

Councilor Burkholder is continually updating his contact list, so you may be receiving this newsletter for the first time. If you have any questions about the content of this newsletter or wish to be taken off this list, please contact Kathryn Sofich at [kathryn.sofich@oregonmetro.gov](mailto:kathryn.sofich@oregonmetro.gov). [Requires that your e-mail be set to HTML view.]



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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.

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#### **1. A message from Rex Burkholder**

Last month I was invited to go to Canada to speak in two communities and I think you might find it interesting why people in Montreal and the small town of Kitchener, outside Toronto, would ask someone to fly out from Portland.

First stop was Kitchener, where I spoke to three groups: downtown business leaders, their regional planning council (made up of mayors from the area) and to their regional government staff. Kitchener and Waterloo are the two main cities in the [Waterloo region](#), with a combined total population of around 500,000. They are close to but not really in commute range of the big metropolis of Toronto. With a large university and high tech research park (home of the [Blackberry](#)) in Waterloo and historical manufacturing and housing in Kitchener, it felt a lot like being in Eugene-Springfield, but cold. The reason they invited me was that they are building their first light rail next year and there is a lot of community concern about the same issues that we had when the first light rail was proposed here in 1986 (from downtown Portland to Gresham).

How would [light rail affect businesses, traffic and housing costs](#)? Would it really trigger redevelopment and investment? Would people really ride it?

Like many others, we have been visited by community and government leaders from the Waterloo region, trying to figure out how they can duplicate our success. In fact, the province of Ontario just adopted their first urban growth boundary legislation last year, and is helping fund the light rail as well. I was able to tell them the sometimes harrowing stories of building a [strong transit system](#), based on light rail but also good bus service. This, combined with actions to create more active, bicycle and walking friendly neighborhoods with convenient access to jobs and shopping, is the key to our success. Along with never-tiring activism and involvement of people who care about their communities-- the quality of schools, safety, air and water quality, healthcare, and on and on.

In Montreal, I was sponsored by the group [Vivre en Ville](#), or the Lively City to speak on Canadian Earth Day ([Jour de Terre](#)). (Everything was in French, except me!) Like the people in Waterloo, the Quebecois were interested in our success in growing bicycling for transportation ([6% of work trips](#) in Portland, up to double that in some neighborhoods) and in [reducing greenhouse gas emissions](#) (per person emissions are about 17% below 1990 levels, mostly because we are driving less). Montreal was actually a wonderful city for walking and biking with an extensive subway system. One challenge they face is winter. I mean, real winter with 3 meters of snow (that's 9 feet!) On many main streets they create cycle tracks (separated one or two way bicycle lanes) by simple, movable concrete dividers or even short plastic poles. They plow 60 km of these cycle tracks in the winter and the others are removed from November 1<sup>st</sup> to April 1<sup>st</sup> so they can pile up the snow. (Aren't you glad that it's just rainy here in the winter?).

Below are a couple pictures from the trip, showing some of the bike facilities in Montreal. It was a good trip and I learned a lot and was able to share a lot of good information, but it feels great to be back in Portland.

Happy Spring.





*-Rex Burkholder*

## **2. Metro report shows urban centers, corridors generally most affordable**

The Metro Council released a report concluding 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](http://www.oregonmetro.gov/urbangrowthreport)

### **3. Metro considers fee changes for solid waste disposal**

As part of the annual budgeting process, Metro considered changes to solid waste disposal fees, including the per-ton price for waste disposal at Metro's two transfer stations. Changes in disposal fees could 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 of 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.

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.

A hearing and first reading of the rate ordinance occurred during the April 30 Metro Council meeting. The Council heard testimony and took final action at the May 7 Council meeting, where amended Ordinance No. 09-1217A was adopted by a vote of 4-0 with three Councilors absent. Agendas, packets, and action updates 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>.

#### **4. One-of-a-kind fen protected by Metro's voter-approved natural area program**

A property acquisition in April by Metro secured the remainder of a rare fen located in the Willamette Narrows area near West Linn. Providing habitat to uncommon, varied and high-quality plant communities, the fen is a unique type of wetland that includes a shallow lake with a floating peat mat.

According to the Oregon Natural Heritage Program, it is the only remaining fen of its kind in the Willamette Valley. The property includes large boulders, rocky piles and other features that were likely created by the action of the Missoula (or Bretz) Floods at the end of the Ice Age. Metro originally purchased 50 acres from the property owners in 1998. The natural area now totals 63 acres.

#### **5. Events of Note in the District**

##### **Forest Park invasive plant removal**

Saturday, May 16

*8:45 a.m. to noon*

Join forces with the No Ivy League and help battle what they call the "green plague" at Forest Park. Groups of five or more are asked to register in advance. Bring water, work gloves and a conquering attitude. Meet at the Lower Macleay Field House at the end of Northwest Upshur just past 29th. Advance registration not required. For more information, call 503-823-9423.

##### **Smith and Bybee Wetlands canoe and kayak tour**

Saturday, May 16

*9 a.m. to noon*

Join Metro naturalist James Davis and learn about local wildlife and the natural history of the area on a three-hour canoe and kayak tour of the wetlands. Boat, paddle and personal flotation device provided by NW Discoveries. Participants can select solo kayaks, a tandem kayak with a partner or a canoe with a partner. Two adults in a canoe can add one or two children to ride in the middle at reduced cost. Meet at the Smith and Bybee canoe launch. Registration and payment of \$25 per adult (age 14 and up) and \$5 per child (age 5-13) accompanied by one paid adult is required two weeks in advance; call 503-797-1850 option 4.

##### **Hillside Park work party**

Saturday, May 23

*9 a.m. to noon*

Hillside is one of Portland's newest pesticide-free parks. Help replace the use of pesticides with people power by weeding and mulching. Snacks, gloves and tools provided. Meet at Hillside Park, 653 NW Culpepper Terrace in Portland. For more information, call 503-423-7549.

##### **Hollywood walking tour**

Wednesday, May 27

*5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.*

This after work stretch will be led by walking guru and author Laura Foster. Though it is only .9 miles long it offers enough places to stop and shop that it could take an entire day. At 42nd and Sandy is the tiny Hollywood Burger Bar building. It was constructed in the 1920s as a stop for the trolley that ran on Sandy Boulevard. Meet at the Hollywood Transit Center and NE Halsey and 42nd Avenue at 5:15 p.m. Free. Registration not required. For more information, call 503-813-7475.

For a more comprehensive list of events, please refer to Metro's [calendar](#) or the Metro website at [www.oregonmetro.gov](http://www.oregonmetro.gov)

## **6. Councilor Rex Burkholder's Contact 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

Metro Council President David Bragdon

Metro Councilors

Rod Park, District 1

Carlotta Collette, District 2

Carl Hosticka, District 3

Kathryn Harrington, District 4

Rex Burkholder, District 5

Robert Liberty, District 6

Auditor Suzanne Flynn

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