

Robert Liberty

METRO COUNCIL DISTRICT 6 NEWS



METRO

PEOPLE PLACES
OPEN SPACES

Robert Liberty
represents
District 6, which
includes portions of
Northeast, Southeast
and **Southwest**
Portland.



Yes and No

In the last month or two I've said both "yes" and "no" to two important issues before the Metro Council.

The yes vote came on March 9, when I joined all of my colleagues in voting to refer to the voters, for their action in the November election, a \$227.4 million bond measure to buy open space lands important for water quality and wildlife. Other councilors, particularly President David Bragdon, made this measure a priority for Council action. Deputy Council President Carl Hosticka promoted the bond measure as part of our ongoing effort to keep nature in our neighborhoods.

My contribution was modest – the idea of setting aside \$15 million as matching funds for projects to restore natural areas and improve water quality in existing neighborhoods, with special attention given to poorer communities in the region. Nonprofit organizations and schools as well as local governments could participate in the program.

The overall bond proposal combines funding for regional, local and neighborhood scale efforts to maintain and restore natural areas and water quality.

My "no" came a few weeks earlier, when I voted against the idea of widening Highway 217 to six lanes, a project that makes the OHSU tram look like a taxpayer bargain for the transportation and land use benefits it delivers.

Widening Highway 217 would cost between \$500 and \$600 million. For that enormous cost it would save an average of three minutes in future travel time, but only for the minority of drivers driving its whole length; most drivers would experience less time savings. And that is three minutes faster than future travel times, not faster than today's travel time. The research left open the possibility that widening Highway 217 would actually increase overall congestion, factoring in construction delays and how a wider Highway 217 would aggravate traffic jams on I-5.

No analysis was done showing that this widening would be better or worse than other transportation alternatives, in promoting the development of new housing and jobs in downtown Beaverton and Tigard or at Washington Square and the Sunset transit station, even though these are goals of Metro's own regional 2040 plan for future growth.

So, when asked whether I think the region is moving in the right direction, I am not being evasive when I answer, "Yes and no."

— Robert Liberty

Carol Coletta to speak April 13 on economic development

Metro's Economic Development Speaker Series brings to the region some of the country's leading economic development thinkers. One of the goals of the Metro Council is that residents and businesses benefit from a strong and equitable regional economy. The diversity of viewpoints and expertise of the speaker series is to challenge us to rise to new levels of thinking about the region's economy,

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Carol Coletta to speak April 13

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market dynamics affecting our global competitiveness and strategies required to position us for success.

Councilor Robert Liberty invites you to hear Carol Coletta, President of CEOs for Cities and host of Smart City radio show, speak on economic development on Thursday, April 13 at 7 p.m. at Liberty Northwest, 650 NE Holladay Street in Portland. The event is offered free of charge, but reservations are required. Send e-mail to speakerseries@metro.dst.or.us and include your name, affiliation, phone and e-mail address.

CEOs for Cities is a national, non-partisan alliance of cross-sector urban leaders. The alliance's mission is "to equip urban leaders across sectors and cities to strengthen urban economies through an exchange and application of best practices, ideas and advocacy." Smart City™ is a weekly public radio talk show that takes an in-depth look at urban life – the people places, ideas and trends shaping cities. Each week Carol Coletta talks with national and international public policy experts, elected officials, economists, business leaders, artists, developers, planners and others for a penetrating discussion of urban issues.

We hope you will join us on April 13.

Bike with Robert on May 19

Friday, May 19 is National Bike Commute Day, and Councilor Robert Liberty invites you to join him for a morning bike ride from Southeast Portland to the Lloyd District Bike Commute Day celebration. The Lloyd District Transportation Management Association will be serving a light breakfast 7:30–9 a.m. at Oregon Square, on Holladay Street between NE 7th and 9th avenues, adjacent to the NE 7th Avenue Max station.

If you are interested in joining Councilor Liberty for his morning commute, contact Linnea Nelson at nelsonl@metro.dst.or.us or (503) 797-1886. For details about the Bike Commute Day celebration, visit www.ldtma.com/bike.htm or call (503) 236-6441.

Metro councilors consider president's 2006-07 budget

In March, Council President David Bragdon proposed a \$307.8 million fiscal year 2006-07 Metro budget to the Metro Council for consideration. In April, councilors will hear presentations from departments, propose budget amendments, hold public hearings and vote on the amendments. Citizens are welcome to listen to budget discussions at Council Work Sessions at 2 p.m. on April 4 and April 25 at Metro, 600 NE Grand Avenue, Portland.

On Thursday, April 27, at the 2 p.m. Council Meeting at Metro, the Council will hold a public hearing, present and vote on amendments and approve a budget for transmittal to the Tax Supervising and Conservation Commission. As required by law, the TSCC will review the budget and hold a public hearing on Wednesday, June 14 at 2 p.m. at Metro. After TSCC review, the Council is scheduled to adopt the budget at the 2 p.m. Council meeting on Thursday, June 22 at Metro.

This year's budget includes further development of the New Look (Metro's approach to updated long-term growth management policies for the region), Nature in Neighborhoods (Metro's region-wide program to protect fish and wildlife habitat), and the regional disposal system review and its ultimate outcome.

The 2006-07 budget shows an increase from the previous year because of anticipated grants to the agency's planning department for federal transportation projects and an excise tax on construction for an expansion area planning fund. The roughly \$2 million anticipated income from that fund will be earmarked for local planning efforts and will sunset after three years.

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About Metro

Clean air and clean water do not stop at city limits or county lines. Neither does the need for jobs, a thriving economy and good transportation choices for people and businesses in our region. Voters have asked Metro to help with the challenges that cross those lines and affect the 25 cities and three counties in the Portland metropolitan area.

A regional approach simply makes sense when it comes to protecting open space, caring for parks, planning for the best use of land, managing garbage disposal and increasing recycling. Metro oversees world-class facilities such as the Oregon Zoo, which contributes to conservation and education, and the Oregon Convention Center, which benefits the region's economy.

Your Metro representatives

Metro Council President
David Bragdon

Metro Councilors
Rod Park, District 1
Brian Newman, District 2
Carl Hosticka, District 3
Susan McLain, District 4
Rex Burkholder, District 5
Robert Liberty, District 6

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