

Rod Park

METRO COUNCIL DISTRICT 1 NEWS



METRO

PEOPLE PLACES
OPEN SPACES

Rod Park represents District 1, which includes Fairview, Gresham, Happy Valley, Maywood Park, Troutdale, Wood Village, Damascus and portions of East Portland.



A message from Rod Park

For those of you with kids with spring break this month, I would like suggest a field trip to the Oregon Zoo. With both indoor and outdoor exhibits, it's a perfect place to go for the unpredictable March weather.

The Oregon Zoo is home to animals from all corners of the world, including Asian elephants, Peruvian penguins and Arctic polar bears. Committed to conservation of endangered species and their habitats—both locally and around the globe—the zoo is a center for wildlife preservation and field research. The zoo contains about 1,029 specimens representing 200 species of birds, mammals, reptiles, amphibians and invertebrates. Of these, 21 species are endangered and 33 are threatened.

The zoo is not all just about the animals. The zoo's botanical garden has more than 1,000 species of exotic plants, including pelican flower and ground orchid. Some of the exotic plants are harvested and given to the animals as browse. In addition, you can learn more about Metro's conservation work, the Nature in Neighborhoods program, by stopping by a kiosk located in the Cascades Stream building. Throughout the year, this kiosk will highlight community groups' work related to this two-year, \$1 million effort to restore or enhance nature in the urban area. Check out the zoo's website for more info: www.oregonzoo.org.

Lastly, while you're in the area you should also check out the Portland Children's Museum (www.portlandcm.org) and the World Forestry Center (www.worldforestry.org). The museum and the center are located within walking distance from the zoo. And remember, you can take the Max!

— Rod Park

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. Nature

in Neighborhoods aligns existing and new conservation efforts by private non-profits, governments and property owners behind a region-wide plan in order to ensure that all residents of the region have access to nature.

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.

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REIN website

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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.

Metro awards \$6.3 million for growth 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. These 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."

Businesses partner with Metro to Recycle at Work

More than 175 businesses joined Metro and local governments this fall to increase recycling in the workplace during the Recycle at Work campaign. An additional 300+ businesses signed up to receive regular email tips about how to increase recycling in the workplace.

Participating businesses agreed to a few simple steps to make it easier for employees to recycle and to inform employees of what can and cannot be recycled (staples and paperclips are ok!). They took steps such as ensuring that every employee has a desk-side recycling box, posting informational posters in work areas and talking about recycling at a staff meeting.

It's never too late to join us, just e-mail our recycling specialists at info@recycleatwork.com, call (503) 234-3000 or visit www.recycleatwork.com. Metro Council and local governments continue their commitment to providing recycling services year-round.



Recycle at Work

from Metro and your local governments

www.RecycleAtWork.com

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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.

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