

METRO URBAN GROWTH READINESS TASKFORCE MEETING

OCTOBER 26TH, 2016 | 2:30 – 4:30 PM

Taskforce Members in Attendance:

Pete Truax, Mayor (Forest Grove)
Shane Bemis, Mayor (Gresham)
Lori DeRemer, Mayor (Happy Valley)
Mark Gamba, Mayor (Milwaukie)
John Ludlow, Clackamas County Chair
Tom Hughes, Metro Council President
Carlotta Collette, Metro Councilor
Carrie Maclaren, Oregon Department of Land Conservation & Development
Jason Miner, 1,000 Friends of Oregon
Jeff Smith, Homebuilders Association of Metropolitan Portland
Tim Knapp, Mayor (Wilsonville)
Andy Duyck, Washington County Chair
Sam Chase, Metro Councilor
Doug Daoust, Mayor (Troutdale)
Tom Armstrong representing Charlie Hales, Mayor (Portland)

Members not represented:

Krisanna Clark, Mayor (Sherwood)
Lou Ogden, Mayor (Tualatin)

STAFF:

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

OVERVIEW & EXPECTATIONS OF THE GROUP

Tom Hughes, Metro Council President, thanked the taskforce and reminded members of the September meeting's discussion. He discussed how the group is seeking consensus on recommendations. Consensus means that the group can live with the recommendations, but there also needs to be a recognition that other bodies, including the state legislature, will be making decisions on these ideas and that each of us will be free to change our level of support as the concepts and their details evolve.

Jeanne Lawson, facilitator with JLA Public Involvement, walked through the agenda with the taskforce. The agenda was as follows:

1. Update on MTAC discussions
2. Update on regional lobbyist discussions
3. Discussion on policy concepts
4. Meeting summary
5. Next steps

UPDATE ON MTAC DISCUSSIONS

John Williams, Metro, used a PowerPoint to present the update on Metro Technical Advisory Committee (MTAC) discussions. He illustrated the proposed evolution of growth management processes, clarifying the characteristics of both the new and old systems.

- Old System
 - Defines complex housing needs using simple math
 - Expands the UGB based on soil types
 - Concept plan areas added to the UGB
- New System
 - Before expansion, concept plan urban reserve areas
 - Defines housing needs with additional policy considerations
 - Chooses expansion area based on outcomes

Metro Council is working to create a system that delivers decisions based on outcomes, seeking a more holistic assessment of housing needs. He reiterated Metro's Six Desired Outcomes, and emphasized the importance of meeting them.

Recommendations from the MTAC are listed in the Concepts section below.

UPDATE ON REGIONAL LOBBYIST DECISIONS

Andy Shaw, Metro, explained that the regional lobby group and Metro staff met and walked through how the new system would be implemented and how it would impact decisions. There was an emphasis on what would be required for cities to have prepared when requesting mid-cycle UGB expansions.

Recommendations from the regional lobbyists are in the Concepts section below.

DICUSSION ON POLICY CONCEPTS

John and Andy presented the three concepts for members to discuss:

1. Clarify expectations for cities requesting modest residential UGB expansions. How do we balance between flexibility and certainty?
 - John explained that MTAC felt the rules for larger expansions should be more established, and rules for smaller expansions can be more flexible. The Task Force should consider this balance when considering whether to recommend size limits for these “modest” UGB expansions.
2. Seek greater flexibility for determining regional housing needs. How frequent should mid-cycle decisions be made? What should the acreage limits be for mid-cycle UGB expansions?
 - Andy explained that Metro staff discussed this with public sector lobbyists and the Home Builders Association with the purpose of developing recommendations that would find traction in the state legislature.
 - It was recommended that there be a single mid-cycle residential urban growth management decision (i.e., not annual decisions).
 - The group recommends having an acreage cap to make the mid-cycle expansion concept palatable to the legislature. A regional acreage cap was considered the best option, rather than a per-city cap.
3. Seek greater flexibility when choosing among urban reserves for UGB expansions. Should Metro have this flexibility, not just in mid-cycle decisions, but also in decisions made in the six-year cycle?
 - Andy described the lobbyist group’s recommendation that this flexibility should only apply to mid-cycle decisions.

Discussion & Recommendations

- **Concept 1:** There was concern regarding the predictability of criteria and expectations for cities requesting expansions. There was a desire that the wording of Concept 1 identifies specific criteria in order to ensure applicants know they aren’t wasting their time, and prevents the application process from being a popularity contest.
 - *MTAC is working through the details to provide more clarity on the requirements for requesting UGB expansions.*

- **Concept 1:** It was mentioned that being too prescriptive in the requirements for mid-cycle expansions would inhibit flexibility. However, it is important that cities are aware of what they are applying for. The Task Force requested that MTAC seek to find a balance between flexibility and certainty in proposed Metro code amendments.
- **Concept 2:** It was recommended that the acreage limit per city expansion be increased from 300 to 500 acres in order to ensure developers are able to provide the necessary infrastructure. The 300 acre limit would be ineffective cost-wise, and would be inefficient in achieving the goals set forth by this process.
 - *The 300 acre limit would only apply to the mid-cycle expansions. Larger expansions would happen during the six-year cycle.*
- **Concept 2:** Why is 300 acres better than 500 acres?
 - *The lobbyists suggested applying a reasonable cap on mid-cycle expansions to ensure modest use of the urban reserves.*
- **Concept 2:** Consider applying an overall cap instead of a per-city cap.
 - *A 900 acre overall cap has been discussed.*
- **Concept 2:** Consider raising the cap to 900 net acres and 1,500 gross acres. This would still use less than 40% of the urban reserves by 2060.
 - *The urban reserves are not just for residential. It would be dangerous to estimate any more than a third of the remaining reserves for residential use.*
- **Concept 2:** It will be hard to advocate for larger expansions in the legislature. It's important that the acreage cap is small enough to get this passed.
- **Concept 2:** It's important to remember that this is referring to minor expansions. The goal should be ensuring we do not use more than 25% of the urban reserves by 2060. The 900 acre limit has been vetted by Metro staff and seems like a reasonable number.
- **Concept 2:** When do cities with urban reserves apply for expansions? It is more likely that companies will buy land if there is the expectation of expanding the UGB.
- **Concept 2:** The taskforce agreed that the acreage limit should be no more than 1,000 gross acres for the entire region, per mid-cycle decision.
- **Concept 3:** Climate change impacts, proximity to jobs, access to transportation infrastructure, etc. need to be considered during the six-year cycle in order to make the highest quality decisions. Consider making the mid-cycle requirements more flexible, and the six-year cycle requirements more rigid.
- **Concept 3:** If mid-cycle process is adaptable and responsive with modest acreage limits, a full analysis would not be necessary.
- **Concept 3:** The new urban growth process does not explicitly address housing strategy and climate impacts. These are illustrated in Metro's Six Desired Outcomes and there needs to be a commitment to achieving them.
- Consider coming back to these concepts in the future to determine details and make changes where necessary.

MEETING SUMMARY

Jeanne reviewed the results of the discussion. She confirmed that members were comfortable with:

- MTAC will continue working to develop Metro code language to clarify expectations for cities requesting residential UGB expansions. MTAC should strive to balance flexibility and certainty.
- There should be only one mid-cycle residential decision per six-year cycle (i.e., three years after a standard six-year-cycle decision).
- Mid-cycle expansions should be limited to no more than 1,000 gross acres for the entire region.
- The Task Force concurs with the lobbyist group's advice that enhanced flexibility to choose among concept-planned urban reserves should only apply to mid-cycle decisions.

The taskforce expressed concern about any changes that may occur after they sign off. Jeanne reminded them consensus does not mean full support from all, but rather agreement from all to not oppose the recommendations. However, each entity will need to decide whether they can still support these changes as they evolve in the state legislature and in Metro's legislative process.

NEXT STEPS

The taskforce will meet again in January to review the status of their recommendations. The Task Force will also discuss how to work as a coalition to advance its recommendations. Tom thanked the taskforce for their participation and closed the meeting.