

Kathryn Harrington

METRO COUNCIL DISTRICT 4 NEWS | May 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.



Your Neighborhood Amenities

A personal message from Councilor Harrington

What do you love about your neighborhood? Do you meet your friends or community group colleagues at a local coffee shop? Does your neighborhood sidewalk connect with others so that you can walk to the local park or local store? Are there childcare providers close by? How about a deli or restaurant? These and many other amenities help define the character of your neighborhood. As a real estate professional would tell you, more neighborhood amenities contribute to an increase in your home value. Local services help provide for economic vitality which contributes to a community or village feel.

There is an interesting web site which puts a numeric measure to the “walkability” of a neighborhood, based largely on the amenities nearby. You can find out your neighborhood’s score by visiting www.walkscore.com. My neighborhood scores 74 out of 100 – not bad at all.

In my 19 years of living here, I have seen an evolution, a gradual shift from regional amenities to more local amenities. Some of the shifts seem large. It used to be I would travel to Washington Square to shop, but now the Streets of Tanasbourne are within walking distance of my home. The nearest grocery store used to be three miles from my house, and now there are three within a mile. In large part, this has been made possible because there are more of us, a larger market base with more people for stores and businesses to draw on as customers.

This kind of community evolution involves some planning, to ensure that services can locate near and connect with customers - the market. Local government makes public investments in infrastructure, in partnerships to build parts of neighborhood and town centers, in standards, design review, sidewalks and people-friendly streetscapes. Metro continues to work with local city and county representatives to ensure that your neighborhood provides a high quality of life with economic vitality. I hope that you will join me and your other local elected officials in discussions to ensure that your everyday needs, (living, working, playing) are within your area of convenience.

– Kathryn Harrington

Metro considers fee changes for solid waste disposal

As part of the annual budgeting process, Metro is considering changes to solid waste disposal fees, including the per-ton price for waste disposal at Metro’s two transfer stations. Changes in disposal fees can affect what haulers charge for garbage collection.

Per Metro code, the rate-setting process to date has included public meetings of Metro’s Rate Review Committee (RRC), which comprises representatives from local government and the solid waste industry, along with recycling and rate experts and a citizen ratepayer. The committee forwarded its recommendations to the Metro Council, which considered them during an April 14 public work session.

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Metro already has taken steps to limit fee increases through programmatic reductions and operational changes included in the chief operating officer's proposed budget for Metro Council consideration. In addition, the RRC has recommended ways to further limit fee increases while continuing to deliver high-quality programs and excellent service.

There have also been opportunities for public comment. A hearing and first reading of the rate ordinance was scheduled for the April 30 Metro Council meeting. The council also heard testimony and was scheduled to take final action at the May 7 Metro Council meeting. Agendas and packets for public meetings on Metro's rates and solid waste budget are available online at <http://www.oregonmetro.gov/index.cfm/go/by.web/id=21730>.

Metro report shows urban centers, corridors generally most affordable

The Metro Council released a report that shows that town centers and transportation corridors are among the most affordable places to live in the region, and that additional investments in affordable housing will be needed as the region grows.

Metro's analysis of the Portland region's housing needs through the year 2030 builds on research completed by the Institute of Portland Metropolitan Studies at Portland State University. The study found that urban centers and transportation corridors have the greatest variety of housing and transportation options and often are the most affordable areas in the region.

Although urban centers and transportation corridors save money, the report says housing and transportation costs will still be a burden for 18 to 23 percent of households by 2030, depending on population growth rates. Today, that percentage is 17 percent. Metro considers people who spend more than 50 percent of their monthly budgets on rent and transportation cost burdened.

The report sets the stage for a discussion among the region's leaders about new incentives for mixed-use and multifamily homes and about investments in transportation and other infrastructure to support efficient use of land inside the existing urban growth boundary.

In 1995, the Metro Council and local governments from across the region endorsed

the 2040 Growth Concept, a blueprint for managing growth that seeks to direct new households and populations into town and regional centers and transportation corridors while protecting the character of single-family neighborhoods. Today's Housing Needs Analysis indicates that to provide more affordable housing options in centers and corridors, additional public investments and policy changes will be needed.

The Housing Needs Analysis is a companion report to the Preliminary Residential Urban Growth Report, which is intended to inform discussions about choices of public policies and investments that can support a wide range of housing options as the region's population continues to grow. The Metro Council welcomes public comment and feedback on this analysis.

In September, Metro will unveil a package of proposals aimed at integrating long-term regional land use policies with transportation investments. An updated Urban Growth Report, which will include an updated Housing Needs Analysis, will be part of that package, along with recommendations on urban and rural reserve designations and a 25-year Regional Transportation Plan, all of which will be adopted by the end of this year.

More information on the Housing Needs Analysis can be found online at www.oregonmetro.gov/urbangrowthreport

Events to note in District 4 **Hazardous waste collection event, Hillsboro** **Friday and Saturday, May 29 and 30** **9 a.m. to 2 p.m.**

Bring your pesticides, paints and other unwanted products to Metro's free household hazardous waste collection event. Call Metro Recycling Information at 503-234-3000 for more information.

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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.

Your Metro **representatives**

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