

Robert Liberty

METRO COUNCIL DISTRICT 6 NEWS



METRO

PROVIDING
OPEN SPACES

**Robert Liberty
represents
District 6, which
includes portions of
Northeast, Southeast
and Southwest
Portland.**



Run those policies up a poll and see who salutes

The National Association of Realtors (NAR) commissioned a national poll of 1,000 adults in early October on the subjects of growth and transportation. The results show how much public opinion about transportation and development has changed in this country.

In response to the question, “Which of the following proposals is the best long-term solution to reducing traffic in your area?”

49% supported “Improve public transportation” and 26% chose “Develop communities where people do not have to drive as much.” “Build new roads” was chosen by only 21% of the respondents.

When asked about the best ways to address “climate change and energy security,” 62% “strongly approved” (and a total of 88% approved) providing improved public transportation. About one-half (49%) “strongly approved” the strategy of building “communities where people can walk places so that people can use their cars less,” and an additional 34% “approved” of that strategy.

The people responding to the poll were asked how they would prefer to accommodate 100 million more Americans by 2050. An impressive 81% preferred to “build new housing and commercial development in already developed areas,” versus only 14% who wanted to “continue to build new suburbs on the edge of the existing suburbs.”

In summary, most Americans believe the best way to address growth and congestion is by redeveloping existing communities, making them more walkable and increasing public transportation. (The poll results can be found at the NAR website page devoted to “Smart Growth”: http://www.realtor.org/smart_growth.nsf)

If Americans as a whole believe these ideas, it is hard to imagine that the residents of our region aren’t even more supportive of public transit and compact growth that emphasizes reinvesting in existing urban areas. Meanwhile, here in the Portland region, once again we are hearing proposals for massively expensive freeway expansions, including a \$4+ billion 10 to 12 lane freeway bridge over the Columbia River, which will facilitate even more auto-oriented sprawl.

Is congestion a problem? Yes.

Should we be making public investments in our transportation infrastructure (including maintaining what we have)? Yes.

But shouldn’t we be finding smarter, cheaper, greener approaches to the problem than massive and expensive investments in freeways based on 1960 conceptions of transportation and land development?

Absolutely.

- Robert Liberty

Council votes to continue studying headquarters hotel

On September 27, the Metro Council voted to request a comprehensive financing plan for the Oregon Convention Center headquarters hotel project including details of sufficient funding to minimize risk to Metro's general resources. Without such a financing plan, the hotel will not be developed.

This last hotel decision by the Metro Council allows another seventh month period to identify and to assess additional funding before a final hotel decision will occur in Spring 2008. Metro staff will now negotiate with other public entities and potential beneficiaries of the Oregon Convention Center to secure additional funding for the hotel project. In addition, Metro's chief operating officer will report to the Council by Nov. 1 regarding the progress of these funding negotiations. In addition, Metro's chief financial officer will work to prepare one or more financing plans for the project.

More information on the project, including the studies and analyses, can be found online at www.metro-region.org/hotel.

Public comments sought for Regional Transportation Plan

One of Metro's key regional roles is to lead the discussion on transportation planning and transportation investments. The long-range blueprint for this effort is called the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), which is currently in a four-year update. From Oct. 15 through Nov. 15, the public will have the opportunity to weigh in on the part of the plan that must fulfill federal requirements.

Public open houses/hearings are scheduled:

Nov. 8 - Hillsboro Civic Center Auditorium
150 E. Main Street
Hillsboro 97123
Open house starts at 4 p.m.; hearing starts at 5 p.m.

Nov. 15 - Metro Regional Center
600 NE Grand Avenue
Portland 97232
Open house starts at 1 p.m.; hearing starts at 2 p.m.

Comments may also be submitted via a

comment form on the project web page, by e-mail to rtp@metro-region.org, or by US mail to RTP Comments, Metro Planning Department, 600 NE Grand Avenue, Portland, OR 97232. Hard copies of the draft plan are also available from the Planning Department.

For technical questions about the transportation priorities process, programs or projects, contact Kim Ellis, RTP project manager, at ellisk@metro.dst.or.us or (503) 797-1617. For questions about public involvement, contact Pat Emmerson at emmersonp@metro.dst.or.us or (503) 797-1551.

Metro Council to meet Nov 29 at Wilson High School

Every year, Metro councilors choose locations around the region for offsite meetings. At the request of Councilor Robert Liberty, council will meet at Wilson High School in southwest Portland on Nov. 29. Two years ago, District 6 hosted the Metro Council in southeast Portland.

The Hillsdale Alliance (www.hillsdalenews.org) will make a presentation at the Nov. 29 meeting on the Hillsdale Town Center and how it connects with Metro's 2040 Growth Concept. The Alliance was formed in 2005 by representatives of various Hillsdale neighborhood organizations for the purpose of fostering communications and collaboration.

Thursday, Nov. 29
5:30-7:30 p.m.
Wilson High School cafeteria
1151 SW Vermont St., Portland

Please check the Metro website for calendar updates and meeting agendas. www.metro-region.org

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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.

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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