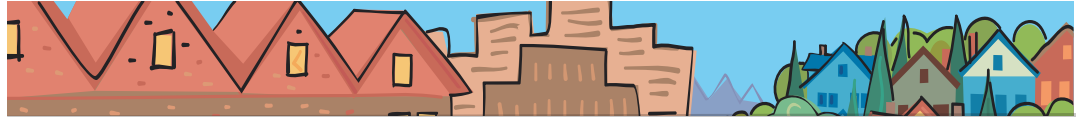


Kathryn Harrington

METRO COUNCIL DISTRICT 4 NEWS



METRO

PEOPLE PLACES
OPEN SPACES

**Kathryn Harrington
represents
District 4, which
includes Northern
Washington
County, Cornelius,
Hillsboro, Forest
Grove, Northwest
Beaverton, Aloha,
Rock Creek, Bonny
Slope, Bethany,
Raleigh Hills, West
Slope, Cedar Mill
and Cedar Hills.**



Keeping our balance: urban, suburban, rural

Oregon is a beautiful state, and our region is consistently rated as one of the most attractive urban environments in the world. Over the last few decades, the Oregon land use system – and for the last decade, the regional 2040 growth plan – have helped us develop an important balance between the needs of urban development and our shared value of preserving farm, forest and natural resource lands. Our population has been growing faster than expected, partly because of the beauty of our region, and will continue to do so. Our job is to keep our balance as we grow.

When we grow out, we consume resource lands, and that can stress our valuable, thriving agricultural and forest economy and our natural resources. When we grow up, we increase density, and that can stress our existing neighborhoods and historic areas. Keeping our balance means carefully considering all impacts of growth decisions we make, and encouraging public and private choices that yield livable communities, healthy employment opportunities and protection of our most important non-urban resources.

Our 2040 Growth Concept plan encourages development of regional, town and neighborhood centers and key corridors in order to reduce the pressure of growth on existing neighborhoods and rural areas, and to leave elbowroom for open space and larger lots where practical. Continuous learning and evaluation is important. Metro's New Look and related programs are taking stock of good results we've had here and ideas from elsewhere, so we can encourage more of the things that work well.

Recently I visited the Vancouver, BC area with city councilors, county commissioners, and private sector planners and developers from our region. We looked at the vibrant urban and suburban communities of that region, and came away with two clear conclusions regarding their livability. First, it isn't about the buildings (tall as they may be), but rather it's the amenities – the parks, the walkable community villages, community centers, the connected feel. Second, as neighborhoods are developed, they maintain sightlines of the nearby hills, mountains and neighborhood features such as community buildings and water. Doing that here in Washington County, our sightlines might take in the Chehalem Mountains, the Skyline hills, Mount Hood and the coast range.

In July, I also joined the 30th annual Washington County Agriculture Tour, hosted by the Hillsboro Chamber of Commerce. Washington County continues to host a strong, economically valuable agricultural industry with a wide diversity of products from nursery stock to berries and potatoes (for delicious chips made right here in Oregon). The economy of our state and region is quite diverse, with Washington County the host for a variety of industries, including high-tech, health care and medical research, agriculture, and much more. Fellow

continued

Keeping our balance

continued from page 1

participants echoed feedback that I hear continuously in our community: “Please be sure to retain our valuable agriculture and natural areas as our region grows in population.”

Over the months ahead, I will continue to work with my fellow councilors and our many regional partners to develop updated urban growth ideas, tools and funding solutions. I encourage you to join us in our educational process, including a September 26 event where two experts will discuss the benefits and consequences of promoting development in centers and transportation corridors. (For more information, visit www.metro-region.org/greatestplace.) We will work to keep our balance as we grow – between “up” and “out,” between density and elbowroom, between urban and rural – so we can maintain a diverse and vibrant economy, livable communities for you and your family, and the natural resources that make this such a wonderful place to live.

— Kathryn Harrington

The 2040 match of the century: Corridors vs. Centers Sept. 26

Get a ringside seat for a free lively debate about different strategies for implementing the 2040 growth concept, our region’s plan for the future, 7 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 26, in the Metro Council chamber, 600 NE Grand Ave. in Portland. The match features heavyweight professors Patrick (“Corridors”) Condon, University of British Columbia, and Gordon (“Centers”) Price, Simon Fraser University, and will be refereed by Metro Councilor Robert Liberty.

Condon, professor of landscape architecture at UBC, favors low and mid-rise development along transit corridors – three and four story mixtures of housing, stores, restaurants, professional services and offices. Price, director of the City Program at SFU and former Vancouver, BC city councilor, is a strong supporter of the

strategy emphasizing growth in high-energy, high-density centers.

Both contenders are internationally recognized experts in their fields and extremely familiar with the Portland metropolitan region. Both approaches are consistent with our region’s 2040 plan for growth. Will either strategy be victorious or will it be a draw? Can both sides win? You be the judge.

We’ll provide the popcorn.

Metro Council considers options for convention center hotel

The Metro Council is evaluating options to enhance the operations of its Oregon Convention Center (OCC) so as to maximize economic benefit for the region, including a proposed headquarters hotel. In recent years, demand for national conventions at the OCC has leveled off. The lack of a headquarters hotel with a large block of rooms adjacent to the OCC is cited as one of the reasons event planners elect to hold events in other cities.

In February, the Council agreed to study the alternatives. The studies are now available via the Metro website at www.metro-region.org/hotel.

The Metro Council is in the final stages of evaluating the alternatives. Analysis of the alternatives will be presented 11:30 a.m. Thursday, Sept. 6 at a Metro Council work session. The Metro Council will hold a public hearing at its 2 p.m. Sept. 20 meeting and is scheduled to vote at its 2 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 27 meeting. All meetings are in the Metro Council chamber at 600 NE Grand Ave. in Portland.

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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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September 2007 dch/final
Printed on recycled paper