

# 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.**



### A tale of two boundaries

From time to time I am asked why some residents and properties in our region are inside the urban growth boundary (UGB) but are outside the boundary of jurisdiction for Metro, our elected regional government. People have been confused by the fact that their land has been brought inside the UGB, but they don't see Metro Council positions on their ballots when they vote. The reason is that the UGB and the Metro political boundary are not the same. They diverge, at least for a while, every time the UGB is expanded to include new land.

So why are these two boundaries different? History. Both the UGB and the Metro political boundary were drawn up in the 1970s, but by two different entities using two different sets of criteria. The Oregon Legislature drew the Metro political boundary, which defines the area where voters are represented by the Metro Council and also where Metro maintains regulatory and taxing authority. The initial UGB was drawn by the predecessor to Metro, the Columbia Regional Association of Governments (CRAG), which was made up of representatives of cities and counties and did not have an elected Council. The UGB is a land use boundary based in state law, dividing urban and rural areas. Rural areas cannot be developed for urban land uses, such as commercial use, industrial activities or subdivisions with lots smaller than two acres.

The elected Metro Council has the authority to provide services (such as household hazardous waste collection and natural areas habitat restoration), create regulations (such as mandatory dry waste recycling), and exercise taxing authority (such as for the voter-approved Natural Areas bond measure), but only inside the Metro political boundary.

So why would someone brought into the UGB also want to be in the Metro boundary? The answer is that even though these areas are inside the UGB, the county is prohibited by state law from making zone changes until the area is brought into the Metro boundary. Without those zone changes, urban development is not permitted. So there's plenty of incentive.

There are just a few areas around our Metropolitan region that are inside the UGB but outside the Metro legal boundary. A map to illustrate this visually has just recently been posted on the Metro web site. Visit [www.metro-region.org/harrington](http://www.metro-region.org/harrington) and click on "Urban growth boundary versus Metro boundary." You can also examine your property tax bill to see if the Metro property tax line items are listed. For my household, the Metro tax items added up to 2.4 percent of the total bill (with three-fourths of the Metro subtotal being voter-approved bond measures).

Property owners who live outside the Metro boundary and inside the UGB have a defined path to join the Metro boundary and vote in Metro elections – that path is annexation. If 50 percent of the voters and the owners of 50 percent of the property, or 100 percent of

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the voters in an area petition the Metro Council and request to be brought into the Metro boundary by “consent annexation,” the Metro Council can vote to bring that area in.

Further information about the Metro boundary, including a map showing the small areas of difference, the consent annexation process and answers to frequently asked questions, can be found on the Metro website. Visit [www.metro-region.org/harrington](http://www.metro-region.org/harrington) and click on “Urban growth boundary versus Metro boundary.”

— Kathryn Harrington

## Capital grant workshops offered in Washington County

Metro is offering workshops on its new Nature in Neighborhoods capital grants program. The Metro Council’s 2006 Natural Areas bond measure established \$15 million for projects that re-green and re-nature neighborhoods on public land. Participants can learn about the goals of the program, criteria, project eligibility, application procedures and tips on how to put together successful capital projects. Participants will have an opportunity to ask questions about specific project ideas.

**9 to 11 a.m. Saturday, Jan. 12**  
Clean Water Services training room,  
2550 SW Hillsboro Hwy, Hillsboro

**7 to 9 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 13**  
Metzger Park Hall, 8400 SW Hemlock St.  
Metzger/Tigard

For a full list of workshops, a grant handbook and application instructions, visit [www.metro-region.org/capitalgrants](http://www.metro-region.org/capitalgrants). To RSVP, contact Mary Rose Navarro at 503-797-1781 or [navarrom@metro.dst.or.us](mailto:navarrom@metro.dst.or.us).

## Join the “Connecting Green” gathering Jan. 8

An interconnected system of ecologically healthy natural areas, parks and trails in the metropolitan region will be discussed 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 8 at the Lucky Labrador Beer Hall, private party room, 1945 NW Quimby Street in Portland. The public is invited.

Called “Connecting Green,” the initiative brings together park advocates, nonprofit

organizations, elected officials and citizens to discuss the momentum building around the development of a unified trails priority, a funding strategy, restoration of natural areas, identification of regional “special places,” and building a coalition of agencies, foundations and nonprofits called the Connecting Green Alliance.

## Regional Transportation Plan update moves forward

Metro’s Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) is the long-term blueprint that guides investments in the region’s transportation system for all forms of travel—motor vehicle, transit, bicycle and pedestrian—and the movement of goods and freight. The RTP is updated regularly to ensure compliance with state and federal regulations and to address changing demographic, financial, travel and economic trends.

On Dec. 13, the Metro Council and the Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation (JPACT) approved the federal component of the RTP, pending an air quality analysis. The air quality analysis considers projected population and job growth, then determines whether the region would meet requirements of the federal Clean Air Act over the long term if all the projects in the plan were built.

The air quality analysis report will be on Metro’s web site [www.metro-region.org](http://www.metro-region.org) for public review and comment from noon on Jan. 18 until noon on Feb. 19. Printed copies can be obtained from the Metro Planning Department. Comments may be submitted by mail to Metro Planning, 600 NE Grand Avenue, Portland, Oregon, 97232; or by e-mail, [rtp@metro.dst.or.us](mailto:rtp@metro.dst.or.us).

## 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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