



COMMUNITY INVESTMENT STRATEGY

Building a sustainable, prosperous and equitable region

Engagement strategies and community response

October 2010

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On Aug. 10, 2010, Metro's chief operating officer, Michael Jordan, released a set of recommendations in a report entitled, "Community Investment Strategy: Building a sustainable, prosperous and equitable region." A public comment period, summarized in this report, ran until Oct. 1, 2010.

The recommendations – focused on paving the way for innovative new partnerships among government and business - ranged from how and where the region should invest in important public structures and systems to how, where and if the Metro Council should expand the urban growth boundary to accommodate future residential and employment growth. The recommendations call for the region to:

- invest in safe, livable communities
- promote economic development and good jobs
- protect natural areas
- reduce inefficiency, foster innovation and demand accountability.

Area residents were encouraged to provide their viewpoints to help shape important decisions by the Metro Council and local cities and counties. This comment report contains an analysis and summary of public comment received between Aug. 10 and Oct. 1, 2010, and will be provided to local elected leaders and the Metro Council. It will also be available on the Metro website at www.oregonmetro.gov/investment.

Numbers

A wide range of views were submitted from across the region in response to the COO recommendations. During the comment period, Metro staff engaged in a coordinated outreach and engagement strategy that included more than 30 stakeholder meetings, website and e-mail information distribution, media releases, newsfeeds and Twitter feeds, seven open houses, a non-scientific online survey, and compilation of letter and e-mail correspondence relating to the Community Investment Strategy and urban growth boundary expansion options.

In all, Metro received more than 600 survey entries, 55 e-mails, 16 letters and 10 other public comments. Some basic demographic data collected from respondents are:

- The majority of survey respondents fall into the category of white, middle- to upper-middle class single family homeowners: 92.6 percent were white, 58 percent have income greater than \$75,000, 83 percent live in a single family home, and 90 percent own their home. (In the Metro jurisdictional boundaries, 78.3 percent are white and 35.2 percent have income greater than \$75,000. Approximately 59 percent of households in the region are owner-occupied homes. Source: ESRI)

- A majority of respondents were also older (51 percent older than 55 – compared to 22.1 percent in the region. Source: ESRI) and have lived in the region for a relatively long period of time (63 percent have lived in the region more than 20 years).
- Survey respondents represent a wide geographic range, with submissions coming from more than 70 different ZIP codes and over 40 different communities.

Key Themes

From all the comments, survey responses, letters, e-mails and other communication from residents of the region, it is clear that most care deeply about their communities. Citizens of the region want neighborhoods that are livable, safe and full of amenities. What is also clear is that the region is diverse, with a wide-ranging mix of interests, politics, cultures and preferences. Choice is important, but so is having a job, having the option to live close to work and preserving the unique character of the metropolitan region that makes it so appealing to past, present and future residents. Rarely is any one topic so clear-cut as to be easily defined, and opinions tend to fall into ranges along a spectrum.

The following is a brief list of the main themes that have emerged in response to Metro’s COO recommendations for a Community Investment Strategy.

Community Investment Strategy recommendations:

Cost efficiency: When asked about how and where to direct investments, residents often asked Metro and the region to consider where money will have the “greatest bang for our buck.” Those investments that will have the greatest return on the dollar should be prioritized, and most respondents valued fixing existing infrastructure before expanding into new areas.

- Quotes:

“Make sure any incentives offered to possible new employers are in line with potential benefits, and not at the expense of the existing citizens. No more BETC-like disasters!!!!”

“It seems to me that we seek out expensive solutions without pausing to examine old methods (with some new adaptations) which serve great portions of the world now.”

“The effective investment in infrastructure is essential to our ability to achieve growth management envisioned in the 2040 Plan.”

“Counties are already cashed strapped. I live in an un-incorporated [sic] area and services have been cut to the point that it is hurting the safety [sic] and livability of my neighborhood.”

Parks and natural areas: Residents of the Portland metro area clearly value the rich natural beauty and open spaces the region is well known for, frequently cited as a key aspect of the region’s unique character. Many would like to see more areas protected, some want

existing resources to be improved and maintained, and others feel that parks are an essential part of a complete community, especially if higher density is desired.

- Statistics: More than 70 percent of survey respondents felt that parks and natural areas should have a higher priority in regional investment. Similarly, 68 percent of survey respondents support factoring climate change into investment decisions.

- Quotes:

“Lots of neighborhood parks make small lot sizes more palatable, encouraging higher density.”

“Portland is unique and protecting and expanding our parks, AND protecting the current close-by farmland from UGB expansion is key to Portland maintaining [sic] its identity.”

“Oregon has always been a state which offers beauty and natural environments. This is why people moved here. It is the environment, not jobs, people, and cars that Metro should be working towards enhancing.”

Community livability: Ideas about quality of life in the region range from community centers, public parks and open space to sidewalks, bike-pedestrian paths, and adequate housing-jobs balance to promote living near places of employment. Many citizens would like to see creation of jobs that support the community, such as small, local businesses that help people live near their work. For some, livability means quiet, suburban communities with larger yards and low-traffic streets. For others, it means dense, walkable, mixed-use neighborhoods with a variety of transportation options and vibrant community spaces. Many additional preferences fall within the spectrum of livability and embody the need for choice and diversity within the region.

Diversity, equality, choice: While some residents clearly prefer either “no UGB expansion” or “pro-jobs UGB expansion,” “protecting parks” or “creating jobs,” “more transit” or “better roads,” many others desire a region that has choice: in housing; in safe, efficient transportation (including walking, biking and transit); in parks and natural areas (from ball fields to hiking trails to natural areas and habitat); and in jobs. These ideas are suggested in several ways, using phrases such as “diversity” and “choice” and “equal opportunity” but largely reflect a desire for a diverse and vibrant region filled with opportunity for a range of interests.

Regional vs. local: On the one hand, many residents see the need to coordinate investments and government activities at the regional level. Other residents, however, say we must consider the character and aspirations of existing communities when we think about investment strategies. Many community residents would like to see more local control of investment, others may be open to Metro playing a greater role in their communities, but only if their distinct needs and desires are acknowledged and included in future planning.

- Statistics: Although 70 percent of survey respondents agree that a regional “report card” should be used to evaluate investments, those same residents are split when it comes to regional control of regulations (50 percent support vs. 40 percent oppose).

- Quotes:

“Regional, state and federal governments, acting upon very noble intentions, have disconnected local government from their ‘place’...”

“Recognize that each Center, Corridor, Station Community and Main Street has its own character and stage of development and its own aspirations; each needs its own strategy for success.”

Fix and maintain existing investments: Across all questions regarding the Community Investment Strategy, respondents focused heavily on maintaining existing infrastructure, parks and natural areas, and communities. There is a strong interest in seeing improvements to current services and ensuring that what we have already lasts long into the future.

- Quotes:

“Insist that new incoming business utilize vacant existing commercial structures or at least rebuild, if necessary, on existing developed lots rather than build on undeveloped land which is wasteful and adds to urban sprawl even inside UGBs.”

“Force change! People & business will continue the same path of outward growth unless forced to find solutions. Let’s make them find solutions. It will promote investment, livability, country leading policy and protect our environment.”

UGB expansion:

Urban growth boundary: Continuing on the strong theme of protecting farmland heard during the urban and rural reserves process, many comments focused on the need to maintain a tight UGB to protect our valuable natural resources and rural communities. However, the current tough economic climate must be resonating with many people, as a large number of comments placed job creation and economic growth as the most important goal. Not every comment made in support of jobs called for large increases in the UGB – some called for better support of small and local businesses that can be accommodated within the existing UGB. In short, the variety of comments suggested we must consider all aspects of a community when deciding on UGB expansion, “complete communities” being one example.

- Statistics: 37 e-mails and letters written in support of UGB expansion, primarily from the cities regarding specific areas. Areas 8A/B (9) and the areas around Cornelius (9) received the most attention, followed by several comments both in favor of and against studying urbanization of the Stafford area (5).

- Quotes:

"Land Use, Zoning, and Planning often either do not allow, or move too slowly to take advantage of small business opportunities rising from technological advances and population changes."

"Put the density inside Portland where there are vast stretches of industrial land that could be repurposed into housing and parks. Expanding the suburbs is not a sustainable solution."

Density: Residents and regional stakeholders appear to have mixed feelings about increasing density, especially in their own neighborhoods and communities. Many would rather see farmland and rural areas protected, and have much higher density within the current urban growth boundary. Others desire more room to develop single-family housing that allows for larger yards in which to raise a family. Some welcome density, others are skeptical and others simply don't want it – they would rather preserve the existing "character" of their community, even at the risk of expanding the UGB and developing farmland.

- Statistics: More than 50 percent of survey respondents agreed at least somewhat with all statements about increasing density in their neighborhood. However, 37 out of 52 letters submitted to Metro included statements in support of expanding the UGB, in most cases to create opportunity for jobs and industrial development. Survey respondents, averaging responses across all expansion study areas, were evenly split: 33 percent oppose expansion in those areas, 33 percent support, and 33 percent are either neutral or don't know.

- Quotes:

"Do not extend the urban growth boundary unless every site within the UGB is developed to its maximum density potential."

"It is very important to be flexible. It is also very important for individuals to have a variety of housing choices."

"The number 1 complaint [sic] I took as a board member for this are [sic] was the infill. Nothing fits in anyway and its all low income and I have already said no to that."

Jobs: Employment opportunities and economic development come up in comments, letters and conversations across the region. These comments are not restricted to either the CIS or UGB analysis, but rather meld across these two important recommendations. Residents, stakeholders and regional partners all seem to agree that we need to do more to invest in the economic opportunities across the region. Opinions begin to differ around *where* those investments should be made. Suggestions range from redeveloping brownfields to increased density, investing in small business opportunities to expanding the UGB to allow more large-lot industrial development. What is clear throughout, however, is that jobs are important.

- Statistics: Almost 50 percent of survey respondents feel that strengthening the regional economy is “essential” and 70 percent say increasing the number of jobs in their city is very important or essential.

- Quotes:

“We compete for employers globally. Give these new potential employers a good choice of properties.”

“Be very careful when placing well-intentioned restrictions on industrial land – let the market take the lead.”

“The market should dictate jobs. Government involvement is to be minimized.”

“We are at a critical juncture where Oregon City needs additional dedicated employment lands. We need local family-wage jobs.”

Land use/transportation connections: Many residents also seem to be aware of the close connections between land use and transportation, and how one is dependent on the other. Many respondents reflected on the need for better transportation options to balance density, and the need for better mixed-use or other land use options to ease the strain on our regional transportation system, including more opportunities for residents to live near their workplace.

- Statistics: Almost 75 percent of survey respondents agreed to some extent that Metro should consider housing affordability in combination with the cost of transportation.

- Quotes:

“We sorely need to promote more active forms of transportation by creating safe and attractive places to walk and bike, developing the mix of essential destinations within appropriate distances of housing, for these forms of transportation, coupled with mass transit.”

“The compact urban development that supports mixed use needs investments in alternative access (walking, biking, transit), open space (parks and good design) and affordability.”

OUTREACH OVERVIEW

Meetings with stakeholder groups and interested parties, Aug. 10 to Oct. 1

Following the release of the Community Investment Strategy, Metro COO Michael Jordan, Metro Councilors and staff met with 29 groups and organizations. These meetings focused on ensuring representation from a broad spectrum of community members, including ethnic and income diversity, business and environmental interests, and geographic distribution. The purpose of the meetings was to discuss the highlights of the Community Investment Strategy, outline upcoming growth management decisions by the Metro Council, and begin a longer regional dialogue about how the public sector can better focus its limited investments in ways that generate greater private development outcomes.

The ideas shared in these discussions will be used to inform the development of specific proposals for consideration by the Metro Council, local governments and the Oregon Legislature, as well as leaders from the private sector. These proposals will seek to provide communities with new and enhanced tools to support jobs and economic growth and improve livability while protecting valuable farms and forestland.

Stakeholders engaged include: Metro Policy Advisory Committee, city and county managers, 1000 Friends of Oregon board of directors, Washington County Farm Bureau, NAIOP, housing organizations for communities of color, Columbia Real Estate Economic Coalition, Columbia Corridor Association, neighboring communities, Clackamas County Economic Development Commission, Westside Economic Alliance, Washington County Coordinating Committee, Oregon Opportunity Network's Portland Policy Committee, Portland Business Alliance's Land Use Committee, Gresham Chamber of Commerce's Public Affairs Committee, Clackamas County Business Alliance board, Homebuilder's Association's Government Affairs Committee, East Metro Economic Alliance, Special Districts Association of Oregon, Coalition for a Livable Future, Oregon Association of Nurseries' Government Affairs Committee, Clackamas County Coordinating Committee, Portland Metropolitan Association of Realtors, North Clackamas Chamber of Commerce's Public Policy Committee, Coalition of Communities of Color, Greater Hillsboro Chamber of Commerce, and South Metro Business Alliance.

Web

Metro's website was used as an information hub and received over 4,000 hits during the open comment period. The Community Investment Strategy pages contained downloadable versions of all reports and supporting documents, links to additional program information, links to the online survey, maps and information about next steps following the recommendations and comment period. Metro's planning and policy newsfeed provided new information almost daily, including coverage of open houses and stakeholder meetings.

Publicity

In addition to paid print and web advertising, e-mail and other local government notifications publicizing the open comment period and related open houses, surveys, stakeholder meetings and other input opportunities, publicity around the region included:

- six news releases sent out by Metro staff
- two news briefings with a total of seven reports present
- 36 newsfeeds related to the CIS recommendations posted through Metro’s website RSS feed
- Twitter feeds announcing open houses and comment opportunities
- 14 additional news media, blog and online publications featuring information about the CIS recommendations during the open comment period.

Online survey

From Sept. 13 to Oct. 1, residents throughout the Portland metropolitan region were invited to complete an online survey covering many of the key aspects of the COO’s recommendations for the Community Investment Strategy and the urban growth boundary expansion study areas. Visitors to Metro’s website were directed to the survey from the CIS information page; additional links to the survey were provided through e-mail alerts to 9,400 recipients and numerous news feeds.

While it is important to note that this is not a scientific sampling of the region’s population, the survey did provide an additional outlet for public comment. Comments were generally thoughtful, well-informed and addressed a wide range of issues. It also proved to have the highest volume of public comment, both in response to specific questions and through several open-ended questions, with more than 600 individuals completing part or all of the survey. A more detailed summary of the survey results are included for the CIS and UGB expansion study area analysis below.

Open Houses

A series of seven open houses were held around the region in order to reach a variety of communities. Open houses were held in Lents, Wilsonville, Sherwood, Oregon City, St. Johns, Hillsboro and Gresham. Many of the open houses included displays and participation by local jurisdiction planning staff. These events were open to the public and held during the evenings to facilitate public participation and dialogue. Participants at the open houses were encouraged to interact with staff, asking questions and giving input on the recommendations. In addition, hard-copy versions of the online survey were available for attendees to fill out. A total of 93 people attended the open houses, ranging from five attendees at both Sherwood and St. Johns to a high of 26 attendees in Wilsonville. A key factor driving attendance in Wilsonville was a city mailing to residents specifically about areas in Wilsonville included in the study for potential UGB expansion.

SECTION 1. COMMUNITY INVESTMENT STRATEGY

During the public comment period, 25 letters were written, more than 600 surveys were submitted, and numerous open houses and stakeholder meetings were held to gather public input on the COO recommendations for the Community Investment Strategy.

Most comments and letters generally support the COO's recommendation of coordinating investment and increasing efficiency. There is some tension present between creating density and affordable housing, between maintaining the current UGB and creating jobs, between sustainability and economic development. However, many comments received from citizens supported a need for greater regional coordination and focused on community character, livability and the connection between land use and transportation options.

Stakeholder meetings gathered a broad set of viewpoints on the investment strategies, covering topics including: feasibility of developing at a density of 15 units per acre; uncertainty of projects, financing, and Metro involvement in local government affairs; creating employment opportunities and room for industrial development; protecting farmland and support agricultural activities; considering market demand for density, housing, and transit; and working to ensure equity – both social and regional (Appendix B).

Throughout conversations, comments and letters, the urban growth boundary remains at the center of discussion, even when considering the CIS recommendations. Questions of density, affordability, jobs and quality of life, more times than not come back to whether or not we expand the UGB and where.

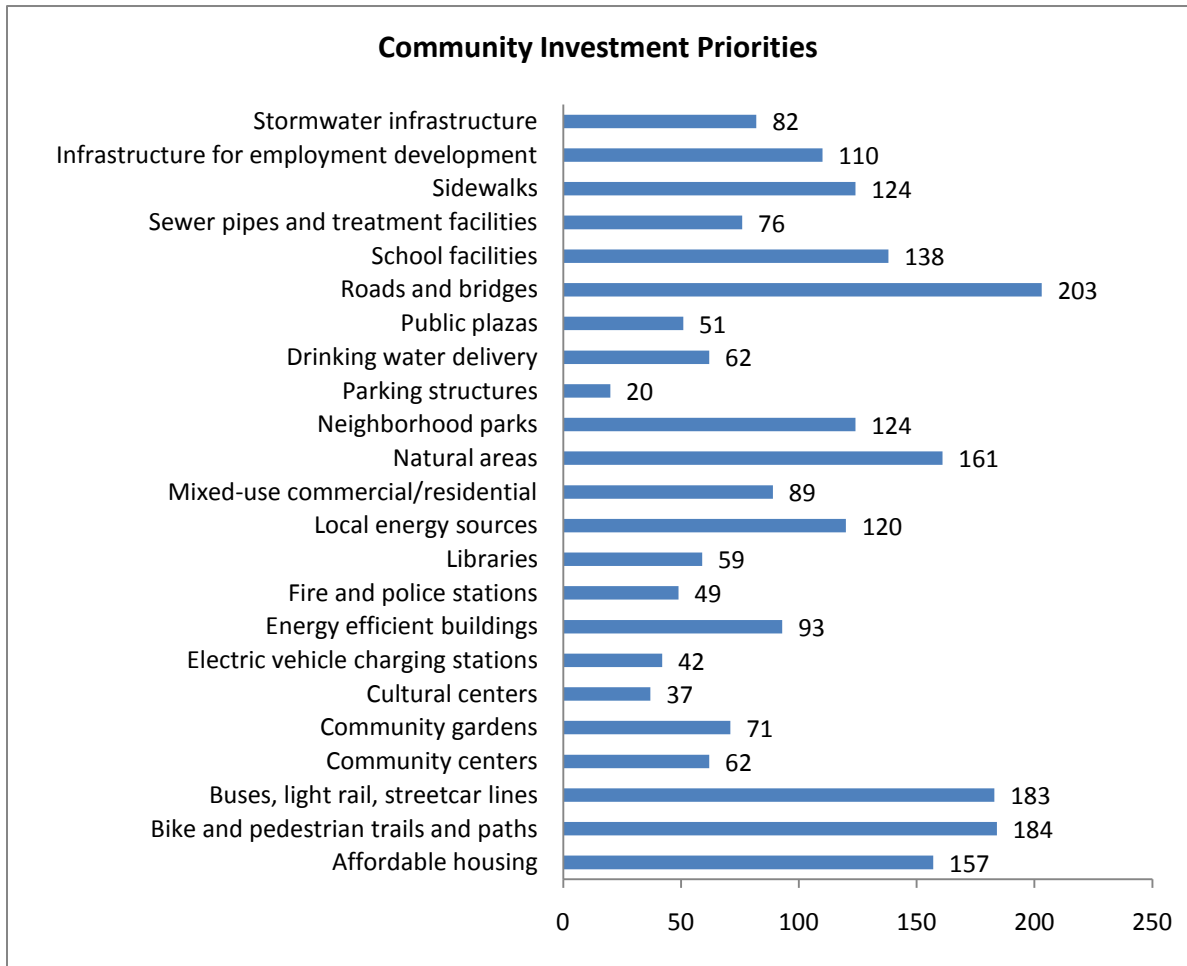
As the largest set of input, a more detailed analysis of the online survey responses related to the CIS recommendations follows:

Councilors, Metro staff, and open house attendees gather to discuss the COO's Community Investment Strategy recommendations



Community Investment Priorities

What public investments are most needed in your neighborhood? Enter numbers from the list above and/or add additional suggestions. Limit your answers to five. (580 responses)



Summary of additional comments

- Investing in roads and bridges was the most frequently listed need for future investment, with 203 comments including this kind of improvement as important.
- 184 and 183 comments listed “Bike/Ped trails and paths” and “Buses, light rail, streetcar lines,” respectively, as important for future investment. Some disagreement occurred around light rail vs. increased bus/rapid transit, but all generally felt like increasing transit options would benefit both their neighborhood and the region.
- 161 said that protecting and enhancing “Natural areas” was important.

- 157 respondents listed “Affordable housing” as a need in their neighborhood. Comments ranged from increasing the supply of all housing to expanding the UGB to allow for more single-family detached housing, to more affordable high-density units.
- Other categories that received frequent mention include:
 - Schools and education (138)
 - Energy efficient buildings and local energy sources (93 and 120)
 - Neighborhood parks (124)
 - Sidewalks (124)
 - Infrastructure for employment development (110)

Quotes:

“The UGB should be expanded when ideas, demand and creativity come together, not just when a government is first in place...”

“I live in southwest Portland and we don't have one single major arterial that meets the City of Portland street standard with complete sidewalks on the streets.”

“We need to retrofit streets and storm drains to break the street-to-stream connection. We need projects like Portland's Grey-to-Green out in Washington County.”

“I'd like to see more done with keeping existing neighborhoods – just that – a neighborhood.”

“All areas of Portland need to focus more on these livability, pedestrian-focused issues.”



Councilor Rex Burkholder engages with area residents at the Lents open house

Policy Recommendations

Invest in safe livable communities: Do you agree or disagree with the following recommendations? (551 responses)

Answer Options	strongly disagree	somewhat disagree	neutral	somewhat agree	strongly agree	don't know
<i>Metro should only expand the urban growth boundary in places that strengthen existing downtowns, main streets or employment areas.</i>	14.10%	10.62%	7.14%	19.96%	47.44%	0.73%
<i>Before new areas are brought into the urban boundary there should be a government to serve the area, funding for services and demand for the new development.</i>	7.56%	7.56%	4.06%	16.97%	62.18%	1.66%
<i>When making policy and investment decisions, officials should strongly consider the affordability of housing in combination with the cost of transportation.</i>	8.01%	8.01%	8.74%	25.32%	48.63%	1.28%

Summary of 325 additional comments

Although a majority of survey respondents agree strongly or somewhat with the statements listed above, there were many caveats and clarifications, such as prioritizing affordable housing and *jobs* in areas near high quality transit options.

- In relation to **UGB expansion** and **density**, comments were split between wanting more density and tight UGB boundaries and expanding the boundary to allow for more low-density housing options. A large number of respondents said we need to focus on **fixing existing** infrastructure before we expand further. Cost and return on investment were motivating factors, as was the deteriorating condition of existing services: no new development without addressing existing problems (roads, sidewalks, sewer and water systems).
- **Protecting farmland**, as with the urban and rural reserves process, is still an important topic for many residents, as is protecting **natural areas**. Others prefer to

focus more on **jobs** and how to encourage employment opportunities and redevelopment before expansion even though it might seem easier.

- In addition to preserving farmland and natural areas outside the UGB, a number of comments said we need to consider **environmental** and **natural infrastructure** *inside* the growth boundary; focus on sustainable development and preserving available green spaces within the UGB.
- Many comments reflected on the need to have **developers pay** for any additional infrastructure costs incurred by new development or expansion of urban areas. These respondents would prefer that current residents and taxpayers not shoulder the cost of new development. Consider who benefits as well as short and long term effects.
- Quality of life, and **livability** in general, emerged as themes throughout many of the comments, although what this means differed for respondents. Some view dense, active communities to be the most livable, others find quiet suburban streets with large yards to be most desirable. A balanced approach was also mentioned in many comments.
 - Active transportation
 - Foodsheds
 - Wildlife corridors
 - Libraries
 - Community centers
 - Neighborhood character
 - Schools
 - Proximity to jobs
- Protecting **existing communities** and supporting **local governance and choice** was important to some residents. But again, opinions differed as to what this would entail for a community: some want to preserve the character and density of their neighborhoods, others would like to see more amenities and transportation options, and still other want the benefits that come with increased density but in a way that suits their particular neighborhood. **Transportation investments are** needed. We **need to consider connectivity**, safety, walkability, transportation options and choices, costs and benefits, commute distances and congestion.

Quotes:

“Government should get out of the way of free markets.”

“Maintaining the agriculture area for food consumption of the state of OR. Having this area sustainable in the area of food is a high priority.”

“Infrastructure Infrastructure Infrastructure”

“Less money and regulations micro-managing all aspects of land-use and development. Set broad policies and then get out of the way. Less paper planning and more actual building.”

Promote economic development and good jobs: Do you agree or disagree with the following recommendations? (553 responses)

Answer Options	strongly disagree	somewhat disagree	neutral	somewhat agree	strongly agree	don't know
<i>The region should maintain a development-ready supply of large lot industrial land to attract new businesses, even if it means expanding the urban growth boundary.</i>	26.96%	18.94%	10.75%	16.39%	25.87%	1.09%
<i>The region needs to create a regional economic development plan, which includes coordination with surrounding cities and counties.</i>	6.19%	6.01%	6.01%	30.24%	50.64%	0.91%
<i>Local governments should make the most of critical employment land by reserving large lots in industrial areas for industrial use only (not using them for schools or parks for example).</i>	14.96%	19.53%	15.33%	25.00%	22.63%	2.55%

Summary of 270 additional comments

Survey respondents appear to be divided about how best to deal with industrial lands throughout the region. A majority supports the creation of a regional economic development plan (81 percent), but remain conflicted about how to create or maintain industrial land used to attract new businesses.

- By far the most comments were directed at **limiting UGB expansion, protecting farmland, and protecting natural/rural areas**. Not all of these comments were against creating jobs, but most were more interested in seeing **existing land** utilized more efficiently, **increasing density** and **redeveloping** existing sites within the current UGB.
- While not as numerous as those calling for limiting UGB expansion, some comments called for promoting **job creation**, even if that means expanding the UGB onto rural farms and forestland. These comments did not call for growth and expansion across the board, but rather called for a **balanced** approach that weighs the cost of expansion

against the benefits of new jobs. Others supported providing a large supply of industrial land by expanding the UGB.

- **Coordination** between local and regional governments, many comments said, is an important goal for a regional economic strategy, as was increased efficiency of investment. One caveat to regional coordination, according to some respondents, was the need to value **local choice** and aspiration for employment lands.
- Many comments focused on the need to provide more support and investment in **small, local businesses**. Some residents see small businesses as the backbone of our economy, providing more jobs and stability for the region than the larger-lot industrial uses so often discussed in conversations about UGB expansion. These jobs, comments said, also have the benefit of being located in and serving neighborhoods and smaller centers. Supporting small, local business was seen as a way to create infill and redevelopment opportunities within the UGB.

Quotes:

“Instead of developing multiple new sites for business, we should explore rehabbing vacant buildings already located in business/industrial parks rather than building ‘out.’”

“I’ve heard that Portland is a difficult place to do business. Too much process, too many fees. We need to change that.”

“Let the free market decide!!!!”

“Investing in a high quality education system is a better long term investment -- companies care about both educated employees and also about good schools for the children of current employees.”

Protect our natural areas: Do you agree or disagree with the following recommendations? (555 responses)

Answer Options	strongly disagree	somewhat disagree	neutral	somewhat agree	strongly agree	don’t know
<i>The region should increase prioritization of maintenance, restoration and expansion of our parks, trails and natural areas.</i>	8.00%	9.09%	11.45%	24.36%	46.73%	0.36%
<i>All major policy and investment decisions should factor in impacts on greenhouse gas emissions.</i>	14.42%	8.76%	8.94%	18.07%	49.82%	0.00%

Summary of 212 additional comments

- **Protect trees, open space, habitat and create more parks.** Many responses urged a greater focus on preserving open space, protecting trees, and creating parks (both community and regional) that serve a range of purposes. Parks and open space were frequently cited as major contributors to the region's livability – the more parks, the better life is. Several comments reflected a desire to have parks and natural areas integrated into both residential and commercial-employment areas.
- **Economy vs. environment.** In the current economic climate, there is some reservation toward investing in parks and open space. Comments frequently point out that parks and such are wonderful to have, but jobs and economic vitality take precedence. *“The green spaces are beautiful, we need to look to the future of our state's natural reserves and gifts, but the focus needs to be on the economy.”*
- The need for better **connectivity** between parks and natural areas, both locally and regionally, was raised in a number of comments.
- While most respondents agree that the region “should increase prioritization of maintenance, restoration and expansion of our parks, trails and natural areas,” many cautioned against adding new expenses and **costs** to the region. We need to **maintain** and **promote our existing parks and natural areas** before expanding that system.
- **Climate change and greenhouse gases** remain as divisive topics in this region, as they are nationally or even internationally. Comments about these topics ranged from a belief that climate change is a non-existent problem to climate change as the region's most pressing problem. Much like other controversial topics covered in the COO recommendations, a few comments focused on a **balance** between jobs and the environment (including climate change).

Quotes:

“Emphasis should first be placed on jobs especially jobs that address/incorporate environmental concerns. Why not target green jobs at the young people who need to work.”

“Utilizing volunteer organizations (Girl/Boy Scouts, 4H, Boys & Girls Clubs, etc.) to clean up parks, trails, etc., makes more sense to me...What better way to teach the younger generation to preserve and protect nature.”

“when the land is developed it is lost for generations. Now is the time to put natural areas and parks aside for our kids and grandkids.”

“I agree that parks, trails and natural areas are certainly beneficial to every community. I do not think that citizens understand how we can have the unemployment rate in the state and still can afford to expand our green areas. People who are struggling financially want their electeds to work on economic problems. The green spaces are beautiful, we need to look to the future of our state's natural reserves and gifts, but the focus needs to be on the economy.”

Reduce inefficiency, foster innovation and demand accountability: Do you agree or disagree with the following recommendations? (556 responses)

Answer Options	strongly disagree	somewhat disagree	neutral	somewhat agree	strongly agree	don't know
<i>A set of indicators – like a report card – should be developed to tell us which regional decisions and investments give the best results.</i>	5.82%	6.55%	15.09%	33.82%	37.64%	1.09%
<i>Local and regional governments should make it a priority to streamline and standardize regulations to make it easier to do business in the region, even if it means less local control over regulations.</i>	17.54%	19.17%	10.13%	22.78%	27.49%	2.89%

Summary of 159 additional comments (Is there anything else you would like to add about reducing inefficiency, fostering innovation and ensuring accountability)

General comments about reducing inefficiency, fostering innovation and ensuring accountability were wide-ranging in subject matter and content, reflecting both the diversity of political, social and cultural viewpoints across the region and the difficulty in adequately summarizing the challenges of a coordinated approach to community investment.

- The debate over whether to **expand or maintain the existing UGB** was again a dominating theme among comments. While more respondents seem to favor maintaining the UGB and increasing density, there are still many who believe we need, at a minimum, small expansions to allow for housing affordability, choice and job creation.
- Fixing the existing infrastructure before expanding into new development continues to be a dominating theme, although there are comments pointing out that existing infrastructure will not be able to handle the predicted growth of the region.

Rate the importance of each of the following as goals or performance measures for public investments. (555 responses)

Answer Options	1 not important	2	3	4	5 essential
<i>Strengthen the regional economy</i>	2.38%	4.02%	14.26%	31.99%	47.35%
<i>Increase the number of jobs in your city</i>	4.01%	6.02%	20.62%	34.12%	35.22%
<i>Provide a greater mix of jobs in all areas</i>	4.75%	8.96%	20.66%	35.10%	30.53%
<i>Help local communities achieve their unique desired visions for the future</i>	7.10%	10.75%	29.14%	28.60%	24.41%
<i>Improve public safety</i>	3.09%	10.89%	30.67%	32.67%	22.69%
<i>Decrease the region's carbon footprint</i>	11.43%	9.80%	16.70%	25.23%	36.84%
<i>Retrofit existing pipes, roads, sewers, etc. to accommodate growth in existing communities</i>	4.17%	6.16%	18.48%	36.59%	34.60%
<i>Protect clean air, clean water and healthy ecosystems</i>	2.35%	4.88%	13.02%	24.59%	55.15%
<i>Increase affordable housing availability</i>	7.99%	9.44%	27.77%	31.22%	23.59%
<i>Provide safe and reliable transportation choices</i>	3.68%	6.08%	16.94%	32.97%	40.33%
<i>Ensure that the benefits and burdens of growth are distributed equally among citizens and communities across the region</i>	11.86%	8.39%	22.99%	26.82%	29.93%

Summary of 184 additional comments (other goals or performance measures that should be considered for public investments)

Respondents continued to emphasize the themes found throughout the previous questions on the survey. Comments focused on the need to maintain a tight UGB, protect farms, forests and natural areas, create jobs (for some, even at the expense of rural land) and support existing communities in their goals and aspirations. Many innovative suggestions were made, ranging from the specific to the very broad. Some made mention of the role health should play in monitoring performance of investments, and others would like to see more cost effectiveness and accountability.

- **Limiting growth** (to areas within the UGB for some, and population in general for others) was one strategy that gained more interest in response to these questions and recommendations made by Metro's COO; balance again was a common theme. The **cost** of suburban growth on **transportation, air quality and quality of life** was compared to the cost of urban density on **housing affordability and choice**.

- **Choice** was again a broad theme emerging from both ends of the spectrum: some want choice of housing and jobs; others want choice in parks, transportation options and amenities (with many respondents falling between and across those categories).
- Several comments said that greater **local control** over community character and direction is needed, and that Metro is welcome to make regional plans, but should foster community aspirations.

Quotes:

“Promote a livable, sustainable community...Foster connections (whether among people, among trails, among streets or green spaces, etc.)”

“Any public investment that only leads to more of the same should be highly questioned. Our regional and global economy needs to be redirected. And if we do not deal with peak oil and global warming our efforts will not matter.”

“How about a cost-benefit analysis? Having more jobs in Hillsboro is a problem if Highway 26 is the only way in. Commutes on 26 and 217 are approaching Bay Area 101 commutes.”

“Increase the number of jobs in neighborhoods in order to reduce travel and other costs as well as the impact on the environment.”

SECTION 2. URBAN GROWTH BOUNDARY STUDY AREAS

During the public comment period, 52 letters were written, more than 500 surveys were completed, and additional comments and input were collected during the open houses and stakeholder meetings held to gather public input on the COO recommendations for the Community Investment Strategy.

All dialogue about the UGB expansion analysis was divided along a spectrum, from those residents who are adamant about maintaining a tight boundary and increasing density to those who believe we must be willing to expand in order to attract large employers and maintain affordable housing options.

The letters and e-mails received focused primarily on creating jobs and promoting economic activity, particularly surrounding Hillsboro and Cornelius. This emphasis perhaps reflects the quantity of letters coming from cities and other local government entities (school districts, for example, argued primarily for additional land to expand on currently over-populated facilities). Beaverton, Hillsboro, Cornelius and Forest Grove all desire additional land to build on their existing industrial and large-lot employment centers.

Conversations at the various stakeholder meetings revolved primarily around concerns over density requirements of present and future expansion areas, regional equity, housing affordability and choice, and concern about accountability (including how to define and measure such indicators as “equity”).

A more detailed summary of the many survey questions and comments relating to UGB expansion area analysis follows:



Councilor Robert Liberty discusses the UGB expansion analysis areas

Urban Growth Boundary Expansion Options

Do you agree or disagree with the following statements? (545 responses)

Answer Options	strongly disagree	somewhat disagree	neutral	somewhat agree	strongly agree	don't know
<i>It is okay to build more homes and businesses near my neighborhood if the new development includes parks and natural areas</i>	11.32%	8.53%	10.76%	29.68%	39.33%	0.37%
<i>It is okay to build more homes and businesses near my neighborhood if the new development includes convenient shopping and services within walking distance of my home</i>	12.80%	10.02%	13.17%	28.39%	34.88%	0.74%
<i>It is okay to build more homes and businesses near my neighborhood if they are attractive and well-designed.</i>	12.55%	5.43%	14.42%	26.78%	39.70%	1.12%
<i>Over the next 10 years, having one more housing unit per block in my neighborhood is a reasonable price to pay for protecting farms, forests and natural areas.</i>	15.99%	8.36%	11.15%	18.03%	43.68%	2.79%
<i>New development to accommodate population and employment growth should come through developing land outside the current urban growth boundary.</i>	49.17%	13.81%	8.84%	12.15%	14.18%	1.84 %

Summary of 232 additional comments

Many of the same themes emerged from comments relating to the urban growth boundary expansion options as came out in discussions of the Community Investment Strategy. Comments addressed topics like density, UGB expansion, farmland, jobs, education and regional choice and diversity.

- **UGB expansion** responses are split on this difficult topic. Similar to comments about the investment strategy, many residents said they would prefer to keep the UGB tight, and protect farms, forest and natural areas. Others said we need to keep land and housing prices down, attract growth and employment, and create choices for the region's many diverse residents, reasoning that impacts to farmland will be less than gains from growth. A few comments suggest that increasing density can lead to lower livability in a community through poor design, higher traffic and a lack of care-taking of public and private spaces.
- **Housing affordability** was one of the main reasons for wanting a UGB expansion, as was **increasing housing choice** and **creating jobs**. Other ways suggested for creating more affordable housing were more **infill** and **redevelopment** of existing under-utilized areas within the UGB.
- A third option was mentioned several times: **limiting growth** in the region. Respondents said growth should not be a given, and offered many arguments on the negative impacts uncontrolled growth can have. Important concepts include carrying capacity of the region, jobs for local residents, and maintaining existing character of the region.
- **Choice, diversity and options** factored into comments in favor of expansion and those supporting protection of rural lands. For housing, some residents want a diverse mix of types, including some low-density single-family detached housing to raise families and have yards. Many said we also need diverse transportation options to relieve congestion and decrease emissions, increase health, and accommodate future growth.
- **Keeping decisions local** again emerged as a common theme, with an interest in keeping Metro as an advisor, regional coordinator or partner, but not necessarily as the primary decision-maker.

Quotes:

"expand, expand, expand! look at the laws of supply and demand...more supply means lower prices...lower prices will encourage growth...growth means economic prosperity and thriving communities. only 3% of land is urban...we have plenty of farms, forests, and natural areas."

"Develop parking lots or turn them into parks instead of expanding the UGB."

"You must stop expanding development into farm land. There are many infill options available that could protect our farms and forests from being destroyed by development. Growth does not mean one has to take prime farmland into consideration."

"You would need fewer parks and recreation areas if yards were large enough to accommodate a few kids throwing a ball around. Parks aren't the end all be all solution."

Urban growth boundary study areas: Recently four local jurisdictions proposed additional areas for consideration, including residential sites in Cornelius and Beaverton and large-site industrial areas in Forest Grove and Hillsboro.

Of the study areas above, five residential expansion options (3D, 4H, 5B, 6A, 7D) and one large-site industrial expansion option (8A) are recommended by Metro planning staff for further consideration. The recommendations were based on a variety of factors, including projected population and employment growth, efficiency of land use inside the urban growth boundary, and market readiness, financing and governance.

Please indicate your level of support for each of the recommended options as expansion areas for residential use: (493 responses)

Answer Options	strongly oppose	somewhat oppose	neutral	somewhat support	strongly support	don't know
<i>3D – Maplelane area (573 acres adjacent to Oregon City)</i>	19.96%	10.08%	22.63%	14.20%	15.64%	17.49%
<i>4H – Advance area (316 acres adjacent to Wilsonville)</i>	21.24%	10.93%	19.38%	18.56%	15.46%	14.43%
<i>5B – Sherwood West (496 acres adjacent to Sherwood)</i>	22.87%	12.47%	20.37%	14.76%	14.76%	14.76%
<i>6A – South Hillsboro (1,063 acres adjacent to Hillsboro)</i>	24.85%	10.27%	16.02%	14.17%	24.02%	10.68%
<i>7D – Cornelius South (210 acres adjacent to Cornelius)</i>	23.09%	11.75%	16.91%	14.64%	21.03%	12.58%

Please indicate your level of support for the recommended option as an expansion area for large-site industrial use: (494 responses)

Answer Options	strongly oppose	somewhat oppose	neutral	somewhat support	strongly support	don't know
8A – Hillsboro North (310 acres adjacent to Hillsboro)	26.32%	10.73%	12.96%	13.56%	28.34%	8.10%

Summary of 142 additional comments (Do you think that any additional areas should be considered for expansion?)

Fewer than half of all comments suggested additional areas to be considered for expansion, although only the Stafford, South Cooper Mountain and Cornelius North have more than a few votes. Most responded with no additional areas to be considered, or that no areas *at all* should be considered for expansion at this time. Following the trends established earlier in the survey, many respondents do not want to see the UGB expanded.

Specific areas mentioned for inclusion are:

- 1C – East Gresham (2); 1D (2); 1F (1); 2C (1); 4A – Stafford (8); 4B (2); 4C (3); 4D – Norwood (3); 4E – I-5 East (3); 4F/G – Elligsen (4); 5G – Grahams Ferry (1); 6A – South Hillsboro (1); 6B – Cooper Mountain (5); 6C – Roy Rogers West (2); 7B – Forest Grove North (2); 7I – Cornelius North (5); 8A – Hillsboro North (2).

Additional themes include protecting farmland, creating jobs and limiting growth in the region.

Quotes:

“As stated previously, open cities to development and create jobs for people who live in AND AROUND town. Provide more options for homeowners and businesses alike.”

“In looking at the study areas why did you not include sites with all of the services right there and not expensive or as expensive to develop?”

“If there's a potential to be able to site businesses on 310 acres, why not double the acreage and double the chances for success? What's the downside even if no new businesses are attracted for a long time?”

“There's too many rural acres left out of consideration. Put those back in the mix for more opportunity, more competition and more creativity.”

Summary of 136 additional comments (*Are there areas that shouldn't be considered at this time?*)

Based on the tone of responses to this question, it appears that most comments came from those residents who do not want to see much, if any, urban growth boundary expansion. Of the 136 comments, almost all are in support of limiting expansion. Few specific areas received much attention, with the exception of 4A – Stafford (8) and 8A/B – North Hillsboro/Shute Rd Interchange (25).

Quotes:

"It is totally inappropriate for me to speak to the aspirations and intent of other communities."

"All of them. Expansion is not necessary at this time and will waste precious land by building horizontally instead of vertically. Our quality of life is being ruined with these expansions. We are becoming too much like Los Angeles with our sprawl."

"The Stafford area. Of all the places in the Metro region to invest in services, this seems the most expensive of the identified "urban reserves" with the least amount of return for the cost."

Summary of 150 additional comments (*Is there anything you would like to add about urban growth boundary expansion study areas?*)

Many of the same themes that run through the responses of all questions on the survey continue to be relevant in these comments. However, some of the comments in this question take those themes and apply them in specific areas.

- **Density** is a divided topic. Some want it, others don't. Specific areas that were mentioned multiple times include Hillsboro (and the Hillsboro North and South analysis areas), Stafford and the areas surrounding Cornelius.
- **Coordination** between governments and communities, both local and regional.
- **Livability**, including jobs, affordable housing, diversity, choice, transportation options, amenities and clean environments and natural areas. Ideas about quality of life vary, depending in part on how respondents view density, transportation and housing choice.
- **Efficiency and cost effectiveness** – Comments included mentions of only expanding the UGB if infrastructure and services can be provided efficiently, mirroring other comments about the Community Investment Strategy. A good return on investment was cited frequently as a means to determine which areas might be considered for expansion, or as a reason *not* to expand the UGB (i.e. redevelopment may be more cost-effective than expansion).

Quotes:

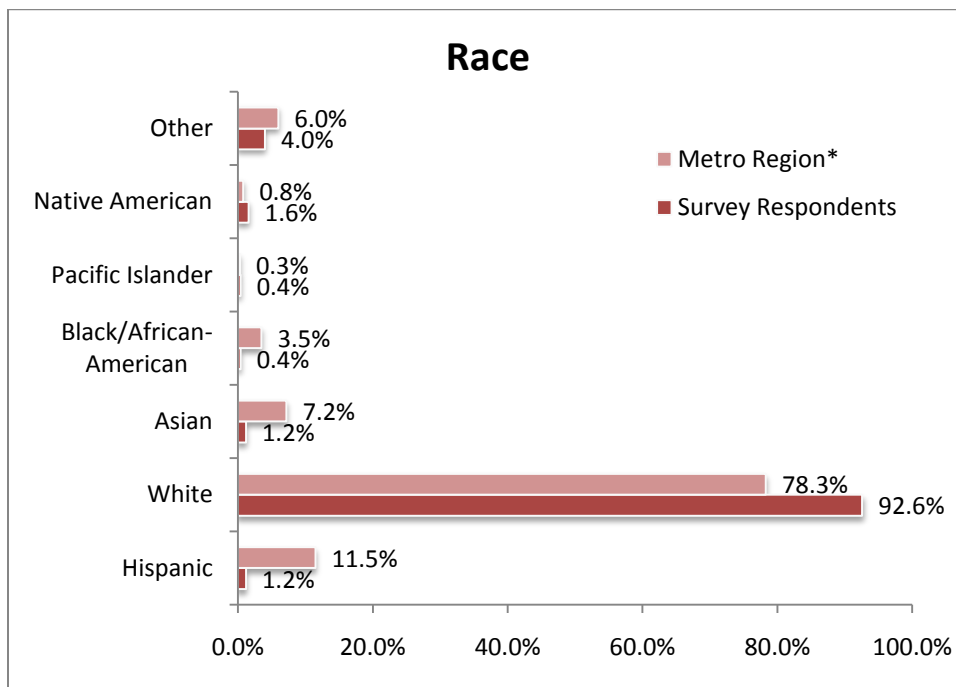
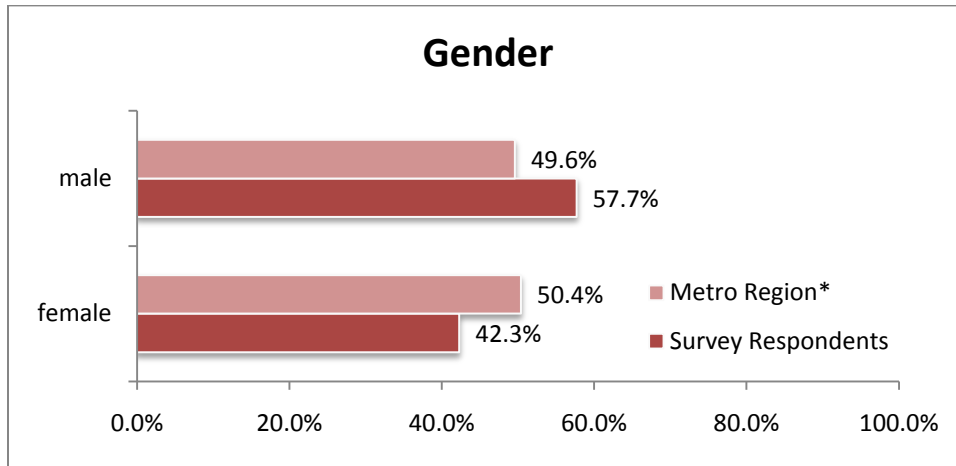
“Let's develop a tax and economic environment conducive to adding jobs but do it within our existing footprint. As for housing, why build more when we have so much lying fallow?”

“Grow up not out to minimize transportation costs and create livable communities where work, shopping, entertainment and outdoor fresh air park environment can be available without using a car.”

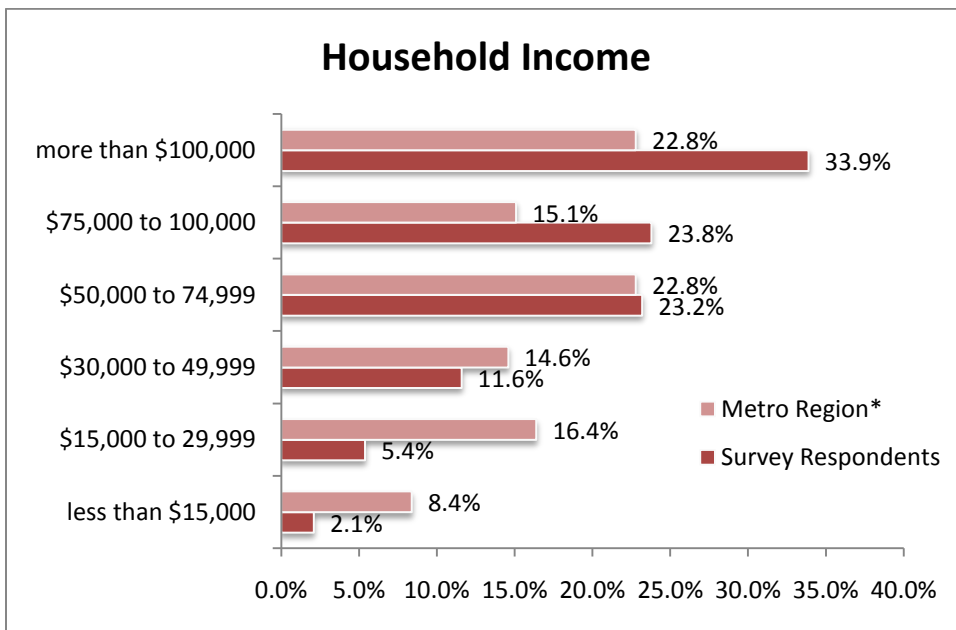
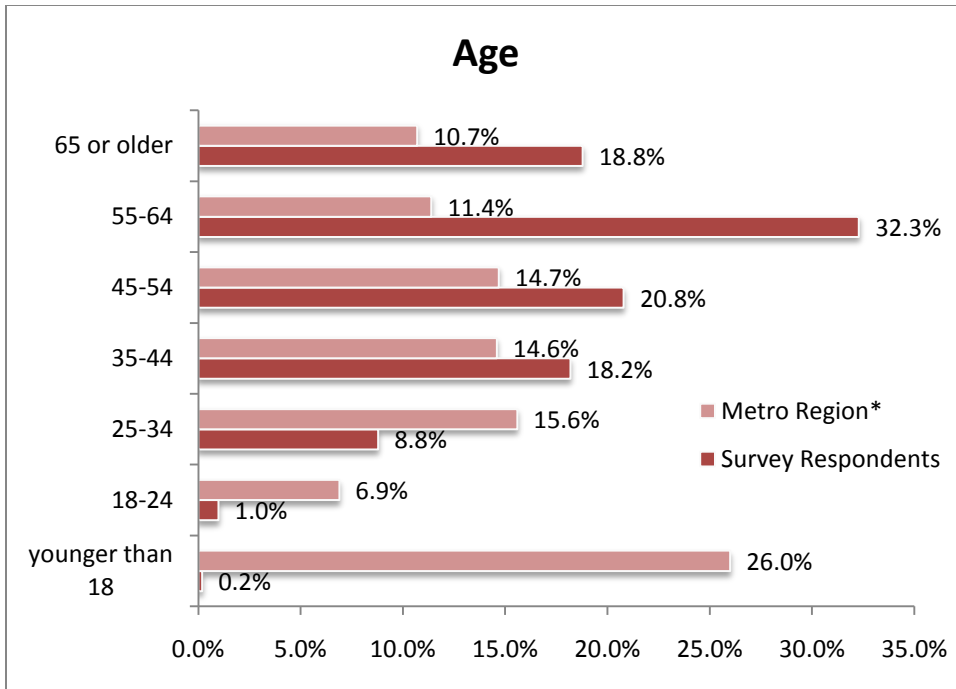
“Listen more to property owners and families who want the definition of livability expanded past convenience, density, public transportation to room to play, sun that gets into the yard, privacy from neighbors, gardens, etc.”



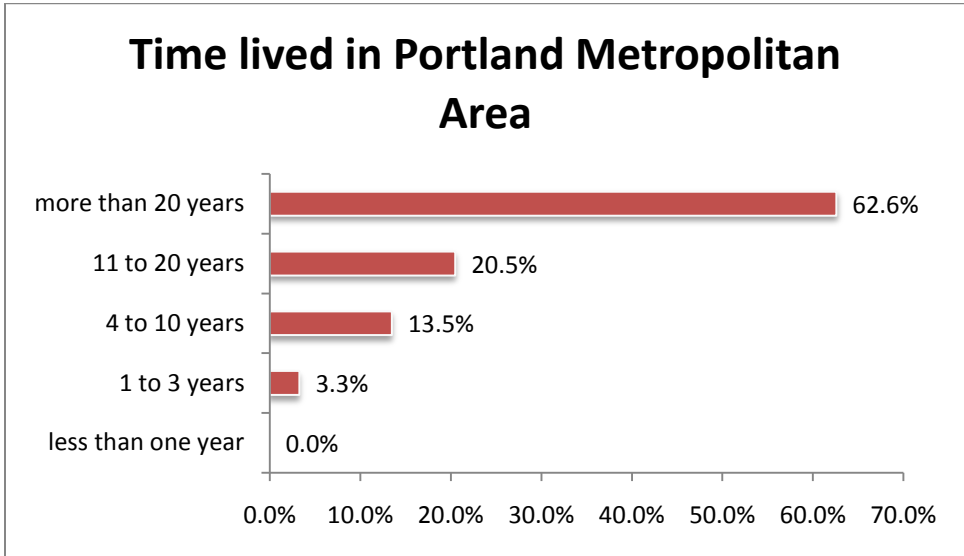
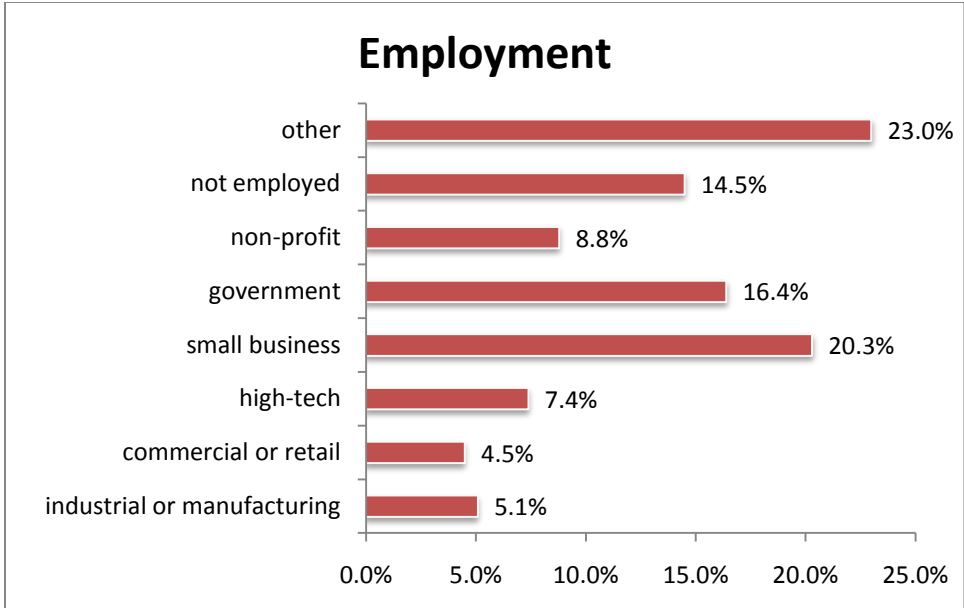
SECTION 3. SURVEY RESPONDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

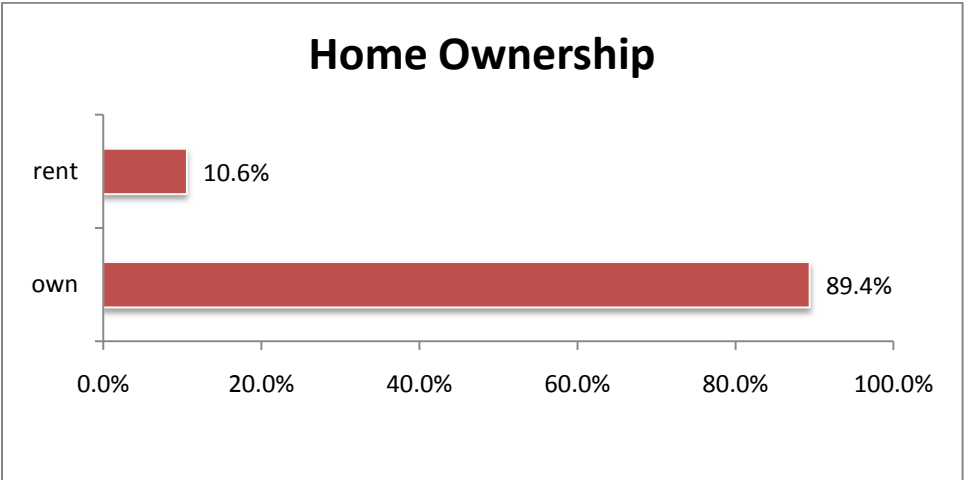
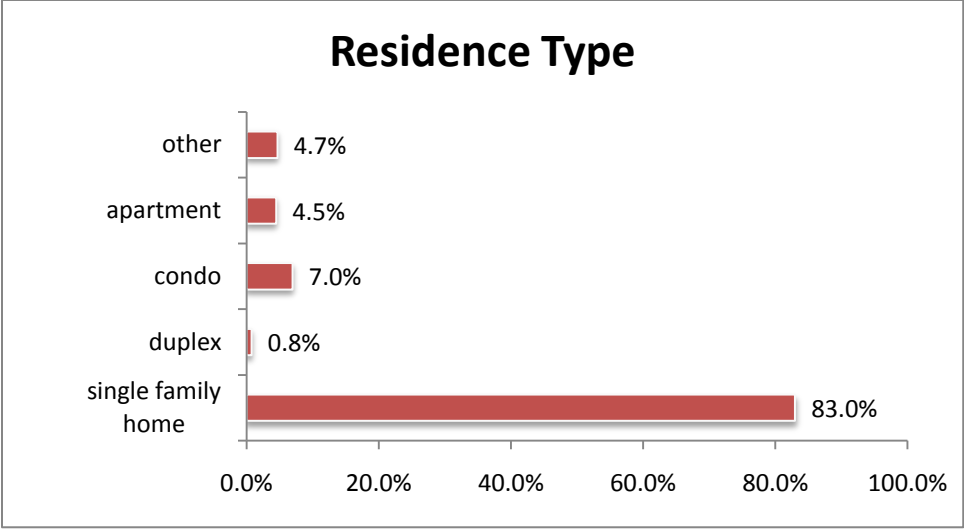


*Metro Region statistics source: ESRI



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Area of residence

Community	# of Respondents
Aloha	11
Banks	2
Beavercreek	4
Beaverton	25
Bethany	8
Brightwood	1
Bull Mountain	1
Cedar Hills	2
Cedar Mill	3
Clackamas	5
Clackamas Co.	10
Clark Co.	1
Cornelius	4
Damascus	3
Fairview	1
Forest Grove	22
Gaston	1
Gladstone	1
Gresham	8
Happy Valley	3
Helvetia	3
Hillsboro	41

Community	# of Respondents
King city	2
Lake Oswego	16
Marion County	1
Milwaukie	3
Multnomah Co.	12
North of Cornelius	1
Oak Grove	4
Oregon City	3
Portland	171
Rivergrove	1
Rock Creek	2
Sandy	1
Scholls	1
Sherwood	10
Tigard	13
Troutdale	1
Tualatin	8
Washington	3
Washington Co.	43
West Linn	10
West Slope	1
Wilsonville	8