



Whether you live in a walkable urban neighborhood, a suburban community or a rural setting outside the urban growth boundary, the decisions that will be made this fall and throughout 2010 will have an impact on your life.

Building on past decisions and shared values, we set the stage today for who we will be and what we will stand for as a society in 50 years.

## A GUIDE TO

# Making the Greatest Place

“During the past several decades, the Portland metropolitan region has become a truly vibrant, diverse and livable collection of communities. The residents and leaders of the region have worked hard to create a place that reflects our common values – safe, walkable neighborhoods; housing, jobs and transportation choices; access to natural areas and local farms.

Although past planning has positioned us well for the future, our region still faces issues that present both serious challenges and opportunities for change – aging infrastructure and limited funding sources, climate change, soaring energy costs, population growth. We cannot afford to ignore the realities of our time or rest on the laurels of past decisions. Now is the time to dig deeper and work harder if we are to truly realize our regional vision.

Since 2005, the region’s leaders have been working to address the fact that we expect about 600,000 more people to live here within 25 years. We have studied, reported, analyzed, planned and asked for input – and now it is time to make decisions and put them into action. This fall local leaders will decide where we put our transportation dollars, how and where we will build taller buildings and keep neighborhoods of single-family homes, and which areas we will reserve for farmland, for jobs or for urban development. Together we will commit to a new future and make it happen.

Our region is a really good place to live – let’s make it the greatest place to live for present and future generations.”

– David Bragdon, Metro Council President

# What are we trying to accomplish?



Our regional vision for Making the Greatest Place, based on values established by residents in the 2040 Growth Concept, includes:

**VIBRANT COMMUNITIES** – People live and work in vibrant communities where they can choose to walk for pleasure and to meet their everyday needs.

**ECONOMIC PROSPERITY** – Current and future residents benefit from the region’s sustained economic competitiveness and prosperity.

**SAFE AND RELIABLE TRANSPORTATION** – People have safe and reliable transportation choices that enhance their quality of life.

**ENVIRONMENTAL LEADERSHIP** – The region is a leader in minimizing contributions to global warming.

**CLEAN AIR AND WATER** – Current and future generations enjoy clean air, clean water and healthy ecosystems.

**EQUITY** – The benefits and burdens of growth and change are distributed equitably.

## What are the decisions that will be made this fall and into 2010?

Decision	When	Who
<b>Regional Transportation Plan</b> – accepts policies, projects and funding strategy as the long-range blueprint for the region’s transportation system	December 2009	Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation and Metro Policy Advisory Committee make recommendations to Metro Council; Metro Council votes
<b>Urban Growth Report</b> – estimated capacity of the metro region to accommodate population and job growth over the next 20 years	December 2009	Metro Policy Advisory Committee makes recommendation to Metro Council; Metro Council votes
<b>Urban reserves</b> – land outside the urban growth boundary identified for potential future urban development	December 2009	Metro Council and three counties identify potential urban reserves through intergovernmental agreements
<b>Rural reserves</b> – land outside the urban growth boundary identified for continued use as farmland or natural area	December 2009	Clackamas, Multnomah and Washington counties identify potential rural reserves through intergovernmental agreements with Metro
<b>Urban reserves designated</b>	Spring 2010	Metro Council designates urban reserves by amending framework and functional plans
<b>Rural reserves designated</b>	Spring 2010	Clackamas, Multnomah and Washington counties designate rural reserves by amending comprehensive land use plans
<b>Regional Transportation Plan</b> – final adoption, which initiates local plan updates	Summer 2010	Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation and Metro Policy Advisory Committee make recommendations to Metro Council; Metro Council votes
<b>20-year capacity ordinance</b> – describes how the region will accommodate the next 20 years of population and employment growth	December 2010	Metro Policy Advisory Committee makes recommendations to Metro Council; Metro Council decision

# voices

Community leaders from all parts of the region and all walks of life have brought their voices and choices to this discussion. Here are some of them:

## What are the challenges we face?

“We need to make sure cities, counties and Metro collaborate so we can ensure that we sustain a healthy economy and high quality of life for residents. If we can identify both urban and rural reserve areas – helping us protect prime farm and forest, as well as plan appropriately for housing, jobs and schools – we can get our boundaries set for the next 40 to 50 years and be able to be even more effective with our growth management.” – Tom Brian, chair, Washington County Board of Commissioners; chair, Metro Policy Advisory Committee

“We are at the forefront of a revolution that transports us 50 years forward – where future generations will reflect on and benefit from our willingness today to make tough choices and smart investments in meeting the needs of our changing communities.” – Lynn Peterson, chair, Clackamas County Board of Commissioners

## How are communities facing those challenges?

“Working in the engineering field and living in Tigard for more than 30 years, I can really appreciate the benefit of a well-planned

transportation infrastructure that supports a community’s vision and the impact it can have on that vision. With the right partnerships and vision, I believe that 30 years from now, you’ll see a vital downtown, top-of-the-line transportation systems and a thriving Tigard community.” – Craig Dirksen, mayor, City of Tigard

“If our local governments make a commitment and take manageable steps towards green, sustainable communities, we can have a long-term global impact. From high-level policy changes to simply tweaking our daily routines, we can make a difference and create a better community – whether by putting up solar panels, retrofitting heavy diesel construction equipment, creating a Climate Action Plan, or visiting our local farmers market.” – Jeff Cogen, Multnomah County Commissioner

“One of Gresham’s greatest assets is its balance. While we host 100,000 citizens, two major semiconductor companies, and one of the world’s largest aerospace manufacturers, we also have a small town character and civic pride that is second to none. I believe that people want to live in a place that has gained a cosmopolitan edge without losing its hometown feel, and I think that Gresham is just such a place.” – Shane Bemis, mayor, City of Gresham

## What can we do to create the best possible future?

“In planning ahead and preparing for growth, we are allowed to take the time and question how to best maintain our quality of life. The people of the region have the power to make choices about how our communities will develop. Our region can be a world leader in solar, high tech and many other sectors if we figure out how to spend limited resources in the right places and focus on making livable communities, a good transportation system and a network of parks and natural areas.” – Carl Hosticka, Metro Councilor

## Where do we need to invest?

“We should be able to choose a travel mode that suits our destination, our mood and our budget. Having transportation options enables us to meet our travel needs quickly, economically and with reduced impacts on our environment. Public investment in transit, sidewalks and bike lanes in our city centers or providing access to parks and open spaces knits people into a community.” – Karen Frost, executive director, Westside Transportation Alliance

## How can we plan for a healthy economy?

“Oregon must invest in a strong transportation system to maintain our economic competitiveness and quality of life. Without a strong transportation system that has the capacity to move people and goods quickly and efficiently, our economy will suffer.” – Bill Wyatt, executive director, Port of Portland

# vision

## Local aspirations for growth

Each community plays a part in how we develop as a whole and where we draw our boundaries. Decisions made in each city and county – how they plan to grow, how much employment and residential growth they want to accommodate – affect the transportation, housing and employment choices of every other community in the region and the rural areas outside the region. We have to work together to make it work for all of us.

Here are some examples of the kinds of local plans that have an impact on the communities in which we live:



Hillsboro Civic Center

**CENTRAL CITY** – Roughly 400 acres of vacant or underutilized land could likely become available for development in the next 20 years within the Central City, resulting in over 100 million square feet of new building area if developed. If 50 or 60 percent of this were developed as residential, it could represent between 50,000 and 60,000 new dwelling units.



Downtown Gresham

**HILLSBORO REGIONAL CENTER** – The city’s downtown plan calls for 2,000 to 3,000 more jobs (a 25 percent increase) and 3,000 more dwelling units (a 100 percent increase) in the larger Hillsboro downtown area. Aspirations call for developing in a style that is compatible with the historic downtown area.

**GRESHAM REGIONAL CENTER** – The downtown portion could grow from 2,500 to 6,000 jobs and from 1,000 to 3,300 residents. In Civic Neighborhood, plans call for doubling from 1,000 to 2,000 jobs

and increasing residences five-fold from 400 to 2,000. Planned amenities include coffee shops, performing arts center, relocated City Hall, venues for live music and other nightlife, child care, multiple restaurants, small historic theater and grocery store.

### **TIGARD TOWN CENTER** –

In the next 50 years, Tigard plans to transform its historic commercially-oriented downtown into a vital mixed-use town center, with an additional 2,500 housing units and 1.9 million square feet of commercial space. To support these aspirations, Tigard is planning for a new high capacity transit line along Barbur Boulevard that will supplement capacities and choices on the existing highway and westside commuter rail service already in place.

### **OREGON CITY REGIONAL**

**CENTER** – The City of Oregon City has focused recent redevelopment efforts on two opportunity sites within the center, a commercial development called The Rivers and a mixed-use residential project at The Cove. Both projects are in the final stages of planning. Streetscape improvements will open up access to the river from downtown.



Amtrak Station, Oregon City



## AMBER GLEN/TANASBOURNE –

Hillsboro has aspirations to expand the Tanasbourne Town Center with development at the adjacent 252-acre Amber Glen site and redesignating the Town Center to a Regional Center. Plans, which are still evolving, call for a total of more than 10,000 dwelling units and 11,000 jobs in the combined center. Infrastructure investments including a new park and light rail transit extension are an important part of achieving the aspirations for additional jobs and mid-rise housing.

## GATEWAY TOWN CENTER –

The only center served by two Interstates and, when the Max Green Line opens in the fall, by three light rail lines, Gateway Regional Center is already one of the more established commercial and residential neighborhoods. Recognizing the potential remaining in the 617-acre area, plans for Gateway call for major street improvements, including sidewalks, medians and increased connectivity within the super blocks, and new parks, plazas and other amenities to support redevelopment. The city has established an urban renewal area for Gateway and other programs to provide financial incentives.



Russellville Commons, Gateway

# choices

## Decisions and participation

Elected officials, business and community leaders, residents – it's up to all of us to create the kind of place we want to call home. If you would like to receive updates and information about ways to participate, send your e-mail address to [greatestplace@oregonmetro.gov](mailto:greatestplace@oregonmetro.gov) or call 503-797-1562.

To learn more about making the Portland metropolitan area the greatest place for generations to come, visit [www.oregonmetro.gov/greatestplace](http://www.oregonmetro.gov/greatestplace).

## Glossary and contact information

**Infrastructure:** public investments and systems that create the necessary foundation for communities like roads, sidewalks, water pipes and sewers, parks and plazas, and schools.

[www.oregonmetro.gov/infrastructure](http://www.oregonmetro.gov/infrastructure)

**Local aspirations:** communities' priorities for redevelopment, the values that guide their decisions and the challenges and barriers they anticipate to achieving these aspirations.

[www.oregonmetro.gov/localaspirations](http://www.oregonmetro.gov/localaspirations)

**Making the Greatest Place:** decisions that will shape both public and private investments in the Portland metropolitan region for years to come in relation to where and how we live, work and relax.

[www.oregonmetro.gov/greatestplace](http://www.oregonmetro.gov/greatestplace)

**Regional Transportation Plan:** an update to the long-range blueprint to guide how the region plans for and invests in the transportation system.

[www.oregonmetro.gov/rtp](http://www.oregonmetro.gov/rtp)

For information on high capacity transit, visit [www.oregonmetro.gov/goingplaces](http://www.oregonmetro.gov/goingplaces)

**Urban Growth Report:** this report updates the estimated capacity of the region to accommodate population and job growth over the next 20 years.

[www.oregonmetro.gov/urbangrowthreport](http://www.oregonmetro.gov/urbangrowthreport)

**Urban and rural reserves:** a set of areas outside the current urban growth boundary for future city development and protection of valuable farmland, forest land and natural areas.

[www.oregonmetro.gov/reserves](http://www.oregonmetro.gov/reserves)

**Urban reserves:** Urban reserves will be designated on lands currently outside the urban growth boundary that are suitable for accommodating urban development over the next 40 to 50 years. Metro, in consultation with the three counties within the region and other regional partners, is responsible for designating urban reserves.

**Rural reserves:** Rural reserves will be designated on lands outside the current urban growth boundary that are high value working farms and forests or have important natural features like rivers, wetlands, buttes and floodplains. These areas will be protected from urbanization for the next 40 to 50 years. Clackamas, Multnomah and Washington counties are responsible for designating rural reserves in consultation with Metro and other regional partners.

# Making the Greatest Place timeline

## MARCH 2009

- Preliminary Urban Growth Report and population forecast released for comment

## SEPTEMBER – OCTOBER 2009

- Metro Chief Operating Officer releases recommendations on Making the Greatest Place policy package (including draft Regional Transportation Plan, Urban Growth Report and guidelines for urban and rural reserves) – Sept. 15
- Public comment period Sept. 15 to Oct. 15
- Open houses
  - 2 to 4 p.m. Monday, Sept. 21 – Hillsboro Civic Center, 150 E. Main St., Room 113A & B
  - 5 to 7:45 p.m. Tuesday, Sept. 22 – Multnomah County Library, North Portland branch, 512 N. Killingsworth St.
- Open houses and public hearings (Open houses start at 4 p.m.; hearings start at 5:15 p.m.)
  - Thursday, Sept. 24 – Beaverton City Hall, 4755 SW Griffith Drive
  - Thursday, Oct. 1 – Gresham Conference Center, 1333 NW Eastman Parkway
  - Thursday, Oct. 8 – Happy Valley City Hall, 16000 SE Misty Drive
  - Tuesday, Oct. 13 – Clackamas County Public Services Building, 2051 Kaen Road, Oregon City
  - Thursday, Oct. 15 – Metro Regional Center, 600 NE Grand Ave., Portland

## OCTOBER – NOVEMBER 2009

- Urban and Rural Reserves Steering Committee recommendation
- Public comments on urban and rural reserves
- Regional advisory committee recommendations on Making the Greatest Place policy package

## DECEMBER 2009

- Metro Council reviews and considers Making the Greatest Place policy package
  - Metro Council accepts the the draft Regional Transportation Plan and directs staff to prepare air quality conformity, final plan and findings
  - Metro Council accepts the final Urban Growth Report for submission to the Oregon Land Conservation and Development Commission in 2010

## EARLY 2010

- Designation of urban and rural reserves by Metro and three counties

## MID 2010

- Approval of final Regional Transportation Plan

## DECEMBER 2010

- Metro Council adopts capacity ordinance describing how the region will accommodate the next 20 years of population and employment growth

**Metro** | *People places. Open spaces.*

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.

### 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

[www.oregonmetro.gov](http://www.oregonmetro.gov)

