

URBAN GROWTH READINESS TASK FORCE

MAY 20, 2016 | 9:00AM – 11:30AM

Meeting Summary - DRAFT

TASK FORCE MEMBERS ATTENDING:

Pete Truax – Mayor (Forest Grove)
Shane Bernis – Mayor (Gresham)
Lori DeRemer – Mayor (Happy Valley)
Mark Gamba – Mayor (Milwaukie)
Krisanna Clark – Mayor (Sherwood)
Josh Alpert representing Charlie Hales – Mayor (Portland)
Doug Daoust – Mayor (Troutdale)
Tim Knapp – Mayor (Wilsonville)
Andy Duyck – Chair (Washington County)
Tom Hughes – President (Metro Council)
Sam Chase (Metro Council)
Carlotta Collette (Metro Council)
Carrie MacLaren (Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development)
Jason Miner (1,000 Friends of Oregon)
Dave Nielson, alternate for Jeff Smith (Homebuilders Association of Metropolitan Portland)

Members not represented:

Lou Ogden – Mayor (Tualatin)
John Ludlow – Chair (Clackamas County)

STAFF:

John Williams (Metro)
Ted Reid (Metro)
Andy Shaw (Metro)
Colin Deverell (Metro)
Jeanne Lawson - Facilitator (JLA Public Involvement)
Hannah Mills - Scribe (JLA Public Involvement)

OVERVIEW & EXPECTATIONS OF THE GROUP

Tom Hughes, Metro Council President, reviewed the context and core values of this process. He acknowledged that urban and rural reserves – when complete – will represent an important milestone for the region and can change the way growth is managed moving forward. Historically, it's been difficult to address these issues due to the narrow technical focus of state laws governing residential urban growth management, but the hope is that this group will work to identify strategies for increasing flexibility for regional decision making. The Metro Council has indicated its willingness to explore alternative paths for regional consideration of modest (to be defined) Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) expansion requests for housing.

Jeanne, facilitator with JLA Public Involvement, asked the members of the task force to introduce themselves, and reviewed the agenda and ground rules for the discussion. The agenda was as follows:

1. Overview and expectations
2. Proposed taskforce charge and Problem Statement review
3. Guided discussion of Problem Statement and key issues
4. Next steps and closing

TASK FORCE CHARGE AND PROBLEM STATEMENT

Task force Charge

Council President Hughes explained that this group will be working to address concerns about the flexibility of the residential UGB expansion process to respond to issues beyond just regional housing needs, but also to consider other regional and local goals such as affordable housing, coordination between transportation and housing, and other issues.

Discussion & Questions

- Consider expanding this discussion to include new housing types, locations of housing and incomes of residents in order to better encompass both housing and transportation needs.
- Seek work-life balance when developing solutions.
- Identify strategies for making the system more responsive, predictable and reliable.
- Consider reforming the UGB review process to include analyses of sub-regional needs for housing and employment.
- Recognize that this is an opportunity to discuss creative solutions to regional issues. Ensure that this process is less focused on the political choices of the past, and more on the opportunities for success in the future.
- There was a hope that this task force will work to determine where an adjustment to the current UGB (swapping areas in the UGB) may be more effective than an expansion. Function is a main priority of the region, and it would be beneficial for this group to make outcome-based decisions.
- There was concern that the adopted plan is too unrealistic and aspirational. Consider narrowing the goals in order to better fulfill the needs of the region.

Problem Statement

Council President Hughes reviewed the proposed Problem Statement with the group, asking the task force to consider whether it embodies the purpose of this process. The Problem Statement is as follows:

Currently, the Metro Council is unable to act on city requests for small residential Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) expansions unless there is a quantified 20-year regional need for more land. The Metro Council believes that there are other compelling reasons to consider modest expansions into urban reserves when there is a city that can govern and finance the area and that is also making progress on creating jobs and housing in target areas.

Discussion & Questions

- There was some concern that the proposed Problem Statement doesn't capture all the components of the issue. Consider cutting or editing the first sentence to better bring up a broader range of needs and strategies.
- When determining the feasibility of an expansion area, it's important to consider financing and funding opportunities.
- Write in a reference or value statement that explains the importance of identifying and fulfilling local and community aspirations.
- Recognize the Problem Statement's purpose to identify and describe inadequacies and inefficiencies in the current system, not to identify goals.
- Ensure the Problem Statement is balanced with the values of this taskforce, and addresses the goal of adjusting the current law.

The group generally agreed that the problem statement should focus specifically on the problem this process is addressing, but not delve into too many details. It should focus on the need for greater flexibility in the residential UGB process and the importance of advancing local and regional goals. Council President Hughes wrapped up the discussion pointing out that there are other planning efforts that will consider some of the region's other concerns about the UGB (for example, technical peer review of forecasts). This process focuses specifically on how city requests for expansions might be able to be addressed, when the current process cannot demonstrate a regional growth need.

GUIDED DISCUSSION – PROBLEM STATEMENT & KEY ISSUES

Jeanne asked the task force to consider their discussion and form recommendations for changes to the Problem Statement, as well as develop a set of Key Issues they would like to address during the process. She encouraged members to submit their thoughts on sheets of paper, one comment per sheet. Staff collected the comments and arranged them on the wall according to their similarities and whether they pertained to the Problem Statement or the Key Issues. Tom reminded the taskforce of their commitment to finding consensus while striving to find suitable solutions to housing and development issues.

COMMENT WALL INPUT

Problem Statement

- Address the need for flexibility when making adjustments
- Work to understand what is needed on a local level by cities in the region
- Understand the necessity of changing the current law
- Recognize the importance of climate considerations during this process
- Thoughtfully consider and plan for population growth and the subsequent development needs
- Illustrate the goal of making a more responsive and reliable system
- Note that the current UGB system does not adequately respond to local needs and aspirations
- Illustrate that housing types, locations and economic levels need to be coordinated with the transportation system in order to address equity and climate impacts
- One taskforce member suggested rewording the Problem Statement:
 - *“Currently, Multnomah County is unable to act on city requests for small residential urban growth boundary (UGB) expansions unless there is a quantified 20 year regional need for more land. Ultimately, Metro recognizes that there are other compelling reasons to consider flexibility into urban reserves where there is a city that can govern and prove through their local plans that they can address the regional issues relating to creating jobs and meeting housing targets.”*

Key Issues

- Be practical when developing solutions, making best use out of what is currently within the UGB
- Address affordable housing needs
 - Plan for population growth
 - Prioritize meeting local housing needs when making decisions and recommendations
 - Provide regional flexibility in housing opportunities
 - Make efforts to ensure residents aren't priced out of their homes and forced to live far from their employment or schooling
 - Work to create variety in housing
 - At the Metro regional level, goal 10 is furthered: full range of housing affordability
 - There is a need for a full range of housing in cities
 - The law requiring that 75% of urban reserves in any particular county be added to the UGB before considering undesignated areas holds some cities back
- Support and promote Metro's Six Desired Outcomes:
 1. People live, work and play in **vibrant communities** where their everyday needs are easily accessible
 2. Current and future residents benefit from the region's **sustained economic competitiveness and prosperity**
 3. People have **safe and reliable transportation choices** that enhance their quality of life
 4. The region is **a leader on climate change**, on minimizing contributions to global warming
 5. Current and future generations enjoy **clean air, clean water and healthy ecosystems**
 6. **Equity** exists relative to the benefits and burdens of growth and change to the region's communities
- Ensure work-life balance is a priority

- Coordinate transportation and housing to remedy potential climate and equity impacts
- Support local aspirations
- There is a regional interest in expanding or adjusting the current UGB to address residential and employment needs
- Allow cities enough flexibility and encourage them to locally define and create “complete communities”
- Understand and make efforts to seek balance when attending to the local and regional need for residential and employment land UGB expansions
 - Consider conducting a local needs analysis to gather specific information pertaining to the cities within the region
- Determine and encourage functional land supply
- It was suggested that the current UGB system may not be “broken”
 - Climate considerations should be a high priority when making these decisions
 - Ensure that the strategy allows for commonsense solutions that promote the Climate Smart values
- Seek a coordinated, regional effort to adjust land use laws in order to enable the deliberate and thoughtful expansion of the UGB, as long as it supports the proposed housing development needs
- Determine whether a community has the capacity to meet growth in the proposed expansion
- Seek flexibility when defining undesignated areas and consider changing classification to Urban Reserve when the area meets the regional needs
 - If the undesignated area is not likely to change classification, identify the barriers to making that revision
- Identify and support the regional goals
- Promote economic, environmental and social equity
- Support and provide more opportunity for economic growth
- Make efforts to support the 2040 Growth Concept
- Create opportunities for positive dialogue with developers that have bought land within the UGB
- Prevent revisiting the urban reserve designations until 2031 to ensure economical and judicious use of the defined capacity
- Resolve Urban Reserves around Stafford and Wilsonville
- In reference to urban reserves in the Core Values, consider replacing “definitive maximum” with “anticipated maximum”

CLOSING & NEXT STEPS

Jeanne reviewed the key points raised during the discussion (see Comment Wall Input) with the task force, and explained that the information gathered during this meeting will be used to help guide decisions moving forward. Metro staff will work to reflect the task force’s discussion in a revised framework, including a revised Problem Statement. Council President Hughes thanked the members for their participation in this process, and discussed the next steps. The next meeting will be on June 22nd, at which time the taskforce will continue their discussion of the Problem Statement and Key Issues, as well launch the discussion of possible solutions.