

Kathryn Harrington

METRO COUNCIL DISTRICT 4 NEWS | October 2008

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.



Community Evolution: Land use, Transportation, Infrastructure Investments -- Framing our Choices during Fall 2008

Last month in my newsletter ('We live in a time of transformation'), I highlighted the need for infrastructure improvements in our community, in each of the 25 cities and 3 counties that make up our metropolitan region. We have great expectations, substantial needs, and complex challenges. We each expect our communities to evolve, maintaining our continued high quality of life, irrespective of any population change.

The future will bring continued population growth, counting the children of our existing population. And there is the reality that, as some have said, funding "ain't what it used to be" to address our community needs. In so many ways, we simply can not afford business as usual.

These are what I and the other regional and local leaders see as the three overriding questions:

- Where and how will our metropolitan region grow during the next 40 to 50 years?
- What investments are needed to create jobs and livable communities?
- What transportation improvements are needed and how do we fund them?

So how do we get good answers? This fall, elected leaders from our cities, counties, and Metro, plus planning commissioners, business and community leaders, will review and discuss large collections of newly formed information. We will use that information to frame the choices we need to make, and the options available. This work will challenge our past practices and our current thinking.

The following questions are an entry point into the discussions and analysis, which will lead to still more questions and possible answers.

- How do demographic, economic and societal trends affect our land use, transportation, and investment choices?
- What effect does climate change have on our decisions? How do our decisions affect how much it costs people to travel and the quality of the air we breathe?
- What are the results of testing different land use policy and investment choices? What are the results of a business as usual approach? What are the consequences of delays in funding for infrastructure in recent UGB expansion areas and if infrastructure is not available to support future expansions? How might targeted public investments stimulate activity in the region's corridors and centers?
- What happens if we focus investments on roads? What happens if we focus investments on transit service? What happens if we initiate tolling on certain roads?
- What affect do different land use, transportation policy and investment choices have on each other?

continued

There will be a number of in-depth meetings with vigorous discussion and dialog over the months of October, November and December, all informed by countless hours expended in advance reading the new, comprehensive analysis information. These sessions will carry forward into our policy choices, with decisions to be made in 2009, to create preferred alternatives, potential futures for our communities, to realize our community visions, hopes and aspirations.

As we make choices for the continued evolution of our communities, I believe we must take a balanced approach with our growth planning policies and with our infrastructure investments, so we do not leave any area completely behind, while using public money effectively and fostering private investment.

Fall of 2008 will be an intense time. What we are grappling with will affect the future for you and your children and grandchildren. I hope that you will seize the opportunity to talk with your local city councilors, mayors, county commissioners, and planning commissioners about these questions and about your community hopes and aspirations.

– Kathryn Harrington

Metro supports state's greenhouse gas reduction targets with first phase of Regional Climate Change Action Plan

The Metro Council responded to the state's call for reduction in greenhouse gas emissions with the launch of the first phase of a regional climate change action plan.

The climate change action plan, part of Metro's sustainability initiative unveiled in April, is one of several strategies that support the overall goal of achieving economic, environmental and social sustainability in the region.

Metro's role, outlined by Councilor Rex Burkholder, is to provide regional leadership in coordinating the efforts of local governments, civic groups, university systems and business representatives to meet Oregon's greenhouse gas reduction goals set in 2007 by the state legislature. The state's greenhouse gas reduction targets call for a halt to emission increases by 2010, a 10 percent reduction in emissions below 1990 levels by 2020 and a 75 percent reduction in emissions below 1990 levels by 2050.

Elements of the first phase of the climate action plan include conducting a regional greenhouse gas inventory to establish baseline information; surveying existing goals, programs and activities in the region; creating a Climate Change Steering Committee to set regional priorities; and hosting a regional climate change summit to engage the public. Metro has allocated \$75,000 toward an estimated \$185,000 total cost for the first phase of implementation. Additional funding will be sought with regional partners and the Governor's office.

The actual climate action plan will be developed during the second phase by a task force of representatives from local governments, businesses, environmental advocacy groups and residents who will be responsible for setting greenhouse gas-reduction goals and identifying the programs that will help meet those goals.

An optional third phase would run concurrently with the first and second phases and include small "Climate Solutions" projects funded by a grant program.

Public comment sought on 2010-13 Regional Flexible Fund Allocations

Metro is hosting the following listening posts in partnership with the Oregon Department of Transportation. At the same time that Metro is seeking public input on the regional flexible fund allocations, ODOT is seeking public comment on the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program. Dates and locations for listening posts are:

5 to 8 p.m. Monday, Oct. 20
Hillsboro Civic Center
Room 113 B, 150 E. Main Street

5 to 8 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 30
Metro Regional Center
Council Chamber

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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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