

Rod Park newsfeed archive

An archive of Rod Park's Metro Council District 1 News

[Council passes capacity ordinance, delays affordable housing](#)

12/17/2010 11:55 AM

The Metro Council unanimously approved its 2010 capacity ordinance Thursday, setting policies that will guide the Portland region's growth for decades to come.

But the approval came after the council decided to delay taking on one of the ordinance's more controversial topics.

The capacity ordinance approved Thursday sets the stage for an urban growth boundary review in 2011 by formally spelling out the region's 20-year need for housing, and establishing how much capacity the region has for homes, businesses and factories. Councilors formally accepted that at least half of the region's 20-year need can be met inside the current urban growth boundary.

The council also accepted many of Chief Operating Officer Michael Jordan's recommendations as part of his Community Investment Strategy, including establishing six outcomes that the council will use in future decisions.

"We have much to cheer for in this capacity ordinance," said Metro Councilor Kathryn Harrington. "It's far-reaching. There are aspirations here, and we should continue reaching for those. We're not resting. This work does not rest on any laurels. There is no status quo maintained here. That's why I support this."

Council President Carlotta Collette lauded the Community Investment Strategy as an effort that will leave a legacy in the region.

"We can plan communities all we want, but unless we can invest in them we can't deliver," she said. "So this strategy really talks about how do we get people to commit to bring not just public dollars, which are tiny, but also private dollars, which are also tiny – but together they start making something that is a livable community."

[Learn more about the Community Investment Strategy](#)

The meeting, though, wasn't without some surprises. Early in the discussion on the ordinance, Harrington issued a rebuke from the dais because proposed changes to Title 11, adopted by the council at the Dec. 9 meeting, weren't properly announced on Metro's website.

"I am deeply disturbed that the Title 11 language, that a lot of people hustled and bustled last week to work out and get amended, hasn't been published as part of our vote," she said. "I do not want to be voting that in as part of this ordinance."

The proposed changes to Title 11 prompt cities to plan for affordable housing in urban growth boundary expansion areas.

[See also: Saying language remains vague, housing industry calls for delay in Title 11 reforms \(Dec. 15\)](#)

In the final public hearing on the ordinance, representatives from the Home Builders Association of Metropolitan Portland and the Portland Metropolitan Association of Realtors also asked that the Title 11 changes be delayed.

"The new language hasn't received input from the housing community... not even MPAC (the [Metro Policy Advisory Committee](#))," said Dave Nielsen, the CEO of the Home Builders Association. "We have not had a chance to review this language and the ramifications of a policy like this are huge."

Harrington emphasized that her issue wasn't disagreement with the language, and said she appreciated the work that MPAC's housing subcommittee and Metro staff did to get the wording into the capacity ordinance.

"I'm proposing this amendment to ensure that we have what I believe is the appropriate and required public availability of the proposed language," she said.

The council voted 4-2 on the motion to hold off on the Title 11 language until 2011; Councilors Robert Liberty and Rod Park voted against the motion.

"It was unfortunate the final meeting of MPAC was cancelled unilaterally," Liberty said, adding that he thought the committee would have approved it anyway. "Are you going to be able to satisfy the concerns raised by the home builders and the Realtors after taking everyone's time to go through another set of meetings? I'd submit to you we won't."

Park's last meeting

The meeting was the last for east Multnomah County Councilor Rod Park, who has served 12 years on the board and is term-limited out.

"So many people continue to push us, as well as the region, just to be a better place, and I have a lot of faith in your ability that you're going to continue to do that," Park said to a packed council chamber.

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[A personal message from Rod Park, my last as your Metro Councilor](#)

12/14/2010 01:09 PM

Twelve years ago I ran for Metro councilor because as a native Oregonian I was concerned about our communities. I ran because our residents wanted good jobs and housing, an effective transportation system, world class regional facilities, and economically and environmentally sustainable approaches to how we build and support our communities. I ran because we needed to protect the farm lands surrounding the region which make this a special place. I ran because frankly, we needed a more responsive Metro.

In my 12 years on the council I have made progress on changes residents wanted to see. We have been able to make reasonable land use decisions which better reflect what people want for better communities. We have developed a transportation system plan that is more realistic financially and provides mobility for people and freight to move within and through the region to support, not displace, our communities. Our solid waste systems are now better integrated to help our sustainability goals of decreased waste and increased recycling. Two new regional nature parks, Cooper Mountain and Graham Oaks have opened. Through your votes, the beloved Oregon Zoo will receive much needed help, and Metro also will be able to continue to purchase more natural areas like the 70 acres on Scouter's Mountain in Happy Valley and the

1,143 acres on Chehalem Ridge in Washington County.

I take pride in having chaired the Community Planning Committee which guided Metro through a major growth management decision. This led to increased efficiencies within the urban growth boundary, and land added for urban uses came at minimal expense to the farm lands we are trying to preserve for future generations. The combination of these efforts will help provide the foundation for jobs and housing for our needs in the future such as in Damascus and the Springwater area south of Gresham while increasing the desirability of lands already inside the boundary.

I am pleased to have sponsored the Nature in the Neighborhood grant program. This four year program has helped move Metro from solely regulation to inspiration by providing incentives for local habitat protection and restoration projects. The \$1.5 million has leveraged more than \$7 million in restoration efforts on many acres of habitat across the region.

I am also proud of the progress on a number of projects in District 1. Working with our regional partners, Metro has helped bring new and improved MAX facilities, such as the most recent opening of Civic Drive Station. The 223rd Ave. underpass has been improved, providing better connections between Gresham, Fairview and Blue Lake Park. Work has started on the East Metro Connections Plan, a project that will help determine the best ways to improve the north-south connections in the eastern portion of the Metro region.

While the current real estate market is dismal, Metro's Transit Oriented Development has continued to build projects to provide much needed jobs. These projects are a combination of ground level retail with living spaces above. The most recent is 3rd Central in historic Gresham across from the Multnomah County library which added a much needed grocery store. This builds on the other projects of Central Point, The Beranger, The Crossings and land holdings next to Gresham Civic light rail station. Combined, these continue to leverage private investments to acquire more amenities such as jobs, restaurants, shops, and more into our downtowns.

We've purchased about 1,600 acres in 70 acquisitions of open space in the district during the last 12 years to help maintain our connections with nature. Some examples are 62 acres at Mt. Hood Community College along Beaver Creek, 44 acres along the Columbia Shoreline, 106 acres between Darby Ridge and Persimmon and 18 acres in Deep Creek. These areas all continue to build on a targeted plan to protect water quality and to provide connectivity for both people and animals.

[View a map of the natural areas acquisitions in District 1](#)

Not all discussions or decisions in the region have come without a struggle. When local hotel/motel tax money was going to be diverted from the smaller cities in Multnomah County to PGE Park, I was able to keep that funding for their local needs. This has funded projects such as improvements at the swim center at Mt. Hood Community College, local tourism marketing and most recently funding to help bring the U.S.S. Ranger to east county.

There are many challenges left for our region which I leave to my successor Shirley Craddick and my colleagues to pursue. I have done my best to leave Metro and the region in a better place to tackle the difficult issues of harnessing rather than being a victim of growth.

I thank the citizens of the district and region for their support and wish us all well in the coming years.

[Partnership will protect Boy Scouts land in Happy Valley, open it as a natural area](#)

12/13/2010 09:56 AM

A beloved Boy Scouts property overlooking Happy Valley will be protected as a public natural area with new trails, picnic tables and restrooms, thanks to a partnership including Metro, the City of Happy Valley and the North Clackamas Parks and Recreation District.

Metro is under contract to purchase 70 acres from the Boy Scouts of America's Cascade Pacific Council, investing funds from the region's voter-approved 2006 natural areas bond measure.

Under an agreement approved this month by all the parties, Metro will oversee restoration and improvements at the forested property. Happy Valley will pay for the upgrades with its remaining \$380,000 of local allocation from the bond. And the parks district will manage the future Scouter Mountain Natural Area, which could open as early as summer 2012.

"This partnership will ensure that future generations connect with nature in a fast-growing part of the region," said Metro Councilor Rod Park, who represents the eastern suburbs in District 1. "Voters were thinking of places like Scouter Mountain when they asked Metro to protect our best remaining land in the Portland metropolitan area."

Rising more than 700 feet above the valley floor, Scouter Mountain is part of the Boring Lava Field. The future natural area is part of a larger property owned by the Boy Scouts, who will retain about 110 acres.

Scouter Mountain Natural Area will honor the Boy Scouts' legacy on the site – not only by promoting outdoor exploration, but also by salvaging pieces of a deteriorating lodge to incorporate in the new picnic shelter. An independent study determined that it would cost more than \$8 million to restore Chief Obie Lodge, which has been closed since 2004 due to fire safety issues. The Scouts will deconstruct the 22,000-square-foot building prior to the property sale, which is expected to be finalized this spring.

"Like so many others, I have very fond memories of camping and other activities on Scouter Mountain with my children and as a young Scoutmaster," said the Scouts' council president, Gene Grant, a former mayor of Happy Valley. "While we all were disappointed to find the cost of preserving the lodge was too high, the new trails, restrooms and picnic shelter that will replace and reuse the lodge materials will be a welcome amenity we will all put to good use. I am truly excited to help create the Scouter Mountain nature park with these new facilities."

The Scouts plan to invest proceeds from the sale at their 17 camping properties in Northwest Oregon and Southwest Washington. More than 15,000 youth and volunteers attend overnight or day-camping programs every summer, and another 30,000 Scouts camp independently throughout the year.

At the Scouter Mountain site surrounding the future natural area, for example, the Scouts host more than 2,000 campers every summer. Now, those campers will share part of the mountain with fellow nature-lovers.

"The City of Happy Valley is thrilled to have access to another 70 acres of natural area to enhance our city's green spaces," said Happy Valley Mayor Rob Wheeler. "As a result of this outstanding acquisition, our residents will have direct access to trails for recreation and education within our natural environment. This is a great asset for the city and the region."

Happy Valley citizens voted to join the North Clackamas Parks and Recreation District in 2006. The district covers 36 square miles, stretching from Happy Valley west to the Willamette River, south to the Clackamas River and north to the Multnomah County line. The new natural area on Scouter Mountain – which was identified as a long-term priority for the district – will be added to a roster of 60 parks and

facilities.

“It’s a wonderful resource, which we’re happy to see preserved for people to use,” said Michelle Healy, parks district manager. “It fits well into what we’re trying to do.”

Scouter Mountain Natural Area showcases Metro’s natural areas bond measure at its best, said Metro Council President Carlotta Collette.

“Voters have allowed us to leverage this region’s passion for the outdoors,” she said. “No one party in this collaboration could have done it alone. But working together, a community group, a city, a park district and the regional government are protecting Scouter Mountain for future generations.”

Metro’s voter-approved Natural Areas Program protects land in 27 key areas across the region. To learn more, visit www.oregonmetro.gov/naturalareas.

Metro Council approves food recycling facility in northeast Portland

12/10/2010 10:22 AM

Power generation, greenhouse gas reduction, job creation, neighborhood grants among benefits

The Metro council last night unanimously approved a franchise permit for Columbia Biogas to operate a facility in northeast Portland that will recycle food waste from commercial and industrial sources, keep about 200,000 tons of waste out of landfills or the sewer system, and produce enough electricity to power up to 5,000 homes.

Columbia Biogas plans to convert local food waste into renewable power, clean water, fertilizer and soil amendments. The anaerobic digestion operation will be located at 6849 NE Columbia Blvd, in an industrial-zoned portion of the Cully area in northeast Portland. Anaerobic digestion is a controlled and enclosed biologic process that breaks down organic matter without oxygen oxygen and produces methane-rich biogas that can be burned to make electricity.

Construction is expected to begin in summer 2011, and will provide about 85 jobs. Once opened, the facility will employ about 10 full time workers and is expected to create additional waste hauling jobs.

Columbia Biogas plans to operate power generating engines that will produce about five megawatts of electricity and to connect to a substation grid in the PacifiCorp system. The digestion process also produces a byproduct that can be used as fertilizer and soil amendments in nurseries and farms.

The facility will be capable of processing about 90,000 tons of solid food waste and 104,000 tons of liquid food waste per year. The material will be processed in tanks in an enclosed building. Solid food waste will come from local commercial sources such as grocery stores, restaurants and food processors. Liquid food waste will come from commercial grease traps and food and beverage processors. Liquid waste is currently sent down sewers and treated at wastewater plants. No yard debris or garbage will be accepted.

"Columbia Biogas brings an excellent model for how to handle food waste throughout the region," said Metro Councilor Rex Burkholder, whose district includes the new facility. "It eliminates the need to truck waste to landfills far from town therefore reducing greenhouse gasses, the process helps power our homes and fertilize our farm fields with food waste instead of burying it, and by partnering with the community, it creates and maintains good paying jobs for people in their own neighborhoods."

Neighbors benefit from grants, agreements, jobs

Neighbors in the Cully area will benefit in other ways. The Metro Council has called for a 50 cent per ton surcharge on waste brought to the facility to establish a grant program to support community rehabilitation, mitigation and enhancement projects. Council has also requested that Columbia Biogas create a Good Neighbor Agreement with the Cully Association of Neighbors to minimize the impacts of the facility on local residents. Columbia Biogas has also formed an advisory committee with the neighbors, as well as a jobs subcommittee which includes the Native American Youth Association, Verde, Hacienda and Work Systems Inc.

Columbia Biogas must also receive a permit from the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality; that decision is expected soon.

[Learn more about the Columbia Biogas facility](#)

[Learn more about Metro's role in waste reduction](#)

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Metro Councilor Rod Park to meet with student leaders in Gresham

12/07/2010 04:25 PM

Metro Councilor Rod Park will join students at Gresham's Centennial High School from 3 to 4 p.m. Monday, Dec. 13 to participate in the Reaching and Empowering All People (REAP) "Future is Now Tour." The tour, which brings students from diverse backgrounds and regional decision makers together to discuss Metro's role in the community and brainstorm solutions to the region's problems, will pair Metro councilors with students in their district.

Students attending the event are participants in the REAP program which aims to empower and provide leadership training. Metro has partnered with REAP for several years and this week's school visits are an important part of the agency's ongoing commitment to fostering diversity and directly engage the community in Metro's decision making process.

Mark Jackson, the Vice President and Executive Director of REAP praised the meetings saying, "The Future Is Now Tour highlights how strategic community partnerships help engage future leaders to ensure the region protects its unique brand of sustainable living."

The presentations follow a meeting held at the Metro Regional Center this past July in which Metro Councilors met with several REAP participants to discuss the regional government's role in transportation planning, climate change mitigation and the promotion of renewable energy resources. While each councilor's presentation will vary depending on their particular field of interest, the overall mission is to inform students about how Metro policies affect the region, increase opportunities for young leaders to participate in decision making processes and to build toward a long-term relationship between Metro and REAP.

After the presentation, students will discuss their perception of Metro's role in the region and make

suggestions for how the agency can improve its effectiveness as well as brainstorming ways in which Metro can effectively engage students and communities of color.

3 – 4 p.m., Monday Dec. 13, 2010
Centennial High School
3505 SE 182nd Avenue
Gresham, OR 97030-5097

The mission of REAP is to be proactively involved to empower and engage youth, families and the community for a better future now.

Metro, the regional government that serves 1.5 million people who live in the 25 cities and three counties of the Portland metropolitan area, provides planning and other services that protect the nature and livability of our region.

[New Civic Drive MAX station connects mixed-use Gresham neighborhood to the region](#)

12/03/2010 04:14 PM



Current Metro Councilor Rod Park and councilor-elect Shirley Craddick mark the official opening of the new Civic Drive Station.

With a steady drizzle in the background and the aroma of hot chocolate in the air, a casual observer might miss the significance of the event. After 13 years of planning, the Civic Drive MAX station officially opened in Gresham's Civic Neighborhood, with many of the key figures that helped make it happen in attendance.

Metro Councilor Rod Park joined former Gresham Mayor Gussie McRobert and Metro Councilor-elect Shirley Craddick in providing historical context. "The opening of the Civic Drive MAX station is an affirmation of the progress we've made in the last 13 years. The partnership of Metro, TriMet, the City of Gresham and the remarkable students at the Center for Advanced Learning is a reflection of the pride felt in this neighborhood and of our commitment to the benefits of transit-oriented living," said Metro Councilor Rod Park. "This station connects the neighborhood to the region, residents to jobs and visitors to the vibrant Civic Drive neighborhood."

MAX trains moved in and out of the new station throughout the ceremony and allowed passengers to get

off and board the train for the first time once the ribbon was cut. Students from the adjacent Center for Advanced Learning proclaimed Dec. 1 as TriMet Safety Day in recognition of the safety elements added to the station that help foster transit ridership and an general sense of security. Other unique station features include a vertical interactive art piece, modern shelters, LED lighting, attractive stormwater planters and basalt benches.



An interactive art piece serves as a distinctive placemaking element for the station and neighborhood.

Metro's Transit-Oriented Development program and the Federal Transit Administration funded the design and construction of the station.

Transit-oriented development, like the Civic Drive neighborhood, 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 region.

[Learn more about transit-oriented development](#)

Metro Council to focus on efficiencies inside UGB this fall

11/23/2010 04:33 PM

The Metro Council will soon consider improvements to the Portland region's growth rules that will require more effective and efficient use of existing public investments and that improve the management and accountability of public services. Metro's goal is to ensure the region makes the most of its existing cities as part of the agency's long-term strategy to provide good jobs, protect valuable farm and forest land and preserve outdoor recreation opportunities.

Metro is evaluating proposals to create stronger protections for industrial land to ensure it remains available for large manufacturers; to focus public investments to support existing businesses, cities, town centers and transportation corridors; and to provide more affordable housing, among other areas.

Four public hearings will be held throughout the region over the next three weeks:

- 5 p.m., Monday, Nov. 29, Clackamas County Public Services Building, 2051 Kaen Rd., Oregon City

- 5 p.m., Thursday, Dec. 2, Hillsboro Civic Center Auditorium, 150 E. Main St., Hillsboro
- 5 p.m., Dec. 9, Metro Regional Center Council Chamber, 600 NE Grand Ave., Portland
- 2 p.m., Thursday, Dec. 16, Metro Regional Center Council Chamber, 600 NE Grand Ave., Portland during the Council's regular meeting. NOTE: The Metro Council is scheduled to vote on the proposed capacity ordinance at this time.

[Read more about Metro's work to improve growth management, including information about upcoming public hearings](#)

The Metro Council will be considering ways to protect farms, forests and natural areas by investing inside the existing urban growth boundary this fall. It will not be considering an expansion of the urban growth boundary in 2010 until a revised urban and rural reserves map for Washington County is agreed to by the Metro Council and the Washington County Board of Commissioners and acknowledged by the Oregon Land Conservation and Development Commission. That work will not be completed before Spring 2011.

[Read more about the ruling of the Oregon Land Conservation and Development Commission on urban and rural reserves](#)

[Read more about the current status of urban and rural reserves](#)

New Gresham Civic Drive MAX station opens Dec. 1 in pedestrian-friendly neighborhood

11/23/2010 04:09 PM

The long anticipated Civic Drive MAX station, located in the heart of Gresham's Civic Neighborhood, officially opens Wednesday, Dec. 1, with an on-site ceremony starting at 1 p.m.

But don't count on a direct-to-station trip on the Blue Line if you plan on attending.

TriMet's MAX Blue Line trains began two weeks of testing at the new Civic Drive station in mid-November. The trains briefly stop at the station, simulating revenue service, but no passengers are able to board or exit the train. Trains will begin serving the station immediately after its official opening.

Anyone planning on attending the ceremony can get off one stop past Civic Drive station at the Gresham City Hall station and walk back to Civic Drive. The City Hall stop is located at the northwest corner of Eastman Parkway and Division.

Since 1997, the station has been part of a larger vision for developing the Civic Drive neighborhood into a vibrant, transit- and pedestrian-friendly area. TriMet and Metro committed to building the future station once there was enough development and density in the neighborhood to support it. The station was funded by Metro and the Federal Transit Administration and is the 85th station along the MAX system.

Transit-oriented development, like the Civic Drive neighborhood, 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 region.

[Learn more about the Civic Drive MAX station](#)

[Learn more about transit-oriented development](#)

Tracking animals in winter

11/19/2010 01:27 PM

Moist soil is the perfect palette for capturing the wanderings of animals. From shorebirds to bugs to animals that only come out at night, tracks on the ground can tell quite a bit about the quiet lives of elusive animals.

Tracking can be done all year, but wet winter weather makes success a sure bet. Open year-round, Metro's nature parks, with habitats ranging from rivers and stream sides to rare Oregon white oak forests and former lava domes, provide a variety of options.

Metro and its partners offer animal tracking classes throughout the year, but to get started learning tips on how to find critters such as raccoon, river otter, Canada goose, rabbit, deer, red fox, black bear or cougar, watch this video with Metro naturalist James Davis.

[View the Metro calendar](#)

[Sign up for GreenScene](#)

[Learn more about Metro's nature parks](#)

Metro celebrates another successful year of outdoor school

11/10/2010 11:05 AM



As another successful year of outdoor school comes to a close, National Sustainability Education Week is in full swing. Although their schedules may not correspond, Metro's ongoing sponsorship of waste reduction education for area outdoor school programs promotes the same goals as National Sustainability Education Week, a nationwide program to encourage awareness and adoption of sustainable practices.

[Learn about Metro's National Sustainability Education Week activities](#)

Since the Metro Council approved funding for outdoor school waste reduction education programming in 2008, more than 12,000 sixth-graders from area schools have attended Metro-sponsored outdoor school programs. In addition to providing financial support for waste reduction education, Metro staff helps outdoor schools craft award-winning curriculum for such programming.

Outdoor school is a fun and interactive way for students to experience the environment that surrounds them and better appreciate the importance of conservation, habitat protection and sustainable living. Along with learning about ecosystems and natural processes, students learn how to shrink their environmental footprint by reducing the amount of waste they create. Educational and experiential activities are integrated throughout the week in all aspects of the programs, including meals, duties, field study, recreation and evening programs.

Metro's support for outdoor school has gained statewide attention: Metro's waste reduction curriculum received the Oregon Association of Recyclers annual Education Program of the Year award for 2010. Waste reduction education programming has been shown to strengthen students' willingness to recycle and follow sustainable practices that will, in turn, reduce the amount of waste entering the landfills.

As school budgets have continued to decline, many schools have considered cutting outdoor school opportunities for their students. Metro's sponsorship of these programs has allowed many schools to continue allowing students the opportunity to attend outdoor school and provides incentives for other schools to resume their outdoor school curriculum. Metro reimburses the cost of providing waste reduction programming for 14 outdoor schools provided by four providers across the tri-county metropolitan area.

[Learn more about Metro's support for outdoor school](#)

Councilor-elect Craddick ready to represent east Metro

11/08/2010 01:52 PM

Shirley Craddick knows the routine – a drive or MAX ride from Gresham to Portland's east side, a day of poring over technical data and collaborating with far-flung colleagues, a return home after a long day.

This January, after she's sworn in as the east metro's next Metro Councilor, she'll be back into that routine for the first time in eight years.

The practice will be the same, but the field will be entirely different for Craddick. She retired in 2003 as a registered dietician and researcher at Kaiser Permanente's Center for Health Research on Interstate Avenue. Now, a couple of miles southeast, she'll be poring over data about land use, transportation, garbage rates and elephant habitats, and collaborating with the eight cities and two counties in her district.

About Shirley Craddick

- Registered dietician
- Retired researcher at Kaiser Permanente Center for Health Research
- Elected to Gresham City Council in 2004
- Council President in 2007
- Alternate to Metro Policy Advisory Committee
- Elected in 2010 to replace Rod Park on Metro Council
[Click here](#) for the City of Gresham's full Craddick bio

"Even though the field is much different, how we get our work done is very similar," Craddick said. "The only way you get your work done is through relationships."

Until recently, serving on the Metro Council was not a goal for Craddick. She and her husband retired seven years ago, and she said she was looking to try something new.

About that same time, development was proposed for some of the buttes that surround her home south of downtown Gresham.

"I knew we would have lots of trees coming down, and many houses, so I got involved with a group of people who were also not interested in having this happen," she said.

At the same time, she said, discord on the Gresham City Council left her unhappy.

"There didn't seem to be anybody on the council that had those values that were important to me," she said. She was elected to the council in 2004.

Aesthetics and land use are a common theme for Craddick. She said the development that occurred on the buttes was "respectful and ended up being quite responsible." As the city council's liaison to the planning commission, she began pushing for higher-quality development across the city.

"A lot of the development that has occurred has been built without much character, a lack of quality, and I really think that undermines the economic vitality of the city. We've had a lot of schlocky development over the years," she said. "As this city grows and continues to mature, the development that goes forward is going to leave behind a better city."

The eye on development led Craddick to start attending Metro Policy Advisory Committee meetings.

"I enjoyed listening to the different conversations and discussions a lot," she said. "Rod (Park) and I

became acquainted. I liked the work he's done. He and I are aligned pretty much the same."

Craddick's path had crossed with the Park family for decades. Park's wife, Joy Guidry, and Craddick were members of Kappa Kappa Gamma at Oregon State University; Craddick has worked the outgoing councilor's mother, Rockie, on work with Gresham's sister city in South Korea.

Councilor Park said he encouraged Craddick to run.

"Her motivations will be different but the outcomes will be similar," Park said when asked to compare himself to his successor. "From a farmer's perspective, I understand the better we do in the boundary, creating the livable type spaces people want to be in, the less pressure it puts on putting the boundary outward. I believe City Councilor Craddick understands the better environment you build inside, the healthier people are.

"The result of creating nice, good, walkable communities is the same but the motivation is different – which actually kind of fits Metro," Park said.

But Craddick is going to face challenges in the district that's benefited the least from the region's urban resurgence of the last 20 years. The Silicon Forest of the west side provides jobs for residents across the region, but the long commute makes it difficult for Gresham, Fairview or east Portland to attract workers from Intel and Nike as potential home or condo owners.

"We need jobs closer to home. Most people in the east part of the region commute 10 to 15 miles a day," Craddick said. "We need jobs to keep people in the same area."

While acknowledging that Washington County has advantages – namely flat land – that the east region doesn't have in attracting large employers, she said she'd still like to see Metro and the cities use their tools to bring new employers to the other side of the region.

"My job is to help find and make industrial land become available to the east county. From there, it's up to the cities to take it from there," she said.

She said she understands trepidation about the costs of redeveloping brownfield sites for large employers, but questions whether those costs truly outweigh the burdens of greenfield development.

"For Gresham to bring in a sewer line for the Springwater area is \$30 million," Craddick said. "That's not water. That's not the road. So how can that cost be any less expensive than reviving a brownfield?"

The highway connectivity to the Springwater area is one of the key issues Craddick will be faced with in her new role. The planned industrial area straddles the U.S. 26 expressway near 267th Avenue, but lacks a good road connection to the region's freeway network thanks to the abandoned plans for the Mount Hood Freeway and development eating up potential rights-of-way for a direct connection to Interstate 84.

"Years ago, we tried to make a single highway like Highway 217 and it would destroy neighborhoods. It destroys cities," she said. "You don't want a six-lane highway through the middle of the city. We need to find other routes to make it happen."

Of course, Craddick isn't only thinking about roadways. One of the region's top two transit priorities, as identified in the most recent version of the Regional Transportation Plan, is a transit corridor along Powell Boulevard. She's also thinking about an extension of MAX or a streetcar that could connect MAX to Mount Hood Community College and the three Interstate 84 cities – Fairview, Wood Village and Troutdale.

"What do we have to do to set the stage to make it happen?" she said. "What do the cities have to do through zoning, through their plans? It's not a politician's job to plan the route but I'd like to ask what we need to do if we want that to happen."

Her other priority is collaboration among cities, pointing to Clackamas and Washington counties' coordinating committees as examples that Multnomah County should follow.

"It's going to be up the cities to make that happen," she said. "I sure will try to facilitate that as best I can. We have this behemoth of Portland. Then we have Gresham, the (state's) fourth largest city. Then we have this cluster of smaller cities. Also, my district crosses two counties. The cities have vast differences in their interests and what's important to them, so that makes it pretty challenging."

But Park said his successor should be careful about being "one of the boys."

"One of the difficult tasks for being a Metro Councilor is the position you're put in as trustee of the rules of the game," he said. "Part of our job is to enforce that. Take a sports analogy. There probably are not very many pro baseball players that become umpires, and there's probably a good reason for that. When you're in that particular position, you can be friendly with everybody, but you really can't be friends and then enforce the rules. Otherwise, it's perceived, no matter what, you're showing favoritism."

Park pointed to Troutdale's lack of compliance with Title 13 of Metro's Urban Growth Management Functional Plan as an example.

"But the other cities are (in compliance)," Park said. "Do you give (Troutdale) a pass and say 'You don't have to do it,' but the rest of them did? Or do you say, 'Hey, you know, the rest of the players are playing by the same rules.'"

"She's going to have to find her own way in that, and say 'Sorry, I gotta call it fair for everybody,'" Park said.

Craddick emphasized that she wants to see the conversation go both ways, particularly in Damascus, a city where many residents have a strong anti-Metro sentiment after the controversial 2002 urban growth boundary expansion there.

"It'll be my job to develop relationships and begin to help see that show that Metro's role is being driven by other factors," she said. "It's not the seven-member body that sits back and makes these decisions without engaging the region."

Metro news reporter Nick Christensen can be reached at nick.christensen@oregonmetro.gov or 503-813-7583.

[Task force and equity groups to help set priorities for regional flexible funds](#)

11/03/2010 08:55 AM

To help make the most of limited transportation dollars, Metro is convening two groups to advise on how to spend \$24 million in Regional Flexible Funds.

The federal money gets a lot of attention locally, largely because it doesn't have the constraints of most federal programs, which require bridge money to be spent on bridges and public transit funds to be spent on those projects. The program drew concern last summer, when regional officials were deciding how

much to spend on freight versus active transportation priorities.

A Regional Flexible Funds Task Force comprising 20 experts from across the region will help set priorities and funding strategies for the flexible funds program. Task force members include experts in public health, freight logistics and pedestrian safety, among other areas of regional interest.

The task force meets for the first time today at Metro and again on Nov. 17. Future meeting dates in December have not yet been set. The meetings are open to the public, but no public testimony is planned.

An Environmental Justice Working Group will advise the task force and the Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation about how best to serve the needs of minorities, the disabled and other underserved communities.

Metro is inviting working group participation by affordable housing providers and community nonprofit leaders from across the region. A less formal group than the task force, the working group will meet twice. Its first meeting, also open to the public, will be held Nov. 10, 8-10 a.m. in council chambers, 600 NE Grand Ave.

The task force is expected to develop priorities for flexible funds spending by the end of the year. Metro staff will work with cities and counties to collaboratively draw up a list of projects recommended for funding. A public comment period will follow next summer before a final vote at JPACT and the Metro Council.

For more information about either the task force or working group, contact Dylan Rivera at 503-797-1551 or e-mail Dylan.Rivera@oregonmetro.gov.

[Read more about the flexible funds program, the task force and working group](#)

[Read more about last summer's JPACT and Metro Council votes on flexible funding](#)

[Want to be a volunteer naturalist? Nature University applications are due Nov. 4](#)

11/02/2010 09:33 AM

If you love nature, enjoy working with children and have access to personal transportation, consider becoming a volunteer naturalist by attending Nature University. But hurry: Applications for the 2011 training course are due Nov. 4.

At Nature University, you receive the training needed to become a qualified and confident Metro volunteer naturalist. Students learn about common wildlife and plants, the ecology of wetlands and ancient forests, and effective teaching techniques. Student naturalists go into the field with experienced naturalists to learn how to recognize animal tracks and signs, bird sounds and much more. Learn the importance of careful observation and the use of field guides, skills that can be applied in a lifelong process of learning and sharing with others.

Find out more about Nature University and download an application at the links below. Submit your completed application by Nov. 4, 2010, via e-mail to parkvol@oregonmetro.gov or by fax to 503-797-1849.

[Learn more about Nature University](#)

[Download the 2011 Nature University catalog \(PDF\)](#)

[Download your application \(PDF\)](#)

[Download your application \(MS Word\)](#)

[Fowl fun: Metro events Oct. 27 - Nov. 2](#)

10/27/2010 09:07 AM

This weekend's events at Smith and Bybee will give birdwatchers something to flock to: join Metro Naturalist James Davis as he takes guests on a tour of many different birds who are passing the fall at Smith and Bybee. Even if birding isn't your pastime, Metro has plenty more opportunities to get out this weekend. Join Metro and SOLV to plant trees at Beaver Creek or meet the famous Oregon pioneers interred at Lone Fir Pioneer Cemetery. The best part is, most of the events are low-cost or free, and registration can be completed online. Follow the links below for more information.

[Plant trees with SOLV in Troutdale](#)

9 a.m. to noon, Saturday, Oct. 30

Glenn Otto Park, Troutdale

Note: all tools provided

[Autumn birds at Smith and Bybee Wetlands](#)

9:30 a.m. to noon, Saturday, Oct. 30

Smith and Bybee Wetlands Natural Area

Note: advance registration required

[Mushrooms for beginners at Smith and Bybee Wetlands](#)

1:30 to 4 p.m., Saturday, Oct. 30

Smith and Bybee Wetlands Natural Area

Note: advance registration and \$10 fee required

[Tour of Untimely Departures](#)

6 to 9 p.m., Sunday, Oct. 31

Lone Fir Pioneer Cemetery

Note: advance registration encouraged

[Planning your garden in the off-season](#)

6 to 8 p.m., Tuesday, Nov. 2

Sabin School, NE Portland

More things to do brought to you by GreenScene

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

[View the online calendar](#)

[Visit the GreenScene page](#)

[Follow on Facebook](#)

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Reserves decision on hold for a week

10/25/2010 12:22 PM

The state board tasked with reviewing the region's proposed urban and rural reserves put off its decision for a week, saying it still had questions about controversial proposed urban reserves near Forest Grove, Cornelius and Hillsboro.

[Read more about urban and rural reserves](#)

The [Oregon Land Conservation and Development Commission](#) is looking at whether Clackamas, Multnomah and Washington Counties, and Metro, adequately studied the suitability of their various proposed urban or rural reserves for either protection from or designation for future development.

But commissioners were grappling as to whether there was evidence in the record that the proposed urban reserves on farmland in western Washington County to support designation as urban reserves.

The commission scheduled a 1 p.m. meeting on Oct. 29 to make its final vote.

Brent Curtis, Washington County's planning manager, tried to make the case for the designation in more than three hours of testimony Friday morning. After the board put off its decision, he said there's "lots and lots and lots" of material that's "really the explanation of how we connected the evidence to the requirements of the law."

Not surprisingly, the lead lawyer in opposing the Washington County reserves disagreed. Mary Kyle McCurdy, attorney for [1000 Friends of Oregon](#), had a one-word answer when asked if the county could justify its case: "No."

The charge against designating the areas as urban reserves was led by Commissioner Greg Macpherson, a Lake Oswego attorney. He said he'd have a hard time finding "that any reasonable person could conclude the factors (for urban designation) have been met," particularly with regard to land north of Council Creek near Cornelius.

"To draw a peninsula is, I think, intrusive into the agricultural landscape and certainly based on my knowledge of agriculture, a risk of breaking down the separation and buffer of the factors," Macpherson said.

In testimony earlier in the day, though, Curtis encouraged commissioners to look past the proposed Cornelius urban reserve, which in earlier testimony had been referred to as a "megaphone."

"We have a supergigantic megaphone that predates the planning process. The city of Cornelius and the city of Forest Grove exist," Curtis said. "Those conflicts exist. They were there in the beginning."

Once the commission looks at the record next week, it can either uphold the region's first-of-its-kind urban and rural reserves designation, or it can remand all or part of it back to the region for a second look.

The western Washington County areas seemed to be the only parts of the proposal at risk of a remand. Commissioners had little further discussion on other hot-button areas, including a rural reserve in western Multnomah County, an urban reserve near Stafford, urban reserves and undesignated areas north of U.S. 26

and an urban reserve in the Tonquin Geologic Area near Wilsonville.

Still, Kathryn Harrington, the Metro councilor who led negotiations for the agency, wasn't celebrating yet.

"There is a lot of consensus, so there's a lot to feel good about with that regard," Harrington said. "But there are some very important areas of contention, so I'm not willing to declare victory."

The location for the Oct. 29 commission meeting has not been determined.

Metro news reporter Nick Christensen can be reached at nick.christensen@oregonmetro.gov or 503-813-7583.

Don't let rain ruin your ride

10/25/2010 12:20 PM



The weekend forecast calls for rain, but don't let that dampen your biking spirit.

Staying active by biking or walking for short trips is great for the planet, your health and your wallet. Households that walk and cycle as the primary modes of travel save an average of \$694 per month.

Follow these easy tips below to stay comfortable, safe and dry while biking for work or play even when it's raining:

Wear rain gear and clothing that fits loosely, has air vents and is water-repellent. Rain capes or ponchos are inexpensive options that keep your top dry while providing plenty of ventilation. If you're commuting by bicycle every day, a Gore-Tex suit or other suit that sheds water and is breathable may be a good option.

Bring a small towel with you. Keep it in an accessible pocket to wipe away any water or splashes during your ride.

Remember that **Metro's new Bike There! map is printed on durable, waterproof paper**, making it a perfect planning tool for finding your way in rainy weather.

Clean off your bike after rainy rides. Wash or wipe down your bike, paying special attention to the chain, headsets, bottom brackets and brakes. Accumulated dirt can interfere with your bike's performance.

Be visible. Wear bright reflective clothing and make sure all your bike lights are bright and blinking so cars can see you in poor conditions.

Invest in fenders for your bike. They will help keep rain and dirt off of your body and the more vulnerable parts of your bicycle.

Avoid puddles. Not only will riding through puddles soak you and your bike, but there may also be bumps or potholes that you can't see.

Remember biking is just one car-free way to get where you need to go. If you're not in the mood to ride in the rain, consider taking transit or sharing a ride with a coworker or someone else in your neighborhood.

[Watch a Drive Less/Save More video about essential rainy weather bike gear](#)

[Learn more about Metro's waterproof Bike There! map](#)

[Learn more about ridesharing or other travel options](#)

Metro grants available for more nature in the neighborhood

10/22/2010 01:15 PM

The liveliest cities and neighborhoods don't happen by accident. We all have the ability to shape our communities through vision and leadership – but it also takes investment. Sometimes a little money is all that stands in the way of turning a good idea into a great project.

Does your favorite natural area need a little love?

Does your school need money for trips into nature?

Do you have an idea that will help local rivers and streams?

Metro's Nature in Neighborhoods restoration and enhancement grants connect people to their neighborhoods, natural areas, backyards and beyond. We look for thoughtful projects that help strengthen the community, involve residents and deliver results. Proposals are accepted from nonprofits, or from an individual, business or group that has an agreement with a nonprofit fiscal agent. A pre-application is the first step. **The deadline to submit a pre-application is 4 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 18, 2011.** Funding requests can range from \$5,000 to \$25,000 for hands-on activities and environmental education programs that protect and contribute to watershed health in the 25 cities in Clackamas, Multnomah and Washington counties. Visit Metro's website and review the program information packet for more details.

www.oregonmetro.gov/grants

New this year is the introduction of planning and project development grants. These grants are for organizations and community groups that need support developing partnerships to tackle bigger projects or that lack the financial and technical resources to develop proposals beyond the conceptual or master plan phase. Planning and project development requests can range from \$5,000 to \$15,000. Up to \$30,000 total will be awarded for these proposals this year.

Don't let the fear of grant writing be an obstacle. If you need help with your application, attend Metro's free grant-writing workshop geared for first-time applicants. **The two-hour session begins at 9 a.m. Saturday, Nov. 13** and will include practical advice, examples of successful projects, time to network with others and much more. Contact Metro for workshop details and to **reserve your place** by calling 503-797-1834 or e-mailing kristin.blyler@oregonmetro.gov.

This is your opportunity to bring a little more nature into YOUR neighborhood!

Metro's business operations get sustainability boost

10/18/2010 08:19 AM

The Metro Council has approved a plan to further reduce the agency's environmental footprint. The new plan, addressing greenhouse gas emissions, toxics use, waste generation, water consumption and habitat, aims to transform Metro's internal government operations into a sustainable business model largely by year 2025.

Key goals, with most slated for completion by 2025 – or 2050, in the case of greenhouse gas emissions – include the following:

- greenhouse gas emissions – reduce direct and indirect greenhouse gas emissions to 80 percent below 2008 levels
- toxics – eliminate the use or emissions of persistent bioaccumulative toxics and other priority toxic and hazardous substances
- waste – recover all waste for recycling or composting and reduce overall generation of waste
- water – reduce water use to 50 percent below 2008 levels
- habitat – ensure that Metro's parks, trails and developed properties positively contribute to healthy, functioning urban ecosystems and watershed health and that its natural areas reflect healthy, functioning ecosystems.

Metro's plan, which includes nearly 100 actions to reach the listed goals, builds on current successes such as the Oregon Convention Center's LEED certification, the Oregon Zoo's composting of animal waste and the Metro Regional Center's use of 100 percent renewable power.

Read the Metro Sustainability Plan, and learn about other initiatives to reduce waste, conserve natural resources and curb greenhouse gas emissions on Metro's website. [Go](#)

[A personal message from Rod Park](#)

10/08/2010 01:47 PM

What an incredible Indian summer, I hope you managed to get outside and enjoy the beautiful weather we've been having over the past weeks. The end of September not only marks the beginning of fall, but also the end of the public comment period for Metro's Chief Operating Officer's recommendations for a Community Investment Strategy. I look forward to reviewing your comments and beginning to put the finishing touches on our region's growth strategies.

Although leaves may be falling and the autumn harvest has begun, there's still plenty of time to learn about natural gardening techniques. Join Metro this October for the final round of natural gardening workshops where participants learn techniques and practices that conserve resources; make the most of native plants; and reduce reliance on garden chemicals harmful to people, pets and waterways. Metro offers workshop details and easy registration at www.oregonmetro.gov/garden, or you can call the Recycling Information Center at 503-234-3000. If you can't make it to one of the natural gardening workshops, look out for Metro's mobile garden at the East Multnomah Soil and Water Conservation District's Welcome the Rain! fair Oct. 23 in southeast Portland. Metro's traveling toxics reduction displays, aimed at helping residents identify and choose alternatives to hazardous household chemicals. With toxics reduction specialists also on hand to answer questions and provide individual advice, both displays help neighbors discover ways to make their homes and yards safer for people, pets and the planet.

One of nature's most incredible events occurs in October, and Metro is prepared to share the spectacle with you. Naturalists will be on hand at Oxbow Regional Park on the third and fourth weekends in October (16/17 and 23/24) when you can witness the return of wild salmon to one of the Pacific Northwest's premier rivers – the glacier-fed Sandy – just 45 minutes from downtown Portland. Naturalists will be on

hand from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the river's edge to help spot spawning salmon and interpret their behavior and life cycle. On Saturdays from 2:30 to 4 p.m., naturalist James Davis will lead explorations of the abundant fungi in Oxbow's ancient forests on a guided mushroom walk. On this beginner's mushroom walk, learn the basics of mushrooms and other fungi and how to go about identifying this complicated group of strange and fascinating life forms. The weekend programs are free with a \$5 per vehicle entry fee to the park.

I also want to let you know about a grant opportunity that support projects to reduce the number of people driving alone. Metro's Regional Travel Options grants for projects that improve air quality, address community health issues, reduce auto traffic and create more opportunities for walking and bicycling are due on Oct. 15. The grants are available to cities, counties and non-profit organizations. To find out more, contact Regional Travel Options at 503-813-7566 or rto@oregonmetor.gov or visit www.oregonmetro.gov and search for "regional travel options."

Thank you to everyone who has taken the time to write me about Metro's Community Investment Strategy and other important topics. I always appreciate hearing from you and welcome your opinions. Please don't hesitate to be in touch. You can reach me at rod.park@oregonmetro.gov or 503-797-1547. I also regularly post important items and personal updates to my newsfeed. Please subscribe to my personal newsfeed at www.oregonmetro.gov/news.

Outreach, equity topics at Gresham briefing

10/04/2010 09:24 AM

By Nick Christensen

GRESHAM – Metro's Community Investment Strategy may have a sweeping vision, but without community support, it could struggle to achieve its goals.

That was the message from officials from the eastern metro area Thursday night as they heard Metro Chief Operating Officer Michael Jordan outline his recommended strategy. The presentation, before about 25 people at Gresham City Hall, was the 30th and final scheduled local stakeholders briefing by Jordan on the strategy.

Jordan, in his briefings, talks about new ways of thinking about infrastructure investments, particularly in light of an anticipated \$27 to \$41 billion bill the region faces to meet its infrastructure needs in the coming decades. About \$10 billion of that, Jordan says, will be to replace existing infrastructure.

But smart investment doesn't necessarily make for good politics, said Portland Planning Commissioner Chris Smith. He brought up this year's kerfuffle about bioswales and bike lanes, saying that the planned bioswales were a better investment for communities than building underground storm sewers.

"It took an ounce of city hall politics before we were stealing sewer rate dollars and we were evil," Smith said. "How do we communicate this to the citizenry?"

Jordan responded in wide strokes about keeping citizens involved, but also said the public at large needs to have the same lightbulb moment that stakeholders have had, that infrastructure needs are going to expensive to meet.

"It has to resonate with the citizens and it has to resonate in their neighborhood," Jordan said. "One of the things that's incredibly clear is that citizens need to have investments that are relevant to their neighborhoods, to their lives, to what they do every day."

But hearing that message from Metro might not always be the best course, warned Damascus Planning Commissioner Katherine Ruthruff.

"What do you do when they don't trust Metro?" she said. "How do you get citizens to buy in when they basically don't trust you, don't like you, and don't like former policies that you did?"

The solution is twofold, Jordan said.

Elected officials, he said, "reserve the right to get smarter. Just because something happened 10 years ago doesn't mean it has to be the same way 10 years from now."

Beyond that, Jordan said, the public generally supports Metro's initiatives.

"They may not like the institution by name, but if you talk to them about what we're trying to accomplish, they have overwhelmingly supported huge amounts of money for the Metro Council to invest in things they care about," Jordan said.

The talk of investments was a concern for Wood Village Mayor Dave Fuller. In this recession, Fuller said, the federal government is "business bashing," and he was dubious that private sector interests would willingly participate in any infrastructure improvements. But, he said, government could get in the way of that.

"Business is the real generator of revenue," Fuller said. "If you don't allow business to grow and bring prosperity back, the rest is moot."

Jordan said he wasn't going to debate state or federal policies, although he's frequently pointed out that some of the major infrastructure initiatives of the past half century, like the Interstate Highway System and the Clean Water Act, are unlikely to see 21st Century equivalents. But, he said, it's been clear that whatever Metro can do to make it easier for businesses to grow should be a high priority.

On the other side of that, Richard Anderson, Chief Financial Officer for Bridgeport Village and Cascade Station owner Centercal Properties, said he didn't think Oregonians were taxed enough, which hurts his business. Centercal, he said, operates in seven states, "four of which are very red.

"There's a complete lack of services that goes along with the lack of taxes," Anderson said. "How do you convince Oregonians to pay the same amount that the government pays in Arizona, Idaho and Utah? If you cut and cut and cut you have no service, you can't attract that kind of development."

Again, Jordan circled back to the local level.

"Where we resonate with citizens the best is when we talk about these things, what we're trying to create in their community," the Metro staff chief said. "We have to talk about it in ways that resonate in their lives."

That may be challenging on the east side of the region, where leaders look longingly at the growth in the Tualatin Valley. Gresham City Council candidate John Kilian asked whether Metro can be equitable to the whole region, when the westside seems to get so many opportunities.

Jordan said the answer is nuanced, and that westside leaders have some complaints about the way things are run east of the Willamette.

"We are in this together. Any one community that fails is a failure to all of us," Jordan said. "The notion of

equitable treatment, the notion of burdens and benefits – we're on the right path, I think, to answer some of the difficult questions you pose."

[Read more about the Community Investment Strategy](#)

Metro news reporter Nick Christensen can be reached at nick.christensen@oregonmetro.gov or 503-813-7583. This story was not subject to the approval of Metro staff or elected officials.

[Last chance to weigh in on Community Investment Strategy](#)

09/27/2010 04:06 PM

This fall, the Metro Council will make decisions that will make a difference for our neighborhoods and communities. Your opinions about how and where the region should invest in important public structures and systems and how, where and if we should expand the urban growth boundary to accommodate future residential and employment growth will help shape important decisions by Metro and your local city or county.

On Aug. 10, Metro Chief Operating Officer Michael Jordan proposed a set of recommendations called the Community Investment Strategy that is designed to pave the way for innovative new partnerships among government and business. The recommendations call for our community to:

- invest in safe, livable communities
- promote economic development and good jobs
- protect our natural areas
- reduce inefficiency, foster innovation and demand accountability.

[Read the Community Investment Strategy](#)

The deadline for providing comments about the best role for the public sector in implementing these recommendations is this **Friday, Oct. 1**. Comments can be made through an online survey, via e-mail to 2040@oregonmetro.gov or written comments can be sent to Metro – Community Investment Strategy, 600 NE Grand Avenue, Portland, OR 97232.

[Take the survey](#)

You may also get more information and provide comments at the seventh and final open house on the Community Investment Strategy from **5 to 7 p.m. this Thursday, Sept. 30** at Gresham City Hall Conference Center, 1333 NW Eastman Parkway in Gresham.

[Metro closes more than half of the Sellwood Gap, allowing the Springwater Corridor to expand in Southeast Portland](#)

09/24/2010 10:52 AM

Trail extension will improve public safety, make commuting easier and bolster outdoor recreation

Runners, walkers and cyclists needn't scrutinize trail plans to name the region's most notorious missing piece: the Sellwood Gap, which forces people off the Springwater Corridor for a mile in its namesake neighborhood in Southeast Portland.

That gap will shrink dramatically, thanks to an agreement reached this week by Metro and the Oregon

Pacific Railroad Co. More than half a mile of trail will be built alongside the train tracks the company operates, allowing commuters and outdoor enthusiasts to take the trail between Southeast Umatilla Street and Southeast 13th Avenue.

“By definition, trails connect places,” said Acting Metro Council President Carlotta Collette. “But they also connect many of the issues that Metro tackles, from health and safety to land-use and transportation. Closing more than half the Sellwood Gap is a prime example, improving public safety and inspiring people to get out and exercise.”

Metro will work with the City of Portland to arrange design and construction for this section of the Springwater, which is one of the Portland metropolitan area’s signature trails. If the Sellwood Gap is fully closed, visitors will be able to traverse 20 miles from central Portland through Milwaukie and Gresham to Boring without having to use public streets.

The Springwater Corridor is one of 27 focal points of Metro’s voter-approved 2006 natural areas bond measure, which is designed to protect water quality, wildlife habitat and recreation opportunities for future generations – and one of several so-called “target areas” that highlight trails. Metro has also made progress this year on the Fanno Creek Greenway in Tigard, the Marine Drive Trail near the Portland-Gresham border and the Willamette River Greenway in North Portland.

“Closing trail gaps typically involves small pieces of property, but it makes a huge impact on neighborhoods across the region,” said Metro Councilor Robert Liberty, who represents portions of Southeast, Southwest and Northeast Portland in District 6. “The extension of the Springwater Corridor will be felt right away by residents of the Sellwood neighborhood and the thousands of people who use the Springwater Corridor.”

Metro’s agreement with Oregon Pacific, which was finalized Tuesday for about \$618,000, also included the sale of a 5,000-square-foot property in the Sellwood area. The land did not further Metro’s natural area goals, and its sale to Oregon Pacific helped secure the rights to extend the Springwater Corridor.

[PCPA throws open the drawers to Northwest artists](#)

09/24/2010 10:51 AM



A sample of the imagery at the "Out of the Drawers" show.

The Portland Center for the Performing arts is digging deep into Blue Sky Gallery's voluminous drawers

full of stunning photography from Northwest artists for it's "Out of the Drawers" show. Starting Oct. 7, guests to PCPA's Art Bar and Bistro can peruse photographs from more than 40 Northwest artists who have participated in Blue Sky Gallery's Juried "viewing drawers."

By showing photographs in drawers throughout the gallery rather than on walls or from ceilings, Blue Sky Gallery's Northwest Photography Viewing Drawers program takes a non-traditional approach to art display. Participating artists contribute 10 photographs to the archival drawers which are open for gallery visitors to explore at their leisure. Photographs in the exhibit represent some of the most interesting, beautiful and creative imagery from regional photographers in recent years.

More than 40 photographs will be pulled from the drawers and displayed in both the PCPA Art Bar and Bistro as well as in Portland City Hall. "Out of the Drawers" will be on view at PCPA from Oct. 7 – Jan. 3 and at City Hall from Sept. 29 to Jan. 3. A special reception will be held in the Antoinette Hatfield Hall of the PCPA on Oct. 7 from 6 to 9 p.m. The public is invited.

[Learn more about the Pacific Northwest Photography Viewing Drawers](#)

Metro invites residents to discuss Community Investment Strategy, adds open house in Gresham

09/17/2010 04:13 PM

Metro wants your ideas about how you'd like the region and your community to look in the future. Visit one of four remaining open houses throughout the region or comment online.



Metro Councilor Robert Liberty talks to a neighborhood resident about desired investments in the Lents neighborhood at the Sept. 13 open house at the Wattles Boys and Girls Club

Metro's Community Investment Strategy "road show" continues next week with open houses scheduled in Oregon City, St. Johns and Hillsboro. An additional open house in Gresham has been added on Thursday, Sept. 30. The open houses are an opportunity for residents to learn more about recommendations calling for a regional Community Investment Strategy for public structures that make our neighborhoods livable – from streets to parks to jobs – and give feedback on possible urban growth boundary expansions.

On Aug. 10, Metro Chief Operating Officer Michael Jordan released recommendations that call for cities, counties, Metro, the state of Oregon and businesses throughout the region to find innovative and cooperative solutions to the challenges we face; to tackle financial gaps and inefficiencies that slow progress and increase costs; to improve coordination of state, local and federal investments in public

structures such as roads, bridges, water systems and parks; and to create a strategic investment plan to better leverage taxpayer dollars with private investments. Jordan also made recommendations about potential areas to consider for urban growth boundary expansion to accommodate future residential and employment growth.

The remaining four open houses will be held:

- **Monday, Sept. 20**, 5 to 7 p.m. – Clackamas County Development Services Building, Community Room; 150 Beavercreek Rd., Oregon City
- **Tuesday, Sept. 21**, 5 to 7 p.m. – St. Johns Community Center, classroom 4, 8427 N. Central, Portland
- **Wednesday, Sept. 22**, 5 to 7 p.m. – Hillsboro Civic Center, room 113C, 150 E Main St., Hillsboro
- **Thursday, Sept. 30**, 5 to 7 p.m. – Gresham City Hall, Conference Center, 1333 NW Eastman Parkway, Gresham

Learn more and share your views online

Visit Metro's website to review the recommendations for a Community Investment Strategy, download maps of urban growth boundary study areas and take an online questionnaire. Find the schedule for all open houses and other ways to share your views. Public comments received by Oct. 1 will be summarized in a report and shared with policy makers prior to decisions scheduled for later in the fall.

[Learn about the Community Investment Strategy](#)
[Find out how to get involved](#)

A personal message from Rod Park

09/13/2010 03:50 PM

The City of Damascus staff met with the Metro Council recently in a work session to update the Councilors of the status of the city's draft comprehensive planning process. The comprehensive plan will help guide the growth and development of the city. City staff presented two draft maps indicating possible future residential, commercial and industrial districts as well as creating several large conservation areas. These maps were also shared with residents during the month of July at a series of "coffee klatch" discussions at local homes, businesses and community centers to gain feedback about the two plans. I was able to attend a couple of them and heard a lot of good feedback and questions.

Two plans, plan A and B, were presented to the Metro Council. Plan A builds upon the 2008 Draft Comprehensive Plan Map that was developed with citizen participation through the sub-area planning process and a four-day public design workshop. It was communicated that the current Damascus City Council is concerned Plan A does not sufficiently illustrate the village concept or adequately reflect the City's Core Values and created the 2010 Draft Comprehensive Plan Map. Plan B's map includes several villages of different sizes and focuses that all contain primarily the same core elements and is designed to increase efficiencies of services, preserve open space, and maximize community building.

The Metro Council is looking forward to meeting with the Damascus City Council on Sept. 15th at Damascus City Hall where Councilors will learn more about the two alternatives and discussing the pros and cons of each alternative. The final recommendation will be released on Oct. 25, following a public hearing period. The city plans to adopt the Comprehensive Plan and the Final Comprehensive Plan Map by December 2010. The final product will be forwarded to the Land Conservation and Development

Commission for final state adoption. As this is Damascus's first comprehensive plan and unlike other established cities within Metro, Metro can only comment on the plan.

As the Councilor from District 1, I have been closely following the hard work that the City of Damascus and the residents have been engaged in since this area was brought into the urban growth boundary (UGB) in December 2002. It has not been an easy process but I am excited to see that progress is being made.

[Learn more about the comprehensive planning process, look at maps and comment on proposals](#)

[Find out more about the public hearing schedule](#)

The East Metro Connection Plan

Over the next 18 months, Metro staff and our local partners will study the best ways to improve access to the north-south connections in the eastern portion of the Metro region. This study encompasses a wide area, bounded by 181st Avenue on the west, 257th Avenue on the east, Interstate 84 on the north and points south including Highway 26, Rockwood, Pleasant Valley, Fairview/Wood Village and Troutdale Town Centers as well as the Gresham Regional Center. Out of the direct study area but in the area of influence are the town centers in Happy Valley and Damascus. The study will determine how to improve connectivity for freight and local trips with improved access within and between existing neighborhoods.

My colleagues and I have prioritized this corridor for improvements because of the important connection these routes provide this area of the region. Our hope is through this study we will get a better understanding of the needs of the different users and how improvements can benefit residents, businesses, and neighborhoods. Transit access and freight access will be included in this study.

Working together with our partners, which includes Multnomah County, Fairview, Gresham, Oregon Department of Transportation, Troutdale, and Wood Village along with Damascus and Happy Valley, we will identify alternatives, study their benefits and trade-offs, and gather input from residents in the broad corridor in order to come to decisions on or projects for the corridor. Based on these decisions, improvements could begin, at earliest, in 2013. These are critical connections for the residents and businesses of the eastern portion of the Metro region. I am committed now as I have been for the last 10 years to seeing this work progress and improvements made.

Taking to the streets: Metro events Aug. 31 - Sep. 3

09/02/2010 01:47 PM

Join Metro and walking coach Carmen Jackinsky for a walking workout around historic Downtown Beaverton. If power walking isn't your thing, head over to Oxbow for a night of singing or listening to Mexican folktales. The best part is, most of the events are low-cost or free, and registration can be completed online. Follow the links below for more information.

[Around the campfire at Oxbow: Dave Orleans the Earthsinger](#)

8 to 9 p.m. Friday, Sep. 3
Oxbow Regional Park

[Around the campfire at Oxbow: Shadow puppets](#)

8 to 9 p.m. Saturday Sep. 4
Oxbow Regional Park

[Walk There! event series - Beaverton Round Fitness Walk](#)

5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Wednesday Sep. 8

Beaverton Library

Note: Arrive at 5:15 p.m.

More things to do brought to you by GreenScene

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

[View the online calendar](#)

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Get rolling this month with the Bike Commute Challenge

09/02/2010 01:45 PM



Starting today, join thousands of individuals and workplaces competing to log the most bike rides to work this month during the Bike Commute Challenge.

The Bike Commute Challenge is a friendly competition between work sites to encourage employees to bike to work. It's easy, fun and free. To participate, register online and then ride to receive discounts at local bike shops and more.

Log seven bike commutes this month and earn bike shop discounts. Each week during the Challenge, the BTA will draw names for a prize for anyone who has logged at least one trip. Prizes include restaurant gift certificates, gear from Columbia Sportswear, Bike Gallery, Keen and more. Share why your commute is a breath of fresh air by sending your story and a photo of your team to the BTA.

Metro and Drive Less/Save More are proud to be sponsors of this collective effort to support clean air and healthy communities.

[Get discounts at bike shops across the state](#)

[Learn more about the Bike Commute Challenge and log your trips](#)

[Consult Metro's Bike There! map to find the safest commute route](#)

[Check out the BTA's resources page for commuter tips, links to bike maps and information about bikes and transit and more](#)

A personal message from Rod Park - investing in our region

08/26/2010 04:36 PM

Dear Resident of District 1:

For many years, Metro has worked with our partners to make the Portland metropolitan area a great place. To protect and enhance our region in the face of current challenges we must take even greater and more innovative steps forward. Metro Chief Operating Officer Michael Jordan released a Community Investment Strategy that calls for our region to:

- invest in safe, livable communities
- promote economic development and good jobs
- protect our natural areas
- reduce inefficiency, foster innovation and demand accountability.

[Read the Community Investment Strategy](#)

The recommendations call for cities, counties, service districts, Metro, the state or Oregon, and businesses throughout the region to find innovative and cooperative solutions to the challenges we face; to tackle financial gaps and inefficiencies that slow progress and increase costs; to improve coordination of state, local and federal investments in roads, bridges, water systems, parks and other public structures; and to create a strategic investment plan to better leverage taxpayer dollars with private investments.

You can do your part by adding your voice to this important conversation. Learn more online, attend an open house in September and share your views with the Metro Council.

[Find out how to get involved](#)

To make it easy for you to follow our progress, Metro created a new online news service. You can now subscribe to a daily, weekly or monthly digest of Metro news; use an RSS newsreader to get items from Metro's newsfeed; or view Metro news using a web browser.

[Visit Metro news](#)

As a Metro councilor, I am keenly interested in your viewpoints on how and where we should invest as well as how, where and if we should expand the urban growth boundary to accommodate future residential and employment growth.

As a region, we all have the ability and responsibility to shape the communities we want and the economy we need. I look forward to hearing your comments and suggestions.

Councilor Rod Park

Metro partners with private business to invest in downtown Gresham

08/20/2010 03:07 PM



Developer Dwight Unti (left) receives recognition for new downtown retail from Gresham Chamber President Robert McDonald (right). Gresham City Council President David Widmark and Metro Councilor Rod Park look on.

Gresham's 3rd Central transit-oriented development boosts downtown amenities with natural food retail

A spirit of collaboration and community pervaded the grand opening on Aug. 12 of an office and two retail spaces in the ground floor of 3rd Central apartments, the urban mixed-use development located at Third Street and Miller Avenue in Historic Downtown Gresham.

Lillian's Natural Marketplace, Bella Cupcake and KZME radio station received an official welcome to the neighborhood with a ribbon cutting ceremony and remarks from Dwight Unti, president of Tokola Properties and developer of 3rd Central, Metro Councilor Rod Park, Gresham City Council President David Widmark and representatives from the Gresham Chamber of Commerce.

Public-private partnership was the keynote of the event and a critical factor in the development of 3rd Central apartments and successful opening of the three ground-floor businesses.

3rd Central is a project of Metro's Transit-Oriented Development Program and Tokola Properties. The TOD Program provided gap financing for the development of the apartment complex and \$85,000 in funds from its urban living infrastructure program to help prepare the space for commercial use by installing restaurant scale ventilation, restrooms and related building improvements. The City of Gresham matched the urban living funds and launched a fee holiday to encourage small businesses to move out of home offices and garages into storefronts where downtown residents can easily access their services.

"Today's celebration marks the success of a public-private partnership without which this corner would look very different today," said Metro Councilor Rod Park within whose district Gresham is located. "This is real time, on-the-ground testimony to the power of local civic, business and government collaboration. It demonstrates what is possible when the intention is set for revitalizing established neighborhoods with incentives for developers, local businesses and residents."

Dwight Unti of Tokola Properties framed his remarks with a before and after comparison of his experience as a developer working with government agencies. "There was a time when working with a government agency to build a development like 3rd Central or open businesses like these three today would have been an exercise in navigating obstacles and cutting through red tape," said Unti. "But I can stand here today and say the partnership experience of working with Metro and the City of Gresham has been all about opening doors and finding solutions to offer this level of downtown living and business opportunity to the residents of Gresham."

The ribbon cutting and grand opening event was hosted by the Gresham Chamber of Commerce, the Gresham Downtown Development Association and Metro.

[Construction begins on veterinary center at Oregon Zoo](#)

08/19/2010 11:23 AM

New facility is first of several to be funded by 2008 zoo bond

Visits to the doctor will soon be much more pleasant for mammals, fish, birds and reptiles at the Oregon Zoo. Construction is expected to start later this month on a new Veterinary Medical Center — the first new facility funded by the voter-approved 2008 zoo bond. The center is expected to be completed by summer of 2011.

The zoo's old vet facilities, built in 1966, have been remodeled and retrofitted several times but cannot accommodate the medical equipment, surfaces and temperature controls available today for treating the many species under the care of the zoo's veterinary staff. As doctors conduct checkups and treat ailments of snakes, tigers, bears and frogs, they need to adjust the conditions to suit the animal. Features of the new building include heated and rubberized floors, holding areas designed specifically to accommodate different species, and adjustable air and water temperatures.

The new medical center will have more than 15,000 square feet dedicated to advanced veterinary treatment. The facility's efficient floor plan will allow staff to easily coordinate medical treatments, surgeries and other procedures. It combines a veterinary clinic and quarantine area where new animals arriving at the zoo get health checks and are observed for a month or so prior to entering their long-term zoo homes. Through closed-circuit monitors and large viewing windows, students will be able to learn about science and conservation by watching surgery firsthand. This same technology will record surgeries and other procedures for educational purposes and provide the means for around-the-clock remote observation of animals in treatment.

While contributing to the health of zoo animals, the facility also is sensitive to the environment. The project is expected to receive LEED silver certification from the U.S. Green Building Council. Rain will be harvested from the roof and stored in a 30,000-gallon tank to be used for washing down animal areas and flushing toilets. Fresh water will be solar-heated and there will be an energy-saving electrical system. Much of the material used in the building's construction will come from recycled sources and 90 percent of construction waste will be recycled.

Trees that surround the new facility will remain; however, some trees must be removed from the building site. Skanska USA Building Inc. of Beaverton, the project's general contractor, is working with the Portland Water Bureau's natural resources staff to reuse these trees in stream-habitat restoration projects.

The zoo's old quarantine facility will be demolished to make room for the new medical center. Demo work, tree removal and site excavation are expected to start Aug. 26. Zoo visitors should be aware that trucks will

be hauling soil, building materials and logs from the site for about two weeks. There will be some noise and dust. For the safety of visitors and animals, the Family Farm exhibit will be closed for a few hours at a time during this period.

The zoo is a service of Metro and is dedicated to its mission of inspiring the community to create a better future for wildlife.

[Transportation panel OKs \\$1.47 million for East Metro, Southwest corridor studies](#)

08/13/2010 04:03 PM

A committee that controls regional transportation spending today approved \$1.47 million to study the best ways to improve access in the Oregon 99W/Southwest Barbur Boulevard area and a north-south corridor in eastern Multnomah County.

The corridor studies will recommend improvements to improve public transit, safety, freight and other transportation issues – but will first examine a range of community needs. Members of Metro's Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation praised the proposals for their intent to first understand the land uses in the corridor areas and look at all methods of transportation as potential solutions.

Boosting public transit service on the routes is just one of many potential outcomes for these plans, said Metro Councilor Carlotta Collette, chair of the committee. "We'll be doing everything we can do along the corridor."

Metro Councilor Rex Burkholder urged a look at interim solutions, such as improved bus service, that could speed up dense development in the southwest corridor. The study's schedule says a new light rail line or bus rapid transit line could be completed there by 2022, he said.

"A 12-year timeframe seems like a long time," Burkholder said.

Tigard Mayor Craig Dirksen agreed, saying "If the transit portion of this is going to be long term, then the land use will be as well."

The East Metro Corridor Refinement Plan was initially called a study of Interstate 84-Highway 26 connections, said Tony Mendoza, Metro project manager. But the cities in the area didn't want "just a highway plan," so the name was changed and the scope includes land use considerations.

The East Metro study encompasses a wide area, bounded by 181st Avenue on the west, 257th Avenue on the east, Interstate 84 on the north and Highway 26 on the south.

"We're not just looking at one route, but lots of routes," said Troutdale Mayor Jim Kight. "All of the cities are committed to making improvements."

The \$1.47 million in federal money helps start the planning process, which will take 18 months for the East Metro corridor and several years for the Southwest Corridor. Local agencies are supplementing the federal money the committee approved. More funding will likely be necessary to finish the planning efforts.

On other topics today, the committee:

- Reviewed plans for a task force that will advise on how to spend \$20-24 million in Regional Flexible Funds. Collette asked JPACT members to send their suggestions to her or Metro staff by Friday afternoon.

- Heard an update on plans for a \$3.6 billion Columbia River Crossing project, a replacement for the Interstate 5 bridge over the Columbia River. A consensus has emerged backing a 10-lane bridge rather than a 12-lane option; a new plan for a Hayden Island interchange would intrude less on the existing the neighborhood; toll rates for the bridge remain an open question for policymakers to decide.
- Approved a change to plans for Southeast Harmony Road and Southeast 82nd Avenue area near Clackamas Town Center. An initial plan was to spend \$1.5 million on an engineering study to eventually widen the road from three lanes to five lanes. But area neighborhoods objected to the widening. So the plan approved today will use the money to improve traffic signals, add street lighting, and build new sidewalks near the mall and on Harmony Road near the North Clackamas Aquatic Park.

JPACT is a 17-member committee of elected officials and representatives of agencies involved in transportation that make recommendations to the Metro Council on transportation needs. Metro Council must approve but cannot amend JPACT decisions.

[Learn more about JPACT](#)

[View JPACT meeting agendas](#)

[Learn more about plans for the Southwest Corridor from Metro Councilor Carl Hosticka](#)

[Learn more about the Regional Transportation Plan that laid the groundwork for the corridor projects](#)

Metro's facility earns top peer recognition

08/13/2010 10:19 AM



Oregon Convention Center Executive Director Jeff Blosser showcases the 2010 Venue Excellence Award.

Awarded for its leadership in community service, operational excellence, and safety and security, Metro's Oregon Convention Center (OCC) was celebrated at the recent convention, exhibition and performing arts centers industry conference and trade show in Houston, Texas, by the receiving the 2010 Venue Excellence Award.

Long-time OCC Executive Director Jeff Blosser believes the center's recognition by its peers – the first award of its kind – is due to the center's mission of making the most of the community's resources while striving to exceed client expectations through exceptional customer service, an especially difficult task during an economic recession.

The OCC's innovative business strategies were credited by the judging panel in distinguishing it from its competitors. One example is the decision to be the first to pursue LEED-EB (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design – Existing Buildings) certification nearly a decade ago, a time in which no other convention centers considered LEED or sustainable operations a legitimate business expense. Achieving LEED-EB certification in 2003 and LEED-EB Silver in 2008 positioned OCC as the industry leader in operating sustainably and helped set a standard among venues nationwide. OCC's collaboration with Portland's destination marketing agency, Travel Portland, to create an online "green meetings toolkit," offering ways for convention and meeting planners to arrange environmentally-conscious events, was also an industry first and contributed to a shift in client needs and expectations throughout the country.

OCC's early engagement of social media strategies, including the use of Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn, to engage meeting planners and convention attendees was also mentioned.

Other unique initiatives, such as partnering with the center's largest collective bargaining unit to provide financial incentives to employees who meet annual recycling goals, was noted as an example of venue excellence. The OCC's commitment to community service, as evidenced by neighborhood clean-up projects during staff retreats and the joint partnership with its food and beverage contractor, ARAMARK/Giacometti Partners, to provide workforce training opportunities to disadvantaged individuals, also received high marks by the judging panel.

More information about OCC and the Venue Excellence Award can be found at www.oregoncc.org.

Metro Council President David Bragdon resigns post

08/11/2010 03:37 PM

Bragdon will leave office four months early, capping legacy of sustainability and collaboration

David Bragdon, who has built his Metro Council presidency on sustainability and collaboration, announced Wednesday that he will leave four months early to pursue the same ideals in New York City at the invitation of Mayor Michael Bloomberg.

Beginning in mid-September, Bragdon will serve as director of long-term planning and sustainability for the nation's largest metropolis. He will lead the mayor's PlaNYC initiative to create a "greener, greater" city.

[Watch David Bragdon announce his resignation, discuss his new job and reflect on his tenure at Metro](#)

"Being able to do that is, like Metro Council President, a dream job for me," Bragdon said this week in an interview. "It involves all the issues that I care about, in a place that I really care about. It involves natural area restoration, recycling of solid waste, improved transportation, infrastructure that we need for the future."

Bragdon's last day on the Metro Council will be Sept. 7, ending nearly a dozen years at the regional government. He won a district council seat in 1998, and was elected council president by voters across the Portland metropolitan area in 2002 and 2006. His term was scheduled to end Jan. 6.

"Based on David's experience and skill set, he's a perfect fit for what Mayor Bloomberg hopes to accomplish," said Oregon State Treasurer Ted Wheeler. "I think it's a tremendous opportunity for David and the City of New York."

During nearly eight years at the helm of Metro, Bragdon has focused on protecting natural areas and the environment, transforming the way the region plans for growth and making the agency more collaborative and financially responsible.

Bragdon championed a \$227 million bond measure that has protected 2,500 acres – so far – for water quality, wildlife habitat and recreation opportunities. He also launched The Intertwine, a regionwide movement to create a world-class network of parks, trails and natural areas.

Under Bragdon's leadership, the Metro Council provided landowners and local communities with a clearer vision of future growth. Metro worked with local governments to select "rural reserves" that will not be developed for half a century and "urban reserves" that make good candidates for growth.

The Metro Council has changed not just *what* the agency does, Bragdon says, but also the way it does business. He pushed a conservative approach to budgeting; called for a more efficient, collaborative staff structure; and emphasized Metro's role as a convener rather than a regulator.

In the coming months and years, Bragdon says, he'll follow Metro's Community Investment Initiative – a shift toward working with the private sector to invest in the region's future, rather than just planning for it.

"A lot of times, in this job, you're thinking about things that won't come to fruition for 20 or 30 years, long after you leave office," Bragdon says. "That's part of the appeal that makes this an interesting agency. There are always things left undone."

Before coming to Metro, Bragdon worked in the transportation industry. He served as marine marketing manager at the Port of Portland and worked in India, China and the Soviet Union as a cargo sales manager for Evergreen International Airlines.

Bragdon, who moved to Oregon with his family at age 12, was born in New York City. In his new job, he'll lead sweeping initiatives to improve his hometown's urban environment and establish New York as a global environmental leader.

The mayor's PlaNYC incorporates five key dimensions: land use, water, transportation, energy and air quality. Bragdon will incorporate solid waste into the plan while coordinating city agencies' work on more than 100 initiatives, such as planting 1 million trees, creating a public plaza in every community and reducing emissions from taxis and school buses.

For such a far-ranging plan, Bloomberg said, Bragdon's background at Metro was a perfect match. "With nearly a decade of experience as the leader of a respected regional planning agency, David has a rich experience looking across agencies and entities to create a vision for a sustainable future, just as we have done with PlaNYC," the mayor said.

Bragdon will officially step down as council president at noon on Sept. 7, naming Metro Councilor Carlotta Collette the acting president. After that, councilors have the option of voting on an interim president – including Collette, another one of themselves or any eligible resident of the region. Whoever serves as president will fill Bragdon's role until Jan. 6, when the winner of the November election takes over.

Bragdon is on a whirlwind trip to New York, where he will be formally introduced and meet his new staff. He returns to Portland on Thursday, in time to attend the weekly Metro Council meeting, trek to Eastern Oregon for friends' 50th wedding anniversary celebration – and start packing.

"I bet at some point this weekend, on the way to or from Baker City, it's going to start to sink in," Bragdon said. "And I'll probably get a little wistful about it."

[Learn more about David Bragdon's work at Metro](#)

[Learn more about David Bragdon's new job](#)

Go batty at Oxbow! Metro events Aug. 3 - 10

08/03/2010 03:37 PM

This week, get out and enjoy some fascinating and fun events at Metro's Oxbow Regional Park. Come gather 'round the campfire to sing with Dave Orleans, learn about night's most interesting creatures - bats, or help your kids scavenge through the forests surrounding the Sandy River. Most of the events are low-cost or free, and registration can be completed online. Follow the links below for more information.

Around the campfire at Oxbow: Dave Orleans the Earthsinger

8 - 9 p.m. Friday, Aug. 6
Oxbow Regional Park

Around the campfire at Oxbow: The amazing nightlife of bats

8 - 9 p.m. Saturday, Aug. 7
Oxbow Regional Park



Oxbow Adventures: Ancient forest adventure

10:30 a.m. - noon Tuesday, Aug. 10
Oxbow Regional Park
Note: advance registration required

Metro grants available to improve air quality, address community health issues

08/03/2010 03:35 PM



Bikers enjoying the car-free street at Sunday Parkways, funded in part by a Metro Regional Travel Options grant

Wondering how to install bike lockers in your community? Interested in creating activities that encourage people to get out of their cars and walk, ride or take transit? If so, your city, public agency or nonprofit organization may be eligible for a Regional Travel Options grant.

Metro will fund projects that improve air quality, address community health issues, reduce auto traffic and create more opportunities for walking and bicycling. Federal transportation funds are used for the grants. The grant application process begins this month to fund projects that begin in July 2011. A total of \$533,000 is available.

Previous projects funded by these grants include: the City of Portland's Sunday Parkways, the Carefree Commuter Challenge and the Bike Commute Challenge. The grants also support projects such as the installation of bike lockers at the Beaverton Transit Center, bike racks for businesses in Tigard and TriMet's Open Trip Planner, which will allow users to plan trips that combine biking, walking and transit.

Grant applicants can learn more at an informational meeting on Monday, August 16 from 10 a.m. to noon at the Metro Regional Center, 600 NE Grand Avenue in Portland. For more information, contact Regional Travel Options at 503-813-7566 or rto@oregonmetro.gov.

Regional Travel Options carries out strategies that encourage and support alternatives to driving alone, such as the Drive Less/Save More awareness campaign, the Walk There! and Bike There! programs, MetroVanpool and CarpoolMatchNW.org. Reducing the number of vehicles on the road cuts vehicle emissions, decreases congestion, extends the life cycle of existing roadways and promotes a healthier community.

[Learn more about Regional Travel Options grants](#)

Metro events: July 14 - 20

07/14/2010 02:43 PM

Whether you're a green thumb or a greenhorn, Metro has an activity for you. From learning to playing and relaxing to volunteering, activities occur throughout the region. This week, join Metro to learn about composting, sing songs from the Oregon Trail, discover Oregon's wild animals, look for osprey at Oxbow or discover the secret to a perfect lawn. Most of the events are free and registration can be completed online. Follow the links below for more information.

Around the campfire at Oxbow: Fellow Travelers

8:30 to 9:30 p.m. Friday, July 16
Oxbow Regional Park

Organic soils and compost

9 to 10:30 a.m. Saturday, July 17
Cooper Mountain Nature Park

Terrific turf without toxics

10 to 11:30 a.m. Saturday, July 17
Metro's natural techniques garden

Around the campfire at Oxbow: All the scary animals

8:30 to 9:30 p.m. Saturday, July 17
Oxbow Regional Park

[Composting basics](#)

1 to 2 p.m. Sunday, July 18
Pistils Nursery

[Sunday Parkways: East Portland](#)

10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Sunday, July 18

[Oxbow Adventures: Super birds](#)

10:30 a.m. to noon Tuesday, July 20
Oxbow Regional Park

More things to do brought to you by GreenScene

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

[View the online calendar](#)

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A personal message from Rod Park: Explaining my vote on Metro's urban and rural reserve ordinance

07/12/2010 03:02 PM

On June 10, my colleagues and I completed a multi-year process that will guide regional land use for the next five decades. In what many described as a historic moment, the Metro Council designated 28,615 acres of urban reserves around the region. For the next fifty years, when Metro considers expanding the urban growth boundary, the focus will be on these lands.

Choosing land for urbanization was a thoughtful and painstaking process. I particularly want to acknowledge the efforts of Councilor Kathryn Harrington as well as my fellow councilors, elected officials, Metro and county staff, interest groups and residents throughout the region who called, emailed or otherwise took part in the discussion.

Although I'm proud of the innovative approach we've undertaken, I would like to take the opportunity to explain why I opposed the final product.

For many years leaders in the region have realized the importance of balancing the needs of an ever-growing population with the obligation to protect farm and natural resource lands. Instead of focusing on short-term growth solutions, we endeavored to broaden the discussion and explore long-term planning strategies. Those conversations led to Metro and the region being granted the unique opportunity to re-

prioritize which lands could be urbanized. While exciting, these efforts also had a lot of risk: the new strategy meant everyone had to let go of the old safeguards for new untested tools. In 2000, I learned about the limitations of the current tools when we considered trying to urbanize a prime piece of farmland known as St. Mary's with the trade-off of protecting other farm lands in western Washington County.

Knowing the only thing about the future that we can safely predict is that things will change, we agreed that we should be conservative in our approach when designating urban reserves. I don't think that means in just the amount of land being placed in the reserve but also the location of those lands. What we found, though, is that everyone's definition of conservative is different, and depends upon the direction they wish to travel.

The creation of urban and rural reserves will clarify which areas will be considered for urbanization over the next 40 to 50 years and where we can ensure that the appropriate planning and investments can occur. This is important as it will better allow all the parties to identify the efficiencies of reusing lands before expanding into new areas. Conversely farmers will know if they can plant long term crops and make capital investments without fear of being included into urban development.

In evaluating the work of the region I have kept these outcomes in mind in my judgment on whether we have met our goals. Have we balanced these as required by the legislation and our stated goals? Our county partners were faced with many difficult choices, I appreciate all their work and in general, I think they've made responsible choices given their options. All three had unique challenges.

Clackamas County did well to protect the most threatened of rural areas while suggesting development that will create a very exciting place to live and work. There, areas of conflicted farmland are mostly included in urban reserves, with the exception of the Boring area which has foundation farm lands in the urban reserves. The area with the most challenges but also with the most promise will be the Stafford Basin, where time will be needed to work through the various issues of urbanization.

Much of Multnomah County's prime farm land had already been urbanized because of past development patterns - beginning with the pioneers. On the east side, we have attempted to correct past decisions made before land use planning was initiated. The main thrust there will be to include and incorporate three schools in urban reserves and eventually into neighborhoods by building around them. On the west side, the goal is to ensure long term habitat and watershed protection. However, I believe this area also illustrates how the political boundaries and the geographical boundaries do not match and where under different circumstances, a different decision might have prevailed.

Washington County had the most difficult issues to resolve. It has the best farmland in Oregon, perhaps the world, is home to a vibrant high tech cluster and it has major transportation issues by virtue of its limited access to the highway system. The dual importance of Washington County's urban and rural economies means that any land use planning decisions will have to strike an important balance between safeguarding rural areas and spurring urban development.

Of all the areas in Washington County being placed in urban reserve it is the area north of Council Creek which gives me the greatest pause. We all hope for a prosperous and vibrant Cornelius, but we also realize that with prosperity comes traffic. People testified about their desire to locate closer to Hwy 26 which would direct urban traffic through rural reserves.

Urban level traffic moving through rural areas is not conducive to farm operations moving equipment and goods to market and between farms. I know this from personal experience - I actively farm within and outside the urban growth boundary. As I review the map, the configuration of the Cornelius area would be the only one to use a rural reserve as a transportation corridor between urban areas and would throw off the

critical balance between rural and urban investment.

Planning for the future requires us to understand our finite resources and make judgments about what will best suit our region 30 to 50 years from now. Striking the right balance between urban and rural reserves means understanding the tradeoffs we make when we allow urbanization of prime farmland.

While we can't undo historical decisions on settlement patterns, we can decide to not repeat some of the decisions that have come since. I ask myself - if I had the ability to make the choice on whether to urbanize the farmland under which Charbonneau was built upon, the catalyst of SB100, Oregon's Land Use system under Senator Hector McPherson and Gov. Tom McCall, would I? My answer would be no.

It is along these lines that I decided to vote "no" on the urban and rural reserves ordinance. I believe we are giving up too much to future urbanization and at the same time locating reserves in areas which will not meet the stated goals of urban and rural reserves. While I found a great many features to like and accept in the legislation before us, overall I could not vote to support a piece of legislation that will fail to meet our overall long term objectives.

This was a historical event, and regardless of my vote, I can say that I was honored to be a part of the process and encouraged that so many of us around this region worked so hard to come to a decision.

[Read more about urban and rural reserves](#)

Cool off at Metro's parks - Blue Lake water spray ground open!

07/07/2010 02:37 PM

With temperatures expected in the high 90s this week, residents should consider staying cool through some of Metro's unique offerings.

Located just 20 minutes from downtown Portland, Metro's Blue Lake Regional Park has a number of cool options for all ages and abilities. Adjacent to the swim beach, the water spray ground is a convenient substitute for those who are unable to make it into Blue Lake's swim area (children under age five are not allowed in the lake).

The 3,500 square foot water spray ground has a variety of fully automatic spray and streaming water features available for visitors who are either young or young at heart. The non-slip surface, lack of standing water and location near the restrooms make the water spray ground safe for those with limited mobility or in need of a wheelchair. Blue Lake's natural backdrop also provides plenty of shady spots and covered picnic areas.

Oxbow Regional Park's ancient forest can also provide cooler temperatures. Under the dense canopy, trees provide natural air conditioning for those looking to hike the trails, spot some wildlife or just get out of the sun. Oxbow also offers a variety of programs to learn about the forest and the Sandy River, and weekend programs feature songs and storytelling around the campfire. Check them out at www.oregonmetro.org/calendar.

Entrance fees to both Blue Lake and Oxbow regional parks is \$5 per car or \$7 per van/bus. Blue Lake is open from 8 a.m. to legal sunset; Oxbow from 6:30 a.m. to legal sunset. Camping at Oxbow is \$20 per evening and is on a first-come, first-served basis.

[Find nature, family fun and music around the campfire at Oxbow](#)

06/30/2010 03:18 PM



You don't have to go far to find the perfect spot for the family vacation or a quick weekend retreat. Just pack up the kids and the camping gear and head to Metro's Oxbow Regional Park located along the scenic Sandy River in Troutdale for some nature, family fun and music.

This summer, overnight campers on Friday and Saturday nights will be treated to old-fashioned entertainment in the outdoor forest amphitheater across from the campground. Enjoy live music on Friday nights beginning July 2 when blues man Steve Cheseborough brings to life the acoustic country blues of the 1920s and 1930s. He plays on beautiful antique guitars, weaving together live music, history and lore. Other Fridays will feature bluegrass tunes, folk music and fiddlin'.

Saturdays are story night with captivating nature presentations and riveting folklore. On July 3, salmon stories, bear tales and the legend of the swallowing monster come to life through the storytelling of Will Hornyak. Other Northwest legends and wildlife stories fill out the summer.

During the day, check out the natural beauty along Oxbow's 15 miles of trails that wind through 1,200 acres of ancient forest. Marvel at the centuries-old trees as well as ridges and ravines carved by volcanic and glacial flows.

Oxbow is a great place to see wildlife and animal tracks. The area's natural habitat makes an ideal home for wildlife such as mink, beaver, raccoon, fox, deer, osprey, songbirds, salmon, elk and many others.

Camping at Oxbow provides not only a fun getaway but an affordable one as well. The camping fee is \$20 per night and the entertainment on Friday and Saturday nights is free and, for safety reasons, only open to overnight guests.

The park's 67 campsites are available on a first-come, first-served basis and each include a picnic table, fire pit/cooking grill and lantern pole. Two restroom/shower buildings offer hot and cold running water, coin-operated showers, heated-air hand dryers, radiant floor heating and flush toilets. The restroom facilities and two campsites are accessible by wheelchair. Twelve pull-through sites are available for RVs.

You'll also find playgrounds, equestrian trails and a number of environmental education opportunities as well as picnic shelters that can be reserved. Pets are not allowed in Metro parks and natural areas. This is primarily to protect fish and wildlife habitat along with avoiding conflicts with other visitors and wildlife. [Learn more about Oxbow Regional Park and the weekend night entertainment](#)

[Metro Councilors on hand for unveiling of green economic development strategy](#)

06/24/2010 04:15 PM

A new regional strategy for green economic development in the Portland metropolitan area identifies six action areas to grow green jobs. A working group of the Climate Prosperity Project released what is called the Greenprint strategy Tuesday, June 23, at Greenlight Greater Portland's third annual economic summit.

The Climate Prosperity Project is a partnership of businesses, non-profit organizations and local governments, including Metro. Its Greenprint draft report recommends actions ranging from identifying finance mechanisms for green innovation to developing a pipeline of green talent.

Metro Council President David Bragdon and councilors Rex Burkholder, Carlotta Collette and Kathryn Harrington were among the more than 500 local leaders and business representatives on hand to learn about the need to foster green economic development.

"We have the leadership and the capability in this region to be a national model of innovative, profitable and clean economic development," said Metro Councilor Rex Burkholder. "By focusing resources on green technology and talent, we will maintain livable communities, attract jobs and develop a sustainable economic industry. "

Although the region boasts statistics that point to a leading role nationally, other regions are poised to take over our lead with better coordination, stated Rob Bennett, executive director of the Portland Sustainability Institute. To assist with implementation of the Greenprint strategy, a Climate Prosperity Leadership Council is planned to launch this fall.

Beaverton Mayor Denny Doyle, speaking along with four other local mayors, highlighted the need for a regional focus to support local jobs and the opportunity to send a consistent message about the region. "Partnerships are the key to pulling us through tough times," he stated.

Portland Mayor Sam Adams emphasized the need for the public and private sectors to work collaboratively to attract and retain businesses and Vancouver Mayor Tim Leavitt stated that businesses want political leadership that transcends political boundaries.

The economic summit also focused on successful public-private collaborations, innovative and clean tech business products, and the release of the Greater Portland Prosperity Index.

[Read a summary of the Greenprint strategy](#)

[Download the full Greenprint report](#)

[Learn more about the Climate Prosperity Project](#)

[View the Greater Portland Prosperity Index](#)

Motivate your green thumb at Metro's Native Plant Center

06/21/2010 10:21 AM



Learn about native plants, find inspiration for your own yard and dig in to restore and preserve natural

areas throughout the Portland metropolitan region.

Metro's Native Plant Center is hosting the first of several volunteer workshops on Saturday, June 19 from 9 a.m to 1 p.m. Participants will help with seed collection, seed harvesting, maintaining grow-out beds and composting while learning about native plant reproduction. No prior gardening experience is necessary.

The plant center, located near Wanker's Corner in Tualatin, provides an essential supply of rare native seeds, plants and saplings for Metro's natural areas restoration projects. In one year alone, more than 4,650 native trees and shrubs grown at the center went into the ground at ten different Metro natural areas.

Advanced registration is required for this volunteer venture so call right now, 503-638-7240. Volunteer workshops will also take place July 10, July 24, Aug. 21 and Aug. 28. There's no cost to take part. Metro is happy for the help and participants get a great learning experience. Gloves, tools, water and a snack will be provided.

[Learn more about Metro's Native Plant Center](#)

[Check out the calendar of volunteer workshops at the plant center](#)

Regional partnerships celebrated at 223rd Avenue grand opening

06/07/2010 02:40 PM



Ribbon cutting marks the opening of newly widened 223rd Avenue in Fairview (Photo courtesy of Multnomah County)

Officials from Multnomah County, ODOT, the city of Fairview and Metro celebrated the grand opening of a newly widened 223rd Avenue in Fairview on Wednesday. Improvements include a new wider railroad bridge above the road, two wider traffic lanes, bike lanes and sidewalks.

The \$8 million project received funding from a variety of sources, including \$2.1 million from the Metro-administered Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program in 2005. MTIP funds pay for local transportation projects that are identified by local communities and approved by the Metro Council and the Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation. [Learn more about MTIP](#)

Metro Councilor Rod Park, Multnomah County Commissioner Diane McKeel, Fairview Mayor Mike Weatherby and other officials were on hand for the celebration. In his remarks, Park noted the project's importance to supporting jobs and transportation safety and providing connections between communities in East Multnomah County and with growing industrial areas, Blue Lake Park and the Columbia River. The project also provides for safer bicycle and transit options in Fairview.

[Learn more about the 223rd Avenue widening project](#)

[Read Multnomah County's news story about this project](#)

[Metro Council awards restoration and enhancement grants to nine groups](#)

06/04/2010 10:32 AM

The Metro Council today awarded \$144,675 in Nature in Neighborhoods restoration and enhancement grants to nine local organizations. Grants are intended to protect water quality and fish and wildlife habitat throughout the region. This year's projects help low-income and underserved students learn about their watershed and healthy agriculture and farming practices. Activities will engage scores of volunteers in large-scale efforts to restore degraded streams for salmon, and nesting and rearing habitat for sensitive turtle species.

Since its inception in 2006, the restoration and enhancement grant program has issued more than \$1.6 million to help fund 85 hands-on projects connecting people to nature and improving green spaces in local communities.

As grants are required to obtain matching funds, Metro's investments have acted as a catalyst by encouraging some 360 private, public and nonprofit community partners to contribute more than \$7 million to accomplish these projects. In addition, volunteers have donated an estimated 80,000 hours. Funding for the program was provided by excise taxes collected on solid waste disposal.

"The goal of connecting people to nature in their own neighborhood is exceeding our expectations," said Metro Councilor Rod Park, who originated the grant program and has worked to ensure continued funding. "The projects not only continue to make positive impacts on the environment, but they engage residents of all ages and give support to dozens of classrooms and thousands of students and teachers."

Nature in Neighborhoods is an incentive-based program to inspire residents, businesses, non-profit organizations and governments to safeguard water quality, protect valuable wildlife habitat and conserve or restore native ecosystems. The projects receiving funding represent innovative public-partnerships that include the education community, the solid waste community, non-profit organizations and individuals doing on-the-ground restoration work, hands-on education, curriculum development and community building.

[Read about this year's grant winners](#)

[Metro's natural gardening workshops continue in June](#)

06/03/2010 09:24 AM

Metro is offering nearly a dozen of its popular natural gardening workshops and seminars in June. From gardening for kids to creating a healthy compost bin, residents throughout the region have a variety of choices to learn how to grow flowers and food naturally.

Metro and its partners offer the gardening sessions at no cost. They're led by local garden experts and take place on weekends in communities across the region. Participants can learn how to grow organic vegetables, avoid pesticides and save money while doing so.

The events are sponsored by Metro, the Oregon State University Extension Service and several local organizations.

Complimentary coupons and publications will be given to participants, and drop-ins are welcome if space is available unless noted. For more information or to register, follow the link below or call Metro Recycling

Information at 503-234-3000.

[See a full listing of workshops](#)

Lace up your walking shoes and hit the Springwater Corridor trail with Metro's Walk There!

06/02/2010 09:02 AM



Coach Carmen leads first fitness walk of the season

Stretch your legs, get a great workout and explore the Springwater Corridor through Gresham on the morning of Saturday, June 5 with the first of Metro's Walk There! fitness walks.

Metro has teamed up with Kaiser Permanente to offer several fitness walks throughout the Portland metropolitan area this summer. They will be led by Carmen Jackinsky, a racewalker and walking coach for Nike and Columbia Sportswear as well as other groups and private clients. "Coach Carmen" is the president of Racewalkers Northwest, a local walking club, and she blogs for OregonLive.

The first fitness walk is adapted from Metro's Walk There! guidebook and will take participants along the Springwater Corridor. After meeting at the Gresham Library, the walk will head southeast along the trail towards the historic Columbia Brick Works. The cool down portion will stroll past the Gresham Pioneer Cemetery which is operated by Metro and is believed to include the grave of the first Japanese citizen of Portland. The walk ends at the Gresham Farmers Market with plenty of time to check out the goodies and local foods and produce on hand.

During the walk, Coach Carmen will teach walking techniques and focus on how to walk for health and fitness. All walkers are welcome. The route will stretch between four to 5.2 miles, depending on your fitness level.

Meet at the Gresham Library, 385 NW Miller Ave. at 8:45 a.m. The walk will go from 9 to 11 a.m. It is free and registration is not necessary.

Walking is not just good for your health, it provides a great opportunity to get out and explore your community, enjoy natural areas and meet new people. It is also an effective travel option for short trips or when combined with other transportation methods.

[Learn more about Metro's Walk There! events and book](#)
[Get to the Gresham Springwater Corridor Walk There! by transit](#)

Gresham Civic Drive MAX station supports transit-oriented living

05/21/2010 12:52 PM



Metro Councilor Rod Park shares a vision for transit- and pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods.

The groundbreaking ceremony held May 17 for a new light rail station in the heart of the Gresham Civic Neighborhood marked the start of a construction timeline that will have the Civic Drive MAX station ready for passengers by the fall of this year.

Metro Councilor Rod Park joined TriMet General Manager Fred Hansen and other local officials to acknowledge the significance of the long anticipated station as a key part of a larger vision for a vibrant transit- and pedestrian-friendly neighborhood.

"Great communities start with a great vision. Our region, through its commitment to creating transit-oriented development, continues to build on that vision," said Metro Councilor Park. "By connecting transit with our land use goals, we give residents a variety of choices about where they live and how they get around, as well as on where businesses can locate."

Through the Transit-Oriented Development Program, Metro has already invested in the area with the Crossings project and four properties totaling 13 acres slated for future transit-oriented development.

"Civic Neighborhood has evolved into a vibrant mixed-use community and this station will further this progress by unlocking new potential for transit-oriented development," said Christopher Yake, project manager and senior planner with Metro's TOD Program.

Unique features of the station include an interactive art piece that will serve as a distinctive placemaking element for the station and neighborhood, and green design elements including LED lighting, stormwater features and secure bike lockers.



Metro Councilor Rod Park (far right) joins other elected officials and community partners to mark the groundbreaking of the Civic Drive station.

Security features added to the station design and the special attention to safety at pedestrian track crossing points help foster transit ridership and an overall sense of safety for transit riders, pedestrians and students at the nearby Center for Advanced Learning.

The Federal Transit Administration and Metro's Transit-Oriented Development program contributed funds for the design and construction of the station.

[Learn more about transit-oriented development](#)

Spring is here! Visit Metro parks - a personal message from Rod Park

05/18/2010 02:58 PM

I wanted to take this opportunity now that the weather is finally getting nicer to remind you about Metro's many parks and open spaces. Residents of Metro District 1 benefit from their proximity to Oxbow Regional Park, Blue Lake Regional Park, Mount Talbert Nature Park, Glendoveer Golf Course and Fitness Trail, as well as numerous trails and open spaces.

Oxbow Regional Park offers both overnight camping as well as picnic areas. The area's natural habitat makes an ideal home for wildlife such as mink, beaver, raccoon, fox, deer, osprey, songbirds, salmon, elk, black bear, cougar and many others. They offer a variety of activities including classes led by a Metro naturalist on how to draw children into our natural environment. You can plan a picnic, cool down at the water spray grounds, and enjoy boating, fishing and swimming at Blue Lake Regional Park. Or, hit the trails at Glendoveer Golf Course and Fitness Trail. For more information on summer events and Metro parks and open spaces, follow the links below. If you are on Facebook, you can link up to Metro's GreenScene, which lists all the events happening at our parks and open spaces.

If you are a bike enthusiast, District 1 has trails for you. Hop on the Springwater Corridor and follow it all the way to downtown Portland. You can also check out one section of the Gresham Fairview Trail and imagine the completion of what will be a 5.2-mile trail that will provide a safe north/south route for connecting Gresham to natural areas along Johnson Creek, Fairview Creek, the Columbia Slough and the Columbia River. Metro just updated our Bike There! map so get your updated edition. The new map features more routes - a total of 600 miles of on-street bike routes and 235 miles of off-street trails. Users can easily see which routes are the most suitable for bikes. Everyone from new cyclists to recreational riders and even bike commuters will find new routes, helpful directions and important safety information. The durable, waterproof Bike There! map sells for \$9 at the Metro Store, local bike shops and other outlets.

If you want to check out what the rest of the region has to offer, I would suggest a couple places. One of my favorites is Cooper Mountain, located near the western edge of Beaverton. The natural area provides stunning views of the Tualatin Valley and Chehalem Mountains and is comprised of remnant and recently reforested conifer forests, oak and madrone woodlands and upland prairies nestled between residential and agricultural lands. Another area worthy of checking out is Smith and Bybee Wetlands in North Portland. This area offers walking trails as well as a canoe launch area. Beavers, river otters, black-tailed deer, osprey, bald eagles and Western painted turtles can be viewed here.

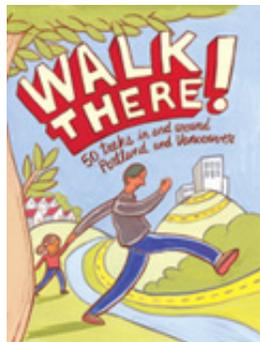
With so much to see I encourage you to get out there and explore.

[Learn about upcoming events](#)

[Connect with the Intertwine](#)

[Walk there! event series begins Wednesday, explores historic downtown Gresham](#)

05/14/2010 12:27 PM



Spring is in the air and it's time to get out and enjoy it with Metro's Walk There! series. The first walk steps off Wednesday, May 19 with a lunchtime stroll exploring historic downtown Gresham.

[View event details](#)

Local author and walking guide Laura Foster will lead the walk and several others throughout the spring and summer. Foster is the editor of Metro's Walk There! book and the author of other books that explore the region's diverse landscapes and neighborhoods including Portland Hill Walks and Portland City Walks.

To take part in the May 19 walk, meet at the Drive Less/Save More booth at the transportation fair in downtown Gresham at noon. The fair is being held at the City Hall Plaza located at 1333 Northwest Eastman Parkway. The short walk will end at 12:50 p.m. back at the plaza. Prior registration is not required. [Learn more about the Way to Go Fair](#)

Metro's Walk There! book is a pocket-sized guide filled with detailed maps and descriptions of 50 treks in and around Portland and Vancouver. The easy-to-use format allows readers to focus on nature, fitness and fun. The maps also show readers how to extend their walk with public transportation, so they don't even need a car.

During the 2010 spring and summer Walk There! event series, Metro will explore routes from the book featuring natural areas, downtowns and historic sites in Wilsonville, Gresham, Lake Oswego, Portland, Hillsboro, Vancouver and Milwaukie.

[Learn more about the Walk There! walking series and the book](#)

[Improve your cast at the Sandy River Spey Clave](#)

05/07/2010 03:52 PM

Join Metro for the largest two-hand fly rod event in the Western Hemisphere, the Sandy River Spey Clave at Oxbow Regional Park, May 14, 15 and 16. This is a great opportunity to get your feet in the river and learn basic fundamental casts. The free event features instruction from Oregon's most sought-after fly fishing guides and national experts. Rods, lines, reels and some sizes of waders are available for use during the classes, or bring your own rod, line and reel and let the experts help you become a more proficient caster. Advance registration not required. Parking is \$5 per vehicle. No pets are allowed in the park. [Learn more about the Sandy River Spey Clave](#)

[Metro partners to improve eastside MAX station areas](#)

05/05/2010 05:54 PM

Increasing the attractiveness of active forms of transportation - walking, biking and transit - brings us closer to a seamless, safe, enjoyable and efficient transportation system. Metro is working with partners to improve the light rail system serving East County neighborhoods. Station areas along the Blue Line will see changes that enhance safety, as well as the look and feel of the stations themselves. Pedestrian crossing safety improvements will be included at all the stations, from Northeast 82nd Avenue to Cleveland Avenue. Many stations will be repainted and some will have lighting upgrades.

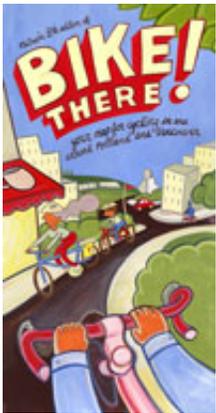
Metro and the Federal Transit Administration provided funds for the design and construction of a new light rail station at Civic Drive. This new station will serve Gresham's Civic Neighborhood, where Metro's transit-oriented development program has invested resources to ensure a transit-supportive plan for the area, higher-density housing and a mix of retail uses. The development supports homes and jobs, encourages walking and transit use, and has improved connections to other destinations within Gresham. The station will include enhanced security features, such as a fare zone demarked by a paving pattern that includes inset LED lighting at the "threshold" and across the platform boarding area. TriMet expects to break ground on May 17 and open the station in fall 2010.

Metro Councilor Rod Park is happy Metro can play a role in these community improvements. "Light rail is a critical part of our regional transportation system. I am pleased TriMet has employed additional security elements in the new station as MAX is a community amenity and these investments will help us make the most of what we have."

[Learn more about transit-oriented development in the Civic Neighborhood](#)
[Learn more about eastside MAX improvements](#)

Celebrate National Bike Month with Metro's new Bike There! map

05/04/2010 01:43 PM



May is National Bike Month and Metro is encouraging you to bike there, whether you are commuting, exercising or just having fun. To help you find the safest and most direct routes, Metro's new eighth edition Bike There! map, which is printed on durable, waterproof paper, is hot off the press and available at area retailers for \$9.

Since 1982, the Bike There! map has helped local cyclists find their way around Portland and Vancouver. In the new edition, those using two wheels instead of four for their daily travels will find commuter maps of downtown Portland along with 21 local cities. The map also gives bike riders of all types - recreational, commuter and beginners - the knowledge to choose the most suitable routes.

The new map features more routes - a total of 600 miles of on-street bike routes and 235 miles of off-street trails. Users will also notice an expanded regional map directing them to popular recreational cycling

destinations where they can get exercise and enjoy the area's natural beauty, an improvement inspired by feedback from local riders. While designing the new edition, Metro watched cyclists use the map. Planners quickly realized the map's legend could be clearer on which routes are the truly the best for bikes.

Metro is marking the release of the new map and National Bike Month with several events including a Bike There! celebration on May 13 that will feature local media celebrities going for the gold in a goldsprint cycling competition, free bike tune-ups and other fun opportunities. Learn more at www.oregonmetro.gov/bikethere.

[Find out where to get a Bike There! map](#)
[Learn more about the May 13 event](#)

Metro, Multnomah County working to keep Gresham site safe, clean

04/30/2010 02:21 PM

Future TOD property gets spruce-up

Metro staff is working across departments and with partner agencies to improve safety and maintain plants and trees in a future transit oriented development (TOD) property in Gresham.

The four-acre site is in the Gresham Civic Neighborhood, near a MAX station soon to be under construction. Slated for mixed use - businesses and homes - the site has become overgrown with blackberry vines, trees in varying stages of decay and invasive plants.

Neighbors were concerned about some trees that had fallen over onto adjacent properties, causing slight damage, and heavy brush which blocked views through the property.

Metro arborists, wildlife monitors, biologists and TOD project managers coordinated the brush clearing and the removal of the most dangerous trees. A crew of inmates from the Multnomah County Sheriff's Corrections Office was enlisted to cut and load wood, which was then delivered to agencies that serve low-income households.

The TOD site is owned by Metro. Next month, TriMet will break ground at on the new light rail station, which is located at the northeast corner of the property. The new station, on NW Civic Drive between Burnside and Division streets, will include pedestrian crossing improvements, new shelters, ticket vending machines and platform furnishings and interactive artwork. The station is scheduled to open this fall.

Gresham Civic Neighborhood is one of the region's first large-scale, mixed-use neighborhoods. The development supports homes and jobs, encourages walking and transit use, and has improved connections to other destinations within Gresham.

[Read about transit oriented development](#)

[Read about the Gresham Civic Neighborhood](#)

Metro, local leaders seek better ways to maintain and build public structures

04/30/2010 02:18 PM

Jobs, safety and the environment become focus of preparing new land for growth

With decisions about where the Portland region's urban growth boundary may be allowed to expand in the future largely complete, the focus is now on making the most of existing public structures and systems to serve new urban areas and on ensuring that any expansions improve existing neighborhoods, protect farmland and create good jobs.

Historically, the region added land to the urban growth boundary without making agreements about who would pay for or manage needed roads, bridges, pipes, parks and other public structures. Without plans or agreements in place, land added to the urban growth boundary often remains undeveloped for years. Metro and its partners are working to change that.

At an April 28 dialogue convened by Metro, a committee of local elected and community leaders and citizen representatives will have an opportunity to weigh in on important questions that will shape how new communities develop in the future. The questions include:

- How can we ensure that areas brought inside the urban growth boundary have the ability to pay for adequate public structures and services?
- How will existing neighborhoods and communities be given a voice in planning new urban areas before they are brought inside the urban growth boundary?
- How will new communities provide for safe neighborhoods for children and seniors, outdoor recreation opportunities and jobs?
- How can the development of new communities protect environmental quality and natural beauty?
- How can new communities provide well-connected streets, bikeways, parks and trails so they don't make traffic worse for existing neighborhoods?

The Metro Policy Advisory Committee will provide its recommendation on proposed policy changes to the Metro Council on Wednesday, May 12. The Metro Council is currently scheduled to vote on the proposed policy changes and formal urban reserves designations on Thursday, June 3.

[Learn more about MPAC](#)

[Learn more about new area planning](#)

Metro honors volunteers during National Volunteer Week

04/22/2010 02:06 PM

"Celebrating People in Action" is the theme for National Volunteer Week, commemorated April 19-25, and Metro certainly has a lot to celebrate. Because of its corps of volunteers, Metro is better able to deliver services to residents of the region - and beyond.

More than 2,750 people donate upwards of 248,000 hours of their time each year at the Metro Regional Center, the Portland Center for the Performing Arts, the Oregon Convention Center, Metro's parks and natural areas and the Oregon Zoo. (That's the equivalent of nearly 120 full-time employees.) These community minded experts help guide Metro policy, restore wildlife habitat, build vibrant neighborhoods, connect children to nature, and make sure national and international guests see the best of this place we call home.

"Metro volunteers are deeply committed to this community and this region truly would not be the same place without them," said Metro Council President David Bragdon. "From park naturalists to zoo guides to guest services staff at conventions and arts events, virtually all of us have been served by a Metro volunteer at one time or another."

OCC's volunteer coordinator Peri Muchich agrees. "I could not do my job without the help of the

volunteers," she says, who assist guests at conventions and meeting throughout the year. OCC's volunteers keep up to date on area information so guests can fully enjoy the region between sessions and before and after conventions. The group has even organized a monthly "Restaurant Research" event, in which volunteers visit restaurants accessible from the convention center either on foot or by transit to help future guests.

The Oregon Zoo has several categories of volunteers. ZooGuides is in an ongoing program for adult volunteers involved in more than 100 different programs. Youth Volunteer Leadership Corps volunteers are high school students who commit to the zoo year round and take leadership in several conservation projects. Project Volunteers share a specific talent with the zoo, such as volunteer divers. ZooTeens manage seasonal programs; about 300 teens operate the Family Farm and provide interpretation at various exhibits. ZooAmbassadors, a family volunteer program, support seasonal exhibits. This year they'll get to help with the Prehistoric Predators exhibit.

Slogging through wetlands in winter to count amphibian eggs, monitoring birds at dawn and caring for hundreds of ancient headstones at historic cemeteries are just some of the out-of-the-ordinary jobs that volunteers in Metro's parks and natural areas perform. Perhaps it's the uniqueness of the opportunities, but community involvement manager John Sheehan says he's seen a steady increase in the number of volunteers and the hours they donate over the years. For example, volunteer hours were up 25 percent at Metro's Native Plant Center alone this year.

Over at the Portland Center for the Performing Arts, volunteers serve as ushers, greeters and tour guides. They also coordinate the PCPA Noontime Showcase, which draws about 1,000 people every year for free hour-long performances. Shows have included the Portland Opera, Dickens Carolers, Portland Taiko and Oregon Children's Theatre.

"About 150 of our 600 volunteers have been with PCPA for more than 10 years," said volunteer coordinator Margie Humphreys. "With close to a million people visiting our venues every year, our volunteers are a group that I trust will help make our patrons have the best experience possible."

While Metro celebrates volunteers throughout the year, it's time to give back. In the next few months, Metro, the Oregon Zoo, PCPA and OCC will honor these remarkable people at separate volunteer appreciation dinners and events where staff, Metro councilors and commissioners from MERC can thank them for their generous contributions of time, energy and ideas.

[Volunteer for Metro](#)

Intertwine Alliance partners unveil bi-state trails plan

04/15/2010 03:38 PM

An extensive network of 37 trails connecting people from Wilsonville to Vancouver and in between has been released. The new Bi-State Regional Trail Systems plan includes 20 trails in the Portland metropolitan area and 17 in Clark County that will connect cities and suburbs to other communities. The plan is the product of The Intertwine Alliance, a coalition of businesses, nonprofits and public agencies that have committed to linking trails, parks and natural areas with homes, jobs and schools to create one of the greatest parks networks in the world.

The 37 trails were selected based on previous regional and state trail planning that stemmed from 100 years of research. More than 250 miles of regional trails on both sides of the Columbia River already provide bicyclists, pedestrians, equestrians and paddlers access to nature and a safe, enjoyable means of

transportation. The long-term vision for the region includes 950 miles of trails that will link 32 cities, six counties and two states.

Metro and the Vancouver/Clark County Parks System wrote the plan, with technical assistance from the National Park Service's Challenge Cost Share Program, which supports groups who work to preserve natural, recreational and cultural resources.

[See the Bi-State Regional Trails Plan](#)

[Learn about The Intertwine Alliance](#)

Talking sustainability: Tell Metro what you think

04/07/2010 09:11 AM

Where do you look online for green-living tips and trends? What types of sustainability information do you seek on the web? How do you share ideas with others? Metro has launched a web survey to learn this and more from folks across the region as the agency updates its online resources. [Go to the survey](#)

From recycling waste and protecting habitat to driving less and building green, Metro wants to make it even easier for people to find information, exchange ideas and take action toward sustainable living at home, in the office or on the go. Survey results will help guide development of web content and tools to further promote regional sustainability.

Take the five-minute survey, available through Sunday, April 11, at www.surveymonkey.com/s/oregonmetro.

Metro measures the region's carbon footprint and leads the effort to shrink it

03/31/2010 03:25 PM

April 2 workshop brings local leaders together to address climate change as a region

Metro has a long history of working to limit its carbon footprint through its sustainability programs such as recycling education, making and selling MetroPaint and composting animal manure at the Oregon Zoo. Now Metro is taking a leadership role in climate change, hosting a local workshop to find ways to significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions on a regional level.

A new study by Metro found Portland area residents create 31 million metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions in 2006. That's nearly 68 billion pounds of pollution. But the main contributor is not coal fired plants and automobile emissions. It's the consumption of materials such as goods and food, much of which is produced outside the area.

In putting together the Regional Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory, Metro planners used information from a recent Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) report to get a comprehensive view of emissions. The inventory shows 48 percent of the total Portland-area pollution comes from extracting, manufacturing, shipping, recycling and disposing of products and food which are produced and grown both inside and outside the region. Residential and business energy consumption creates another 27 percent, with the final 25 percent coming from local transportation.

"We need to highlight what consumers can do," said David Bragdon, Metro council president. "This is an

opportunity to show people that by making informed choices and changes in the items we buy and the way we get around, we can be part of the solution to climate change."

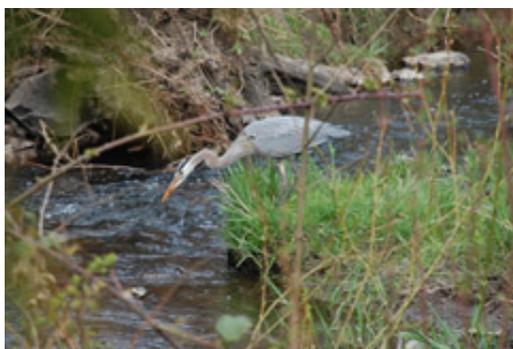
Metro has been mandated by the Oregon legislature to develop long-range plans for meeting state climate pollution reduction goals for transportation and land use. The agency has invited local jurisdictions to begin addressing how to meet those goals at an April 2 workshop headed by Dr. William Moomaw, professor and founding director of the Center for International Environment and Resource Policy at Tufts University. Moomaw is a lead member of the Nobel Prize-winning Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), a United Nations sponsored group of scientists.

At the workshop, members of the Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation and the Metro Policy Advisory Committee will work to develop a common understanding of the science of climate change and the impacts of land use and transportation strategies. The groups will begin developing tools to forecast climate pollution as well as identify shared goals, expectations and policy options for achieving a healthy climate and region.

[Learn more about the Regional Greenhouse Gas Inventory](#)

Metro awards \$1.9 million in Nature in Neighborhoods capital grants

03/24/2010 04:09 PM



Great Blue Heron in Tigard's Summer Creek.

Metro has awarded \$1.9 million in Nature in Neighborhoods capital grants to five local projects that will preserve and restore natural areas. The grants are designed to involve the community in innovative projects that incorporate nature in their neighborhoods as the region grows. Since the program began in 2008, Metro has handed out \$3.3 million in capital grants.

Recipients must match Metro awards with outside funding or in-kind services worth at least double the amount of the grant. Criteria for the grants include "re-naturing" neighborhoods by improving their ecology, restoring rare habitats, demonstrating cost-efficient design solutions and providing public access.

"This program helps nurture new projects, giving them the best possible shot at funding," said Sue Marshall, volunteer chair of the capital grants review committee. "Today, we're recognizing five groups that had the right mix of creativity, resources and momentum."

The third round of Nature in Neighborhoods capital grants were awarded by the Metro Council on March 18 and support everything from natural area acquisition to creek restoration to public structures:

Re-Greening Park Avenue Park & Ride

Recipient: TriMet, Urban Green

Partners: North Clackamas Parks and Recreation District, Oak Lodge Sanitary District, North Clackamas Urban Watershed Council

Grant amount: \$349,305

Total project cost: \$1 million

Finding inspiration in Metro's Integrating Habitats design competition in 2008, this project will create the region's first sustainable, habitat-friendly light rail station and park-and-ride. When TriMet's new orange line pulls up to the station at Southeast McLoughlin Boulevard and Park Avenue in Milwaukie in 2015, commuters will be in for a unique experience. They will find a re-created riparian forest, a natural stormwater treatment system and many other green features including a parking garage with plants built into it. Agencies and community groups are collaborating to showcase development that balances design excellence, ecological stewardship and economic enterprise. Project partners hope to restore the Courtney and Kellogg creek basins and promote low-impact development throughout the McLoughlin corridor - showing community members, Trolley Trail users and thousands of MAX riders how to restore ecosystems in a built environment.

[Learn more about TriMet's green Park Avenue park-and-ride station](#)

Trillium Creek Restoration Project

Recipient: City of West Linn

Partners: Mary S. Young Volunteers, Willamette Riverkeepers, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, Harris Stream Service, Robinwood Neighborhood Association

Grant amount: \$55,330

Total project cost: \$179,000

Trillium Creek flows from upland areas in West Linn through a wooded ravine into Mary S. Young Park and down to its confluence with the Willamette River. It should offer a welcoming habitat for plants, fish and other wildlife but contamination, channel and bank erosion as well as storm damage have taken their toll. The Metro grant will help bring students, volunteers and other community members together to rehabilitate 1,045 feet of the creek by re-establishing its natural channel and floodplain. The stream bed will be filled with cobble and gravel materials, and bio-engineering measures will be used to provide temporary erosion control until permanent vegetation can take root. Invasive species will be removed and hundreds of native plants and shrubs will be put in to stabilize the banks and return Trillium creek to a healthy urban waterway.

[Learn about Trillium Creek and future restoration efforts](#)

Baltimore Woods Connectivity Corridor

Recipient: City of Portland Bureau of Environmental Services, Three Rivers Land Conservancy

Partners: Portland Parks & Recreation, Friends of Baltimore Woods, Audubon Society of Portland, SOLV, Port of Portland

Grant amount: \$158,000

Total project cost: \$475,000

The Metro grant will help purchase parcels, totaling one acre, within the Baltimore Woods corridor in North Portland. This acquisition will protect rare Oregon white oak trees that provide homes for a number of unique species including acorn woodpeckers and the western grey squirrel. These parcels are part of a larger 30-acre corridor that the Friends of Baltimore Woods, city agencies, land trusts and non-profit organizations plan to restore and preserve. This woodland corridor will enhance the nature experience for

bicyclists, walkers, joggers and even commuters who will someday use a future trail along this section to connect with the region's Willamette River Greenway Trails system.

[Learn about the Willamette River Greenway Trails system](#)

Crystal Springs Restoration Partnership

Recipient: City of Portland Bureau of Environmental Services

Partners: Johnson Creek Watershed Council, Friends of Crystal Springs, Portland Parks & Recreation, Reed College

Grant amount: \$311,480

Total project cost: \$968,000

Crystal Springs Creek in Southeast Portland is fed only by springs, leaving the water free of the urban runoff that taints so many urban streams. The clean water, along with a constant year-round flow, low temperatures and little changes in gradient make this a potential sanctuary for the area's threatened salmon. This project, partially funded by Metro, helps realize the stream's potential by removing barriers that block juvenile fish passage and restoring the floodplain and riparian habitat along the creek. The Lower Columbia chinook, the coho and the steelhead, all listed under the Endangered Species Act, have been documented in Crystal Springs and are expected to thrive once the stream is rehabilitated. There's even the possibility that the Columbia River chum, which has died off in the Portland area, could be reintroduced to the creek after the restoration.

[Learn more about Crystal Springs restoration projects](#)

Summer Creek natural area acquisition

Recipient: City of Tigard

Partners: The Trust for Public Land, Tualatin RiverKeepers, Tualatin Watershed Council, Fans of Fanno Creek, Washington County, Clean Water Services.

Grant amount: \$1 million

Total project cost: \$5.4 million

Metro will contribute to the acquisition of 43 acres of wetlands and mature forests at the confluences of Summer and Fanno creeks. The property is a high-profile natural area, the best remaining unprotected land in Tigard and, soon, the city's second largest park. The site has functioned as an outdoor lab for students at Fowler Middle School who test the water quality and stream flow, learn about the trees and vegetation, track and study birds and even release newly hatched fish into the creeks. With the help of several community partners, a Summer Creek Environmental Education Program will be established that will allow children throughout the area to come experience and study nature first hand.

These latest grants come shortly after Metro surpassed the halfway point toward its goal of protecting 4,000 acres with the region's natural areas bond measure, which was approved in 2006 by voters in Multnomah, Washington and Clackamas counties. Combined with a 1995 bond measure, Metro has acquired more than 10,000 acres.

[Find out about Metro's Nature in Neighborhoods capital grants program](#)

[Learn about Metro's natural areas bond measure](#)

[Metro Council, county boards protect more than 272,100 acres of farmland and forestland](#)

02/26/2010 04:29 PM

The Metro Council and Clackamas, Multnomah and Washington county commissions approved agreements this week that will set aside more than 272,100 acres of farmland, forestland and natural areas to be excluded from urban growth during the next 50 years. The agreements also set aside about 28,100 acres of land for potential future growth needs during that same period.

Today the Metro Council voted 5-2 on a resolution to adopt agreements with each county to designate urban and rural reserves. The Clackamas and Multnomah county commissions unanimously adopted their respective agreements with Metro earlier in the day. The Washington County Board of Commissioners unanimously adopted its agreement with Metro on Tuesday.

"We have before us today an amazing opportunity to protect and provide certainty for more than 270,000 acres of farmland, forests and natural landscape features for up to a half-century," said Metro Councilor Kathryn Harrington, who served as Metro's representative on the Core 4 group that led this effort.

"We have the opportunity to make it more straightforward to provide land for future employers in places that the market wants to go. We have the opportunity to end forever the old, divisive, inadequate way of expanding the UGB based on soil type rather than on the creation of great communities as needed, when needed, and how it is needed," she added. "We have the opportunity to show the state and the nation how we can work together to shape our own future, and thereby win the confidence about investing in our future."

Prior to its adoption of the resolution, the Metro Council cast separate votes on each of its agreements with the three counties. The agreements with Multnomah and Clackamas counties each passed on a 7-0 vote. (The Multnomah County reserves map was amended to change two areas in the western part of the county from undesignated to rural reserve, in keeping with the action taken by the Multnomah County Commission earlier in the day.) The agreement with Washington County was the most contentious and resulted in a divided 4-3 vote, with Councilors Rex Burkholder, Robert Liberty and Rod Park voting no.

Burkholder, who ultimately voted in favor of the full reserves package, raised serious concerns about the amount of urban reserve land, particularly in Washington County. "While I support providing land needed for employment and population growth, urbanization is a one-way street," he said. "Designating land as urban will make it more difficult for farmers to make long-term investments. There is also the very real problem of creating demand for infrastructure when we have challenges maintaining the roads, sewers and other infrastructure that we have."

Both Park and Liberty voted no on the final resolution containing all three agreements. "Once again, we spent time looking at the edge instead of focusing on the communities that need it [attention]. Now we have 28,000 acres of distraction," said Liberty. He also stated his belief that there is too much land in urban reserves, noting that the vast majority of new residential development that has occurred in the region since 1998 has taken place inside the urban growth boundary as it stood in 1979.

Park noted that laudable efforts at compromise had been made by many parties to come to the map prepared today. "We do need jobs. We need places for people to live," said Park, who expressed concerns about the amount of foundation farmland included as urban reserve north of Cornelius. "The decision needs to be balanced. It doesn't feel right to me."

Others expressed support for the reserves package and the protection it offers for agricultural land. "If you want uncertainty, go back to the old system. What is certain are rural reserves. This map would protect 98 percent of the [foundation] farmland in Washington County from having to be discussed" for future urban growth boundary expansion, noted Councilor Carl Hosticka.

Councilor Carlotta Collette also expressed concerns about location and sizes of particular urban reserves but supported the proposal and the compromises necessary to produce it. "I'm trusting and hoping that the principles that accompany the IGAs will provide the level of protection for natural resource areas that they deserve," she said.

"One of the valuable aspects of urban and rural reserves is that, by limiting the amount of land and the locations available for future growth, it requires us to rethink how we invest limited resources in our existing communities and make the best use of what we already have," said Metro Council President David Bragdon. "Now the real work begins."

The Oregon Legislature, in enacting Senate Bill 1011 during the 2007 session, provided Metro and the three counties with the authority to designate urban and rural reserves. Since early 2008, Metro and the three counties have led a collaborative effort, working with local governments, business representatives, farmers, environmental and land use advocates, property owners and other residents, to identify areas most suitable for urban growth over the next 40 to 50 years and provide long-term protection to valuable farmland, forestland and natural areas.

The designation of urban and rural reserves will support implementation of the 2040 Growth Concept, the region's blueprint for growth adopted in 1995 that calls for focusing development in city and town centers, along transportation corridors and near employment areas. As the final reserves designations are made, the Metro Council will strengthen its focus on finding ways to maximize public investments to support jobs and redevelopment.

Later this spring, each county will take formal actions to designate rural reserves through their existing comprehensive land use plans, and the Metro Council will designate urban reserves through amendments to its land use ordinances and plans. The Oregon Land Conservation and Development Commission will review the entire reserves package this fall before the Metro Council considers a possible urban growth boundary expansion by the end of this year, as required by state law.

[Learn more about the urban and rural reserves process](#)

Metro's regional venues continue to contribute millions to local economy despite recession

02/23/2010 04:22 PM

Throughout one of the most challenging business climates in decades, Metro and its Metropolitan Exposition Recreation Commission (MERC) continued to infuse hundreds of millions of dollars into the local economy in 2008 and 2009.

A recent study concluded that the Oregon Convention Center, Portland Expo Center and Portland Center for the Performing Arts generated more than \$522 million in direct and indirect spending throughout Clackamas, Multnomah and Washington counties during fiscal year (FY) 2009. The independent analysis, conducted by Crossroads Consulting Services, LLC, also estimated that 5,540 local jobs with more than \$203 million in employee earnings were supported, and that \$18.2 million in tax revenues were distributed to state and local governments as a result of the venues' business.

FY 2009 was the second year that economic and fiscal data was collected across all MERC venues. In FY 2008, the facilities generated nearly \$535 million in direct and indirect spending, supported 5,810 jobs and nearly \$206 million in earnings, and generated \$18.2 million in tax revenues. The consulting firm attributed the FY 2009 decreases to implications that industry experts anticipated would arise from the economic

downturn, including fewer people attending smaller events compared to prior years.

The 2009 MERC Economic and Fiscal Impact Report includes information about the number of events and visitors hosted at each venue.

[Read the report](#)

Metro acquires six acres along Johnson Creek, Springwater Trail

02/19/2010 05:02 PM

New natural area protects water quality, provides important wildlife habitat

Metro continued efforts to protect land along Johnson Creek and the Springwater Corridor trail last week with the acquisition of 5.6 acres on Southeast Telford Road, just south of Gresham.

The property includes more than 1,000 feet along Johnson and Sunshine creeks, which support Chinook, Coho, steelhead and cutthroat trout.

Forests of alder, cottonwood and scattered Douglas fir trees protect and improve water quality in the creeks. Because this sort of riparian habitat has decreased significantly statewide, it receives special attention in the Oregon Conservation Strategy, a blueprint for protecting native fish and wildlife. Riparian areas in Western Oregon support a wide diversity of animals, including more than 200 bird species.

"The wildlife that makes this region so special will continue to have a home here, thanks to the protection of natural areas like this one," said Metro Council President David Bragdon. "And that's good news for all of us who enjoy the outdoors."

Walkers, joggers and bicyclists pass the property on the Springwater Corridor, which follows Johnson Creek on its path from Gresham to the Willamette River. This regional trail provides easy access to Metro's new natural area, creating the potential for future public use.

The property, which was purchased for \$378,000, is adjacent to a two-acre natural area owned by Metro. The 2006 natural areas bond measure has protected a total of 165 acres in the Johnson Creek area.

"Collectively, all those acres have a big impact on the Johnson Creek watershed," said Metro Councilor Rod Park, who represents District 1, in the eastern part of the region where the property is located. "The community has embraced this creek, and cares deeply about its long-term health."

Johnson Creek is one of 27 areas protected by Metro's natural areas bond measure, which was approved by voters in 2006. The program funds land acquisition and capital improvements that protect water quality and fish and wildlife habitat, enhance trails and wildlife corridors, and provide greater connections to nature in urban areas throughout the Portland metropolitan area. For more information, visit www.oregonmetro.gov/naturalareas.

Metro, the regional government that serves 1.5 million people who live in the 25 cities and three counties of the Portland metropolitan area, provides planning and other services that protect the nature and livability of our region.

Counties, Metro scheduled to vote on historic agreements

02/19/2010 04:57 PM

Unprecedented planning, compromises, will guide public and private investments, provide certainty for farmers, governments, service providers and landowners

After more than two years of research, study and public input, Metro and the three counties in the Portland metropolitan region are nearing the end of an unprecedented process to agree on where and how our region will grow in the next several decades. Next week, the commissions of Clackamas, Washington and Multnomah counties and the Metro Council will vote on approximately 270,000 acres of land for rural reserves and 28,000 acres for urban development. The individual agreements between each county and Metro, scheduled to be adopted next week, will specify urban and rural reserve lands in each county.

Each of the counties has established agreements with Metro that outline where cities within their boundaries will grow when urban growth boundary decisions are made in the next 50 years, and where they will not - preserving the land for farms, forests and natural areas. The proposed regional maps and the legal agreements - reached after tremendous amounts of study, public input and compromise - are the basis for the land designations. [Go to the agreements and maps](#)

The Washington County commission is expected to adopt its final map and intergovernmental agreement (IGA) with Metro on Feb. 23; Multnomah and Clackamas counties are expected to adopt their IGAs with Metro on Feb 25, and Metro will vote on all three agreements Feb. 25. In the next two to three months, the Metro Council will pass an ordinance to amend its Regional Framework Plan to designate urban reserves and the three counties will also amend their comprehensive plans to formally designate rural reserves.

The reserves process is unique in the nation - never before has a metropolitan area mapped out a decades-long plan that identifies areas for urban growth and lands that should be set aside as rural reserves.

Under Oregon's land use system, Metro maintains the urban growth boundary surrounding the Portland metropolitan area. Every five years the agency calculates how much acreage is needed to maintain a 20-year supply of land to accommodate projected population and job growth and expands the boundary if necessary to respond to that need. Once designated, urban reserves will be the focus of consideration for future urban growth boundary expansions. Rural reserves will be off limits to urban development for 50 years. Metro has already embarked on the region's next urban growth boundary decision, which is expected to be completed by the end of this year.

Representatives of the four elected bodies who worked in consultation with their council and commissions to craft the final agreement-- the Core 4--are Multnomah County Commissioner Jeff Cogen, Washington County Chair Tom Brian, Clackamas County Commissioner Charlotte Lehan and Metro Councilor Kathryn Harrington.

Metro, the regional government that serves 1.5 million people who live in the 25 cities and three counties of the Portland metropolitan area, provides planning and other services that protect the nature and livability of our region.

[MPAC recommends adoption of alternative reserves map](#)

02/12/2010 12:34 PM

At its meeting Wednesday night the Metro Policy Advisory Committee recommended the Metro Council and the Clackamas, Multnomah and Washington county commissions adopt an urban and rural reserves map that reflects the suggestions made by MPAC at its Jan. 27 and Feb. 1 meetings.

Representatives from each county commission and the Metro Council – a group called the "Core 4" – approved a map this week that reflects their consensus on 99.5 percent of a 400,000-acre study area. The Core 4 map includes more than 270,000 acres of rural reserves and 27,000 acres of urban reserves while leaving a total of 2,753 acres yet to be resolved in three main areas: West Multnomah County, south of Sherwood, and north of Cornelius.

[Download the map](#)

[Learn more about the Core 4 and the reserves decision-making process](#)

Concerns were raised by several MPAC members that their committee's recommendations were not discussed by the Core 4 at its Feb. 8 meeting, and that MPAC's recommendations may have been ignored in the development of the final Core 4 consensus map.

"There has been so much time put in on this," said Fairview Mayor Mike Weatherby, who represents the cities of Fairview, Wood Village, Troutdale and Maywood Park at MPAC. "I'm frustrated. I can't go back [to East Multnomah County cities] and say nobody really cared."

Clackamas County Commissioner Charlotte Lehan, who serves on both MPAC and the Core 4, shared her perspective on the discussion at the Core 4 meeting. "People were so eager to go home and declare victory," she said. "I felt like I was the wet blanket on Monday, saying that we had not come to agreement on many levels."

Portland City Commissioner Amanda Fritz expressed similar disappointment. "I would like some communication [from Core 4] back to MPAC on why our views were not discussed."

Metro Councilor Carl Hosticka countered that many of MPAC's recommendations – particularly on areas for which Core 4 had specifically asked for input – were incorporated.

That did not satisfy Portland Mayor Sam Adams. "I disagree that MPAC was treated well in Core 4, regardless of how the map turned out," he expressed. Adams made the motion to advance the previous MPAC recommendation on reserves. "I think we should honor our own work by moving forward our previous recommendation." In the end, the MPAC recommendation was advanced on a 15-2 vote.

Following discussion of the reserves map, the committee discussed language and principles contained in the draft intergovernmental agreements between Metro and each of the three counties. The language of the draft IGAs describe the conditions and principles for planning urban reserve areas before they are added to the urban growth boundary as well as conditions guiding the protection of rural reserves. MPAC supported the IGAs and recommended additional refinements:

- The agreements should require (not merely suggest) that concept planning include certain elements.
- The protection of natural resources should be strengthened by reducing assumptions about urban density in areas with significant natural features.
- The agreements should assure that existing cities are included and can participate in urban reserves concept planning.
- The agreements should address urban form, density and transportation circulation.
- Priority should be given to large lot employment land in particular urban reserves.
- The principles for concept planning should be consistent across all three IGAs.

It is anticipated that representatives of the Metro Council and the three county boards will reach agreement on the final reserve areas within the next week. The county commissions and the Metro Council are scheduled to consider adoption of the IGAs, including final reserves maps, by the end of February.

MPAC and Core 4 recommendations side by side

Several of MPAC's recommendations were incorporated partially or fully into the Core 4 map. In some cases, where the designations differ, conditions were placed by Core 4 on its recommended designations to address many of the issues of concern to MPAC.

- **Area 1F** (north of Highway 212 near Boring): MPAC recommended an urban reserve, and the Core 4 map changed from an option area to urban reserve.
- **Area 1D** (Boring/Damascus): MPAC recommended placing the buttes east of Damascus in rural reserve. Core 4 included the area in urban reserve but proposed a set of principles for concept planning to address the known environmental and topographic constraints in that area.
- **Area 6B** (Cooper Mountain): MPAC recommended reducing the size of the proposed urban reserve. Core 4 retained the full area as an urban reserve with principles for concept planning to address the known environmental and topographic constraints.
- **Area 4A** (Stafford north, triangle): MPAC recommended an undesignated area, whereas Core 4 included the area as urban reserve with a set of principles for concept planning to address the known environmental and topographic constraints.
- **Area 4D** (Stafford south): MPAC recommended reducing the amount of land in urban reserve and using Stafford Road as boundary between urban reserve to the east and rural reserve to the west. Core 4 reduced the size of the proposed urban reserve but kept urban reserves on both sides of Stafford Road.
- **Areas 8D, 8E, 8F** (near Banks and North Plains) and **3H** (Canby): MPAC recommended general reduction of acreage in undesignated areas around Banks, North Plains and Canby. Core 4 reduced the acreage of undesignated lands in these areas.

MPAC recommendations and Core 4 recommendations differed completely in two areas.

- **Area 1A** (east of Troutdale): MPAC recommended this area be included as urban reserve, but the Core 4 map proposed an undesignated area of 186 acres.
- **Area 8B** (North of Highway 26 near Hillsboro): MPAC recommended surrounding this urban reserve with rural reserve, whereas the Core 4 map retained an undesignated area between Highway 26 and West Union Road.

MPAC also made recommendations on the three areas where Core 4 consensus has not yet been reached.

[Learn more about MPAC](#)

Core 4 agrees on 99.5 percent of reserves map; counties, Metro to work out remainder

02/09/2010 11:35 AM

The four elected officials representing the Metro Council and Clackamas, Multnomah and Washington county commissions - the Core 4 - agreed to protect more than 270,000 acres of the region's best farmland and key natural features in rural reserves while securing just over 27,000 acres in urban reserves to accommodate efficient regional growth for the next 40 to 50 years. Two years ago the counties and Metro began studying a 400,000-acre study area encircling the region's urban growth boundary. Today, these four governments are down to negotiating the final 2,357 acres before establishing urban and rural reserves for the next half century.

"It's gratifying to see how far we've come as a region," said Metro Councilor Kathryn Harrington.

Multnomah County Commissioner Jeff Cogen noted, "we're near consensus on about 398,000 of those acres," and that areas left unresolved represent less than one-half of one percent of the total study area. Cogen made a proposal to endorse a revised map presented this morning and enable each county to work directly with Metro to reach agreements on remaining unresolved option areas.

[Download the map](#)

[Learn more about urban and rural reserves](#)

Each of the other Core 4 members agreed to Cogen's proposal, though Clackamas County Commissioner Charlotte Lehan expressed concerns with issues that remain unresolved, particularly the total number of acres in urban reserves and the conditions and principles under which they will be planned and developed over time. "There are a lot of issues that are more global that we really haven't wrestled with," she said.

Since the last Core 4 meeting on Jan. 11, Metro and the counties held six open houses across the region, as well as four Metro Council hearings, where members of the public expressed their views on proposed urban and rural reserve areas. More than 850 people attended the open houses, 237 people offered testimony at the four public hearings and nearly 2,000 people viewed maps and commented online at a "virtual open house" on Metro's web site. Changes in the proposed reserve map reflect comments received as well as the results of discussions and negotiations between county commissioners and Metro Councilors.

Over the next two weeks, representatives of the Metro Council and the boards of county commissioners will work to reach agreement on the remaining option areas and on final language of the intergovernmental agreements to designate reserves. The commissions and council will adopt the IGAs, including the final maps, before the end of February, with the Metro Council currently scheduled to vote on all three on Thursday, Feb. 25.

No further Core 4 meetings are currently scheduled, though facilitator Debra Nudelman asked Core 4 members to leave the morning of Monday, March 8, open for an additional meeting if needed.

[Metro protects Chehalem Ridge Natural Area in the Tualatin Valley](#)

01/08/2010 12:08 PM



View more photos of the Chehalem Ridge Natural Area on Metro's GreenScene Facebook page. [Go](#)

Metro's Natural Areas program started 2010 with big news - literally - by purchasing 1,143 acres of forestland in the Chehalem Mountains of the Tualatin Valley. It's the largest acquisition in the history of the Portland region's two voter-approved natural area bond measures.

The new Chehalem Ridge Natural Area, south of Forest Grove, is one of the metropolitan area's biggest remaining swaths of undeveloped forest. At about the size of Oxbow Regional Park, the property is positioned to protect water quality and wildlife habitat in the Tualatin River Basin and serve as a scenic and recreational resource for the region.

"This acquisition nearly doubles the amount of land the Metro Council has protected with the latest bond measure, but Chehalem Ridge is much more than a number," Metro Council President David Bragdon said. "It's also a milestone in terms of scenery, restoration potential and partnerships."

The acquisition was a team effort. Metro bought the property on Thursday from The Trust for Public Land, a nonprofit conservation group. The Trust for Public Land negotiated a deal with the land's longtime owner, Portland-based Stimson Lumber Co.

Straddling the top of Chehalem Ridge, the new natural area provides panoramic views of surrounding farmland and five Cascade mountain peaks: Rainier, St. Helens, Adams, Hood and Jefferson.

A young Douglas fir forest dominates the property. Cedar, hemlock and grand fir can be found in the drainages on the cooler, eastern side of the ridge. Oak-madrone woodlands, which are increasingly rare in the northern Willamette Valley, make an appearance on south- and west-facing slopes.

Chehalem Ridge is the starting point for a network of streams that flow to the Tualatin River, which provides drinking water for 200,000 people. This feature creates opportunities for Metro to improve water quality beyond the natural area's property line.

"This property is extraordinary," said Metro Councilor Kathryn Harrington, who represents the western part of the region in District 4. "It's exciting to think that we've protected another natural area of this size, scale and quality in Washington County. It's a success for residents of the entire region."

Chehalem Ridge will complement bird and wildlife viewing opportunities planned at the nearby U.S. Fish and Wildlife Refuge at Wapato Lake.

The Metro Council's goals for land acquisition in this area include the potential for recreational uses. At Chehalem Ridge, an existing gravel and dirt road network could form the basis for a future trail system. For now, Metro's science staff will develop a plan to guide forest management practices, habitat restoration and appropriate interim opportunities for the public to experience Chehalem Ridge. (For details, stay tuned at www.oregonmetro.gov/chehalemridge.)

The Trust for Public Land has pledged \$90,000 toward land management and stewardship during the first three years. Helping secure the acquisition and continuing to support Chehalem Ridge makes sense as the Portland metropolitan area invests in its natural environment, said the group's Oregon director, Geoff Roach. A diverse coalition is collaborating on The Intertwine, a movement to connect the region's parks, trails and natural areas and create a common identity. (Find details about The Intertwine at www.theintertwine.org.)

"We are delighted to be working in a region where business leaders, local government and nonprofits are encouraged to collaborate on land conservation," Roach said. "Love of nature is at the core of this region's outstanding quality of life. The Intertwine is leading the country in breaking down organizational and jurisdictional barriers to create, protect and enhance a world-class system of parks, trails and natural areas for everyone to enjoy - and Chehalem's a result."

The Metro Council's voter-approved 2006 Natural Areas Program funds land acquisition and capital improvements that protect water quality and fish and wildlife habitat, enhance trails and wildlife corridors

and provide greater connections to nature in neighborhoods throughout the Portland metropolitan area.

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

Politicians beware: Support for Metro is on the upswing

01/06/2010 11:57 AM

The Oregonian feature editorial for Jan. 5, 2010

The election for council president in 2010 could be the most thoughtful and provocative in the history of the regional government

This year, the Metro regional government will make a momentous decision, perhaps the most important in its history. But the principle behind it is surprisingly simple: Minimize waste.

Oregonians detest waste. Increasingly, they understand that land can be wasted as surely as money can be wasted - and, in fact, that wasting land is a form of wasting money.

This year, along with Clackamas, Multnomah and Washington counties, Metro will distinguish land that it would be smarter to develop eventually, called urban reserves, from land that it would be smarter to set aside for generations, called rural reserves.

Years ago, Metro made a run at doing something similar. But nothing on this scale requiring the counties and Metro to reach a consensus has been attempted before. That the process might have a few hiccups, or even threaten to implode a time or two, is only to be expected. So many future investments - those of farmers, developers and taxpayers - depend on these critical decisions.

By designating urban and rural reserves carefully, Metro and the counties can boost the Willamette Valley's agricultural industry, spark economic development, encourage the reuse of empty and wasted land inside the urban growth boundary - and save money on extending roads, sewers and waterlines.

Coincidentally, in 2010, David Bragdon will be finishing up his last year as Metro Council president, and three Metro-savvy candidates have already jumped into the race.

Rex Burkholder, a former high school science teacher now in his third term as a Metro councilor, is an expert on regional transportation. Tom Hughes, the affable former mayor of Hillsboro, has considerable expertise in economic development. And Bob Stacey, former director of 1000 Friends of Oregon, is an expert on conservation of farm and forest land.

If these three can't spark a vigorous - and, yes, exciting - debate on the future of the region, no one can.

The decision about urban and rural reserves will likely be settled before a new president is elected. So it will really be up to Bragdon to shepherd this inherently contentious process to a successful conclusion. This is a legacy issue for him.

Not surprisingly, the counties don't all see eye to eye on the reserves. There have even been a few mutterings about Metro disintegrating over the issue.

But that's extremely unlikely. If anything, public opinion is moving in the opposite direction. Surveys by Davis Hibbitts & Midghall Inc. show support for regional land-use planning - what Metro does - has only

intensified.

Oregonians are strapped and in a frugal mood, yes. But as the firm's Adam Davis recently told the City Club, people increasingly view compact development as financially smart, preventing waste, lessening the need for taxpayer-funded services and saving families both in money (fuel and other transportation costs) and in commute times.

Pay attention, politicians. Density is no longer the dreaded d-word, easy to demonize. Not so long as it comes, Davis says, with public safety and a few things Metro helps to provide - ample parks, "open spaces and walkability."

People in this region increasingly identify themselves as "Portlanders" and see Metro as a positive force. If you're looking for the usual suspect drawn to a Metro race-the candidate who runs against the very idea of a regional government?

Hey, for 2010, that candidate has yet to emerge.

That's progress.

Metro announces new director for the Oregon Zoo

12/29/2009 11:15 AM



*New Oregon Zoo
director Kim Smith*

Metro is excited to welcome new Oregon Zoo director Kimberly A. Smith beginning March 1. Smith brings 25 years of comprehensive zoo experience to the position. She has built an exceptional reputation for her commitment to wildlife conservation and has worked closely with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, along with state and local wildlife officials, on several local conservation initiatives. Smith also has a solid track record in overseeing and implementing strategic and master plans and will lead the Oregon Zoo as it undertakes \$125 million worth of bond-related improvements over the next 10 to 15 years.

"We are very pleased to have recruited such an outstanding zoo director," said Michael Jordan, Metro's chief operating officer. "She is a proven community leader, manager, conservationist and educator - and is well positioned to lead us into a new era of excellence." The zoo is a service of Metro and is dedicated to its mission to inspire the community to create a better future for wildlife.

[Go to the news release](#)

Councilor Rod Park's position on urban and rural reserves

12/15/2009 12:36 PM

On Dec. 10, 2009 Councilors Rod Park and Robert Liberty offered a recommendation about what lands should be designated for future urban development (urban reserves) and which lands should be preserved for farming and forestry (rural reserves). This is our region's version of Oregon's famed land use bill SB100 which put in place our current growth patterns.

The proposal was offered as an alternative to the Dec. 8 map prepared by Councilor Carl Hosticka and Council President David Bragdon which was intended to solicit public comment. Competing maps were developed for the purpose of providing direction to Councilor Kathryn Harrington, who is Metro's liaison to the Core Four group discussing and negotiating urban and rural reserves. (The other members are Multnomah County Commissioner Jeff Cogen, Clackamas County Commissioner Charlotte Lehan, and Washington County Commission Chair Tom Brian.)

Key differences are the Park/Liberty map identifies about 10,000 fewer acres for urban reserves than the Hosticka/Bragdon map (18,800 acres versus 28,895 acres) including about 5,000 fewer acres of farmland that the Oregon Department of Agriculture has identified as part of the "foundation" lands for farming in the Portland metro area. The Park/Liberty map also included about 13,000 more acres as rural reserves, particularly in the West Hills and east buttes south of Gresham.

View a comparison of the two proposals. [Go](#)

The Park/Liberty proposal was based on the following principles:

Protect valuable farmland: Protect the productive and beautiful farmlands surrounding the Metro areas, especially the farmland identified as part of the "foundation" farmlands by the Oregon Department of Agriculture. Not all valuable farmland can be protected. But it is especially important to protect farmland that remains in large blocks and keep it free from the conflicts caused by nearby residential development. Thought was also given how the farming infrastructure of suppliers, transportation and processors interact with these lands which keeps farming viable.

Protect natural features and resources that define our region: The Sandy River Canyon, the West Hills and the Boring buttes in the eastern part of the region are natural features that help define our region; they should be protected by rural reserves. When designating urban reserve areas, give preference to leaving out the creeks and floodplains that serve as borders for these areas.

Make better use of the land we already have set aside for urban development: The region needs to put emphasis on making better use of recycling the land already inside the urban growth boundary. Over the next 40 years, building on all vacant lots & redeveloping all substandard buildings along commercial streets inside already development communities is preferable to developing farm and forestland at the edge of the region.

Protect taxpayers' investments in existing communities: The fiscal reality is that many governments in the region lack the money to maintain the roads, schools, water and sewer lines and treatment facilities or to build the new parks, sidewalks, schools and other improvements that are needed for existing communities. Adding land to the urban growth boundary most likely will require raising taxes on existing residents to pay for these same improvements in the urban expansion areas. We think that this will prove politically difficult and therefore we believe we should be more measured in how much urban reserves are designated.

Avoid over-estimating the land needed for urban development: The region is developing much more efficiently than we anticipated. Since 1998 Metro has added 20,000 acres to the urban growth boundary (an expansion of about 8%) based on its conclusion that the urban growth boundary did not have enough land

in it to accommodate projected growth. Yet in the 11 years since the beginning of 1998, less than 1% of the new homes were built in these "needed" expansion areas. About 95% of all new homes were built in the urban growth boundary as it was established in 1979 - thirty years ago.

Plan for 40 years, not 50 years: We acknowledge that our ability to predict how much and which lands are needed for urban development fifty years in the future is poor at best and use a 40-year planning period. (Forty years is the minimum amount of time and 50 years the maximum amount of time permitted under the urban reserves planning process approved by the 2007 Oregon Legislature.)

Note about Stafford Basin: Councilor Liberty believes that most of the Stafford Basin does not satisfy the criteria for either urban or rural reserves. Leaving most of the Stafford Basin undesignated leaves the underlying zoning intact and does not imply or necessitate any change in development patterns there. Councilor Park is open to urban reserves in this area however recognizes the political challenges which may make this impracticable at this time.

Metro Council Action on Dec. 10, 2009

At its meeting on Dec. 10, the Metro Council voted on which map it wished to use as the basis for negotiation with the counties.

Councilors Burkholder, Liberty and Park voted in favor of the Liberty/Park map. Council President Bragdon and Councilors Collette, Harrington and Hosticka voted in opposition.

Council President Bragdon and Councilors Collette, Harrington and Hosticka then voted in favor of the Hosticka/Bragdon map, Councilors Burkholder and Liberty voted against. Councilor Park abstained as it was indicated further refinements to the proposed map may be made before the final vote at the Dec. 17 in resolution 09-4100.

[Urban and rural reserves](#)

[Input to the Core 4](#)

[RTP provides benchmarks to reduce greenhouse gas pollution - a personal message from Rod Park](#)

11/19/2009 06:28 PM

As you may be aware, the region is in the midst of updating the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), which recommends how to invest more than \$20 billion in anticipated federal, state and local transportation funds in the Portland metropolitan region during the next 25 years. The plan is updated every four years to reflect new federal and state requirements, policies, new technologies, and changes to land use, demographics, and planned transportation projects. The updated RTP lays out new policies and an investment strategy for addressing transportation problems throughout the region, strengthens ties between land use and transportation, and lays the groundwork for a regional discussion about how to reduce our carbon footprint.

The proposed RTP will invest in maintaining our existing roads and bridges, improving the movement of goods and freight to support good jobs and committing more resources to high-capacity transit, bicycle and pedestrian-oriented projects than ever before. It also sets benchmarks for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and per capita vehicle miles traveled (VMT). In fact, the draft RTP reduces per capita transportation-related greenhouse gas pollution from 2005 levels. Finally, the RTP will help force the region to confront the fact that per capita reductions in pollution aren't enough to offset the overall

pollution created by our growing population.

Metro is committed to regional leadership in addressing climate change. Our region is already far ahead of the rest of the United States in reducing greenhouse gas pollution. We have a decline in VMT per capita while other metropolitan areas in the United States are seeing an increase. Our use of transit also is increasing -the Federal Transit Administration ranks us as seventh in the nation for transit ridership per capita. Our region also benefits from effective carpooling, cycling and walking programs, and from shorter average trips because of our commitment to a strong urban growth boundary.

The RTP is part of a comprehensive strategy designed to preserve our growth boundary to the maximum extent possible, invest in our existing roads, bridges and cities, and to create more good jobs by making it easier for employers to move their goods and services and for employees to get to and from their jobs. As currently written, however, the draft RTP by itself will not reduce the region's total greenhouse gas pollution levels and therefore it does not meet the goals adopted by the Oregon Legislature.

Fortunately, when the legislature adopted the goals, it also directed Metro to develop scenarios that will help identify the best way to reduce transportation-related greenhouse gas pollution and per capita VMT. Metro is hard at work developing a scientifically credible approach to evaluating all the pollution reduction options available.

Currently, a mischaracterization of the RTP is circulating locally. Some special interests are saying that "greenhouse gas emissions from vehicles will jump 49 percent if all projects in the RTP are built." Several aspects of this statement are misleading. The 49 percent figure is based on assumptions that include a massive expansion of the urban growth boundary, which is not realistic, little improvement in fuel efficiency, and a set of projects that lists some that no one expects will be built as currently envisioned (more than 1,000 have been proposed).

The 49 percent figure in many ways is significant because for the first time we have a benchmark from which to evaluate and measure our work to reduce greenhouse gas pollution. If we make the right decisions, enact the best policies, and work together regionally, not only will we avoid a 49 percent increase, we actually will start reducing pollution even with a growing population.

It will take more than transportation investments to affect climate change. Investing more money in transit and bicycle routes and more energy efficient vehicles alone won't get us there. Ensuring new residents can live in places that don't require using a car as often, using tolls and parking management to reduce traffic demand, and investing in energy conservation and wind, solar and other clean energy solutions also will be required.

The Metro Council and the Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation will be voting to accept a draft RTP in December. If we are going to move the region ahead on cleaner air and better jobs, I believe we need to adopt this RTP and concentrate on efforts to meet the region's and the state's climate pollution goals by working with local governments in 2010 and 2011 to modify their local transportation system plans so they are consistent with the new RTP and support the region's efforts to reduce greenhouse gas pollution as mandated by the legislature.

The current RTP is not the final solution but it does - for the first time - create a blueprint for evaluating our transportation investments against a set of environmental and community development outcomes that the region desires. I look forward to more work with our regional partners to find a range of solutions to reduce this region's greenhouse gas pollution levels and to continue to make our region a great place to live, work and play.

Metro Councilor Rod Park debates agricultural urbanism on OPB's "Think Out Loud" Friday, Oct. 2

09/30/2009 06:41 PM

Larry Thompson has an idea to develop his 80-acre Damascus farm – which is inside the urban growth boundary – into a neighborhood of homes and services people could use on a daily basis, including 20 acres for growing food.

Oregon Public Broadcasting host David Miller brings his radio show "Think Out Loud" to Thompson's farm Friday, Oct. 2 at 9 a.m., where they, Metro Councilor Rod Park, land use attorney Carrie Richter and Damascus City Councilor Andrew Jackman will discuss the possibilities and challenges of developing land inside the urban growth boundary for this kind of use. [Learn more about the show and join the discussion online](#)

The conversation comes at an opportune time, as Metro is hosting a series of "Making the Greatest Place" open houses and hearings that focus on where to expand the urban growth boundary, which roads, trails and transportation projects we should invest in, and how and where the region plans for growth 40 to 50 years into the future. [Find out how to share your views](#)

Metro Councilor Rod Park tees up discussion of golf at Blue Lake on Fairview 15

09/29/2009 06:11 PM

Metro Councilor Rod Park appeared on the "Fairview 15" edition of Civic Agenda to talk about future improvements at Metro's Blue Lake Regional Park. Fairview 15, a monthly series produced by Metroeast Community Media, highlights relevant information and events for the communities located in East Multnomah County, Fairview, Gresham and Troutdale.

Highlights from the interview include an update on the new Blue Lake Nature and Golf Learning Center anticipated to open in Summer 2010. The project includes a nine-hole family golf course, a six-hole pitch and putt course, a pre-engineered golf and operations building, and a covered driving range. Plans also include replacement of The Lake House event center, restoration of an existing wetland and other improvements to Blue Lake Regional Park.

The project will provide increased revenue for the park and offer visitors new and improved amenities including a fitness trail, wildlife watching opportunities and connections to the nearby 40-Mile Loop Trail.

[Watch the interview](#)

[Learn more about the golf project](#)

Opinion survey gauges public views about growth

09/25/2009 03:40 PM

Metro today released the results of a public opinion survey designed to develop valid and statistically reliable information regarding the attitudes of residents about the quality of life in the region and growth management principles. Six hundred voters in the Metro region were randomly selected and interviewed on the phone between July 31 and Aug. 3, 2009. The margin of error for the survey is +/- 4 percent.

Summary of findings prepared by Davis, Hibbitts & Midghall, Inc.

Residents are optimistic about the direction of the region, and enjoy the quality of life they have. A majority of voters (58 percent) think things in the region are headed in the right direction. As found in other surveys for Metro about the quality of life in the region, residents value the environment, landscape and the types of activities and lifestyles these things provide. They also value the small community feel, access to a variety of activities and type of people living in the region.

There is widespread support for the region's urban growth boundary, smart growth and protecting the region's farmland, natural areas and standing forests. The environment is one of the top things that contributes to residents' quality of life in the region, and many communicated they do not want population growth and new development to jeopardize it. Residents strongly support development within the current urban growth boundary, including along transportation corridors, building on vacant lots, redeveloping old buildings and creating higher density neighborhoods (if they have parks, natural areas and access to convenient shopping and public transit) to preserve farm and forestland.

Residents across the three counties feel similarly about the quality of life they have in the region. They like the same things (e.g., outdoor recreation opportunities, environmental quality, weather and people/sense of community). They also have similar concerns (e.g., traffic congestion, public safety, government, employment).

While there are differences in priorities and the acceptability of planning principles across age, education, and income groups, the starkest demographic differences are by residency type and county. Residents in Multnomah and Washington counties showed stronger support for the urban growth boundary, higher density growth and alternative modes of transportation than those in Clackamas County. Even so, a majority of Clackamas County residents supported new development to accommodate population growth coming through the redevelopment of land within the current urban growth boundary, reusing and revitalizing old buildings and vacant lots in already developed areas resulting in more people and increased activity in those areas, and development of public transit biking and walking as an alternative to the automobile.

Importantly, during the past decade Washington County residents, whose views were once more uniform with those living in Clackamas County, have identified closer to or in many cases almost equally with their counterparts in Multnomah County. Residents with higher levels of education and income levels also showed the most support for the urban growth boundary and the planning principles tested. While those ages 18 to 34 had strong support for high density development and public transit infrastructure, they were less likely to have strong opinions about whether or not the urban growth boundary is expanded.

Resident support for the urban growth boundary and higher density development is dependent on certain things:

- understanding the potential for redevelopment of vacant lots within the urban growth boundary and revitalizing old buildings, and being assured that this kind of development will precede or be done concurrently with the development of any undeveloped land within the boundary
- being assured that new development of any kind is carefully designed, accompanied with parks, natural spaces and easy access to public transit, and is walkable
- knowing the location of any new development relative to nearby neighborhoods and the level of increase in population density and activity level; otherwise, residents will assume the worst
- understanding that higher density development is a way to conserve farm and forest land and natural spaces, and is an alternative to urban sprawl.

[A personal message from Councilor Park](#)

09/16/2009 05:50 PM

In 1973 Oregon enacted Senate Bill 100, a historic land use bill for the protection of farm and forest lands and orderly urban development. Thirty-six years later the region is re-examining that policy decision through an effort called Making the Greatest Place. Its focus is to help us continue making good choices so we maintain our quality of life and plan how our region grows. [Learn more](#)

In the next few months, the Metro Council and other local governments will make decisions about how much farm and forest land to protect, where we should grow during the next 50 years and the best way to invest our limited money on creating jobs and making the most of our existing bridges, roads, trails and public transit.

Yesterday, Metro's chief operating officer Michael Jordan released a set of proposed strategies to inform those decisions and to inspire a regional dialogue about our future:

Strategy 1: Make the most of what we have

Invest to maintain and improve our existing communities.

Strategy 2: Protect our urban growth boundary

To the maximum extent possible, ensure that growth is accommodated within the existing boundary to protect farm and forest land and the outdoor recreation opportunities we enjoy with our families.

Strategy 3: Walk our talk

Be accountable for our actions and responsible with the public's money.

[Review the recommendations, plans and reports](#)

We can't "make the greatest place" alone. We need to hear from you. Please let me know what you think and what is most important to you by attending an open house, commenting online, sending mail or e-mail, or testifying before the Metro Council.

[Find out how to share your views](#)

Thanks for your interest and for weighing in about how best to preserve our urban growth boundary and the farm and forest land it protects; how to make the most of our existing cities and neighborhoods; and how to ensure we create enough good jobs for the people who live here now and the people who will come in the future.

[Welcome from Councilor Park](#)

09/15/2009 05:22 PM

Starting today, I'll be delivering Metro news to you as it occurs, sometimes on a daily basis here on my new online newsfeed. My goal is to make it faster and easier for you to stay informed about issues you and your family care about, and to provide you a way to give me feedback whenever it's most convenient for you. Please check the site regularly and take advantage of the subscription features that let you choose the way you want to stay updated. Let me know what you think of this new way to deliver information, and if you have any ideas for how to make it better.

Contact

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[Transportation speaker series: Global experiences in congestion pricing](#)

09/09/2009 04:40 PM

Join the regional discussion about innovative solutions to transportation planning challenges. The latest installment of Metro's transportation speaker series welcomes Naveen Lamba, an international expert on congestion pricing. The lecture is from noon to 1 p.m. this Thursday, Sept. 10, at Metro Regional Center.

The need to reduce congestion will become more important as the region's population increases and puts more pressure on our infrastructure. One solution that has been successful in other cities is congestion pricing, which shifts the cost of peak demand for the public transport network to the users. Learning from the experiences of other cities is the first step in the discussion on how, or if, our region could use these tools to meet our future needs.

Naveen Lamba from IBM's Global Business Services will address examples of successful and unsuccessful congestion charging programs from around the world. He will also discuss the development of the next generation of congestion pricing solutions.

[View calendar](#)

[1,000 acres and counting](#)

08/08/2009 03:59 PM

Since 2006, Metro's voter-approved Natural Areas Program has funded land acquisitions and capital improvements that protect water quality, preserve fish and wildlife habitat, enhance trails and wildlife corridors and provide greater connections to nature throughout the Portland metropolitan area. With the addition in June of three new properties, the total acreage of protected natural areas has reached the 1,000 acre mark, moving the program closer to the goal of protecting up to 4,000 acres in urban areas and areas where development is likely to occur. With nearly nine miles of stream and river frontage included in the new total, habitat quality for fish and wildlife can be preserved and improved. [More](#)

[Oregon Zoo Concerts a-go!](#)

06/28/2009 09:00 AM

What do baby Samudra, summer weather and the B-52s have in common? They're all part of the Oregon Zoo's 31st annual summer concert series presented by NW Natural.



This year's zoo concert series promises to be an exhilarating experience with 18 shows from June through August. It is the longest-running outdoor concert series in the Pacific Northwest and one of the most anticipated events of the summer.

New this year is a showcase of local bands to take place Wednesday, July 8. Concert fans are asked to weigh in on which local bands they'd like to see perform that night. Voting for the showcase takes place through May 31 on the zoo's Web site.

The zoo concert series is presented by NW Natural with support from KINK.fm and KOIN Local 6. Tickets may be purchased at www.ticketmaster.com and at the zoo. Funds raised during the concert series support several conservation projects, including the protection of threatened and endangered Northwest species.

General admission is \$9.75 (12-64), seniors \$8.25 (65+), children \$6.75 (3-11), and infants 2 and under are free; 25 cents of the admission price helps fund regional conservation projects through the zoo's Future for Wildlife program. A parking fee of \$2 per car is also required. Additional information is available at www.oregonzoo.org or by calling 503-226-1561.

[A personal message from Councilor Park](#)

06/25/2009 04:25 PM

Mark your calendars for July 4th! What better place to spend it than at the 10th Annual Fourth of July fireworks and festivities at Blue Lake Park. Celebrate Independence Day with music, fun and east county's best fireworks display at Blue Lake Regional Park in Fairview. Pack a picnic, load up your loved ones and join us for a good time for the whole family with fireworks, musical guests and playtime for children in the water spray ground. Activities are located at the west end of the park.

While there make sure you wander over and check out the Natural Discovery Garden where you can gather ideas to make your yard safe and fun for kids, songbirds, lakes and streams. All ages can explore a worm bin, climb rocks and logs or try to spot a hummingbird.

The food court opens at 5pm and the music begins at 6pm and events wrap up by 10pm. Admission is \$10 per car, \$12 per bus, RV or 15-passenger van. Please note, no pets, alcohol or personal fireworks are allowed. This year's event is presented by the Yoshida Group, sponsored by Gresham Outlook, Metro and City of Fairview.

Check out our [online calendar](http://calendar.oregonmetro.gov/events/) (<http://calendar.oregonmetro.gov/events/>) for more information about this event.

-Rod Park

[Cooper Mountain Nature Park opens June 27](#)

06/01/2009 08:25 AM

Overlooking the Tualatin River Valley, the new Cooper Mountain Nature Park sits on the southern edge of Beaverton. The 230-acre park offers visitors 3.5 miles of gravel trails traversing the park's rare habitats and natural features. A demonstration garden and Nature House provide additional opportunities to enjoy 

the park through self-guided tours and environmental education programs. Summer camps, bird walks, wildlife photography workshops, twilight explorations, stargazing and much more will all be part of the inaugural summer season at Cooper Mountain Nature Park. To register for events or programs call: 503-629-6350 or visit <http://www.thprd.org/parks/coopermountain.cfm>.

Cooper Mountain's stewardship a joint venture

The Tualatin Hills Park & Recreation District will provide day to day management of Cooper Mountain Nature Park, including park ranger operations, security service, educational programming, park maintenance and natural resource management. Voter-approved funds allowed Metro to purchase land at Cooper Mountain beginning in 1997. More land acquisition followed until 230 acres were protected. Park development is supported by voter funding and a grant from Oregon State Parks. Volunteers have participated in nearly every aspect of Cooper Mountain's transformation.

[More](#)

Metro is cautious in financial downturn

04/28/2009 04:30 PM

Metro Councilors are currently reviewing the proposed budget for the 2009-2010 fiscal year beginning on July 1, 2009. Like all governments, Metro must have a balanced budget. And like workers and households in the region, Metro is cautious in this financial downturn. The solid waste system is a large part of Metro's activities, and we have seen a sharp decline in waste, particularly from construction and demolition. Even waste coming from households has fallen off as people are cutting back on consumer spending and staying in the same house or apartment.

On the positive side spring break has seen great attendance at the Oregon Zoo and at local theaters and performance halls where the "stay-cation" philosophy finds Metro residents enjoying local activities instead of traveling. Metro's proposed budget is about the same size as last year. Executive salaries have been frozen, and we have taken a sharp pencil to programs that have accomplished their goals and are ready to stand on their own. Growth areas include the continued purchasing of land to protect water quality and habitat and construction at the zoo, activities that may provide some local economic stimulus. Most importantly, we want to continue our land use and transportation work. When the region starts to recover, we want to remain ready to encourage and support the region's livability and environmental diversity as it returns to economic prosperity. You can learn more about Metro's budget by visiting the website and typing "proposed budget" in the search box.

Urban and Rural Reserves open house events

04/04/2009 04:32 PM

A personal message from Councilor Park

Fifty years from now? It is hard to imagine what the world will look like, let alone our region. However, this is what regional citizens are attempting to envision on a gross level -- what lands to keep in farming and forestry and where to build houses and businesses. I would invite you to attend various open houses to learn and contribute your ideas to the effort that Metro and the region's counties of Multnomah, Clackamas and Washington are undergoing to harness the region's growth.

Open house calendar:

Saturday, April 18
9 a.m. to noon
Metro Regional Center
600 NE Grand Ave., Portland

Monday, April 20
5:30 to 7:30 p.m.
Sam Barlow High School
5105 SW 302nd Ave., Gresham

Thursday, April 30
5:30 to 7:30 p.m.
Wilsonville City Hall
29799 SW Town Center Loop E, Wilsonville