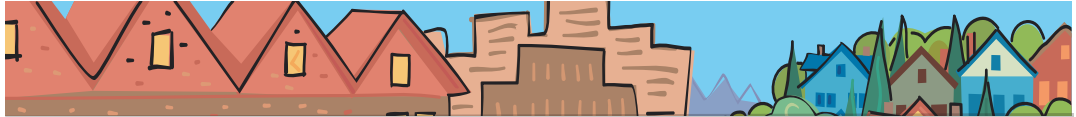


Carl Hosticka

METRO COUNCIL DISTRICT 3 NEWS



METRO

PEOPLE PLACES
OPEN SPACES

**Carl Hosticka
represents
District 3, which
includes portions
of Washington and
Clackamas counties
and the cities of
Beaverton, Durham,
King City, Sherwood,
Tigard, Tualatin and
Wilsonville.**



A new process for managing the UGB

Metro is currently reworking our process for managing the urban growth boundary (UGB). Part of this effort is looking at areas outside our existing UGB. Over the past year, we have undertaken studies to identify how three elements – the agricultural economy, natural areas and urban areas – all contribute value to our region. The studies will help us identify areas that will be urbanized over the next 50 years. We will want to make sure new areas are appropriately linked to existing urban areas, and are planned in a way to provide great communities.

We also need to identify those areas that won't be developed based on their importance to the agricultural economy. This approach would look at the whole "economy" of agriculture and its supporting businesses and needs, rather than just focusing on soil types, as we have done in the past.

Third, we need to identify natural features that are important for us to preserve. Greenspaces are important as both habitat for fish and wildlife, and also for the sense of place and quality of life they provide to all residents.

Preliminary results of these studies, including maps, were released at a regional symposium on January 19 in Hillsboro (see related story). As part of our effort to make the process more collaborative and transparent, we are now engaging in a process of refining these maps with local governments and interested citizens to identify specific areas for urban and rural reserves. Since our process for managing the UGB is governed by state law, we are also working with the state legislature to make appropriate changes.

You can review the maps and study online at www.metro-region.org/newlook. I encourage you to answer the related questions that are posted there and submit them by May 15. This will give us direction for how to create livable, thriving communities throughout the region.

— Carl Hosticka

Studies help Metro, partners work toward New Look at Regional Choices

In its ongoing work on New Look at Regional Choices, the Metro Council, along with its partner governments, released research results at a regional symposium on January 19. The research considered how the agricultural economy, natural features and urban areas contribute to the region, and identified new factors for determining how growth should occur while maintaining the livability of our region.

The agriculture study, undertaken by the Oregon Department of Agriculture,

included an inventory and assessment of agricultural land close to and outside the urban growth boundary to determine the land's feasibility and viability for commercial agriculture. The study identified such factors as adjacent land use and agricultural use patterns, parcel size and location, and transportation.

The natural landscape features study, conducted by Metro staff in association with biologists, ecologists and other experts in the

continued

New Look

continued from page 1

field, addressed three areas. They include: which natural resources are essential to the health and welfare of the region; which define the sense of place for the region; and which are essential to creating an ecologically sustainable region and also preserve biodiversity.

The third study, focusing on urban issues, was undertaken to define and describe characteristics necessary to create great places to live, work and play. The study defined a set of eight characteristics that relate to community design and land use, governance, urban services and finance.

Information about the outcomes of the forum can be found on the Metro website: www.metro-region.org/newlook.

MTIP comments sought, hearing Feb. 13

The Metro Council and the Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation (JPACT) invite the public to comment on the final draft list of projects to be funded in the flexible funding portion of the 2008-11 Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (MTIP). MTIP is the biennial program for federally funded transportation projects in the metropolitan region.

Every two years, Metro selects projects to receive funding from the flexible funding part of MTIP, referred to as Transportation Priorities. Projects fall into categories that include bike/trail, boulevards, Green Streets, pedestrian, planning, transit, road modernization and construction, highway, and transit oriented development. The amount of flexible funds available in this round is approximately \$45 million, which is about 4 percent of the total funds available during the 2008-11 funding cycle.

Jurisdictions and transportation agencies submitted 66 projects for funding consideration, totaling \$132 million in funding requests. To see a full list of the proposed projects, visit Metro's website at www.metro-region.org, and search for "Transportation Priorities Process 2008-11."

Testimony is scheduled to begin at 5:30 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 13 in the Metro Council Chamber, 600 NE Grand Avenue, Portland. Testimony may also be submitted by e-mail

(trans@metro.dst.or.us), U.S. mail, fax (503-797-1930), or over the Metro website (www.metro-region.org), as long as it is received after the final draft list is released on Feb. 3 and before midnight on Feb. 13.

For more information, contact Pat Emmerson at (503) 797-1551.

Nature in Neighborhood's REIN tool goes on line

A new online mapping tool that will allow Metro to track watershed health, restoration efforts, and increase local collaboration in environmental projects through information sharing is now live and online.

The Regional Environmental Information Network (REIN) is part of Metro's Nature in Neighborhoods initiative, a long-term effort to conserve and restore nature throughout the urban area.

The REIN website will serve as the regional clearinghouse for restoration, enhancement and monitoring projects and as an information resource for government partners, nonprofits, community groups and citizens working to monitor or improve the natural environment.

The goal of REIN is to increase the ability for local groups to share information on individual projects, form partnerships, find volunteers and alleviate duplication of efforts. By tracking current projects, REIN will allow Metro to issue an in-depth two-year report on the state of the region's watersheds and other ecosystems.

The REIN website will feature an interactive web tool to map study sites. Visitors can search for projects on the site; members with accounts can log on to enter, find or edit a project; administrators can review and publish projects; and staff can log on and generate reports. Visit REIN at www.rein.org.

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.

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February 2007 dch/final
Printed on recycled paper