



**Department of Community Services**  
**MULTNOMAH COUNTY OREGON**

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**Land Use and Transportation Program**  
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February 19, 2009

To: Chris Deffebach

From: Karen Schilling, Land Use and Transportation Planning Director KS

Subject: Multnomah County Aspirations for Growth

Let me start by expressing our appreciation for the work you have done to provide a forum for local governments to share their growth aspirations, and for Metro's commitment to use this information to help shape the region's long range plan as part of the Greatest Places Initiative. Multnomah County differs from other metro counties in that it has a very small amount of urban unincorporated land. This came about as the result of longstanding policy choices, which I describe below, that have come to define the County's growth aspirations as they exist today.

Urban Services

Multnomah County has been pursuing an approach to urban growth for the past 26 years from the perspective that the appropriate providers of urban services are cities. The County expressed this policy intent when the Board of County Commissioners adopted "Resolution A" in 1983. At that time, the county began reducing services to a minimal rural level in subsequent budgets. Initiatives to further this goal included intergovernmental agreements to transfer building permitting and public facilities planning authority to cities, and support for annexations of unincorporated urban areas, including most transportation facilities. By the end of the 1990's, the large majority of the unincorporated urban areas in the County, which were primarily located between Portland and Gresham, had been annexed.

Planning for the County's remaining urban unincorporated areas adjacent to Portland and Troutdale is done by the respective cities under intergovernmental agreements that were adopted in 2002. With these agreements the County adopted city plans and codes to comply with the Metro 2040 Functional Plan, and the cities agreed to administer the codes. This is an interim step, until the areas are annexed.

The County applies the same policy approach to lands that are brought into the Urban Growth Boundary by encouraging cities that have the ability to provide services to take the lead role in developing the concept plans required by Metro Title 11. This ensures that city planning policy is reflected in area plans, and that the areas will urbanize upon annexation. Examples include agreements with Gresham to plan for the urbanization of

Pleasant Valley in 1998, Springwater in 2004, and the Kelley Creek Headwaters in 2008. The result of all of these efforts is that nearly all urban areas in Multnomah County are planned and served by cities.

### Rural Planning

Multnomah County's rural planning philosophy is grounded in a conservation ethic and desire to support the interests of its unique rural communities. At its core, are Rural Area Plans that were adopted following public planning processes that took place between 1996 and 2005. The plans and their effective dates are: West Hills (1996), Sauvie Island/Multnomah Channel (1997), East of Sandy River (1997), West of Sandy River (2002), and the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area (2005). These plans and implementing zoning ordinances preserve and protect wildlife habitat, streams, scenic views, the Gorge, and commercially viable farm and forest lands. They also seek to preserve the County's rural communities and support an economically viable rural lifestyle. The County Board of Commissioners adopted land use planning values in 1999 and 2007 that affirm the principals behind these rural area plans and, in tandem with the plans, serve as the County's aspirations for its rural lands.

For your benefit, we are attaching a copy of Multnomah County Resolution A and our Board values. The two documents summarize the County's policy stance as it relates to its urban and rural lands. Upon request, we would be happy to provide you with any of the other documents or agreements if they would be helpful.

Attachments:

Resolution A  
Board of Commissioners Planning Values

BEFORE THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
OF MULTNOMAH COUNTY, OREGON

In the matter of Phasing Out of Delivery of )  
Urban Level of Services in the Unincorporated )  
Area of Multnomah County during the next three ) RESOLUTION  
years (Resolution A) )

WHEREAS, the Board of County Commissioners is considering the mission and purpose of Multnomah County; and

WHEREAS, the 150,000 persons currently residing within Multnomah County's urban growth boundary outside incorporated cities require long-range planning for services; and

WHEREAS, it is in the public interest to clearly express the County's mission regarding providing services in mid-Multnomah County; and

WHEREAS, Multnomah County's resources are insufficient to continue current service levels and the government is facing a significant revenue shortfall of approximately \$14 million in general resources for FY 1983-84; and

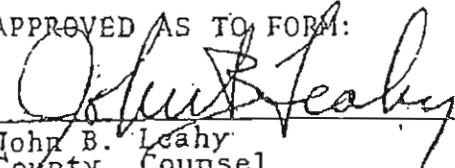
WHEREAS, the first priority for the available resources of Multnomah County shall be for those services available to all residents of the County, such as Assessment and Taxation, Elections, Corrections, Libraries and Health Services; and

WHEREAS, "municipal services" is defined as governmental services usually provided by city governments and shall include but not be limited to police service, neighborhood parks, and land-use planning and permits, "urban" shall be defined as governmental service comparable in quantity and quality to incorporated municipalities, and "rural" shall be defined as governmental service comparable in quantity and quality to unincorporated service areas outside urban growth boundaries.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that County services generally described as "municipal services" at a level considered "urban" rather than "rural" shall be proportionately reduced starting FY 1983-84 through FY 1986-87 to establish a minimal and essentially rural level of municipal services throughout Multnomah County.

ADOPTED March 15, 1983

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

  
John B. Leahy  
County Counsel

(SEAL)

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
FOR MULTNOMAH COUNTY, OREGON

By   
Gordon Shadburne  
Presiding Officer



## Land Use Planning

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# Multnomah County Oregon

## Board of County Commissioners

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### Land Use Planning Values

**We value** the preservation and protection of:

- Wildlife;
- Streams;
- Scenic Views;
- the Gorge;
- Forest Lands; and
- Farm and Nursery Production.

**We value** sustainability and an eye to the future, and believe that maintaining the quality of life in the rural areas of Multnomah County provides a social benefit that serves those on both sides of the urban growth boundary.

**We recognize** that we are part of a larger ecosystem and want to make decisions accordingly, working with other jurisdictions and stakeholders with common purpose.

**We value** rural communities and support an economically viable rural lifestyle.

**We support** the Statewide Planning Goals adopted by the Land Conservation and Development Commission in 1975 and strive to further those goals with locally adopted plans and policies.

**We support** the "recreational values" and "cultural and historic values" imbedded in the goals.

**We value** clear, courteous, respectful and responsive communication and collaboration with citizens and the many communities and jurisdictions involved.

**We seek** fairness, equity and balance in finding creative solutions that build community as well as benefit the public.

**We value** swift, accessible and understandable processes that are administered in a consistent and predictable manner in compliance with applicable local and state laws.

**We value** history and a sense of place.

Adopted December 9, 1999  
Affirmed January 30, 2007