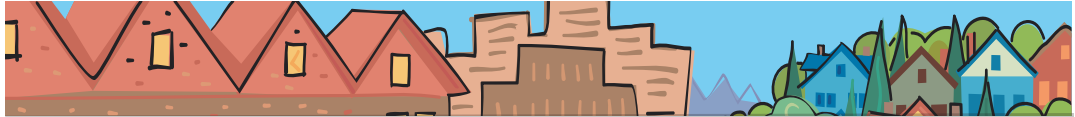


Rex Burkholder

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

Some of you may have read Randy Gragg's farewell column in the Sunday (May 20) Oregonian. In it he claims that the Portland region has "no plan" for transportation. I found this column to be baffling for a number of reasons. I want to use this opportunity to let you know that, quite contrary to how Mr. Gragg has characterized things, my Metro Council colleagues and I are indeed undertaking very serious and ambitious transportation planning and implementation for this region.

Although Mr. Gragg mentioned this region's most symbolic transportation accomplishment—our growing light rail system—there is much more to the story: Our shortening work commute trips (10 miles average in 1990, 7 in 2000); the highest rate of bicycle use in any large metro area in North America; improved air quality (no violations of federal standards in 7 years versus 90 or more in the 1970s); declining per capita auto use; and transit use growing at almost twice the rate of population growth.

These successes didn't happen by accident—they are the direct result of decades-long, coordinated efforts of our region's 25 cities, TriMet and Metro along with business, freight and community groups, working together.

Mr. Gragg is right in pointing out that there are great challenges ahead with continued population growth, climate change and uncertainties around oil supply and price. Add to these the failure of state and federal investment to keep up with needs—the last federal and state gas tax increases were both in 1993! But far from doing nothing, as Mr. Gragg claims, Metro is leading the region through a full re-examination of both transportation and land use policies to address these challenges.

This is not an easy or simple task. All of us are conditioned by 50 years of massive federal subsidy of highways. Until recently, as much as 90 percent of highway costs were paid for with federal funds, while transit has always been primarily a local responsibility. Making up this funding gap would require more than doubling the current Oregon gas tax. Clearly, we will have to do things differently if we are to keep this region livable and its economy functioning. Like locating jobs and housing closer together as well as making walking and cycling easy, safe and attractive

What I found most perplexing about Mr. Gragg's column, however, is his comparison of recent huge tax increases for transportation in Denver, Houston and Phoenix with our efforts here—the insinuation being that we're not as aspirational as they are. With all due respect, he completely missed the point on that one. Because, unlike Portland, which made wise, forward-looking transportation investments decades ago, those cities put all their eggs into vast and unsustainable road transportation systems.

On top of that, those cities did not make the wise land use choices like we have done. As a result, they have found themselves in a complete, sprawling mess today. So I would argue that those transportation funding initiatives that Mr. Gragg holds up as models for Portland, really are more like lessons for all growing cities: if you don't make *continued*

Message from Rex

continued from page 1

the kind of smart investments that Portland did, you'll get stuck with a huge tab trying to play catch-up.

It is true that our region needs to get serious about finding ways to invest more in our transportation system, but I am confident that we won't be forced to take such drastically expensive action as those cities have because we have such a well-balanced transportation system as well as efficient land use and growth patterns upon which to build.

Like you, I'm very proud to be a resident of such a fine region, not just for our wonderful natural features, but also because we take such good care of this place and make good plans to keep it that way for generations to come.

If you would like to learn more about the Regional Transportation Plan and let me know your concerns, please visit: www.metro-region.org/article.cfm?articleid=137.

— Rex Burkholder

Public invited to discuss options to improve transportation between Lake Oswego and Portland

Should rapid bus or streetcar be considered on Highway 43 and the Willamette Shoreline right of way? Should a pedestrian and bike trail be built between Lake Oswego and Portland?

These and other questions will be considered at an open house meeting to discuss ways to improve transportation between Lake Oswego and Portland. The Project Advisory Committee, made up of community members, has been studying possible transit and trail alternatives in the corridor since July 2005. The public is invited to review alternatives identified to improve transportation in the corridor.

After defining a wide range of transit and trail alternatives, Metro staff analyzed several options before three committees—one comprised of citizens, another of technical advisors one of elected officials—narrowed the wide range to a few that best address transportation needs in the corridor.

One of three alternatives or combinations of alternatives will advance for further study in the next phase of the project. They include a no-build option, a Bus Rapid Transit line on Highway 43 and a streetcar on the Willamette Shoreline right of way, Macadam Avenue or parts of both. Information will also be available on the project timeline and future public involvement opportunities.

The open houses will follow a flexible, drop-in format so residents can arrive at any time and spend as much time as necessary talking with staff or reviewing maps and materials. A feedback form will allow Metro to capture written comments.

Open houses will take place on the following days:

Wednesday, June 27, 6 to 8 p.m.

US Bank Building

120 N State St., Lake Oswego

Parking at the US Bank lot or across State St. in the city-owned lot

Thursday, June 28, 5 to 7 p.m.

David Evans and Associates

2100 SW River Pkwy., Portland

Parking at the lot just south east of the Marriott Residence Inn under the Marquam Bridge

A 45-day public comment period for the project will open June 27 and continue through August 17. During this time anyone can submit comments by:

- Attending an open house
- Sending email comments to trans@metro.dst.or.us
- Recording comments on Metro's transportation hotline at (503) 797-1900, option 3
- Mailing comments to LOAA, 600 NE Grand Ave., Portland, OR 97232.

After the open house meetings, the citizen advisory committee will make its recommendation on which options to study further.

A mid-July public hearing will also provide an opportunity for testimony before the project Steering Committee, which is made up of elected officials from the cities of Lake Oswego and Portland, Clackamas and Multnomah counties, TriMet, ODOT and Metro. The Steering Committee will then forward its recommendation to project partners for a vote sometime this summer. A final vote by the Metro Council will take place in fall 2007.

To learn more, visit www.metro-region.org/lakeoswego or call (503) 797-1756.

Metro Council appoints members to enhancement grant committee

The Metro Council has appointed four new members to the North Portland Rehabilitation and Enhancement Committee, a group that selects neighborhood improvement projects to fund in North Portland.

New committee members are Chris Duffy, Chair of Arbor Lodge neighborhood association, member of the Interstate Corridor Zoning Review Committee and volunteer at Chief Joseph Elementary School; Doretta

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Enhancement grant committee

continued from page 1

Schrock, board member of the North Portland Public Safety Action Committee and Housing Authority of Portland community advisory committee member; Robin Plance, member of the city's Charter Review Commission; and Mike Salvo, board member of the North Portland Business Association and Meals-on-Wheels volunteer.

In 1985, the Oregon Legislature gave the Metro Council authority to establish a mitigation fund to compensate the community affected by the now-closed St. Johns Landfill. Projects selected for funding must benefit residents who live in the area. The money was generated from a 50-cent surcharge collected on each ton of garbage taken to the old landfill.

Metro's North Portland program has awarded more than \$2 million to more than 400 projects to date. Projects include distributing food to the hungry, nutrition education projects, health care clinics and screenings, a tool-lending library for low- to moderate-income residents, free concerts in Cathedral Park and dance classes for children at a local community center.

Metro Council awards \$421,000 in Nature in Neighborhoods grants

Interested citizen groups, businesses, non-profit organizations, school groups, neighbors, government agencies and service organizations submitted 30 applications for \$420,685 in funds for nature-friendly projects through Metro's Nature in Neighborhoods grant program.

The grants, announced May 24, were awarded to 19 groups for 21 projects focusing on restoration, conservation education and other innovative ways to motivate communities to protect the nature of our region. The grant program is part of the Nature in Neighborhoods initiative, the Metro Council's commitment to protecting fish and wildlife habitat in the region.

Grants in Districts 5 include:

- Native American Youth and Family Center - \$10,000 for restoration of 10 acres around the center, which is located on an historic Chinook fishing village and is close to the Columbia River
- East Columbia Neighborhood Association - \$36,380 the Lower Columbia Slough habitat restoration and education project at the 28-acre Children's Arboretum
- Verde (non-profit landscaping services and job training program - \$24,970 for the Verde Native Plant Nursery, which provides watershed education for students, training for nursery workers, native plant propagation

and support of garden installations at the Hacienda Community Development Corporation, a non-profit organization that develops affordable, supportive housing and builds thriving resident communities for working Latino families and others in Oregon.

Metro acquires unique natural areas in Washington County

Metro recently purchased two additional natural areas in Washington County with funds from its 2006 natural areas bond measure.

Both are examples of wet prairie; one is a 44-acre parcel along SW Hillsboro Highway in Scholls adjacent to Metro's Gotter Prairie natural area. The purchase provides an opportunity to protect a remnant of Oregon white oak habitat as well as restoration of the river's floodplain.

The other recent acquisition in the valley, two parcels totaling 53 acres located off Scholls-Sherwood Road, protects the area where Heaton and Baker Creeks meet and includes more than one and three quarter miles of stream frontage.

Three of the top goals of Metro's natural areas program are to safeguard water quality, protect valuable wildlife habitat and conserve or restore native ecosystem. These purchases allow Metro to meet all of those goals.

Events of note in District 5

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

Thursday, June 7, 7 a.m.

Columbia Slough birding bike ride

Take a leisurely, pre-commute bike ride along the Lower Columbia Slough Trail and enjoy the lively birdlife to be encountered on a spring morning. Learn about future extensions of the trail and how citizens can get involved in protecting and restoring the slough. Helmets are required. Directions and other details will be mailed to you. Free. Advance registration required; visit www.audubonportland.org or call (971) 222-6116.

Thursday, June 7, 7 p.m.

North Portland future greenway trail walk

Join trail advocates working to extend the Willamette River Greenway from the end of the Eastbank Esplanade through North Portland. Walk along a short paved existing trail through Willamette Cove, former industrial sites, under cottonwood trees and along the edge of the working Willamette River to Swan Island, and return along Willamette Boulevard for sweeping vistas across the Willamette and the west hills. Wear good, sturdy shoes to cover five miles. Meet at the end of North Pittsburg Avenue near the intersection with North Crawford Street at Cathedral Park under the St. Johns Bridge. Free, but donations will be accepted. To register, call (503) 823-4099 or send e-mail to info@npgreenway.org.

Saturday, June 9, 9 a.m.

Columbia Slough stewardship at Salish Ponds

Enjoy a stroll along the trail at Salish Ponds Wetlands Park in Fairview while picking up litter and improving habitat in the Columbia Slough watershed. Gloves, bags and refreshments will be provided. Advance registration required; call Melissa at (503) 281-1132.

Saturday, June 9, 9:30 a.m.

Intermediate animal tracking practice at Smith and Bybee Wetlands Natural Area

Metro volunteer naturalist and experienced tracker John Halsell leads a monthly tracking program on the second Saturday of each month at Smith and Bybee Wetlands. Practice the ancient art of tracking on sand, mud and the forest floor. This is an outstanding place to find evidence of a variety of urban wildlife including beaver, deer, coyote, raccoon and rabbits. Most of the time will be spent walking on sand or paved trail to find and discuss tracks and sign "in the wild." Participants will get the most from the class if they have previous tracking experience. Suitable for adults and teens. Meet in the parking area on North Marine Drive. Free. Advance registration required; call (503) 797-1715.

Saturday, June 9, 10 a.m.

Lone Fir Pioneer Cemetery tour

Embark on a unique history lesson while enjoying the beauty and tranquility of this old cemetery in Southeast Portland. The tour highlights Portland's founders, early pioneers and nationally recognized figures, as well as interesting headstones and monuments. Explore 30 acres of mature trees and a very special rose garden. Suitable for all ages. Meet at the main entrance at Southeast 21st Avenue and Morrison Street. Advance registration is not required. A suggested donation of \$10 goes to headstone restoration and educational programs. For more information, call (503) 775-6278.

Tuesdays, June 12 and 26, 7 p.m.

Twilight Tuesday at Smith and Bybee Wetlands Natural Area

This relaxing walk takes advantage of long summer days and gives you a chance to unwind after work. Dusk is one of the best times to see wildlife, especially during the summer. It is about the only time you can see most mammals such as beaver, muskrat, otter, raccoon, deer and bats. Metro naturalist James Davis teaches the basic techniques of wildlife watching and identification. Bring your binoculars or borrow a pair of ours. Suitable for adults and children age 10 and older; participants must be able to be quiet, sneaky and patient. Registration and payment of \$5 per adult are required in advance; call (503) 797-1715.

Saturday, June 16, 10 a.m.

Monument repair workshop, Lone Fir Pioneer Cemetery

Monument conservation is critical to preserving the history here. Help repair larger obelisks and reset broken, damaged stones in danger of disappearing altogether. Meet at Southeast 21st Avenue and Morrison Street. Advance registration required. For more information, call (503) 775-6278.

Saturday, June 16, 10 a.m.

Natural gardening seminar, Livingscape Nursery

Turning turf into raised beds – Grow food and flowers where once was lawn
Why not turn part of your lawn into a garden bed to grow gourmet organic food or beautiful blossoms? Learn several techniques for removing lawn without herbicides, and for creating beautiful, productive raised beds. Also hear tips for starting a gourmet vegetable garden or fun flowerbed in June – it's not too late! All natural gardening seminars are free. Reservations are required and limited to 60 participants. To register, call Metro Recycling Information at (503) 234-3000.

Saturday, June 16, 1 p.m.

Explorando el Columbia Slough, Whitaker Ponds Natural Area

Celebrate the nature and history of the Columbia Slough at this annual environmental festival offering activities in Spanish and English. Enjoy canoe trips, music, bird watching, nature games and displays, refreshments and more. Come to Whitaker Ponds Natural Area at 7040 NE 47th Ave. in Portland. Free. For more information, call (503) 281-1132.

Saturday, June 30, 9 a.m.

Summer bird watching at Smith and Bybee Wetlands Natural Area

Join James Davis and other Metro naturalists for some great birding. Watch fledglings and family activities such as feeding and flocking. Learn to identify the most common birds by their songs as well as their appearance. Suitable for adults and children ten and older. Bring your binoculars or borrow a pair of ours. Meet in the parking area on North Marine Drive. Free. Advance registration required; call (503) 797-1715.

Councilor Rex Burkholder contact information

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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

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Suzanne Flynn