hiking and bird-watching at new nature parks near Beaverton, Wilsonville and Happy Valley.

"Some of this is because of luck. We happen to live in a very beautiful place," Metro Council President Tom Hughes said this January at his inaugural address. "Some of it is because we have appreciated that and recognized that and planned to preserve that to the greatest degree possible."

[Explore Metro's natural areas through photos, video, stories, events and more](#)

[Visit the natural areas interactive map](#)

[Read the summer GreenScene special edition](#)

[Bike, pedestrian, transit and freight projects up for public comment](#)

June 3, 2011 3:43 PM



The Springwater Corridor, an example of a regional flexible fund 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 fund 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 in July. 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](#)

[2011 State of the Centers report - measuring progress on the way to a vibrant, livable and prosperous region](#)

May 27, 2011 4:52 PM



Centers provide a mix of services that attract businesses, visitors, residents and new investment.

They're the hubs of economic activity in the region.

Characterized by concentrations of mixed-use, compact development, they offer employment space and housing options along with the public and private amenities that support urban living.

Restaurants, coffee shops, bookstores and brewpubs mix with post offices, community centers, schools and libraries to provide a balance of services that attract businesses, visitors, residents and potentially, new investment.

Urban parks, multi-use trails and waterways provide opportunities to step into nature near an office, across from an apartment building or just down the block from a popular restaurant.

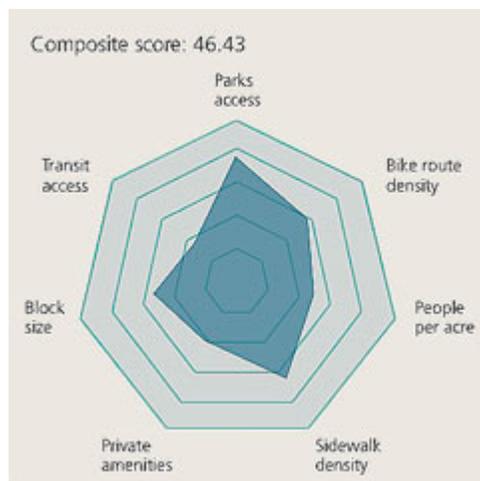
And they're accessible – by bike, transit, car and on foot.

The 38 regional and town centers in the Portland metropolitan area serve as mileposts on the path to achieving the region's goals for vibrant, livable and prosperous communities, as envisioned in the region's 50-year plan for managing growth – the 2040 Growth Concept.

Measuring success, targeting investments

As appropriate for a regional plan stretching out over half a century, Metro is measuring its progress.

The 2011 State of the Centers report, released in May as a follow-up to the 2009 report, provides local governments, community leaders and businesses new tools and data to determine the progress of their centers against their own local aspirations and existing conditions in other centers.



Seven characteristics of a successful center scored relative to the region as a whole.

"Metro has established policies that give priority to regional investments for those communities that have taken steps to promote development in downtowns and along main streets," says Tom Hughes, Metro Council president. "The State of the Centers report is an invaluable tool for local jurisdictions with aspirations for high capacity transit or other investments that

will stimulate economic growth in their centers."

[Download the 2011 State of the Centers report](#)

The data displayed in the profiles of regional and town centers – including people per acre, public and private amenities, market value per square foot, total businesses per acre and median household income – can help local governments target investments in their centers and better leverage them with other public and private funding.

By comparing the measures in the report to local aspirations and conditions in other centers, communities can identify where investments are most needed.

Seven measures of a successful center

New to the 2011 report is the visual representation of seven characteristics of a successful center. Transit access, block size, private amenities, sidewalk density, people per acre, bike route density and access to parks are scored relative to the region as a whole. A composite of the seven scores is represented visually for each center for an at-a-glance indication of progress toward becoming livable, pedestrian-friendly and vibrant centers that support economic prosperity.

Demand shifts for more compact development

According to findings of an expert advisory group convened by the Institute for Portland Metropolitan Studies at the request of Metro in 2009, compact mixed-use development supports the need to provide housing near transit and services for a diverse population. The advisory group concluded, in part, that given the scarcity of resources in the public sector, there is a need to both prioritize investments and find ways to sustain collaboration between public, private, nonprofit and institutional sectors to support robust development in centers. The 2011 State of the Centers report supports targeting investments.

[Read the findings of the advisory group](#)

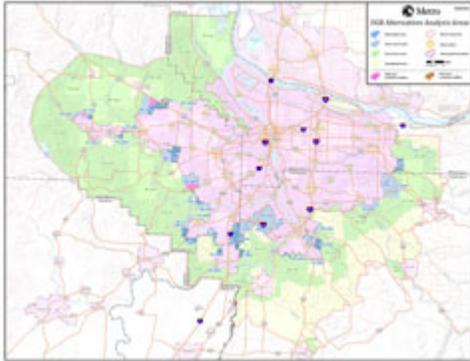
Future editions of the State of the Centers report will be more web-based, allowing the data to be regularly updated to better monitor center performance. Metro welcomes suggestions for improving the presentation of data or in defining new measures

for evaluating performance. For more information, call 503-797-1562.

[Learn more about the State of the Centers report](#)
[Discover what conditions support center development](#)

[**Metro Council finalizes study areas for fall growth management decision**](#)

May 27, 2011 4:51 PM



Today the Metro Council directed its staff to study several areas outside of the region's urban growth boundary that can support the creation of good jobs and new communities while supporting investments in existing communities.

This fall, the Metro Council is expected to consider whether (and, if so, where) to expand the UGB. The UGB serves as a boundary for development that seeks to provide for more efficient use of land, public facilities and investments within existing communities while preventing sprawl and preserving valuable farms and forest lands that define the character of the region. It can also be expanded, when needed, to provide for new jobs and housing.

[Read more about the urban growth boundary](#)

Over the next month and a half, Metro staff will analyze nearly 9,800 acres in various places and look at a variety of considerations. These considerations include the abilities of nearby cities and counties to govern and provide services to these areas, the areas' proximities to highways and other transportation corridors, and how growth in different areas may affect—and complement—growth and investment in communities already inside the existing UGB.

[Review the map of study areas \(PDF\)](#)

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 investments and new local policies would be needed to accommodate all of the forecast demand 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 last June that included investments in future light rail and other high-capacity transit service that could enhance greater development inside existing communities. These actions enabled the Metro Council to adopt an ordinance in December 2010 that accommodates additional growth inside the current UGB and reduces the need for expansion of the boundary.

Even with these additional measures, the ordinance adopted last December acknowledged the need for some expansion of the UGB to provide more large (100 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.

In early July, acting COO Dan Cooper is expected to make his recommendation to the Metro Council on which specific areas should be considered for expansion of the UGB. Following the release of Cooper's recommendation, the public will have an opportunity to weigh in on the recommended areas and provide feedback to the Metro Council. The Metro Council is expected to decide whether, and if so, where, to expand the UGB this October.

[Portland vs. Washington D.C.: 394 vs. 1,575](#)

May 13, 2011 1:45 PM

In the Portland metropolitan area, population growth and

development expand urbanized land by 394 square feet per person. In the Washington, D.C., metro area, it is 1,575 square feet per person.

Through a combination of land use planning and a strong regional transit network, the Portland metropolitan region is fighting long commutes, congestion and urban sprawl more successfully than other urban areas. Metro, local agencies and community leaders are also improving air quality, protecting farms, forests and natural areas, and helping people live closer to work. Thanks to careful transportation planning and management, high-capacity public transit and regional freight lines, our region has successfully employed investments and strategies that keep people and commodities moving without ignoring the reasons people live here: safe, reliable and affordable public transit, clean air and water, and vibrant, livable communities.

Read on to learn how Metro's regional planning saves you time and money and reduces harmful environmental impacts like greenhouse gas emissions.

Did you know...

- **1.4 million**
Residents of the region drive four fewer miles per day than comparable urban areas, resulting in a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions of 1.4 million tons per year.
- **\$2.6 billion**
Lower transportation costs and time saved result in \$2.6 billion a year savings in the local economy.
- **\$85 million**
Traffic signal timing and other operational improvements save 3.5 million hours of traffic delay a year, or \$85 million.
- **\$128 million**
Public transit saves 5.4 million hours of traffic delay a year, or \$128 million.
- **\$694**
Households that use walking and biking as primary modes of travel save \$694 a month.
- **25 percent**
Twenty-five percent of all trips can be done with a

20-minute walk.

- **16.8 percent**

The average household in the Portland–Salem metropolitan area spends 16.8 percent of the family budget on transportation, second only to shelter.

- **3.4 million**

Marketing and public education saved 3.4 million gallons of gas and 74 million vehicle miles in 2010.

- **28 percent**

Twenty-eight percent of adults in the region have seen Drive Less Save More messages and reduced drive alone trips as a result.

- **0.4 percent**

Every 1 percent increase in miles traveled by bicycle or on foot instead of by car reduces the region’s greenhouse gas emissions by 0.4 percent.

[Learn more about Metro's role in reducing climate change through investing in transportation projects and expanding travel options](#)

[Upcoming event drives home savings for commuters](#)

May 13, 2011 1:43 PM

Join Councilor Burkholder and Congressman Blumenauer on May 18



With gas prices going up and up, many drivers are crying, “Uncle!” At a luncheon Wednesday, May 18, Metro Councilor Rex Burkholder and other officials, including U.S. Rep. Earl Blumenauer, will showcase efforts that save money for transit riders, cyclists and other commuters.

During the event, Blumenauer will discuss the Commuter Relief

Act. The proposed legislation will help reduce the number of drive-alone car trips, which creates a healthier environment and community by cutting down on road congestion and reducing air pollution.

Burkholder and Blumenauer will be joined by Portland Mayor Sam Adams and other local officials, who will highlight money-saving travel options for commuters.

The event begins with a free luncheon at noon at the Governor Hotel's Grand Ballroom in Portland. Attendees must register by Friday, May 13.

Experts have found the best way to get commuters to try other options is by getting employers to play a role. A recent study by Newsweek found that one in five workers changed how they commuted when their employer offered a commute benefit program.

[Register for the May 18 event](#)

[Find out how to save money on your commute to work](#)

[Learn more about Metro's Regional Travel Options program](#)

Commons Convergence events provide opportunities and inspiration to protect shared resources

May 6, 2011 1:41 PM

In 2008, regional leaders came together and agreed on six desired outcomes for communities throughout the region; economic prosperity, safe and reliable transportation, leadership on climate change, clean air and water, equity, and vibrant communities. By bringing together different groups to identify common values and pursue measurable outcomes, Metro and its regional partners work together to guide the region's growth. In the same spirit, Oregon Commons will host a free event May 7 from 1 to 4 p.m. at St. David of Wales Church in Portland to promote conversations about shared values like useable public spaces and creativity and to foster community-based leadership to solve communal problems.

The Commons Convergence features keynote speaker Jay Walljasper, author of the book *All That We Share: A Field Guide to the Commons*. Jay will share stories illustrating how individuals can work together to protect shared resources. The event will also include opportunities to network with 25 local

non-profits working towards communal goals and videos highlighting local people who are actively working to preserve and improve our shared resources.

Metro Councilor Kathryn Harrington attended an Oregon Commons event last fall and found it to be inspiring and informative. "So many activities and stories today are really divisive," Harrington commented. "The Commons Convergence helps us focus on all the good things that we share and challenges us to make choices that will benefit future generations."

Some of the issues that may be discussed include protecting natural resources like air, water and wildlife, improving shared social institutions such as libraries and public spaces, and increasing access to knowledge resources like scientific research and creative works.

The event is sponsored by Metro and On the Commons, a national group working to spark collaborations that protect community resources.

[Learn more about the Commons Convergence](#)

[Share your ideas about potential improvements at the Glendoveer Golf Course and Fitness Trail](#)

April 29, 2011 4:25 PM

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](#)

[Local leaders focus on the prosperity of East Metro](#)

April 29, 2011 4:23 PM

Advocates for the east side of the Portland metropolitan region agreed that economic vitality, livability, safety and environmental quality should be enhanced by the East Metro Connections Plan – a community investment strategy that will identify specific transportation, community and economic development projects in Fairview, Gresham, Troutdale, Wood Village and Multnomah County.

During the first meeting of the Steering Committee on April 22, elected officials, community and business leaders listened to Metro Council President Tom Hughes' insights from spending the morning touring the East Metro area. He asserted that the eastern part of the region has great bones in terms of future job growth and that the area has the opportunity to become one of the most important driving economic forces for the rest of the region. To realize that potential, he said, communities there are going to have to pull together to maximize our ability for economic development.

East Metro Connections Plan implements a new approach to allocating limited transportation dollars to ensure that regional transportation investments support local land use, community and economic development and the environment. Given this new approach, agreement on priorities will help the cities advocate for their local needs, while capitalizing on the opportunity to address issues that cross jurisdictional boundaries.

A few themes were repeated as Steering Committee members shared their hopes for the outcome of this effort. There was rousing agreement that everyone wants East Metro Connections Plan to be successful with the process resulting in economic development and prosperity. Some expressed the importance of focusing on the Interstate 84/U.S. Highway 26 transportation connection, while others endorsed broader aspirations. A comprehensive analysis of the transportation system will illuminate effective ways to serve residents, businesses and those who travel through the area. The transportation system is intrinsically connected to other elements that will also be analyzed, including economic, community and environmental issues.

The East Metro Connections Plan began in fall 2010 and will wrap up during summer 2012. The public will be invited to attend a workshop this summer to learn more about the project and provide input on local needs, evaluation criteria and the types of solutions decision-makers will be asked to consider.

[Read more about the East Metro Connections Plan](#)

[Learn about the Steering Committee and download meeting materials](#)

[Metro Council releases three redistricting options for public review](#)

April 29, 2011 4:21 PM

The Metro Council is seeking public comment on three options for redrawing the boundaries of Council districts.

Every ten years, following the completion of the U.S. Census, the Metro Council is required to evaluate whether each of 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 indicate that the populations of a few of the Metro Council districts vary significantly from the average district population, which is now 248,362 people. As a result, the district lines must be redrawn to ensure that each district is relatively equal in population.

[Read about the redistricting process, download maps, and give](#)

[comments on the options](#)

The Metro Council is scheduled to vote on a final redistricting map at a public hearing on Thursday, May 19. The draft redistricting ordinance, which will include one proposed map, will be introduced for first reading at a public hearing on Thursday, May 12. Public testimony on the redistricting proposal is welcome at both the May 12 and May 19 public hearings. Comments may also be submitted in writing to the Metro Council at any time through May 19.

[Go to www.oregonmetro.gov/redistricting for more information](http://www.oregonmetro.gov/redistricting)

[National nonprofit spotlights strategic direction of Metro's Transit-Oriented Development Program](#)

April 22, 2011 3:36 PM

Think of it as a road map to future investments for Metro's Transit-Oriented Development Program.

The Center for Transit-Oriented Development released a strategic plan for the Metro's TOD program this week to help maximize Metro's investment opportunities in key development projects located near transit.

Metro TOD Program staff worked with CTOD to develop the plan with Nelson\Nygaard Consulting.

[Download the plan](#)

CTOD is a national nonprofit dedicated to providing best practices, research and tools to support equitable, market-based transit-oriented development.

In an economic climate where every agency with dollars to invest is looking for ways to make the most of what they have, the strategic plan helps Metro continue a 10-year record of leveraging \$30 million existing funds into over \$300 million in private investment in transit-oriented development projects within the region.

By evaluating station areas and corridors for market readiness and existing urban form, the strategic plan helps the TOD program prioritize its investments across the region.

Highlights of the plan include:

- an evaluation of regional existing conditions influencing the ability of transit-oriented development as a strategy to achieve Metro's 2040 Growth Concept goals
- a typology framework that classifies station areas and corridors based on their "TOD readiness"
- guidelines for phasing of TOD program activities based on this typology
- discussion of potential future activities for the program, and funding strategies to support them.

[Learn how transit station types shape development](#)

The typology framework can help regional and local agencies use market and physical characteristics to make sense of the types of investments needed to promote TOD at the neighborhood scale - without expensive and time consuming station area planning.

Transit-oriented development 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.

[View the TOD strategic plan presentation](#)

[Learn more about transit-oriented development](#)

[Learn more about CTOD](#)

[**Metro Council adopts final component of 50-year growth plan**](#)

April 22, 2011 3:34 PM

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](#)

[A personal message from Barbara Roberts](#)

April 12, 2011 6:03 PM

As the month of April moves us into warmer weather and more time outdoors, I begin this season as a new member of the Metro Council, following a month of getting acquainted with my new office, my altered schedule, my council colleagues, and a superb professional staff.

My appointment to the council in late February gives me an exciting 22-month opportunity to be part of Metro's decision-making team on issues of land use, transportation, trails and sustainable communities.

Metro President Tom Hughes and our full council just completed the process of council assignments and liaison responsibilities. I am very enthusiastic about my assigned duties. Two of my roles are short-term. First, I am chairing a redistricting committee that will design new boundaries for Councilors' Metro districts. This is a legal requirement that takes place every ten years following the federal census. The purpose is to equalize the population number in the six Metro districts. We will complete that effort in late May.

My other short-term assignment is critically important to Metro's success. Chaired by Councilor Carl Hosticka, this I am assigned to a committee that is designing the process for the selection of a new chief operating officer. This vacancy was created when Metro COO Michael Jordan resigned to take a position with the governor's office. Work on the selection process will continue into the late summer months.

The remainder of my assignments includes a wide variety of policy matters and will fill my schedule. I am:

- the new liaison to the Community Investment Strategy Policy Group

- working with Councilor Shirley Craddick as we share liaison responsibilities for formulating a work plan for housing and equity matters
- stepping in to share responsibilities with Councilor Carlotta Collette on the Lake Oswego to Portland Transit Project
- one of three Metro Councilors serving on the Metro Policy Advisory Committee
- assigned to represent the Council in working with the Glendoveer Golf Course and Fitness Trail
- taking on a special project with the Lone Fir Pioneer Cemetery that I will tell you more about in the near future.

My work is cut out for me!

[Regional leaders consider ways to make great communities while fighting climate change at Metro summit](#)

April 8, 2011 4:14 PM

Convening about 250 elected officials, business and community leaders from across the region, Metro held a Climate Leadership Summit on Friday that explored ways the Portland area can build vibrant neighborhoods and spread economic growth while reducing emissions that are linked to climate change.

Speakers and a panel discussion focused on exploring a wide array of policies and strategies that can reduce traffic congestion and dependence on driving by providing more travel options and opportunities for everyone. Building more affordable, mixed-use commercial centers and corridors, creating more walkable neighborhoods and expanding public transit, bike and pedestrian connections help reduce emissions. Expanding the use of synchronized traffic signals, so drivers get more green lights, can reduce pollution. Building electric vehicle charging stations can help spread the use of zero-emission cars.

Those are among the strategies that can help reduce emissions linked to climate change. But they are also policies the region pioneered for other reasons, such as fighting congestion, protecting the region's farm and forest lands, improving the region's air quality and making more vibrant downtowns.



John Fregonese of Fregonese and Associates, Inc. discusses what strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions could look like in Oregon communities.

“We stand on the shoulders of giants,” Metro Councilor Carlotta Collette said. “We benefit from decisions to create urban growth boundaries so that we wouldn’t sprawl ... and so we could protect the land and the water and the other natural resources that we rely on.”

A panel discussion by four community leaders provided examples of local actions already taking place that could be part of emissions reduction strategies.

Developer Dwight Unti described the challenge of building an apartment building in downtown Gresham, which opened last year in the midst of a recession. The building’s first floor retail space and upper-floors apartments are all full, with other potential tenants on a waiting list.

“There is significant market demand for climate smart development in the form of vertical housing over ground floor commercial space,” Unti said.

Such infill development makes the most of public infrastructure – the streets and water lines that are already in place. But these projects are more expensive because of the cost of building multiple story buildings.

“This was not possible without an extremely strong public private partnership between our firm, Metro and the City of Gresham,” he said. “Without solving that equation, we’re simply not going to get there.”

Several speakers throughout the day urged policymakers to ensure that any prosperity and public investment that comes from efforts to fight climate change also help minorities,

low-income, the elderly and other underserved communities.

“In our stratified and segregated society, policy statements and inclusive language are not enough to create a shared prosperity,” said Connie Ashbrook, executive director of Oregon Tradeswomen Inc. “We need design and implementation strategies that, among other things, ensure that diverse people get good jobs.”

Ashbrook’s organization trains low-income women for jobs in high-skilled, high-wage construction and building trades. It has recently helped many women get jobs making homes more energy efficient, partnering with Clean Energy Works Oregon and other local groups.

Greg Chambers, director of Climate and Energy for Nike, said there’s a strong business case for addressing carbon emissions from business.

“Carbon equals dollars,” Chambers said. “If you’re managing your climate and energy impacts, you’re saving money. So that’s the business case. But overwhelmingly, Nike is doing this for the sustainability case.”

Nike’s production of sports clothing depends on cotton production, which depends on water supplies – which are “in crisis mode” worldwide, he said. Synthetic apparel and equipment comes from petroleum based materials, which are not renewable sources.

Tigard Mayor Craig Dirksen explained how his community has changed its policies and plans to encourage more activity in commercial corridors to protect existing neighborhoods. That is one of several high capacity public transit alternatives being considered in Metro’s Southwest Corridor plan.

Scores of summit participants used keypad polling devices to voice their opinions on potential effects of strategies that summit speakers presented. Those strategies are among the many that Metro staff will study this summer as they learn what it takes to meet the state carbon reduction targets.

Public opinion researcher Adam Davis also told the audience about recent polls showing regional support for a tight urban growth boundary and the law requiring lower climate related

emissions.

The discussion comes at a pivotal time for action on climate change and livability. On Friday, the Department of Land Conservation and Development recommended a 21 percent reduction in per person emissions for cars, SUVs and light trucks in the Portland area by 2035. That does not include reductions in emissions that could come thanks to more fuel efficient cars and other technology.

The policies and strategies that came up at Friday's summit are believed to be among those that could help meet the 21 percent target.

The target is a draft subject to six weeks of public review. The Land Conservation and Development Commission plans to vote on a target in late May, taking effect June 1. State law requires the region to report to the legislature in January on the results of some scenarios that could meet that target.

The summit also was a joint meeting of the Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation, which controls federal transportation investments in the region, and the Metro Policy Advisory Committee, which advises the agency on land use and transportation policies.

Collette chairs the transportation committee and was the co-emcee of the summit, along with Clackamas County Chair Charlotte Lehan, who chairs the policy advisory committee.

Materials from the summit, including polling results, will be posted on the Metro website next week.

[Learn more about Metro's efforts to address climate change](#)

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

[Learn more about the Metro Policy Advisory Committee](#)

[Proposed Metro budget freezes executive pay, cuts staff, asks new employees to pay PERS](#)

April 8, 2011 4:12 PM

Metro news release:

Contact: Karen Kane, 503-797-1942,

karen.kane@oregonmetro.gov

Proposed Metro budget freezes executive pay, cuts staff, asks new employees to pay PERS

Regional agency also makes strategic shifts to improve focus on economic prosperity

The Metro Council today received a staff-proposed budget that is \$40 million smaller than last year's, reduces seven full-time positions, freezes the pay of senior managers for the second time in three years, increases contributions of non-union employees for health insurance premiums, and requires all non-union employees hired on or after July 1 to contribute six percent of their salaries to PERS.

The proposed budget also shifts resources from older programs that achieved their purposes to new initiatives aimed at spurring private investments that will create good jobs, prevent urban sprawl and protect the region's farms, forests and natural areas.

"Metro is not immune from the recession," said Dan Cooper, Metro's acting chief operating officer. "The proposed budget keeps our focus on strategic projects that will improve our region's economy and quality of life for years to come. I'm proud that our strong focus on fiscal accountability resulted in Standard and Poor's recently renewing our AAA bond rating. This proposal continues our practice of sound budget management while being a good employer," he said.

The document council receives today fulfills the agency'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 economic impact for the region last year while supporting 6,600 jobs.

The proposed budget also continues voter-approved purchases of natural areas and projects at the Oregon Zoo that will improve animal health and safety and conserve water. The proposal balances the agency's revenues and expenses for the coming year. It also invests the agency's resources in five core areas to prevent urban sprawl and 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 bike-able, walkable and transit-supported neighborhoods while also 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 responding to innovative new technologies to manage the region's waste, reduce cost to ratepayers and prevent material from entering the waste stream in the first place.

The Metro Council will review the proposed budget and consider amendments. Public hearings on the budget proposal will be held at the regular Council meetings on Thursday, April 21, and Thursday, May 5, each beginning at 2 p.m. at Metro Regional Center, located at 600 NE Grand Ave. in Portland.

The Council is scheduled to approve a preliminary budget on May 5. The Multnomah County Tax Supervising and Conservation Commission (TSCC) will then review the budget in a public hearing on Thursday, June 9, beginning at 12:30 p.m. at Metro Regional Center.

Following review by the TSCC, the Metro Council is scheduled to adopt a final budget following a public hearing on Thursday, June 23. The new fiscal year begins on July 1.

[Learn more about the proposed 2011-12 Metro budget](#)

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.

[Tell Metro what you think about the Glendoveer Golf Course and Fitness Trail](#)

March 25, 2011 11:50 AM

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](#)

[Metro, partners break ground for trail on historic streetcar, railroad line](#)

March 25, 2011 11:49 AM

When the Portland to Oregon City railroad opened in 1893, Milwaukie and Gladstone - two cities that eventually developed

along the track – were not even towns.



This rendering shows an example of what the future trail will look like.

The new line connected Portland, Milwaukie, Gladstone and Oregon City, and for years ran freight trains and streetcars, helping communities along the route grow into towns and prosperous cities.

Now, forty-three years after the last freight train arrived in Portland and more than half a century after the last passengers stepped off the streetcar, an updated pathway – the Trolley Trail, a six-mile bike and pedestrian path, – will break ground on March 22. The trail follows the part of the historic line that ran between Milwaukie and Gladstone and connects local neighborhoods, schools, parks, retirement communities and business districts.

The groundbreaking takes place at 11 a.m. at Stringfield Family Park, which is along the trail at 3614 SE Naef Rd., off SE McLoughlin Boulevard.

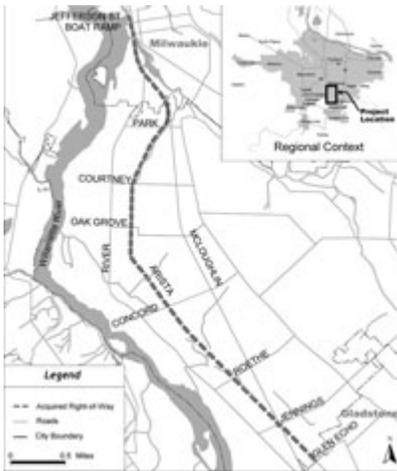
The trail will open as soon as fall 2011 but its 118 year transformation from active railroad to paved path hasn't been nearly as quick.

After the Portland to Oregon City streetcar closed in 1958, freight trains used the tracks for another decade. By 1968, most of the rails were removed as the route fell out of use and into disarray.

Since the 1970s, there has been consistent interest in turning the right-of-way into a walking and cycling path. Trail supporters got their wish in 2001, when Metro and the North Clackamas Parks and Recreation District used funds from Metro's first natural areas bond measure to buy the historic

right of way. It was a long overdue purchase.

"Metro listed this as a future trail in 1992, and the Columbia Region Association of Governments listed it in 1971, so we've been working on it for a long time," Metro regional planner Mel Huie said. "This trail is part of the 2040 Growth Concept plan, regional transportation plans and local trail plans. It's in nearly every existing plan we have."



A map of the future Trolley Trail.

Huie should know, as he has worked on the route for more than 23 years, and his family's connection to it goes back even further; they rode the streetcar before he was born.

"My parents lived in Gladstone but they worked in downtown Portland so they would take the streetcar to work every day," Huie said. "It's funny because now I'll be using it as a trail after my parents used it as transit."

After years of public input, studies, planning, surveying, re-planning and securing funds, the trail will finally be ready for passengers again.

The Trolley Trail will eventually combine with other regional trails to make a 20-mile loop between Portland, Milwaukie, Gladstone, Oregon City and Gresham. Trolley Trail partners include the cities of Milwaukie and Gladstone, Clackamas County and Oak Lodge sanitary and water districts. Community partners include the citizen-based Friends of the Trolley Trail, and various neighborhood associations and civic groups.

[Learn more about the Trolley Trail](#)

[Learn more trail planning](#)

[Barbara Roberts takes oath of office, joins Metro Council to represent District 6](#)

February 24, 2011 4:49 PM

Former governor steps in as current governor taps Metro COO to lead operations for State of Oregon

Metro news release:

Contact: Karen Kane, 503-797-1942

Portland, Ore. – Former Oregon Governor Barbara Roberts was sworn into office today as Metro Councilor for District 6, representing parts of Southwest, Southeast and Northeast Portland. She replaces Robert Liberty, who resigned the position two years before the end of his four-year term.

Roberts says she'll bring her strong budget experience as well as her broad understanding of state and local government, land use and housing to residents of the district.

Roberts joins the council at the same time Oregon Governor John Kitzhaber has tapped Metro Chief Operating Officer Michael Jordan to become COO for the State of Oregon.

"That a former governor would commit two years to the Metro Council at the same time the current governor appoints the Metro COO to a critical position on his team illustrates the leadership and collaboration that Metro has forged," said Metro Council President Tom Hughes. "This shows how central Metro is to local, regional and state decision-making."

Watch Barbara Roberts' swearing-in and listen to her comments upon joining the Metro Council

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. In 2001, she chaired hearings on the Metro charter review, which was passed by voters in 2002.

Since leaving public office, Roberts 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. Her autobiography is scheduled to be released this fall.

"This is a perfect time for me to step forward and dedicate the next two years to the important decision-making that will face Metro's council," Roberts said. "Robert Liberty did an outstanding job serving the residents of District 6," she said, "and I intend to work hard to live up the standards he set."

Metro is expected to wrap up the urban and rural reserves decision with Multnomah, Clackamas and Washington counties this summer, and make a decision on whether to expand the urban growth boundary this fall. The agency will also take part in the Community Investment Initiative to develop an integrated federal, state and regional investment approach to maintain public structures and community assets as well as to support new investments, and the Climate Leadership Summit to unveil regional land use and transportation strategies to reduce carbon emissions. In the news few years, the Oregon Zoo, owned and operated by Metro, will undergo several upgrades made possible by a \$125 million bond measure passed by voters in 2008.

Roberts was sworn in by her step-daughter, Multnomah County Circuit Court Judge Leslie Roberts, at the beginning of the Metro Council meeting at 2 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 24.

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[Welcome from Councilor Roberts](#)

February 24, 2011 2:24 PM

Welcome to my newsfeed, where I'll be delivering Metro news to you as it occurs, sometimes on a daily basis. My goal is to make it easy for you to stay informed about issues you and your family care about. Please check the site regularly and take advantage of the subscription features that let you choose the way you want to stay updated about Metro news and events.

Feel free to let me know what you think of the news I deliver, or if you have any ideas for how to make my newsfeed better.

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[Metro Council appoints Barbara Roberts to represent District 6](#)

February 22, 2011 10:21 AM

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.



Newly appointed Councilor Barbara Roberts is congratulated by Metro President Tom Hughes.

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.

[How Metro Council vacancies are filled](#)

January 7, 2011 1:38 PM

On Jan. 3, Metro Councilor Robert Liberty, who represents District 6, announced that he will be resigning his position, effective Jan. 15, to become the director of the University of Oregon's Sustainable Cities Initiative. Since that announcement, questions have been raised about how a vacancy on the Metro Council gets filled.

Councilor Liberty's successor will be appointed by the Metro Council, as the Metro Charter requires. In the coming days, the Metro Council will announce the beginning of an application process for interested persons to apply for the vacant position. Metro's code requires that the application period be open for at least four weeks. For this vacant position, qualified applicants must be residents of District 6 for at least one year prior to the appointment. Metro District 6 includes portions of Northeast, Southeast and Southwest Portland.

The Metro Council will schedule a public meeting to take place after the application period ends at a location within District 6. Council members will interview qualified applicants and invite members of the public to speak in support of, or opposition to, any of the applicants or to provide council with any other guidance as it considers this appointment.

The Metro Council may vote to appoint the new councilor at this meeting or it may hold the vote over to a later date. Council may, at its discretion, schedule additional public meetings and follow-up interviews before reaching its decision. The Metro Charter requires the council to appoint a new councilor within 90 days of the declaration of a vacancy.

The person appointed to the vacant District 6 position will be able to serve the remainder of Councilor Liberty's term, ending in January 2013. The appointee, along with other eligible persons residing in District 6, may run as a candidate for a four-year term at the May 2012 election. If no candidate receives more than 50 percent of the vote in that election, the

top two vote-winners will advance to a run-off election in November 2012.

The Metro Council has not determined when the application process for this appointment will begin or end, nor has a date been chosen by which the council will reach its decision. This information will be announced soon through local news media and the Metro website www.oregonmetro.gov

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[Robert Liberty to leave Metro Council, join University of Oregon](#)

January 3, 2011 4:03 PM

Metro Councilor Robert Liberty announced today that he is resigning his position on the Metro Council effective Jan. 15 to become executive director of the Sustainable Cities Initiative at the University of Oregon in Eugene.

Liberty was first elected to the Metro Council to represent District 6 in 2004, and was re-elected for a second term in 2008. District 6 includes portions of Northeast, Southeast and Southwest Portland.

While serving on the Metro Council, Liberty's priorities included protecting productive farms, forest lands and natural areas in and outside the urban growth boundary, reinvesting in existing communities, increasing transportation and housing choices, and giving citizens a stronger role in regional planning decisions.

Liberty has also recently worked with leaders in the business community and nonprofit organizations on the effort to create a regional consensus around the highest priority investments we should be making in the region. "If done well," he said, "this can be an important effort to improve the region's economic health and increase economic opportunities for working class people while maintaining our high standards for protecting the environment and promoting innovations in urban development."

Liberty's role at UO is a new position. The Sustainable Cities Initiative (SCI) is one of five interdisciplinary themes, called "Big

Ideas," that are shaping future academic priorities at the university. Started at the UO School of Architecture and Allied Arts, SCI now extends across disciplines into other schools and colleges on campus. The program aims to transform higher education with community engagement, interdisciplinary collaboration and sustainability study to influence public policy.

"Robert Liberty has worked hard to create complete communities where everyone has what they need to live, work, shop, get around and go to school," said Metro Councilor Carlotta Collette. "He's always operated with principles and integrity, making decisions based on his values and his core integrity. Robert's sense of fairness, kindness and generosity comes through in all his work. The University of Oregon has gained a valuable leader, and we'll miss him on the Metro Council."

Because less than two years remain in Liberty's term, the Metro Council will make an appointment to fill his seat, which runs through January 2013. The Council must advertise the vacancy for at least four weeks and provide for at least one week of public comment prior to making an appointment.

[Read more about the Metro Council](#)

[Learn more about the University of Oregon's Sustainable Cities Initiative](#)