

## MINUTES OF THE METRO COUNCIL MEETING

October 4, 1999

Gresham City Hall Chamber

Councilors Present: Rod Monroe (Presiding Officer), Rod Park, Bill Atherton, David Bragdon

Councilors Absent: Susan McLain, Jon Kvistad, Ed Washington

**Presiding Officer Monroe** convened the Regular Council Meeting at 5:10 p.m.

Presiding Officer Monroe announced that Elaine Wilkerson, Growth Management Services Director would give an overview of the Urban Growth Report Update.

**Elaine Wilkerson**, Growth Management Services Director, presented highlights from the update on the Urban Growth Report (UGR). (The substance of Ms. Wilkerson's presentation can be found in the document titled, "1997 Urban Growth Report Update, Summary," attached to the permanent record of this meeting). She said the update verifies the previous UGR in its assumptions and assessments.

**Councilor Atherton** brought up the jobs housing balance and its relationship to transportation. He noted that downtown Portland has a jobs/housing imbalance of about 10:1. He asked how widely the concept of jobs/housing balance is used in the field of regional planning.

**Ms. Wilkerson** said that most large areas have an imbalance heavily weighted toward jobs. She said that is because the transportation systems are commonly radial—i.e., they feed into the downtown. Portland's 10:1 imbalance is not unusual. However, most areas prefer that the suburban areas have a more equal distribution of jobs and housing to reduce pressure on roads and transit systems. She said one strategy involves encouraging return traffic, so a road becomes used in both directions during peak periods. The end result has been to decentralize through by supporting town centers, regional centers, or subcenters that offer employment or community activities. The central city, then, performs special functions that require less-frequent trips. She said this is a fairly common pattern throughout the country.

**Councilor Atherton** asked Ms. Wilkerson what ratio of jobs to housing she considered acceptable for regional centers as opposed to the urban core.

**Ms. Wilkerson** said that depends on whether you consider only the geographic center or whether you include the area it serves. She said most analyses include the market area around the center. She said the Urban Reserve Rule specifies 100,000 households as a reasonable support for a regional center. That does not mean the people who live there necessarily have to work there; it simply means there should be opportunities for that many people to work there. She said that although a 1:1 ratio is ideal, it is not realistic to expect to achieve that all the time everywhere. For one thing, often more one person in a household works.

**Councilor Atherton** challenged the assumption that focusing on a regional supply of land for housing was an appropriate guide for regional planning. He suggested a more appropriate approach would be to look at the supply of land with regard to industrial and commercial jobs areas. He thought that and transportation would be more important in achieving the goal of providing people with options and opportunities. He said in his view, this is a transportation access problem rather than a housing supply problem.

**Ms. Wilkerson** said in her view it was both. She said jobs should be encouraged in areas where jobs are insufficient, but housing opportunities also need to be provided near existing job opportunities. She said that whereas Clackamas County does not have enough jobs to employ all the workers living in the area, in other parts of the region there are job opportunities without housing nearby.

**Councilor Atherton** asked how that situation developed. He asked what forces created the situation in Clackamas County where more people live there than have jobs. He asked why people would choose to live where they could not work.

**Ms. Wilkerson** said the situation in Clackamas County has been long-standing. There has never been a large industrial jobs base in that county. She said the historic trends suggest there should never be a lot of jobs in Clackamas County in the context of Metro's policy to seek jobs-housing balance. That policy requires the infrastructure to support that balance—the roads and services—not just the land. She suggested the reason people might have moved where there were no jobs lies in the fact that at one time the roads were not as crowded as they are today. People judged it would not take them long to reach jobs elsewhere in the region. That is no longer true; roads are much more crowded.

**Presiding Officer Monroe** opened a public hearing on urban growth boundary issues.

## 1. PUBLIC HEARING ON URBAN GROWTH BOUNDARY ISSUES

**Jay Humphrey**, Estacada Community Planning Organization, 255255 Laura Lane, Estacada, Oregon, said Metro had done a good job regulating the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB), which is often used as a model for other cities to emulate. He said the problem Metro has with the UGB comes from subsidizing growth in general. He said some studies have indicated that the true cost of growth to a city ranges from \$24,000 to \$33,000 per home. That is the cost of developing the infrastructure. He said in Estacada, where he lives, about \$3500 per home is recovered through system development charges (SDCs). That means the Estacada heavily subsidizes growth. He said he realized Metro was not a taxing body, but he thought it should look at trying to recover all costs on SDCs for all the areas on which the legislature currently does not allow—schools, fire, and police.

**Councilor Atherton** asked Mr. Humphrey if, in his opinion, there are ways in which the region subsidizes growth as well.

**Mr. Humphrey** said the legislature took certain categories of growth away from the citizens of the cities to tax. One example is schools. Schools are the most expensive aspect of growth. Places like Battleground [Washington] have tried to build their way out of growth. In Battleground, schools fill up as quickly as they can be built. Metro should learn from that, and receive SDCs from schools. Some parts of the country require that the schools be in place before development takes place. He said that might be a little extreme, but it might be one way to stay ahead.

**Councilor Atherton** said he agreed with Mr. Humphrey on the cost of growth. He said it would be easy for people to understand the concept of having growth pay its own way. He said it was easier said than done, however. He said he had prepared a list of proposals he hoped to solicit public comment on, and he invited Mr. Humphrey to contribute his comments on them.

**Presiding Officer Monroe** said this Council is concerned about schools in that the planning and infrastructure must be in place before an area can be brought into the UGB. He said he had been a member of the David Douglas School Board since 1991, and before that he had been a public school teacher. He said that with regard to bringing land inside the UGB, schools sites need to be available and there needs to be a mechanism for paying for acquisition and construction of them.

**Jerry Hansen**, 17243 SE McKinley Road, Portland, OR 97236, said he has lived for some time in one of the first areas to be brought into the UGB. It has Gresham on one side and Portland on the other. But a stream that flows through his property, and he was concerned about the 200 buffer he understood he would need to provide. He said that would remove about three acres out of seven for any possible development. He said he did not move out there with the intention of developing the land—it was his father's property. He said he has lived there most of his life. He said he has witnessed many changes in the area. He said when the UGB first came in 1976, he had tried to build a single-family dwelling on two acres of the property. His application was denied because his father had someone who parked a camper on his father's property. His father was deemed too wealthy to be granted an exception. He said he had always wanted to preserve the valley. However, over the past 20 years, the UGB has not done a good job of preserving the valley as it was. It went from a 12-acre minimum for building in 1976 to a five-acre minimum. Today, the area is covered by ranch houses that sit on two acres of a five-acre plot. He said if Metro had been

serious about saving land inside the UGB, it should have kept the minimum at 12. That would have left a lot more buildable land in the area. He said the salmon had already almost disappeared by the 1950s. He wondered why Beaverton could have a 25-foot buffer around streams and the rest of the area could have a 50-foot buffer, but now it has been determined that 200 feet is necessary in a valley that has not had old-growth timber for 100 years. Also, he said the area subsidizes Tri-Met, the Port of Portland, Metro, and any new business that can be lured into the area. He did not understand why business was given tax breaks to come to an area it would come to anyway. He said livability was slowly disappearing. He said he had read about the 1997 decision to expand the UGB. Now, only three years later, Metro was trying to decide how much of the land it would need to accommodate the 200-foot buffer. He said he had followed the vote to include his area in the UGB as well as the vote to add areas on the west side. He thought some of those who voted had a conflict of interest. He said some of the pro-development people had voted against including his area but had voted for St. Mary's and vice-versa. He said he would like to know what Metro planned to do so he could plan his life. In closing, he suggested finishing the planning for one area before bringing in another.

**Presiding Officer Monroe** said the legislature had passed a law in 1995 requiring Metro to keep a 20-year land supply inside the UGB. He said that was what had triggered the whole process of looking at the amount of growth that can be handled inside the current UGB as a means of estimating additional need. That led to expansion last year of the UGB into the area where Mr. Hansen lives. He said in terms of zoning and minimum lot sizes, Metro's policy is to have an overall density of 10 units per acre. That would mean that except for hilly areas, there should be no fewer than four houses per acre on any land. He said sometimes the county or city allows something different from that. He said Metro has no control over subsidies cities and counties offer to businesses. He said that practice always sparks controversy and has arguments on both sides.

**Councilor Atherton** said the county was the jurisdiction that lowered the minimum from 12 acres to five acres.

**Mr. Hansen** said he thought the Land Conservation Development Commission had approved that change.

**Councilor Atherton** said he thought the five-acre minimum was for exception lands.

**Ms. Wilkerson** said that when the Pleasant Valley area was amended into the UGB, Title 11 stipulated that until all the planning needed to be done before development could take place, and until then the land could not be partitioned into lots of less than 20 acres. That stipulation was new, however, as of December of 1998.

**Presiding Officer Monroe** addressed the 200-foot riparian protection zone for streams. He said Metro does will not know exactly what that protection zone will be until the federal government decides. He said several salmon were placed on the list covered by the Endangered Species Act, which means that the government can dictate the amount of protection Metro must allow. He said some estimates have placed that at up to 200 feet. In the meantime, Metro has used a placeholder amount of 100 feet on each side.

**Ms. Wilkerson** said the placeholder amount represented the difference between the setbacks in Title 3, which were frequently 50 feet from the top of the bank and 200 feet from the center of the creek. She said the placeholder represents the difference between those two measurements. That would vary, depending on circumstances. The purpose would be to keep a vegetation bugger sufficient to protect water quality.

**Presiding Officer Monroe** said Mr. Hansen wanted to know how much of his land could be developed.

**Ms. Wilkerson** said she could not say without knowing more about the land. She suggested Mr. Hansen call her when she could look his property up on a map. Then she could tell him exactly what rule would apply.

**Councilor Park** said with regard to surety, that Mr. Hansen's property lies inside the UGB in an area that was not being contested. The question now is how long it would take Gresham to plan that area. Gresham received a grant from Metro to use toward planning that area. With regard to votes of the last Council, he said he did not believe it was self-interest that prompted the vote. He said part of the criteria included the types of land that needed to be brought in first. The exceptions areas were designated to come in first. That is why Pleasant Valley was high on the list—it was an exception area.

**Ted Sester**, Sester Farms, Inc., (no address given), said he was there to ask a question. He asked what Metro's long-term plans were for moving the UGB farther east, especially around 282nd and Division.

**Councilor Park** said that area was not inside an urban reserve; it was still zoned for Exclusive Farm Use (EFU). He said as far as he knew, for the next 50 years the UGB would remain at its current eastern boundary. He said the urban reserves lie south of Gresham and in other areas of the region.

**Presiding Officer Monroe** added that in addition, Metro has a policy supported by satellite cities such as Sandy and by the 24 cities that lie within the Metro area to maintain separation between the cities. So not only does Metro have the state mandate to protect farm and forest land, but also a mandate arising from an agreement with Sandy not to allow Portland and Sandy to grow together. That suggests Mr. Sester's property will remain farmland for the rest of his life.

**Mr. Sester** asked about growth on the northeast side of 282nd. He asked if that growth had been in the plan originally or whether it had come about in the past 10 years.

**Councilor Park** said he did not know about the timing, but he did know the land lay in Troutdale. He said he thought it had been brought into the UGB back in 1979; he knew it had not been recently. He said he had been surprised when the development went in, also. He said he did not know whether the land remaining between there and 282nd could also be developed.

**Dan Cooper**, Metro Legal Counsel, said there had not been any major amendment to the UGB in that area since it was first adopted. Therefore, whatever has been developed was inside the original UGB.

**Mr. Sester** said he did not oppose growth. He just wanted to know what the situation was. He asked if it made a difference whether the property lay in Troutdale or Gresham for purposes of annexation.

**Mr. Cooper** said no; UGB expansion and annexation were two separate decisions.

**Presiding Officer Monroe** asked if others wished to testify. No one came forward, so he closed the public hearing.

## 2. COUNCILOR COMMUNICATION

**Councilor Park** thanked those who came and noted the sparse audience. Presiding Officer Monroe said that had not been true last year when the Pleasant Valley area was being considered.

## 3. ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the Metro Council, Presiding Officer Monroe adjourned the meeting at 6:25 p.m.

Prepared by,

Chris Billington  
Clerk of the Council

Document Number	Document Date	Document Title	TO/FROM	RES/ORD
100499c-01	September 1999	1997 Urban Growth Report Update		