

# Carlotta Collette

METRO COUNCIL DISTRICT 2 NEWS | May 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 personal message from Councilor Collette

Ambrose Calcagno grew up farming in Clackamas County, as did his parents and their parents and a fourth generation back as well. Some of the 400 plus acres he farms today is the same land as those other generations farmed, on a peninsula wrapped three sides around by the Clackamas River. But about 50 acres is actually owned by Metro. The family holds a long-term lease on the land, and can continue to farm there, selling their produce to local outlets of Albertsons, Fred Meyer and

Safeway, until Metro has the funding and other resources to restore the land for habitat or park purposes.

The Calcagno family is one of about 20 farmers who lease land from Metro for agricultural purposes. Altogether these farmers lease almost 700 acres of the 12,000 acres Metro has purchased as open space. About 135 acres were recently removed from agricultural use so they could be restored as natural habitat. But the backlog of land awaiting restoration, and the priority of restoring riparian and other particularly high value lands, puts a lower priority on transitioning productive farms back to native habitat.

In the interim, farmers seeking long-term leases from Metro agree to raise their crops using sustainable agricultural practices. These practices include paying attention to the health of the land, the ecosystem and the people who work on the farms. They must agree to provide wildlife habitat, including water resources. They must provide buffer zones along streams. They reduce their use of pesticides in an approach called “integrated pest management.” They do not use genetically-modified crops or livestock. They provide safe and fair working conditions to farm employees. And they agree to annual goals for improving their practices to make them even more sustainable each year.

As we begin to adapt to changing global climates, including the persistent droughts across the part of our country that produces a large portion of our food, we will need to ensure our region’s ability to produce more of our food closer to home. The Calcagno family, and others like them, are part of the network on which we will rely.

Over the next few months, I’ll be exploring with others ways to secure smaller scale, highly productive, sustainable farms both within and close to this region’s urban growth boundary. As we move forward, I’ll report on our ideas and accomplishments in this newsletter.

– Carlotta Collette

## 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



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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.

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.

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)

## Homewood Park opens in Milwaukie

The Hector Campbell Neighborhood in Milwaukie celebrated the grand opening of Homewood Park on Saturday, April 11th. Volunteers have been working on building Homewood Park for over 10 years. Now with Metro funds from both 1995 and 2006 bond measures as well as the City of Milwaukie Neighborhood Grant funds, the park includes new lawn and irrigation, a play structure, picnic tables, garbage cans, bike racks, new fencing and a nature trail. According to Sarah Smith, resident of Hector Campbell, the neighbors have been steadily removing English Ivy over the past 10 years and have planted thousands of native plants. Homewood Park is located on Southeast Home Avenue between Monroe and Ada Lane.

## 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.

## 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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