

Carlotta Collette

METRO COUNCIL DISTRICT 2 NEWS | January 2009

Carlotta Collette represents District 2, which includes the cities of Gladstone, Johnson City, Lake Oswego, Milwaukie, Oregon City, Rivergrove and West Linn and a portion of Southwest Portland.



A timeless way of planning

A personal message from Councilor Collette

In 1979, I moved to Portland from Minnesota, and Christopher Alexander published “The Timeless Way of Building.” There’s no connection between the two, except that I bought the book that year and it, plus its sister book “The Pattern Language” have been the two most important influences in my understanding of the designed world ever since.

The Timeless Way describes a philosophical base for creating livable places, whether a room or a city. The Pattern Language outlines the steps, the “patterns” in architecture that lead to buildings and communities that are, in some hard to define way, perfect and ageless.

Over the years since these books were published, they’ve become classics of architecture and planning. Christopher Alexander and his team from the Center for Environmental Structure at Berkeley have gained an international reputation based on the structures and whole communities they’ve helped design.

I mention this here because in 2008 the City of Milwaukie hired Alexander and the Center for Environmental Structure to help design the south end of its downtown. I can’t imagine a wiser choice.

Milwaukie has long struggled with whether and how to grow its downtown. At the south end, there’s the potential for a couple of wonderful city parks – part wild and part urban. There could be a public plaza with a light rail station. New housing and shops could wrap around these and have views and connections to the city’s Riverfront Park. It could be the new heart of a city that’s too often had its heart torn by controversy.

Dozens of citizens have met with the Alexander team and shared their visions for the town. And what is truly exciting about what’s happening is that there is a shared hope – confidence would be too big a word – that the community and Alexander’s team might just have come together enough to do something truly extraordinary. Something that will live like a small town with an easy walk-about-in feeling, but with convenient links to the wider region.

Alexander’s preliminary proposal will be in Milwaukie’s hands this winter. There will of course be much debate over how and whether it really “fits” this city. It will be tweaked and tested. It may change altogether. But it could become a model for how our region grows – with extreme care and the engagement of its citizens.

I am a big believer in community creativity. I believe that how you design and build communities is critical to how well they live. I’m excited to live in a region where collective creativity is how we face our shared challenges. Stay tuned for the results in Milwaukie.

– Carlotta Collette



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Public weighs in on regional transportation funding

A 45-day public comment period on how to allocate regional flexible transportation funding for 2010-13 closed at noon on December 1, 2008. These funds come from two federal funding categories established by Congress—the Surface Transportation Program and Congestion Mitigation/Air Quality funds. These funds are administered in the Portland metropolitan region by Metro. A total of \$67.8 million is expected to be available during the 2010-13 funding cycle.

A new, two-step process for allocating regional flexible funds was developed by the Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation (JPACT) after extensive stakeholder and community input. During Step 1, JPACT identified nine regional programs and recommended that \$46.14 million be apportioned among them, subject to public comment.

During Step 2, local jurisdictions and agencies submitted 26 competitive applications to fund projects that totaled \$57.8 million in requested funding—about twice the \$21.65 million expected to be available. Public comments will help narrow the project list to more closely match available funding.

In total Metro received 797 comments as letters, emails, comment forms, online and written summaries of oral comments offered at four public “listening posts.” Of that total, 574 comments came in through the Metro web site. Regardless of category, projects that featured bicycle, trail and pedestrian improvements garnered the most support, accounting for 553 (69%) of all the comments received.

Next, the Transportation Policy Alternatives Committee (TPAC), a technical committee that provides recommendations to the Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation (JPACT), is scheduled to make its final draft recommendation by February 2, 2009, for further public review and comment. On February 12, 2009, JPACT and the Metro Council are scheduled to hold a public hearing on the recommendations before JPACT and the Metro Council consider approval in early March.

For more about the regional flexible transportation fund process, the candidate projects, and updates to the decision making schedule, visit the project website at: www.oregonmetro.gov/regionalflexiblefund. You may also call 503-797-1551 to request e-mail updates about the funding process.

Events to note in District 2

Story and stroll at Tryon Creek: Douglas fir Friday, January 16 , 1 p.m. to 2 p.m.

Join a park naturalist for nature story time and a stroll through the park. This program is geared toward families with children ages 3-6, but all are welcome. Registration is free. For more information, call 503-636-9886 ext. 225.

Story and stroll at Tryon Creek: Wiley Coyote Friday, January 23 , 1 p.m. to 2 p.m.

Join a park naturalist for nature story time and a stroll through the park. This program is geared toward families with children ages 3-6, but all are welcome. Registration is free. To register, call 503-636-9886 ext. 225.

Native Plant Center volunteer Saturday Saturday, January 24, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Help out at Metro’s Native Plant Center in Tualatin which provides an essential supply of rare native seeds and plant stock to support Metro’s restoration projects. Volunteers will help harvest native bulbs, replant seedlings grown from seed collected at Metro’s natural areas, harvest willow stakes, pot up native species into gallon pots, maintain seed beds, and harvest and replant wetland beds. This is a family-friendly volunteer opportunity and a great way to learn more about Metro’s native species conservation program. Prior gardening experience is not required. Gloves, tools, water and a snack are provided. For more information and to register, call Marsha at 503-701-7554.

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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Carlotta Collette, District 2
Carl Hosticka, District 3
Kathryn Harrington, District 4
Rex Burkholder, District 5
Robert Liberty, District 6

Auditor
Suzanne Flynn

Councilor Carlotta Collette contact information

600 NE Grand Ave.
Portland, OR 97232
503-797-1887 | 503-797-1793 fax
carlotta.collette@oregonmetro.gov

Ina Zucker, policy coordinator
503-797-1543
ina.zucker@oregonmetro.gov

www.oregonmetro.gov