



Reserve candidate areas

Clackamas County



What are candidate areas?

Candidate areas are not reserves. They are lands that have gone through the first round of analysis and meet a broad set of criteria for designation as either urban or rural reserves.

Candidate areas will be the focus of the next round of more intense scrutiny. It is anticipated that in summer 2009, both rural and urban proposed reserves will be delineated within these candidate area boundaries.

What makes a piece of ground suitable for urban development? What are the attributes of flourishing metropolitan area farms and forests? Which rivers, wetlands, buttes and savannas define our region and the boundaries of our urban footprint? These are the questions that all of us must consider in designating urban and rural reserves.

By the end of 2009, Clackamas, Multnomah and Washington counties and Metro will together create a map of the areas that are the most suitable places to build new communities over the next 40 to 50 years. The four jurisdictions will also draw a line around the best and most economically viable farm and forest land and agree to protect it from development. And these four public agencies will decide which natural features deserve protection from the pressures of urbanization for the next half century.

You are engaged in the third of five phases of the reserves designation process. Having come to working agreements, and after defining the area to consider, these four public agencies analyzed 400,000 acres within a wide band of land surrounding the current urban growth boundary in order to identify the most suitable lands for further study. This “coarse screen” narrows this large study area to focus on “candidate areas.”

Urban reserves will be designated by Metro on lands outside the current urban growth boundary that are suitable for accommodating urban level development over the next 40 to 50 years. These will be the areas Metro turns to first when considering future urban growth boundary expansions.

Clackamas County's 21-member Reserves Policy Advisory Committee is made up of seven members representing cities, seven members representing citizen organizations including rural communities and hamlets, and seven members representing other interests including development, agriculture, forestry and the environment. They meet monthly.

Clackamas County's process

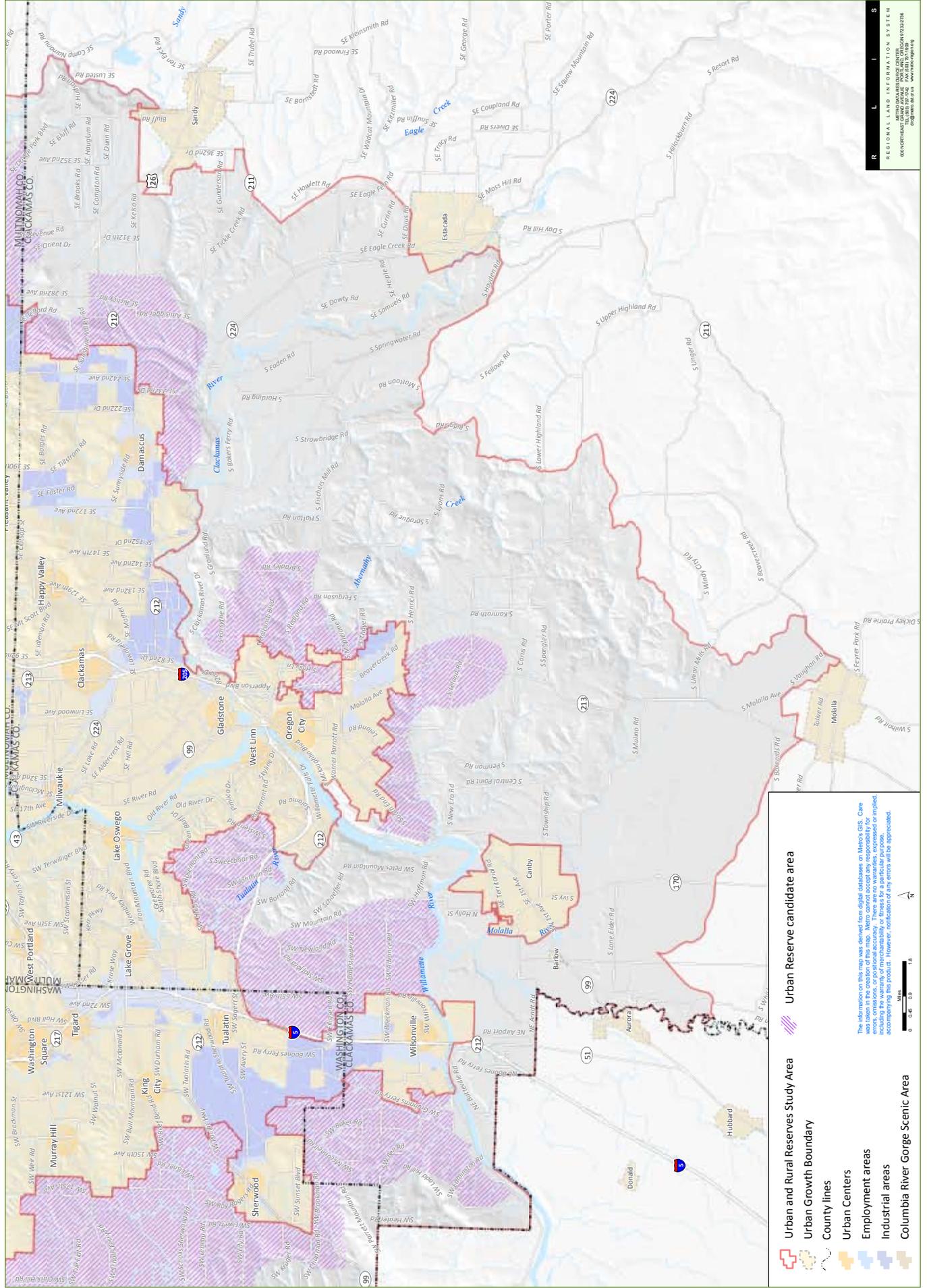
From January through March 2009, the Clackamas County Reserves Policy Advisory Committee consulted maps and studies, listened to presentations, received public input and applied members' knowledge of the land to identify areas that should be considered in the next 40 to 50 years for urban development. They focused on two factors:

1. Can the area be developed at urban densities to make efficient use of current and future public and private infrastructure?
2. Can the area be efficiently served by capable providers of schools and other public facilities?

Clackamas County urban reserve candidate areas

Clackamas County's Reserves Policy Advisory Committee identified lands east of Damascus and around Boring as candidate urban reserve areas. However, the Clackamas County Commission removed lands between Sandy and Boring to honor a previous agreement with the City of Sandy to maintain separation between Sandy and the Portland metropolitan area urban growth boundary. The county will continue to study lands east of Oregon City around Beaver Creek and to the south along Highway 217. The county considers the entire Stafford Basin an urban candidate area and will continue to study lands both east and west of Tualatin and Wilsonville. Clackamas County does not intend to further study lands south of the Willamette River.

Clackamas County urban reserve candidate areas



Rural reserves will be designated by Clackamas, Multnomah and Washington counties on lands outside the current urban growth boundary that are high value, working farms or forests or have important natural features like rivers, wetlands and floodplains. These areas will be protected from urbanization for the next 40 to 50 years.

The Clackamas County Board of Commissioners reviewed the advisory committee recommendations and crafted guiding principles for considering reserves. Their top priorities are protecting foundation agricultural land, protecting key natural resources including the Clackamas River, and honoring the existing agreement with the City of Sandy regarding a green belt along Highway 26.

Clackamas County’s process

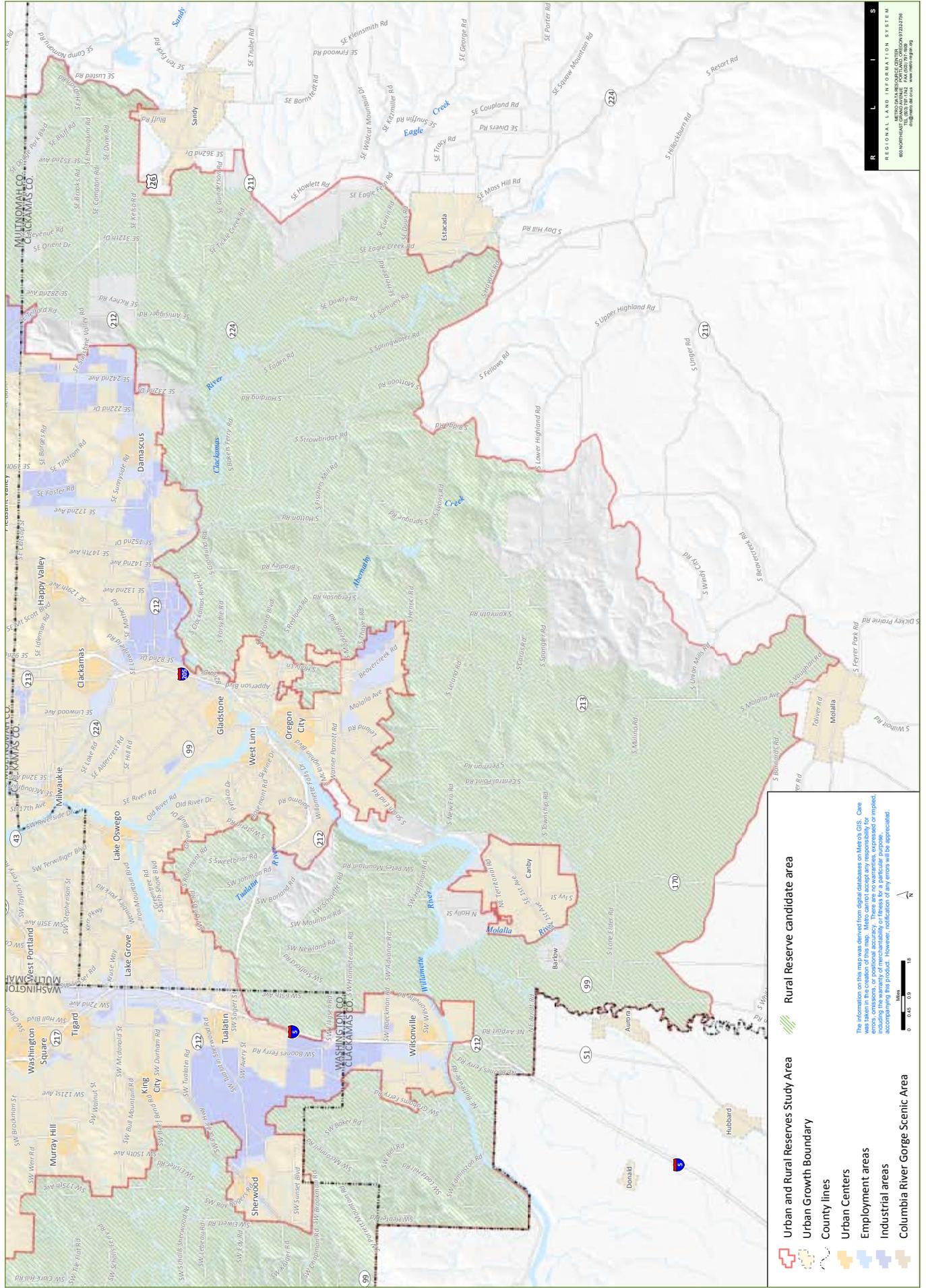
From October 2008 through March 2009, Clackamas County’s 21-member Reserves Policy Advisory Committee consulted a number of resources, including aerial photos, natural features maps, and maps of forest and agricultural land studies. They listened to presentations, received public input and applied members’ knowledge of the land to identify areas that are suitable to remain in agricultural or forest production, or natural resources protection, for the next 40 to 50 years.

Clackamas County’s rural reserve candidate areas

Clackamas County identified most lands within the study area as candidate rural reserve areas. Areas that were under little threat of urbanization were removed. Areas north and west of Canby were removed to honor the city’s future growth plans. An area south of Damascus and lands around Boring were taken out of rural reserve consideration because the area has already been developed with houses.



Clackamas County rural reserve candidate areas



What are the factors used to identify reserve candidate areas?



Cities

Neighborhoods

Communities

Farms

Forests

Natural Areas

Factors considered for urban reserve designation include:

- Can the land be developed at urban densities that make efficient use of existing and future infrastructure?
- Does the land have enough development capacity to support a healthy economy?
- Can water, sewer, schools, parks and other urban-level services be provided efficiently?
- Can the land accommodate a well-designed system of streets, trails and transit?
- Can the area be designed to preserve and enhance natural ecological systems?
- Is there enough land to accommodate a range of housing types?
- Can the area be developed while preserving important natural landscape features?
- Can the area be designed to minimize conflicts with farms, forests and important natural features on nearby land, including adjacent rural reserves?

Factors considered for rural reserve designation include:

- Is the land in an area that is otherwise potentially subject to urbanization as indicated by:
 - proximity to the urban growth boundary
 - proximity to land with fair market value that significantly exceeds values for working farms or forests?
- Is the area capable of sustaining long-term agriculture or forestry operations with features like:
 - suitable soils and available water
 - a large block of land with concentrated farm operations or clustered managed woodlots and compatible adjacent land uses
 - sufficient agricultural or forestry infrastructure?
- Does the area include important natural landscape features such as natural hazards; important fish, plant or wildlife habitat; lands that protect water supply and quality; features that provide a sense of place such as rivers or buttes; lands that separate cities; or lands that provide access to recreational opportunities?

What information was used to select reserve candidate areas?

The planning staff and advisory committee members from each of the counties consulted studies, map data and regional experts to inform their evaluation of lands within the study area. These were very preliminary assessments and will be refined considerably over time. A partial listing of their primary sources:

Shape of the Region study

Throughout 2006, Metro, in partnership with Clackamas, Multnomah and Washington counties, the Oregon Department of Agriculture, and the Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development, conducted a comprehensive study of the various factors that influence the shape of our region and contribute to the quality of life we enjoy. The study sought to identify how the agricultural economy, natural areas and urban communities all contribute value to this region.

Consultation with experts

The staff of Metro and the three counties also consulted groups of experts to obtain initial recommendations on the potential for providing urban level services to lands within the study areas. Each of these groups developed preliminary maps indicating the degree of difficulty in serving lands within the study area.

Water: Portland Metropolitan Area Water Providers' Consortium serves as a collaborative and coordinating organization to improve the planning and management of municipal water supplies in the region. Member participants from Sunrise Water Authority, Oak Lodge Water District, South Fork Water Board, Tualatin Valley Water District, Clackamas River Water, cities of Forest Grove, Gresham, Hillsboro, Lake Oswego, Portland and Wilsonville assisted in the initial assessment for providing water to the study area. They identified key criteria as: proximity to a current service provider, topography, use of existing resources and source.

Sanitary sewers: Sewer experts from Clackamas County Water Environment Services, Washington County Clean Water Services, Portland Bureau of Environmental Services and cities of Gresham, Wilsonville and Lake Oswego established criteria for this first landscape scale analysis. These include topography, proximity to a current waste water treatment plant, existing capacity of that treatment plant and the ability of the treatment plant to expand.

Transportation: A group of transportation experts from local jurisdictions and agencies developed a theoretical road network to determine areas that could accommodate an urban level development pattern including vehicular, transit, bicycle and pedestrian travel.

You can read the technical memos from these assessments on the Metro web site at www.oregonmetro.gov/index.cfm/go/by.web/id=29972

Components of the Shape of the Region study:

1. an assessment of the agricultural lands surrounding the metro region and their long-term commercial viability, developed by the Oregon Department of Agriculture
2. an inventory of the natural landscape features that define this region
3. an analysis of factors that contribute to the development and enhancement of great urban communities

The results of this study were shared at a symposium held at the Hillsboro Civic Center on Jan. 19, 2007. Full reports and executive summaries of the three components of the Shape of the Region study are available for download from the Metro web site:

www.oregonmetro.gov/reserves

How can I learn more and be involved?

BE INVOLVED

Learn what's going on and voice your ideas and concerns at every step of the way:

- community meetings
- public hearings
- written comments
- web site feedback.



Boundaries of the candidate reserve areas will be determined by Metro and the three counties in May. The elected officials representing the four jurisdictions (the “Core 4”) will consider the views of residents and advice from the regional Reserves Steering Committee when they make that decision so be sure to share your thoughts and ideas. Urban and rural reserves will be proposed this summer. You will have opportunities to give the Metro Council and county commissioners your perspective on proposed reserves during the summer at public meetings, through online surveys and by mailing written comments. The counties and Metro will craft intergovernmental agreements to designate urban and rural reserves in autumn 2009.

You can learn more about the candidate reserve areas, talk with staff and elected officials and share your perspective at eight open houses scheduled around the region from April 15 through April 30. The Metro web site is a great source of up-to-date information on reserves designation and public engagement opportunities. You can tell us what you think about the proposed reserve candidate areas by taking the online survey. Each of the three counties maintains a reserves web site with information on their respective activities and meetings. The regional Reserves Steering Committee meetings and county advisory committee meetings are open to the public so you can listen to deliberations and provide feedback. Make sure you stay engaged throughout the process as the people of the Portland metropolitan region make this important decision.

Clackamas County

www.clackamas.us/transportation/planning/reserves.htm

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