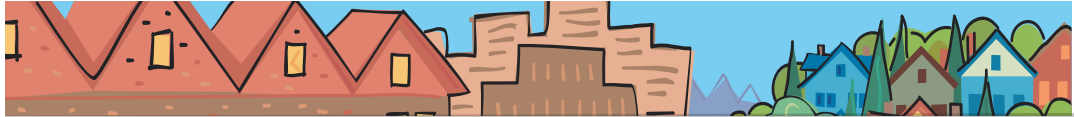


Rex Burkholder

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

“May you live in interesting times” may or may not be a Chinese curse, but it can seem like one when thinking of transportation in times of global warming and \$4 a gallon gasoline. What should we be thinking of when we plan for and try to fund transportation in today’s rapidly changing world? Will the automobile become a technology of the past, like the horse and buggy or will we find new energy sources to allow us to keep driving? Still, the issue of traffic and congestion will remain even if we find a new, clean and cheap source of energy to replace petroleum. Add to these questions the

high cost of maintaining the roads and bridges we already have and the declining value of the dollar, and we do, indeed, live in interesting times.

As a Metro Councilor and chair of the Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation (local elected officials and agency heads who make regional transportation policy), I think about these issues just about every day and am involved in many efforts to try and answer these questions. Let me tell you about a couple of initiatives underway:

Federal transportation legislation: every 6 years, Congress passes a transportation policy and funding bill, directing how almost \$300 Billion in federal gas taxes will be spent. I am a board member of the national Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations as well as part of an ad hoc group looking to improve how these funds are spent, particularly re-directing these resources to providing more choices for people in how they get around their communities, including increasing transit coverage as well as funding more walking and bicycling facilities. Congress will be debating this bill in 2009 and Oregon’s own Congressperson, Representative Peter DeFazio, heads the subcommittee that will write the bill. Many have high hopes that the federal government will lead the way in protecting our existing transportation investments, like repairing and replacing old bridges, as well as investing in cleaner, greener options.

State transportation legislation: I represent Metro on the Governor’s Transportation Vision Committee that was charged with coming up with ideas for the 2009 Legislative session as well as plotting new transportation strategies for the next 20 years to cope with climate change and rising energy costs. Lots of interesting discussion around this big table with lots of new ideas as well as fears and uncertainty. Some clear suggestions for the Governor include using least-cost planning to guide transportation investments (like in the energy field 20 years ago that led to investments in conservation instead of new capacity), significant state commitment to funding transit (now almost totally a local responsibility), and a renewed focus on freight movement, by rail as well as truck, as a key part of Oregon’s economy.

Regional high capacity transit study: 30 years ago, regional leaders plotted out an orderly investment in light rail, incrementally adding lines to create a system over time. This

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started with the Blue Line to Gresham and will end with extensions to Vancouver and Milwaukie. This study will determine the next 30 years of investments. In addition to questions about where we might want to build the next light rail connections, we are also investigating the use of Bus Rapid Transit (like the EMX in Eugene) and commuter rail. Given the scary rise in gasoline prices, would BRT be a quicker way to get good, fast transportation options to more people using existing roads? How can we connect to communities down the valley, like Salem? This study's results are due out this fall.

Regional Transportation Plan: This fall will also be the time where the two years of research and public involvement on the RTP will bear fruit in your opportunity to play "Sim City" and compare different transportation futures. We are modeling four scenarios of the future: highway oriented, transit oriented, managing demand (including pricing roads) and community level investment. We will be able to compare the performance, cost and impacts of these various options and have a public discussion about which best meets our hopes for the future.

Finally, September is Bike Commute Month and we at Metro are planning on winning in our category! My fellow Councilors will join me in riding into work. Some have a long commute and will probably bike to the MAX like so many others do. Find out more about biking to work by checking out the Bike Commute Challenge at www.bikecommutechallenge.com/oregon.

— *Rex Burkholder*

Metro to identify next 30 years of high capacity transit projects

The Portland metropolitan region is home to a pioneering transit system. Over 30 years ago, the region decided to grow differently than other cities when elected leaders and citizens rallied against construction of freeways through developed neighborhoods and instead directed resources to a light rail project along I-84. Since then, the region has constructed 44 miles of light rail. An additional 6.5 miles of light rail and 14.7 miles of commuter rail are currently under construction.

Metro is launching a study to consider where the next 30 years of high capacity transit investments should go. High capacity transit is characterized by routes with fewer stops and some separation from regular traffic and could mean light rail, commuter rail, streetcar or buses on a dedicated right of way.

In planning for future high capacity transit routes, Metro is not starting from scratch but building on a legacy of planning work that is captured in the 2040

Growth Concept and the Regional Transportation Plan. The 2040 Growth Concept, adopted in 1995 after an extensive public engagement process, calls for high capacity transit service to regional centers like Oregon City and town centers such as Tualatin. The Regional Transportation Plan, updated every four years, identifies potential high capacity transit corridors that will serve as the starting point for this planning effort.

The High Capacity Transit System Plan will provide the region with a prioritized set of corridors based on planned land uses, community values and potential ridership. The plan will be adopted by the Metro Council in spring 2009 after review by community members, elected officials and technical staff from around the region.

Get involved!

Attend a workshop to learn more about the project and provide input about what areas should be served with high capacity transit in the future.

5 to 8 p.m. Tuesday, Aug. 12
Walters Cultural Arts Center
527 East Main St., Hillsboro

5 to 8 p.m. Wednesday, Aug. 13
Oregon City Pioneer Center
615 Fifth St., Oregon City

5 to 8 p.m. Thursday, Aug. 14
East Portland Community Center
740 SE 106th Ave., Portland

To learn more about the project or get on the mailing list, call 503 -797-1755, send an e-mail to trans@oregonmetro.gov, or visit the project web site at www.oregonmetro.gov/goingplaces.

Integrating Habitats People's Choice Award winners

Metro's Integrating Habitats competition sought multi-disciplinary, collaborative designs that integrate built and natural environments in three distinct scenarios and more than 100 teams from around the world submitted entries. The three design categories were:

1. neighborhood infill development with a remnant oak woodland/savannah habitat interface
2. mixed-use development with a riparian forest habitat interface
3. commercial development with a lowland hardwood forest habitat interface

In addition to jurist selection awards, local residents and communities were asked to select the entries that most captivated and inspired them for the People's

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Choice Awards (PCA). Each of the categories had a student and professional PCA winner with a 7th PCA given to the Best in Competition. Short videos honoring each winner are available at Metro's web site (www.oregonmetro.gov/index.cfm/go/by.web/id=27944)

Two local efforts are featured among the PCA winners:

"Urban Ecotones," a collaboration of GreenWorks PC, Bruce Rodgers Design Illustration, Ankrom Moisan Associated Architects, ESA Adolphson, and SWCA Environmental Consultants, won first place jurist selection and PCA for Category 2. It was to be a 1st place jurist selection and win a PCA.

"Growing Together," a collaboration of EDAW and Yost Grube Hall Architects, took home three awards overall. It was both the 2nd place jurist and PCA winner for Category 3 and also took home the overall Best in Competition PCA.

The third non-student PCA winner was Category 1's "Integrating Habitats Creating Captivation" by Daniel O'Brien of Ball State University.

"Daily Migrations," by a team from the University of Arizona, was the third place jurist selection for Category 1 and the Student PCA winner in the same category.

The Category 2 student PCA was shared by "Designing Flow," Pennsylvania State University, and "The Green Spine: Backbone of a new commercial commons," from a second University of Arizona team.

The final student PCA went to a team from Georgia Institute of Technology for "Symbiotic existence through transactional awareness," which was also the third place jurist selection for Category 3.

Metro presents region's first walking guide

In July, Metro unveiled a new regional walking guide designed to connect residents with newly protected natural areas, scenic parks, historical sites, main streets and commercial districts throughout the Portland-Vancouver area. The 240-page Walk There! guidebook, indexed by city, offers 50 detailed routes organized by walk type and color-coded regional sections.

Thanks to support from Kaiser Permanente, local governments and community groups, Metro developed this comprehensive walking guide with every level of walker in mind – with routes that vary from easy strolls to longer distance walks with elevated terrains. A number of routes in the guide are suitable for individuals with mobility assistance devices or strollers. An informational bar on the first page of each route lists the difficulty rating, GPS coordinates for the start location, and length. Each section offers a detailed map

and description that explores the location's rich history and landscape.

Pocket-sized copies of Walk There! can be picked up at Metro at no charge. The guidebook will be distributed through Kaiser health education classes, as well as community walking events and other Kaiser programs. The guide can also be ordered online for \$5 shipping fee at www.oregonmetro.gov/walk.

Visitors to the web site can also download all 50-featured walks.

Metro makes first natural area purchase in Stafford Basin

The 25-acre property is located in the Stafford Basin and includes about 2,000 feet of frontage along both sides of Pecan Creek and a portion of a small tributary creek, helping protect water quality in the Tualatin River basin. Douglas fir, big-leaf maple, and cedar trees are found throughout the property along with a scattering of native understory plants. The purchase, utilizing funds from Metro's voter-approved natural areas bond measure, builds on the region's vision of a protected wildlife corridor along Pecan Creek from Luscher Farm to the Tualatin River.

Although many of the trees visible along the Stafford Road property boundary are covered with English ivy, the area along Pecan Creek is in good condition and provides the creek with significant water quality benefits. Metro's natural area restoration experts will remove the ivy and other non-native species that have gained a foothold and bring the struggling native plants back to health.

The Stafford Basin is one of 27 target areas identified for protection in Metro's 2006 Natural Areas bond measure. The program funds land acquisition and capital improvements that protect water quality and fish and wildlife habitat, enhance trails and wildlife corridors, and provide greater connections to nature in urban areas throughout the Portland metropolitan area.

Cooper Mountain Nature Park construction begins in August

Construction includes a parking area, nature center and trail system that will help visitors enjoy Cooper Mountain's unique landscape and learn about the plants and animals found there. The nature center will include space for environmental education programs, a base for volunteers and restrooms for everyone. Gardens will showcase native and drought-tolerant plants suited to Cooper Mountain's dry climate and south-facing slopes. Funding for construction comes from Metro's natural areas bond measure and a grant from the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department.

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Three miles of trails will traverse the site; including a wheelchair accessible loop. The trails pass through each of Cooper Mountain's distinct habitats - from forest to prairie to oak woodlands. Hikers will have grand views of the Chehalem Mountains and Tualatin Valley, close-up looks at Oregon white oaks and spring blooms, and glimpses of rare animal species like the Northern red-legged frog and Western gray squirrel.

Together with volunteers, Metro's science and stewardship team has spent the past decade restoring the oak woodlands, native prairies, Douglas-fir forests and perched wetlands at Cooper Mountain. Oak woodland and prairie habitats are rare in the Willamette Valley and their preservation offers an important link to the area's natural history. When the park opens to the public in 2009, visitors will be able to learn about Cooper Mountain's past while enjoying scenic beauty protected for the future.

Events of note in the district

Columbia Slough summer day at the ponds

9 to 11:30 a.m. Friday, Aug. 8

Join the Columbia Slough Watershed Council and the slough school education program for a field trip. Enjoy a nature hike, search for aquatic animals and complete a nature-themed craft. Bring water and a snack. Suitable for ages 7-11. Registration and cost: \$8 per child suggested donation. Advance registration required, call Rachel at 503-281-1132 or send e-mail to rachel.felice@columbiaslough.org.

Wapato Island wild food expedition

1 to 4 p.m. Sunday, Aug. 10
Explore edible plants of the place Native Americans called Wapato Island, today known as Sauvie Island. Investigate wild foods from marshes, fields and woods, including wapato, or Indian potato, wild cherry and more. Registration and cost is \$22. Advance registration required; call 503-775-3828.

Late summer paddle at Smith and Bybee Wetlands Natural Area

noon to 4 p.m. Saturday, Aug. 16
Bring your own kayak or canoe and personal flotation device. The new water control structure is helping to restore the natural area to a seasonal wetland; the

changes are great for wildlife, but they make paddle conditions difficult to predict. The trip leader will contact participants if it is necessary to cancel the trip due to low water levels. Registration and cost is free. Advance registration required; call Dale at 503-285-3084.

Twilight Tuesday at Smith and Bybee Wetlands Natural Area

7 to 9:30 p.m. Tuesday, Aug. 19
This relaxing walk at Smith and Bybee Wetlands Natural Area 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 cost: Registration and payment of \$10 per adult are required in advance; call 503-797-1850 option 4.

Wild foods in wilderness survival

1 to 4 p.m. Sunday, Aug. 24
Learn to determine when and which wild foods are desirable to use in both recreational and unplanned survival situations. See major poisonous plants. This core workshop provides a deeper understanding for all other Wild Foods Adventure workshops. Registration and cost: \$18. Advance registration required; call 503-775-3828.

For a complete list of events, check out our online calendar, www.oregonmetro.gov/calendar.

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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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