

# Kathryn Harrington

METRO COUNCIL DISTRICT 4 NEWS | March 2009

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.



## Our economic interests, our quality of life

Metro's responsibility for urban growth management includes forecasting future needs for jobs and housing. I have previously described how Metro is working closely with our local city and county governments as well as business, environmental, land use and social issue interest groups on our next round of urban growth management decisions, a program we call 'Making the Greatest Place1.' In this program, Metro is utilizing new tools and the latest techniques to perform analysis and understand trends, including employment and economic trends. This involves national and regional research, plus focus groups and roundtables of businesses in our region, to collect, review and understand new information and perspectives. I believe this analysis is very significant for all of us.

Our quality of life here is the envy of many in the U.S.A., and to me a job is the anchor for a great quality of life. Despite the current challenging economic times, we are doing better than many. We all want good homes, and good jobs to support our interests and those of our families. But what does the future hold? How will we ensure good jobs for our children and their children?

Over the last thirty years, many industries including high technology/electronics, athletic apparel and equipment industries helped transform the economic landscape of the Portland metropolitan area. Here in Washington County, particularly in Hillsboro, there is great hope that the solar industry will help forge a bright and prosperous future over the next few decades. For example, SolarWorld2 (located in Hillsboro on Evergreen Road, with a 480,000-square-foot manufacturing plant on a 94 acre property) will produce solar photovoltaic (PV) silicon products, helping to establish the newest cluster in our traded sector ecosystem, providing products to our nation as well as to the global market.

But jobs benefit more than our families. The money employees and employers make also helps run our beautiful State of Oregon. Personal income tax paid by employees, sometimes called the "individual" income tax, is the state of Oregon's largest source of revenue. For 2007-09 (the current 2 year state budget), this revenue is estimated to be \$11.1 billion, or 86 percent of General Fund revenues3. The corporation income tax is the second largest source of revenue for the state General Fund. For 2007-09, this revenue is estimated to be \$857 million, or 6.7 percent of General Fund revenues3.

Here in Washington County, we have many fine businesses, and our employees generate 16% of the state income tax revenue for the state3, over 13% of the state general fund. The top three counties (Multnomah, Washington and Clackamas) together provide 49% of the state income tax revenue4. Thank you to our employers and employees for creating products for the world markets, valuable family wage jobs, and tax income to help run the important services of our state, contributing to the quality of life that we each experience and enjoy here!

As we look ahead in the coming decades, what will employers provide for our future? The lands currently inside the urban growth boundary are expected to accommodate housing plus employment industry growth for the next 20 years5. The urban and rural reserve program



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is looking 20-30 years beyond that. My colleagues and I on the Metro Council are working collaboratively with the local elected officials at the city government and county government levels to estimate what the future might hold for our urban growth needs, including businesses and industry. What jobs might your children and grandchildren hold for the benefits of themselves and their families? There are no certainties, rather ranges of possibilities. Together we will be choosing what potential future we are willing to plan for and work towards.

– Kathryn Harrington

Source notes: 1: [www.oregonmetro.gov/greatestplace](http://www.oregonmetro.gov/greatestplace)  
2: [www.solarworld-usa.com](http://www.solarworld-usa.com)  
3: [www.oregon.gov/DOR/STATS/exp09-11-toc.shtml](http://www.oregon.gov/DOR/STATS/exp09-11-toc.shtml) 4: [www.oregon.gov/DOR/STATS/101-406-08-toc.shtml](http://www.oregon.gov/DOR/STATS/101-406-08-toc.shtml) 5: Most recent decisions of 2002-2004. [www.oregonmetro.gov/index.cfm/go/by.web/id=277](http://www.oregonmetro.gov/index.cfm/go/by.web/id=277) (or search 'Urban Growth Boundary' at [www.oregonmetro.gov](http://www.oregonmetro.gov))

## Metro's recycling hotline: over two million served

The Metro Recycling Information hotline reached a major milestone when it answered its two millionth call on Saturday, February 28th. The popular recycling and disposal information clearinghouse has been part of the regional government since 1981. Fielding such questions as "how can I recycle 300,000 defective shopping bags" and "what can I do with 2.5 tons of outdated astrology books," the hotline operates six days per week with a staff of six specialists who answer questions from residents and businesses about recycling, garbage disposal, household hazardous waste, natural gardening and reuse options for unwanted materials.

In this increasingly automated era, callers are frequently surprised to hear a person answer the phone. According to customer-service surveys,

callers value the quick, helpful answers they get from talking with people at Metro's recycling information hotline.

The hotline has grown from an operation whose only resource was a map marked with recycling depots to a GIS database-driven service with hundreds of recycling, reuse and disposal referrals as well as several hundred topic files. In its first year of operation, the hotline answered just over 9000 calls. In 2008 more than 104,000 calls were answered.

The recycling information referral database can also be viewed through Metro's website. This additional way of providing information captured another audience: businesses that want to recycle. About 90 percent of hotline calls are residential, but 88 percent of web visitors in 2008 were from businesses.

Metro Recycling Information, at 503-234-3000, is open Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. The Find a Recycler web page address is [www.oregonmetro.gov/findrecycler](http://www.oregonmetro.gov/findrecycler).

## Metro Council meetings online

Metro Council meetings can now be viewed in streaming video on the TVCTV website (our cable provider for Washington County):

<http://www.tvctv.org/content/media/govtstreams.asp>

Each Metro Council meeting that is taped by our cable providers will be able to be viewed on this website. (There may be a delay of usually no more than a day when TVCTV does not provide the filming crew. We alternate weekly between TVCTV and PCM.) This is not yet a service provided by our other cable provider, Portland Community Media.

## 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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