

Rex Burkholder

METRO COUNCIL DISTRICT 5 NEWS



METRO

PEOPLE PLACES
OPEN SPACES

Rex Burkholder represents District 5, which includes Northwest Portland, North Portland, Northeast Portland, downtown Portland, a portion of Southwest Portland and a portion of Southeast Portland.



A message from Rex Burkholder

Six more weeks of winter it is! On Groundhog's Day, I had the pleasure of presiding over the hedgehog festivities at the Zoo. Ke, the resident hedgehog, saw her shadow. This was a fun event, complete with eager kids wanting to get a glimpse of Ke. And in case you didn't know, the groundhog is a relative newcomer to the prognosticating game. Historically, the hedgehog was used in this centuries-old European tradition, but immigrants to North America discovered there were no hedgehogs in their new homeland. They substituted the groundhog, but being purists, we're going back to the original critter. If you want to see the video of Ke seeing her shadow, go to the Zoo's website, www.oregonzoo.org/VideoArchive/HedgehogDay2007.htm.

In other news, as I've reported before, the Metro Council is currently updating the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) that will prioritize investments in transportation projects and maintenance. In order to understand what the public desires from transportation, we recently commissioned a detailed public opinion survey.

This region has been very innovative with transportation in the past building the first new light rail and streetcar lines in the US. This survey reflects a will to stay on this path. In general, what we're hearing from the public is that they desire a balanced transportation system – one that enables people to choose safe, affordable, reliable and environmentally sustainable ways to get around. Having options for getting around also relieves the burden off of any one mode – most notably highways and major roads – and keeps business commerce moving quickly and reliably.

This survey also told us that the public expects a disciplined fiscal approach to our transportation policy and planning. Specifically, they cited a preference for maintenance of existing roads before building new ones, that we take advantage of existing roads and services when building new housing, and that we fund the kinds of transportation that encourages community developments that bring housing, employment and stores closer together.

Finally, the public has a very sophisticated understanding of the impacts of driving on air quality as well as that our regional economy is dependent on a good transportation system.

As we move into the policy development phase of the RTP, we will be using this information – and information from other forms of public outreach – to help us form transportation policies that will be good for our region, and that also reflect public expectations.

To see the full results of this survey, visit www.metro-region.org/rtp.



Councilor Burkholder holds Ke the hedgehog, February 2, 2007

Michael Darham

— Rex Burkholder

Metro Council makes first purchase with 2006 bond measure funds

The Metro Council's purchase of a one-acre parcel in Sellwood with frontage on Johnson Creek kicks off the program voters approved in November for natural area and water quality protection. Located directly adjacent to the Springwater Corridor trail and Johnson Creek Park, this purchase provides opportunities to restore native vegetation, enhance water quality and protect fish and wildlife habitat.

The area can be seen by users of the Springwater Corridor trail when they cross the recently opened bicycle and pedestrian bridge over Johnson Creek. The bridge is part of the Springwater Corridor trail's "Three Bridges" project completed this fall.

Johnson Creek is the most densely urbanized creek in the region and is one of 27 target areas identified in the bond measure for habitat and water quality protection efforts. The Portland Bureau of Parks and Recreation will manage the site through an intergovernmental agreement with Metro, and already has plans to restore the stream with native vegetation that will improve water quality.

The Metro Council's [2006 natural areas bond measure](#), part of its [Nature in Neighborhoods](#) initiative, 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 greater Portland region.

Metro to hear public testimony on 2008-11 MTIP final draft list

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% 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. To ensure the accuracy of testimony, participants are asked to bring a written version of their spoken comments, and to be certain that contact information and affiliation (if any) are included. Testimony forms will be available at the hearing. Testimony may also be submitted by e-mail, US mail, fax, or over the website as long as it is received after the final draft list is released (Feb. 3) and before midnight on Feb. 13.

For technical questions about the Transportation Priorities process, programs or projects, call Ted Leybold, MTIP project manager, (503) 797-1759. For questions about public involvement, call Pat Emmerson, (503) 797-1551.

Studies help Metro, partners work on 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 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 factors that affect agriculture in addition to soil quality and water availability, including adjacent land use and agricultural use patterns, parcel size and location, and transportation.

The natural landscape features study was meant to address three issues – 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 as well as preserve biodiversity. The study team identified 27 areas in the region that should be considered when making growth decisions.

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.

Metro awards \$6.3 million for expansion area planning

The Metro Council has made available \$6.3 million in grants to local cities and counties for land use planning for areas brought into the urban growth boundary since 2002. The funds, to be distributed to three counties and 10 cities within the Metro region, will pay for concept and comprehensive planning so development can occur in newer expansion areas.

In 2002 and 2004, the Metro Council voted to expand the urban growth boundary by nearly 20,000 acres. Metro's code requires that affected cities and counties complete comprehensive land use plans within two years of an urban growth boundary expansion. Many local jurisdictions have lacked the necessary funding to complete the required planning. As a result, more than 6,000 of those acres remain unplanned and cannot be developed as residential, commercial, and industrial areas.

In response to requests to find funds to pay for this planning, the Metro Council convened a tax study committee to determine the scope of need and identify an appropriate mechanism to raise revenue. The committee recommended a limited-duration excise tax on construction permits throughout the region. The Council adopted a temporary regional construction excise tax in March 2006, which went into effect on July 1. This will raise \$6.3 million over an estimated three-year period. The tax will expire once the funds are collected.

For a list of jurisdictions and the amount of funding they will receive, visit Metro's website at www.metro-region.org and search for "planning in growth expansion areas."

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.

Zoo attendance highest in 120-year history

The Oregon Zoo broke its all-time calendar-year record in 2006, with 1,447,116 visitors – the highest attendance in the zoo's 120-year history. This is a 7 percent increase over the previous record, set in 2004, when the zoo attracted 1,350,952 visitors.

The Oregon Zoo continues to have the highest attendance of any fee-based tourist attraction in Oregon. Only Multnomah Falls, which does not charge an admission fee, has more annual visitors.



A SERVICE OF METRO

Events of note in District 5

For a complete list of events, check out our online calendar at calendar.metro-region.org.

7-9:30 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 8

How animals work

How can turtles breathe while they are at the bottom of a pond all winter? Why don't ducks get hypothermia swimming around in freezing cold water with their bare feet? Why are there no warm-blooded animals with gills? Join Metro naturalist James Davis for a look at the incredible adaptations different animals have to meet the same basic needs – food, water, oxygen and shelter. Understanding how animals work greatly increases our awareness and appreciation of their amazing abilities and unique ways of life. For adults and teens. Meet in room 370 at Metro Regional Center. Registration and payment of \$10 per person required in advance; call (503) 797-1715.

7-9 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 15

npGREENWAY community meeting

Get involved in npGREENWAY, a new community group advocating the extension of the Willamette Greenway from the Eastbank Esplanade to the St. Johns Bridge and eventually on to Kelley Point Park. This new trail would serve both nature lovers and commuters. Meet at WorkSource Portland at 4610 N. Trenton St. at New Columbia in North Portland. For more information, visit www.npgreenway.org or call (503) 823-4099.

10 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 17

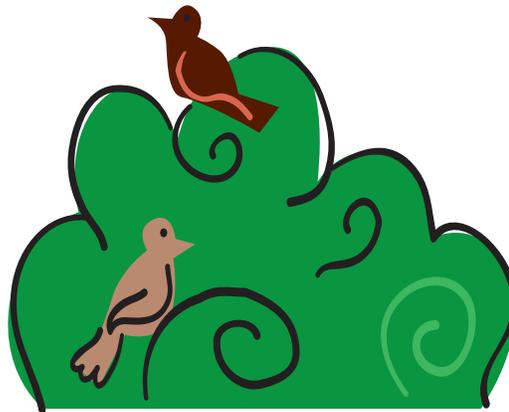
Winter birds at Smith and Bybee Wetlands

It's a waterfowl wonderland in the Portland area with thousands of ducks, geese and even swans spending the winter here. On a good day, you can see a dozen different species of waterfowl and other water birds such as grebes, gulls, coots, cormorants and herons. This is also the best time of year to see bald eagles and other birds of prey. Bundle up and meet naturalist James Davis at the natural area parking lot on Marine Drive. Binoculars will be available to borrow. Suitable for adults and teens. Free. Advance registration required; call (503) 797-1715.

10 a.m.-2 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 18

Smith and Bybee Wetlands paddle trip

Traveling by canoe or kayak is the best way to explore Smith and Bybee Wetlands Natural Area in North Portland. Meet at the parking lot on North Marine Drive. Bring your own kayak or canoe and personal flotation device. The new water control structure is helping to restore the natural area to a seasonal wetland. The changes are great for wildlife but they make paddle conditions difficult to predict. The trip leader will contact participants if it is necessary to cancel the trip. Advance registration required; call Jeff Locke at (503) 771-1500 or send e-mail to keith_locke@msn.com.



Councilor Rex Burkholder contact information

Address	600 NE Grand Ave. Portland, OR 97232
Phone	(503) 797-1546
Fax	(503) 797-1793
E-Mail	burkholderr@metro.dst.or.us
Assistant	Kathryn Sofich
Phone	(503) 797-1941
E-Mail	sofichk@metro.dst.or.us
Web	www.metro-region.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.

Your Metro representatives

Metro Council President
David Bragdon

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

Auditor
Suzanne Flynn

February 2007 dch/final
Printed on recycled paper