

Metro

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Metro

Minutes

Tuesday, October 8, 2024

10:30 AM

Metro Regional Center, Council chamber,
<https://zoom.us/j/615079992> (Webinar ID: 615079992) or
888-475-4499 (toll free)

Council work session

This meeting will be held electronically and in person at the Metro Regional Center Council Chamber.

You can join the meeting on your computer or other device by using this link:

<https://zoom.us/j/615079992> Webinar ID: 615 079 992 or 888-475-4499 (toll free)

10:30 Call to Order and Roll Call

Council President Peterson called the Work Session to order at 10:31 a.m.

Present: 6 - Councilor Gerritt Rosenthal, Councilor Mary Nolan, Juan Carlos Gonzalez, Ashton Simpson, Christine Lewis, and Lynn Peterson

Excused: 1 - Duncan Hwang

10:30 Work Session Topics:

10:30 2024 Urban Growth Management: Council Direction to Staff

Attachments: [Staff Report](#)
[Attachment 1](#)

Council President Peterson introduced Catherine Ciarlo, Planning Director, and Ted Reid, Principal Regional Planner, to present on the topic of Urban Growth Management and the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) expansion proposal.

Staff pulled up the “Urban growth management: Metro Council direction to staff” slides to present to Council.

Presentation

Ciarlo explained that planning staff were seeking feedback and direction from the Metro Council on the COO’s recommendations to expand the UGB to include Sherwood. She summarized the key points raised during discussion on the topic from a previous work session. Reid described a desire for optimism in the growth and employment forecasts as well as a need for large sites. Ciarlo noted MPAC’s request for a higher baseline and reviewed the timeline.

Council Discussion

Councilor Lewis expressed support for seeing a resolution and advised that conversation focus on growth projection before addressing conditions of approval.

Councilor Simpson emphasized the importance of developing conditions for approval.

Councilor Rosenthal concurred with Councilor Lewis.

Councilor Nolan urged that the proposal be contingent on the Governor's actions. Councilor Nolan additionally raised concerns about the approach with regards to the racial equity policy.

Council President Peterson acknowledged the majority of Council favored seeing legislation and requested that staff speak to both industrial and housing forecasts, as well as MPAC and stakeholder recommendations.

Following a correction by the Metro attorney, Ciarlo clarified that it would be an ordinance, not a resolution.

Reid explained the scenario from the high growth housing forecast assumed migration from outside of the region, likely from younger households seeking rental opportunities, entailing a need for more apartments.

Councilor Gonzalez asked if the industrial and housing projections belonged to the same forecast scenario.

Staff responded that the two categories are generally interdependent and were considered together.

Councilor Gonzalez inquired about whether the medium

growth forecast addressed the housing shortage and expressed that the semantics of “baseline” undermine the forecast’s favorability, due to bias toward high-aiming goals as more desirable.

Reid stated that they are expecting most of the growth, tens of thousands of households, within the existing boundary, and reported optimism that there will be a long-term growth through attracting migrants to Oregon.

Council President Peterson questioned why the two primary scenarios were so distinct from each other.

Staff stated that the assumptions were bundled together and therefore were not cumulative.

Councilor Nolan returned to the nomenclature and the term “baseline.”

Reid clarified that in their statistical analysis the “baseline” forecast represents the most likely outcomes in the model.

Councilor Simpson remarked on the strategic plan and being proactive in stimulating housing production.

Councilor Lewis advised that staff use the baseline forecast given its higher reliability based on the analysis.

Councilor Rosenthal concurred that staff should use the data to guide the process. Councilor Rosenthal remarked on the Governor’s potential executive action for more housing.

Councilor Gonzalez conveyed that the medium forecast is ambitious and expressed that the Urban Growth Report is not just a planning document but a legal foundation for the region. Councilor Gonzalez cautioned that relying on a less

likely scenario jeopardizes the success of the project.

Council President Peterson summarized that the majority of Council supported introducing an ordinance to bring Sherwood West within the UGB based on a medium growth forecast. Council President Peterson then requested that the councilors share their thoughts on the conditions of approval.

Staff pulled up the “Topics for Potential Conditions of Approval” slide.

Councilor Nolan remarked that “number of housing units” is a vague condition and advised adding the sequencing of housing units and prioritization of affordable workforce housing for middle income families as a condition.

Councilor Gonzalez suggested that the conditions could be rephrased to include those idea.

Councilor Lewis, Councilor Rosenthal, and Councilor Simpson expressed wanting to see additional research on the precedent for affordable housing.

Councilor Gonzalez raised concerns over the responsibility of cities to develop diverse housing.

Councilor Rosenthal recommended a condition that would address the Regional Transportation Plan.

Council President Peterson acknowledged the unique context of the Urban Growth Management proposals and emphasized the need for an updated process and a more proactive approach with cities going forward.

Councilor Nolan expressed support for Tribal Consultation as

a condition and recommended engagement with regional BIPOC leaders as an additional condition.

Council President Peterson conveyed that advancement of racial equity was a component of the existing broad-based community engagement point.

Councilor Lewis noted that Tribal Consultation denotes a formal process between governments and advised that engagement with historically marginalized communities should be distinguished from the term “consulting.”

Ciarlo reported that staff were listening to the comments and would return drafts based on the feedback.

Councilor Gonzalez asked staff to describe how the CORE recommendations would be incorporated.

Ciarlo responded that Metro staff would be working with Sherwood on comprehensive planning and explained that while specifics had not yet been developed, the recommendations would continue to be discussed.

There being no further discussion, Council President Peterson summarized the Council’s recommendations to staff for updating the conditions of approval and moved on to the next agenda item.

11:30 Conversation with Tracy Loh

Council President Peterson introduced guest speaker Tracy Loh from the Brookings Institution to present on five strategies for the future of downtowns, cities, and regions.

Staff pulled up the “How to Break the Urban Doom Loop” slides to present to Council.

Presentation

Tracy Loh provided background on “How to Break the Urban Doom Loop,” a quantitative and qualitative report from the Brookings Institution on the impact and effects of the COVID pandemic on four major cities. Loh highlighted the difference between media narratives and their findings. She relayed five of seven themes that emerged from the research to the Metro Council:

1. Public safety

Loh explained that violent crime rates had decreased in downtowns. Loh demonstrated how crime statistics could be expressed in certain ways to shift public perception further from reality

2. Understanding “adaptive reuse and resilience”

Loh conveyed that office conversions are not a magical solution to the housing crisis

3. Transit and ridership recovery

Loh described the approach of ridership evolution and reported that cities with the highest ridership invested in services that go beyond pre-pandemic commuting needs, such as weekend service and high quality bus

4. Hope for homelessness

Loh highlighted the success of comprehensive strategies for addressing homelessness in regions such as the Houston metropolitan area

5. Defining recovery

Loh shared that there are many metrics for analyzing recovery which can also provide insight into regionally specific trends

Loh then offered five broad recommendations from the

report: to a) further tailor crime response strategies, b) consolidate jobs in activity centers (downtowns), c) maximize transit-oriented development, d) take a coordinated, data-based, and regional approach to homelessness, and e) empower places to self-help and link prosperity of downtowns with neighborhood well-being.

Council Discussion

Councilor Simpson referred to the crime data and noted that community leadership often looks to invest in crime reduction at the core (downtown areas) while neglecting peripheral neighborhoods. He highlighted that East Portland struggles with crime and remarked that crime response strategies should address neighborhoods outside the city core.

Councilor Lewis identified infrastructure as another key component of inequality in the region. She mentioned the unincorporated urban area in the Portland metropolitan area and asked Loh to share observations on similar trends in other regions.

Loh spoke to the city of Houston's large amount annexed land and how coordination with the county and surrounding counties to address homelessness allowed for a consistent standard of housing services across the region.

Councilor Rosenthal noted the importance of recognizing local conditions for developing effective solutions.

Council President Peterson highlighted the Future Vision Commission to update Metro's 50-Year Plan and asked Loh for big picture advice on outlining goals for the region.

Loh advised having one big picture goal per category

(economy, health, governance, etc.) and expressed that reduction of inequality should unite the framework. Loh emphasized that inequality harms the whole region and noted that everybody is better off when people suffering the most are better off.

Councilor Nolan concurred with Loh's remarks and inquired if they had studied whether an imbalanced reporting of crime data had led to an increase in racism.

Loh stated that media bias was likely not the main explanation for dysfunctional public safety policies in recent years.

Councilor Gonzalez inquired about specific observations of challenges related to governance on the West Coast.

Loh reported a general sense of distrust between the private and public sectors and noted that communities making the most progress often had cross-sector collaboration and involvement from the business community (or communities) to address regional issues.

Council President Peterson concurred that private-public partnership would need improvement.

There being no further discussion, Council President Peterson thanked the guest speaker and moved on to the next agenda item.

12:15 Chief Operating Officer Communication

Marissa Madrigal provided an update on the following events or items:

- Reported that Portland city council is considering a Performing Arts Resolution, which includes a strategy to develop two Broadway-capable venues and a

market feasibility analysis

- Reminded everyone of the upcoming Employee Town Hall at the Oregon Convention Center, which was seeking volunteer greeters to welcome staff arrivals to the event

12:30 Councilor Communication

Councilors provided updates on the following meetings and events:

- There were none.

1:00 Adjourn to Executive Session

There being no further business, Council President Peterson adjourned the Metro Work Session to an Executive Session at 12:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Emma McIntosh

Emma McIntosh, Legislative Assistant

The Executive Session will be held pursuant under ORS 192.660(2)(e); To conduct deliberations with persons you have designated to negotiate real property transactions. This Executive Session is closed to the public.