

# 2014 Survey among City and County Elected Officials

Conducted by  
CFM Strategic Communications

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strategic communications, inc.

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# Overview

- **2014 Elected Officials Survey**
  - Similar surveys were conducted in 2011 and 2012. The survey was not conducted in 2013.
- **Objectives:**
  - Measure the percent of elected officials that agree with the statement: “Metro provides highly valuable services that have positive impacts on my constituents.”
  - Assess Metro’s performance on information and trust.
  - Assess Metro’s performance for specific responsibilities and areas.
  - Trend results from 2011 and 2012, where appropriate.

# Methodology

- **Multi-modal survey**
  - Online survey and
  - Telephone interviews
- **Participants: county commissioners, mayors and city council members in Multnomah, Clackamas and Washington counties**
- **Interviews conducted June 9 to June 25, 2014**
- **67 completed interviews**
  - 52 online, 15 telephone
  - 60 city and 7 county officials
  - 42% response rate

# Respondent Characteristics

	Commissioners	Mayors	City Council	Total
<b>Multnomah</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Washington</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Clackamas</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>32</b>

**Metro provided a list with contact information for 160 elected officials. Up to five attempts to contact and complete an interview were made for each elected official, two by phone and three by email.**

# Participation by County

	2011	2012	2014
<b>Washington</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Multnomah</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Clackamas</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>62*</b>	<b>67</b>

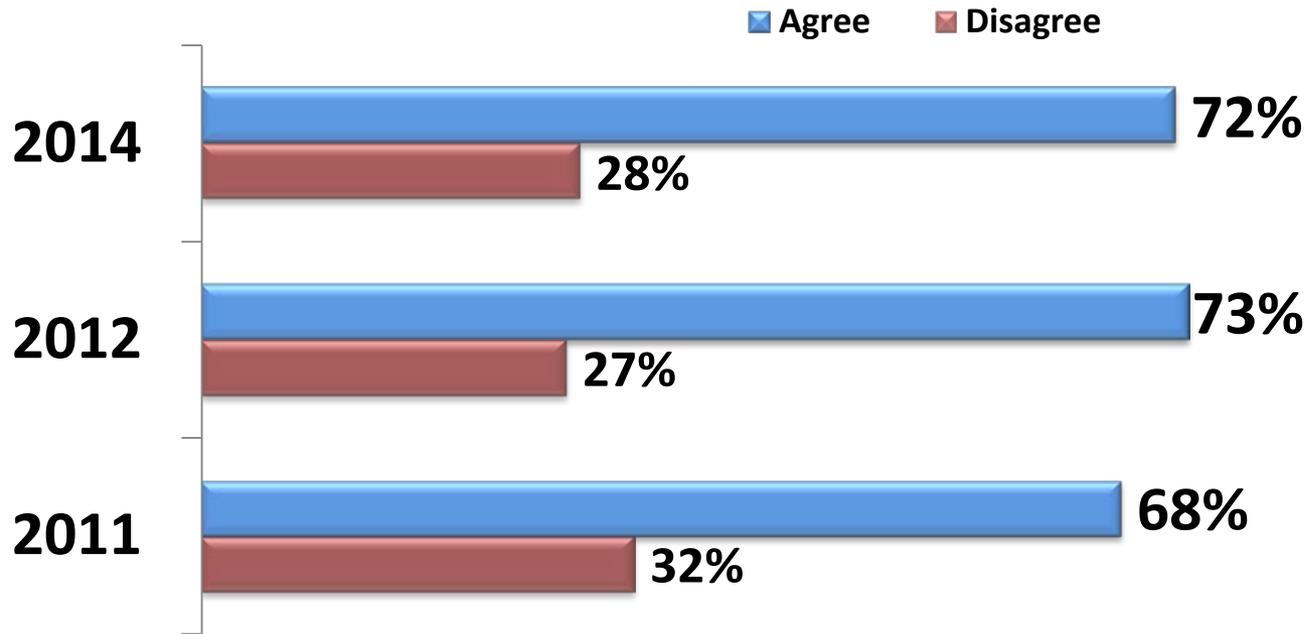
**Participation by county has changed year to year.**

\* 66 officials participated in 2012. County information is not available for four.

# Overall Perceptions of Metro's Services

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement:

"Metro provides valuable services that have positive impacts on my constituents."



**Opinions about Metro's positive impacts are unchanged.**

# Opinions by Area and Position

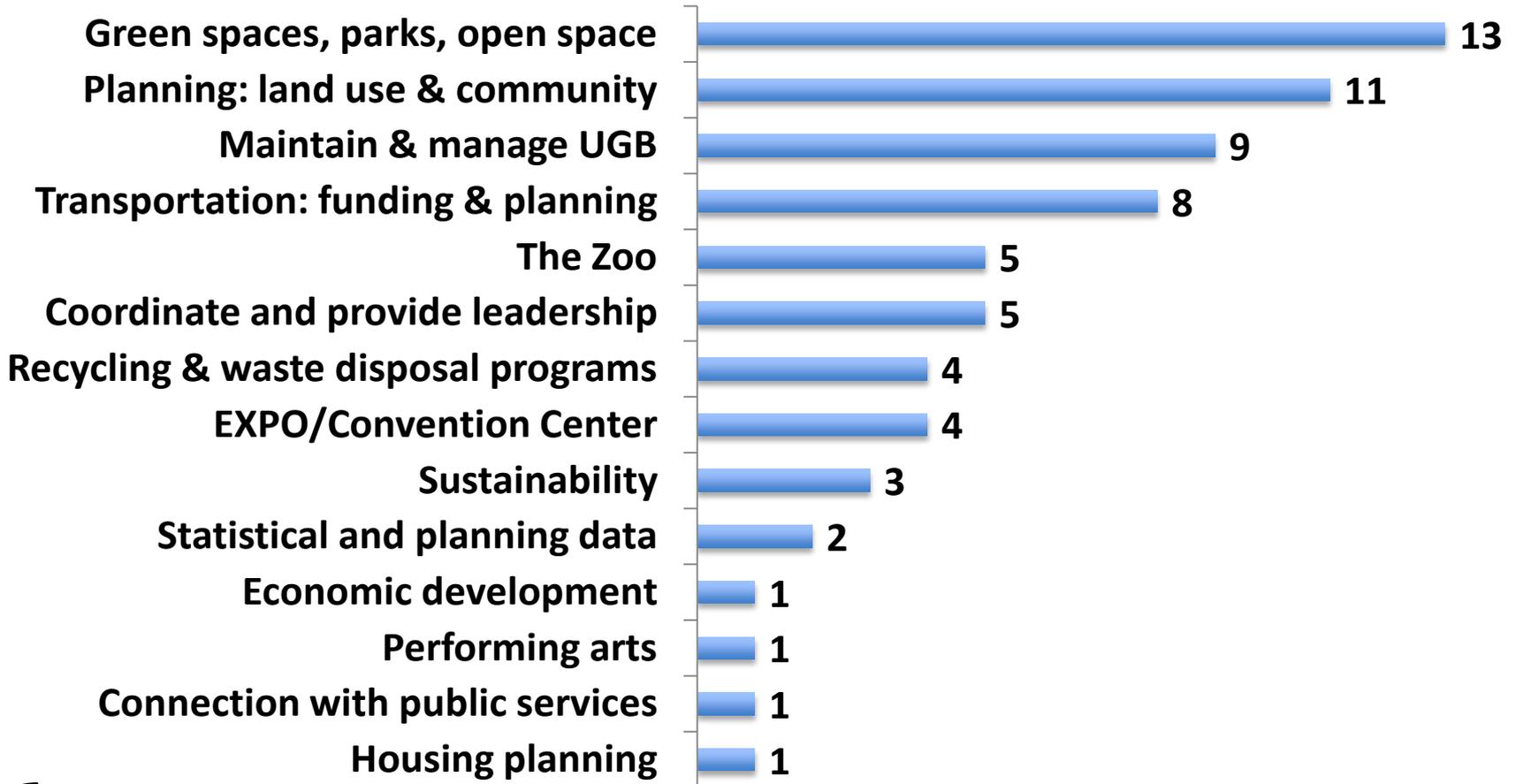
	Agree	Disagree
<b>Multnomah</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Washington</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Clackamas</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>19</b>

**Officials from Multnomah and Washington Counties  
are most likely to value Metro's efforts**

# Metro's Most Valuable Services

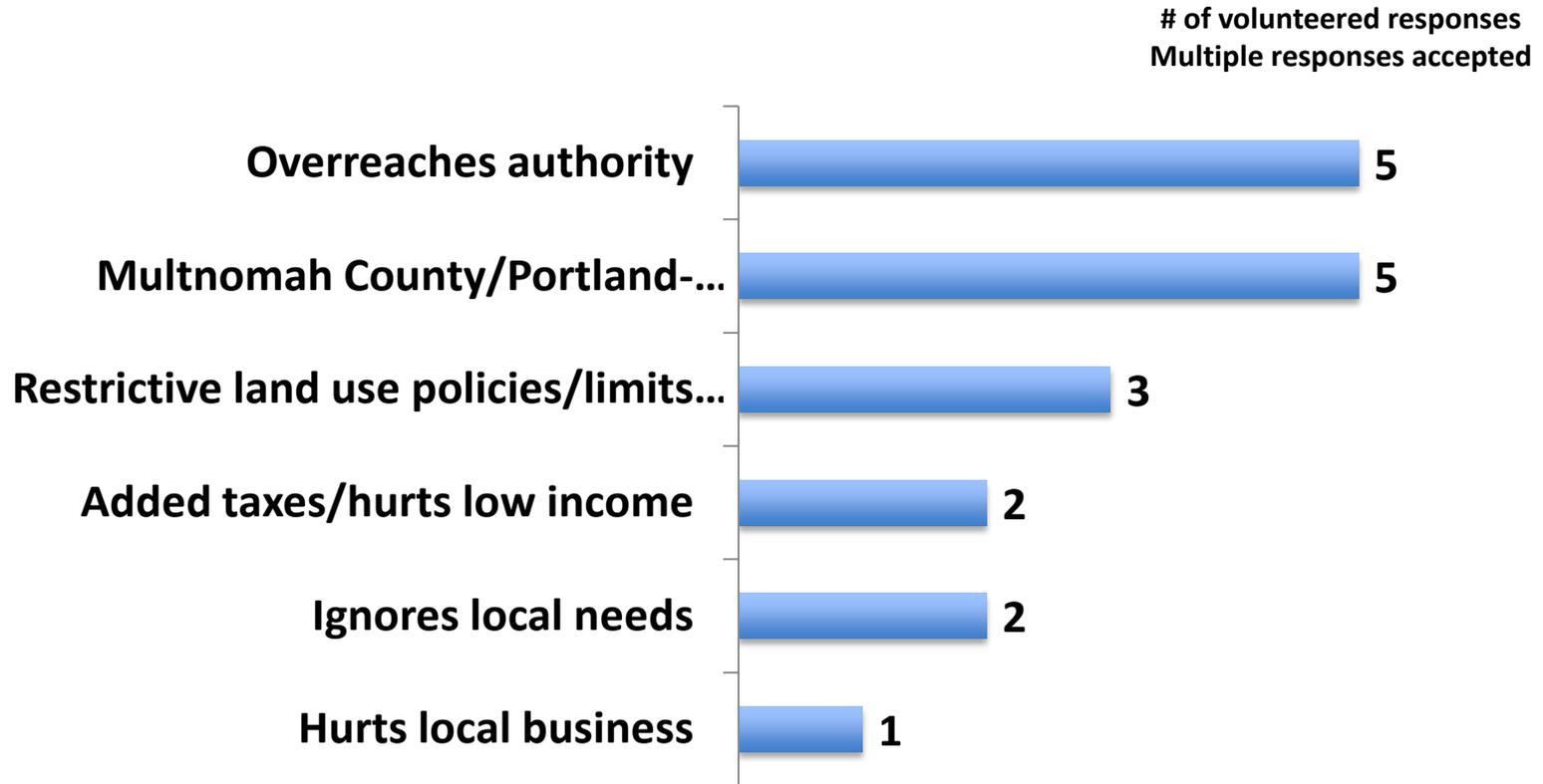
What are the primary reasons you agree Metro provides valuable services that have positive impacts on your constituents?

# of volunteered responses  
Multiple responses accepted



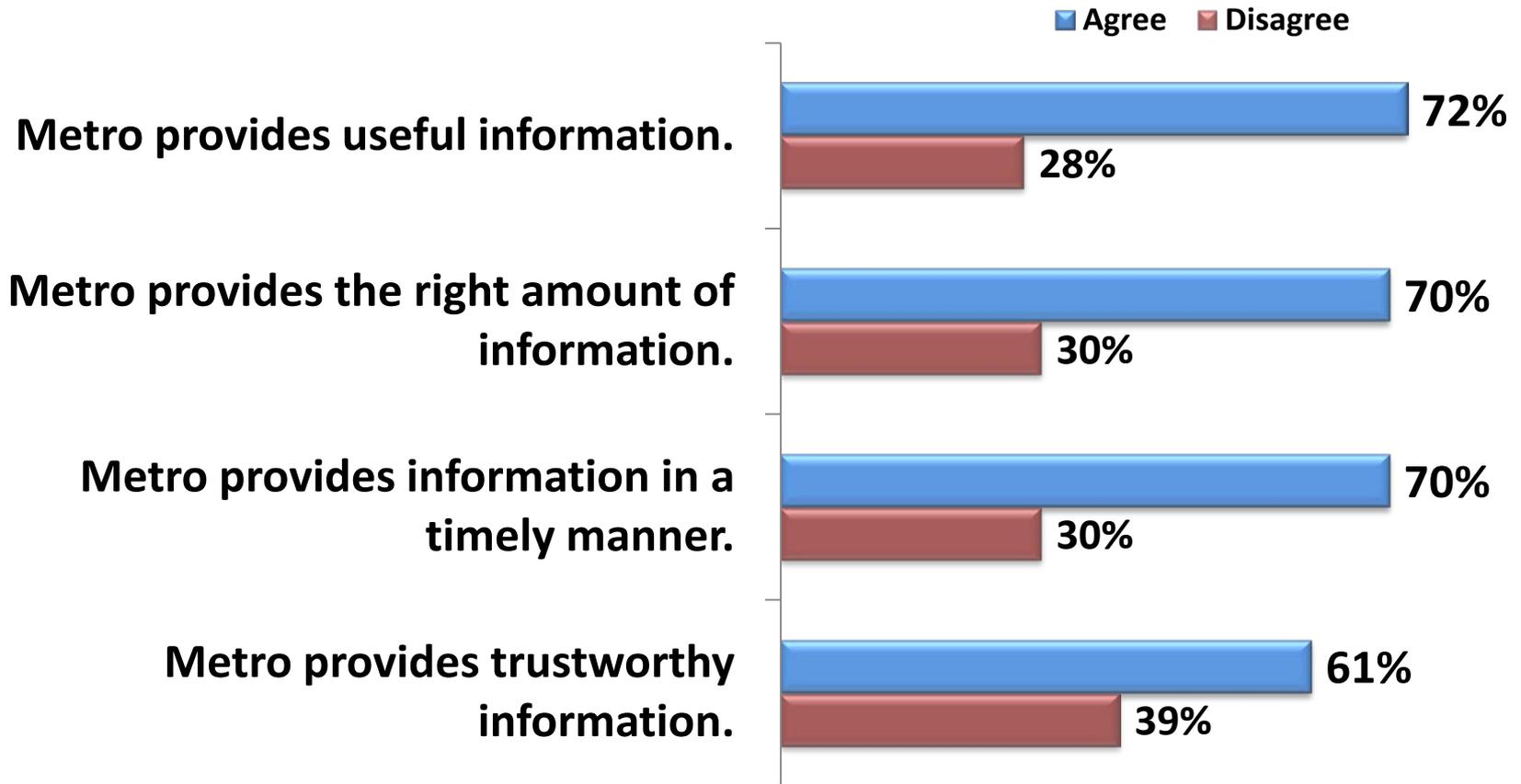
# Concerns about Metro's Efforts

What are the primary reasons you disagree Metro provides valuable services that have positive impacts on your constituents?



# Assessing Communication

Do you agree or disagree with the following statements?



# Trends

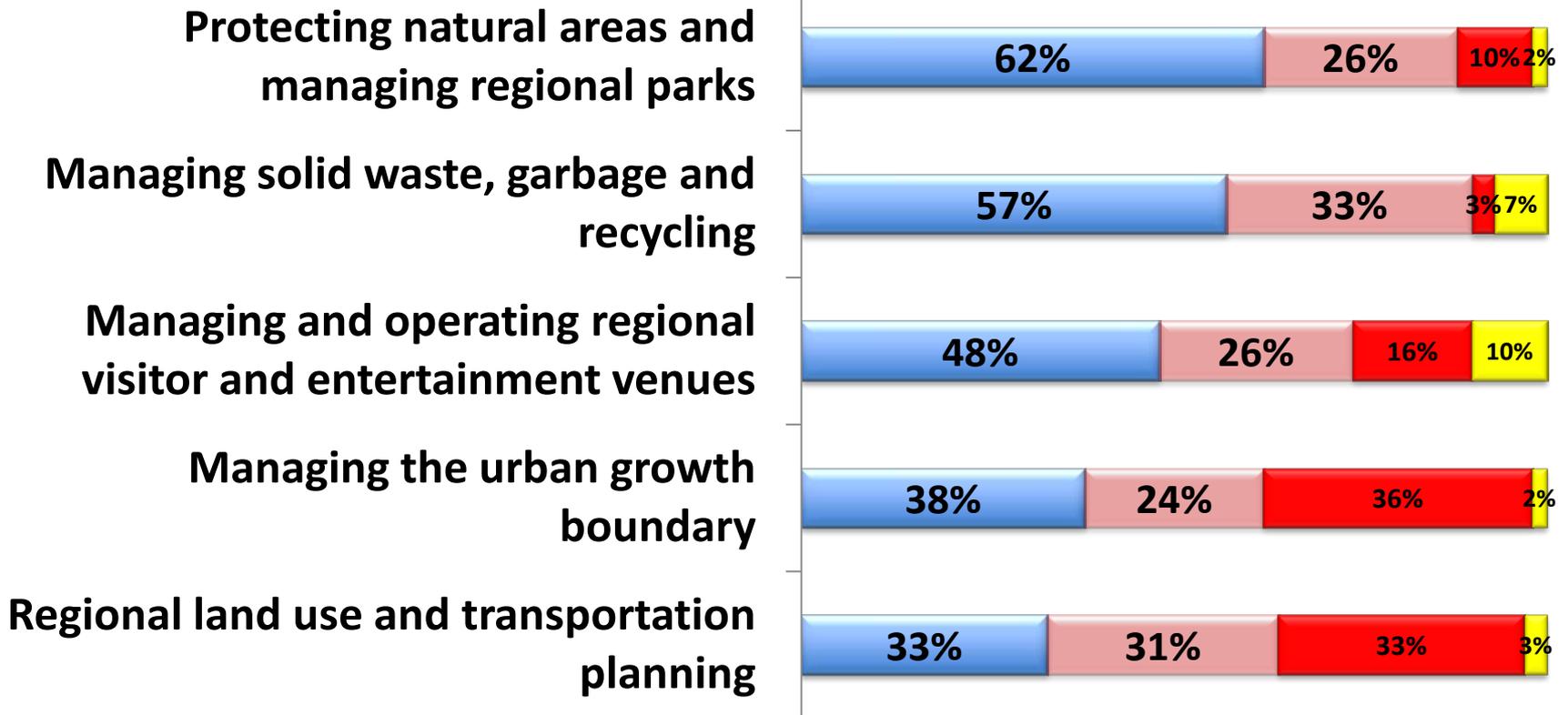
Perceptions of Metro's information has been consistent since 2011.

	Year	Agree	Disagree
<b>Metro provides useful information.</b>	2014	72%	28%
	2012	76%	24%
	2011	74%	26%
<b>Metro provides information in a timely manner.</b>	2014	70%	30%
	2012	78%	22%
	2011	78%	22%
<b>Metro provides the right amount of information.</b>	2014	70%	30%
	2012	68%	32%
	2011	na	na
<b>Metro provides trustworthy information.</b>	2014	61%	39%
	2012	67%	33%
	2011	62%	38%

# Rating Primary Responsibilities

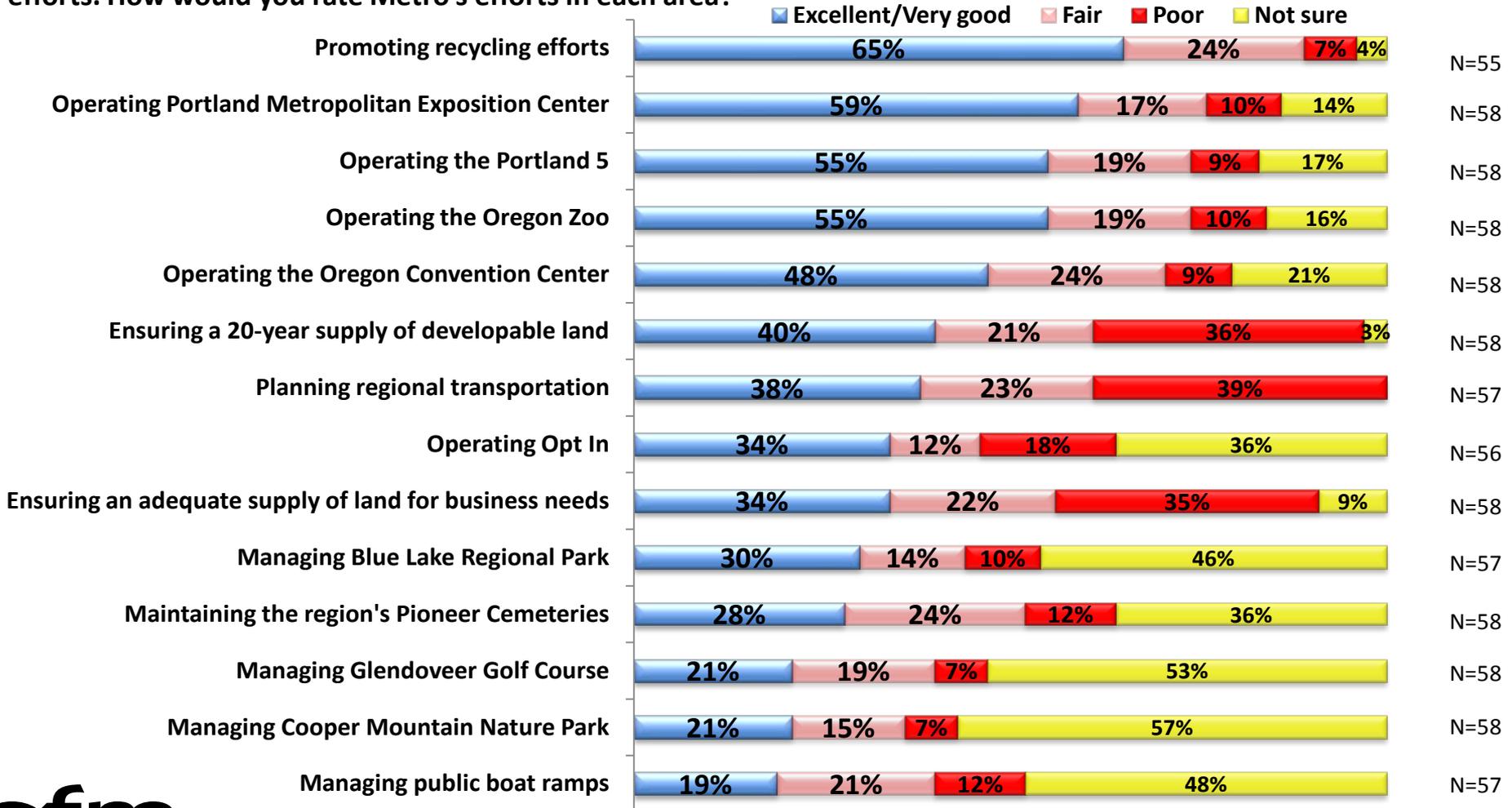
The following are five of Metro's primary areas of responsibility. How would you rate Metro's efforts in each area?

■ Excellent/Very good  
 ■ Fair  
 ■ Poor  
 ■ Not sure



# Rating Specific Responsibilities

The following are more specific Metro responsibilities and efforts. How would you rate Metro's efforts in each area?

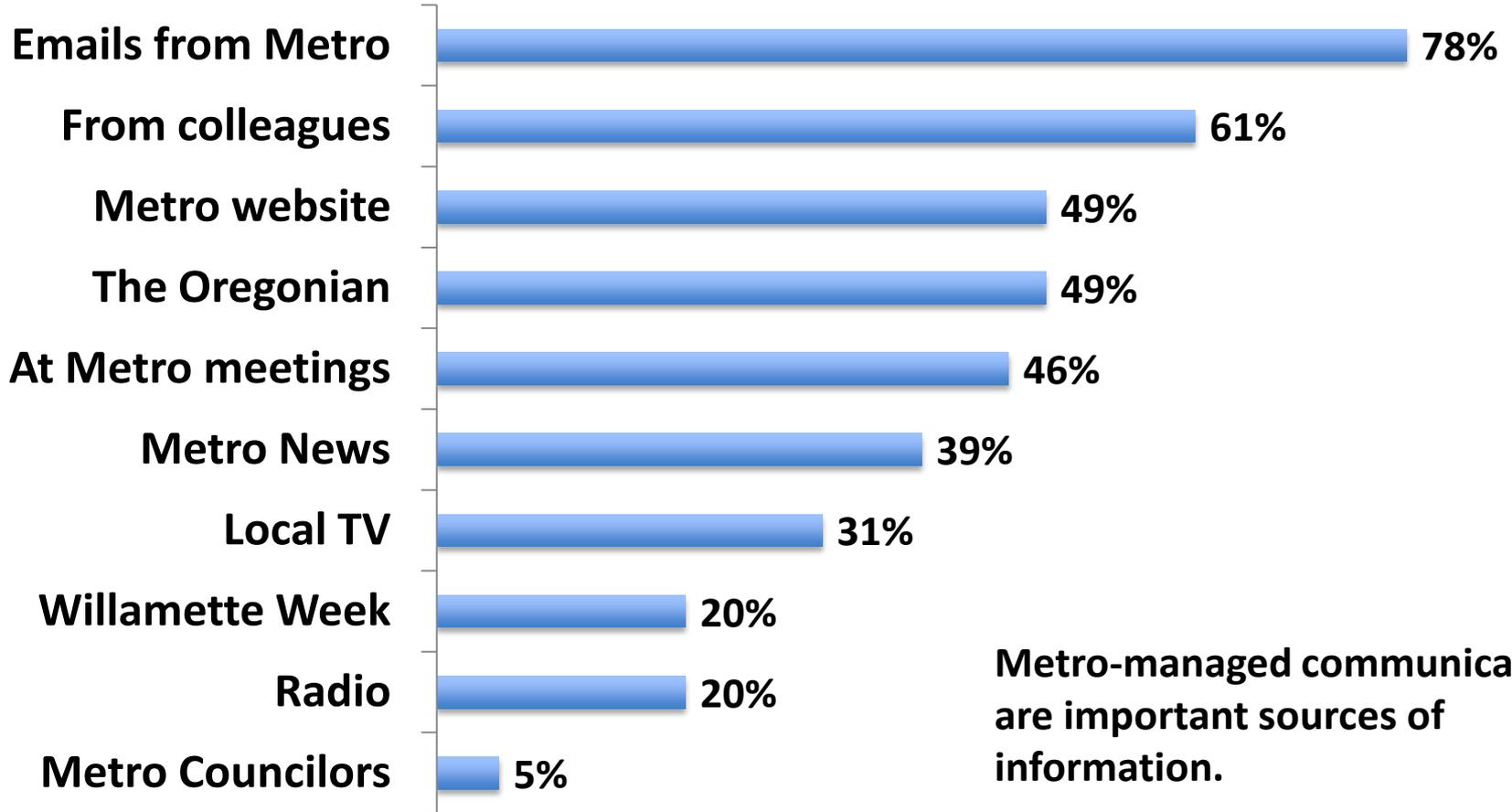


## Rating Responsibilities

- Elected officials give highest ratings for Metro's recycling efforts.
- Officials give mixed ratings for Metro's overall efforts managing events venues but are impressed with management of specific facilities.
- Overall, officials are impressed with Metro's management of parks and recreational areas but a large share don't know enough to rate its efforts managing specific parks and facilities.
- Elected officials give lowest ratings for Metro's efforts regarding land use and transportation planning.

# Sources of Information

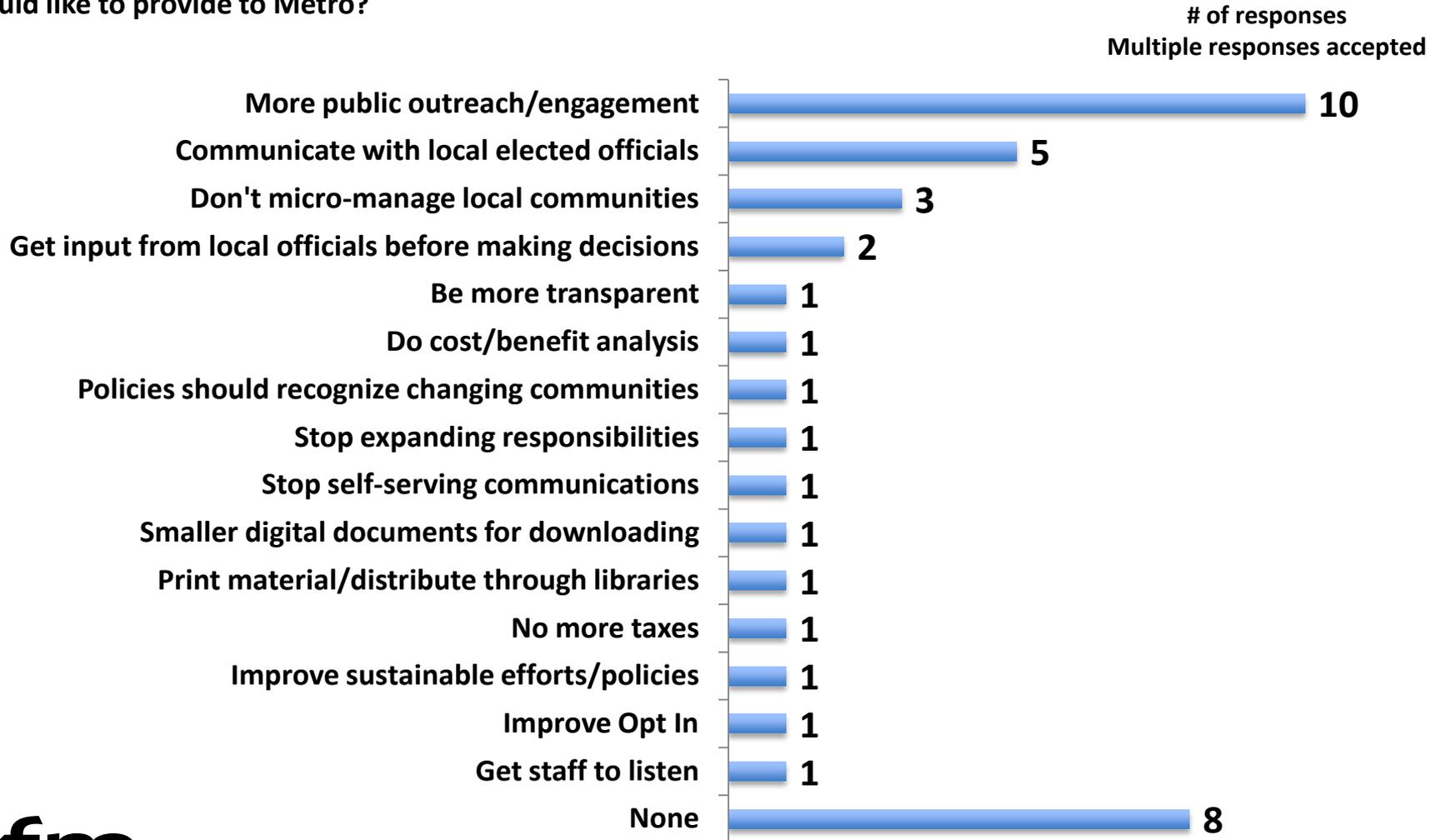
Where do you typically get information about Metro?



**Metro-managed communication are important sources of information.**

# Suggestions to Improve Communication

Are there any other specific suggestions you would like to provide to Metro?



# VERBATIM

# Valuable Services

## **IF AGREE METRO PROVIDES VALUABLE SERVICES: What are the primary reasons you agree Metro provides valuable services that have positive impacts on your constituents?**

There are good resources when we have common goals, such as our trails and environment and regional work such as waste. When they micromanage us on development, that is a problem. The state gives us broad objectives and Metro micromanages. The different cities have different cultures.

Metro helps coordinate regional planning well.

The impacts of the land use planning have prevented us from having urban sprawl.

Clackamas County doesn't believe in anything. They don't think we need mass transportation. I don't know why. Metro does not look at the region as a whole.

Metro's management of the UGB and planning processes helps enhance our quality of life.

Metro has control of services that my city needs, but would like to see them provided by an organization other than Metro

The uniqueness of our region.

Running convention center, etc. Garbage recycling management

Parks, field trips, recycling information.

They look out for the interest of the region.

I think there are some important services that Metro provides.

They do garbage handling, zoo, and expo well. They get too wrapped-up in aspirational dreams and not enough on execution. Ex: Staff presented an active transportation plan that noted the primary source of funding was from the federal government and funds were declining...and the plan would take 150 years. To present a plan for the metro region to saying that a 150-year plan is necessary is ineffective and ridiculous. This is an example of 'Metro gone crazy.' Metro needs to stop trying to please everybody and come up with specific plans.

Adds value to land use planning.

I appreciate that their work on public transportation reduces single passenger cars.

They offer the opportunity to plan land use and transportation improvements across local jurisdictions that will give our region the most bang for the buck.

Grants for planning, Metro acquisition of natural areas, nature in neighborhood grants, support for major projects like the Willamette Legacy Project

Metro works diligently to move this region in a more sustainable direction - the highest calling for any elected body at this time in our history

We must plan and implement programs on a regional basis

Grants for transportation and nature in the neighborhood have helped improve our city.

# Valuable Services (continued)

## **IF AGREE METRO PROVIDES VALUABLE SERVICES: What are the primary reasons you agree Metro provides valuable services that have positive impacts on your constituents?**

- It preserves land for parks and services, sets standards for and provides services for urban development and living, protects, to some extent, the environment
- Regional planning in land use, UGB, transportation.
- Helping to achieve consistency with multiple jurisdictions.
- Construction Excise Tax. Metro purchased and maintained open spaces in my community, partnerships in projects. Regular reporting from our council.
- Controlled growth is important for livability.
- Area-wide coordination
- Provide money for local parks.
- Metro protects green spaces, manages growth, and has added economic development in goals and is helping cities in these areas.
- They help us keep the region compact, obtain federal funding, follow critical state mandates and insure state requirements are followed in a timely manner, and so on
- Planning efforts for relief of traffic congestion down 99hwy corridor.
- Actually I'm more neutral on this issue. I think metro is an extra layer of government that is redundant and unnecessary
- Only bus service, the rest hindrance to the quality of life, by pushing so many persons so close together. Too many dollars spent on a few not enough for highways or truck traffic.
- Roads, parks, trails, garbage
- Zoo, expo center
- UGB governance
- They provide help with parks and services.
- Open/green spaces, regional land use planning and regional facilities such as Keller Auditorium and the Oregon Zoo are all valuable services that have positive impacts for my constituents.
- Protection of farm and forest lands via UGB. Regional amenities such as zoo & convention center
- Planning Coordination
- Good regional transportation planning, regional parks and natural areas stewardship, valuable information about best practices in urban development
- Primarily regional planning services, but also information and recreational services.

# Concerns about Services

## **IF DISAGREES METRO PROVIDES VALUABLE SERVICES: What are the primary reasons you disagree Metro provides valuable services that have positive impacts on your constituents?**

Metro provides value to transportation planning.

Central planning has become too PDX-centric. It has been used to slow growth and is not responsive to the market or to suburban cities' and counties' needs.

I feel as a city we should have greater control over our land-use decisions. Metro does not have close connection to our citizens or their greatest concerns and challenges.

Find their land-use policies to be overly restrictive and disrespectful of taxpaying citizens. And hypocritical.

The best thing that can happen to (city X) is to have the city allowed to meet minimum state goals environmentally.

Over-reaching on our residents that are unnecessary.

The taxes in Oregon are way too high and Metro is one reason for that. They have taken responsibility away from the local government. They do not listen to people as a whole.

Due to Metro rules, a business was not able to create enough parking spaces for the customers and employee so parking is done on the street, which affects the neighboring businesses. Tri-Met is over a half mile away. So much for supporting local business, but we can spend millions on a hotel that a billion dollar company should be building.

It appears that Metro is spending our tax dollars on projects that benefit the big city concept such as Light Rail and other metropolitan-type transportation projects such as Tri-Met buses. Out in (City X), those type of projects don't benefit us and we need other transportation projects such as (X-Road) improved. We understand in the past that Metro wanted to encourage people to live in areas like the "Pearl District" so some 6-10+ years ago Metro discouraged good roadway transportation projects on the fringes such as (X-Road) and this action has caused us grief just as Metro hoped, but we love it here and have no plans on moving to the Pearl. If "diversity" is such a good thing then why can't a group like Metro recognize that our metro area does not need to be one homogenous neighborhood and respect the differences that a small town like (City X) provides through it's diverse lifestyle found rarely in the Metro Area. Metro needs to encourage diversity by protecting areas like (City X) and making transportation a priority in this area.....and I don't mean bringing light rail or buses. We have cars/trucks/SUV's in (City-X)and no "encouragement" will get our constituents to change their behavior to meet some goal. Value the diversity (City-X)brings to the table and allocate us our fair share of the transportation dollars, then we'll feel like Metro provides valuable services. Metro also did the only thing it could do to stop any sort of Westside by-pass hope by not bringing in the one single parcel into the UGB a couple years back, that move was a clear sign of disrespect to our constituents that did not go unnoticed or forgotten.

## Concerns about Services (continued)

***IF DISAGREES METRO PROVIDES VALUABLE SERVICES:*** What are the primary reasons you disagree Metro provides valuable services that have positive impacts on your constituents?

Policies and taxation mainly benefits Multnomah County at the expense of Clackamas County

Does not take into account local jurisdictional needs.

I have not seen any evidence of this, such as help with planning for bus service north of Sandy, nor starting up the Banfield flier again. Metro instead focuses on Gresham and Portland projects such as the Powell/Division project.

We do not need most of their services, so their impact on the city is unneeded regulations.

Metro regulates what cities can do and not do and really does not provide valuable services to a positive living environment

Too much control over cities.

Metro has their own agenda and the taxes and fees that you impose are hurting families that need their income for their own needs and wants.

Metro does not listen to the needs of other cities and their residents

Metro does not provide services that can be better met by local jurisdictions. I disagree with the concept of "Regional Governments" as it undermines local control.

Metro is too Portland-centric.

# Improving Communication

## What specific suggestions do you have for Metro to improve its communications, public engagement processes or services?

More public outreach

They need to put their information at local libraries in hard-copy form for the general public to see.

Metro officials should reach out and communicate with local city and county elected officials

Listen to the people.

Improve social media outreach.

The only time we run into conflict is when they micromanage us.

Go to more local organizations.

Try not to make all decisions before asking for input. Y'all seem to know, and push for, the "preferred alternative" before real stakeholders have a chance to give input.

My biggest concern is that Metro has grown from a trash collection agency into an agency that controls far too many diverse land uses. I have only lived in Oregon two decades, but it is very unsettling to me that metro has this much power. How can one organization designed for trash collection be a master of many things as diverse as the list I just went through without becoming a jack of all trades and master of none? It is extremely disappointing that Metro has more say in how a community's land is used than the people who live and work in the community and own the land.

Be honest and learn to manage accordingly. Put out a clear 5-10-15 year plan. Greater tolerance for change to plans. Allow cities to create their own future and grow it without threats of short funding or forced compliance.

I think the process is fine right now.

Documents on web site too big for many computers to download.

The opt-in program did not do good job of reaching out to people outside Multnomah county, following results show the balance of numbers way out of whack. Washington County should have two to three more entries. This is a result of old policies that largely limited outreach to Portland residents and conservation entities. All of the old lists were sent info re Opt-in, leading to the imbalance.

Work even harder to create a sustainable future

Be more open and transparent about issues concerning the zoo and the convention center hotel.

Get rid of your paid reporter. I do not believe most of the stuff from Metro because it is self-serving.

# Improving Communication (continued)

## What specific suggestions do you have for Metro to improve its communications, public engagement processes or services?

Reevaluate composition & purpose of standing committees. Develop more staff openness to views of various jurisdictions. Learn that talking to one elected or one staff person does not constitute "coordinating with that city". Help Metro staff learn the value of true collaboration. Realize that it may take months for a city to schedule local information dissemination, have dialog at Council, and develop a consensus. Engage and partner more with the mayor's group, whether they share Metro preferred position or not.

Reach out via online sources such as this and get public input on transportation issues. I'd be surprised if you'd see widespread support for many of your transportation decisions based on constituent feedback we hear, at least in our area.

Cost-benefit analysis management process

Engage and involve the Planning Departments of the various regional cities when planning is beginning involving that city. Incorporate local planners in the final product.

Convey to the public through media that metro is not about roadblocks or cramming people into small spaces, but about managing our resources and creating opportunities.

Engage cities in person

Need to find other ways to reach all demographics and brand what it is you do. Metro provides valuable services the choir is all too familiar with. Find new ways to reach the public mass (all demographics), win them over and become proactive-PR engaged as opposed to reactive-PR engaged. Getting there will require a new outreach mission and vision outside of the standard media formats above.

Engage the regions, not just Portland all the time, treat regions alone, not like it was all alike big city little city.

Work with the funds that Metro began with and stop creating new tax and fee revenue. What percentage of a family's income should support government?

Don't try to micromanage the cities.

More outreach to citizens. Start listening to other cities than just Portland

Come out and talk to cities

Metro is over-communicating about the Climate Smart Scenarios project.

Include city leaders early on in any decision-making process that involves them. Be more forthright and genuine with local authorities with Metro's intents.

# Other Suggestions

## Are there any other specific suggestions you would like to provide to Metro?

Metro needs to recognize employment numbers in Washington County versus numbers in Clackamas County and Multnomah County. Metro needs to open up more land for residential use in Washington County because the employment numbers are so high. People are commuting from Clackamas County, Multnomah County, and Vancouver, that is responsible for the terrible traffic problems. 99W has received a "F" grade for the past 20 years because of this. Metro also has an unusable website. The data files are too big and we cannot open many of the files or print them off. Metro should supply hard copies of documents at local libraries because that's where people go to do research. Metro caters to Portland way too much and is keeping all of the growth in Multnomah County.

Metro needs to be more respectful of local cities and jurisdictions and the differences between them. Be more respectful of the elected officials there and recognize that each community has differences. They need to stop ramming their vision down communities' throats and stop spending so much money. Get out of our citizens' properties. They are in danger of making themselves in a situation where there is a revolt against their control and they are going to create their own demise.

The best thing that can happen to (City X) is to have the city allowed to meet minimum state goals environmentally.

Do what the people tell you to do. Portland is very liberal, but the rest of the state is very conservative. Portland votes always beat out the rest of the state and there is a greater and greater divide between groups in the state. They need to stop relying on the Portland vote exclusively to dictate policy.

They do a lot of studies and people have trouble understanding how they are going to fund the decisions that they are making.

Focus. Focus. Focus...and Focus.

Services could stick to their main original goal of land-use planning. They are getting a little bit far out from where their responsibilities lie.

Work on their broader public understanding of the cities' role in Metro. And Metro's responsibilities to the state.

Keep up the good work with the recycling.

I have followed Metro from its inception when I lived in Portland. The organization really focused on the interests of the City of Portland. Over time, the Council became more balanced, but planning staff still exhibit the same biases. Lots of the staff came from orgs. like 1000 friends. With expected population growth, the region needs to realize that most residents outside Portland don't want to live in density like The Pearl district. Those that do will move into or continue to live in the City. All newer housing areas around (City X) are denser than SE Portland. The transportation system cannot absorb more of that density level.

Get out of the hotel business!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

# Other Suggestions (continued)

## What specific suggestions do you have for Metro to improve its communications, public engagement processes or services?

From within (City X), I'd like to see Metro make some extraordinary moves to help our City come to a resolution of a Comp Plan. I don't think a majority of our people will ever vote for a plan; and thus I think the time is approaching when the State and Metro should impose one on Damascus--such as taking the 2013 plan, since it meets basically all the land use laws, etc., and imposing it on the City--perhaps as a "penalty" to be applied for the next 3 or 5 years at which time the City can forward another one or a revision of the 2013 plan. Or, as an alternative, we as a Council pass forward to DLCDC the two existing alternatives (one known as the 2013 plan and the other as the Mayor's plan) as "provisional, incomplete" (these are key terms) plans to DLCDC and ask it to decide which one best meets the land use goals; then allow the people to vote on it (as the Charter requires). Thus we resolve the Comp plan problem and accord with the Charter. In the meantime, some of us are sponsoring a Charter change that will do away with the prior ratification of a Comp plan by the people (unique to all of Oregon's cities). I've spoken to Shirley Craddick about one of these ideas. I hope they will get a hearing with Tom Hughes and others.

Embrace diversity of neighborhood/towns and don't try to make the entire Metro area one big City linked to Portland. Respect areas like (City X) for the alternative lifestyle this town affords its residents and provide transportation solutions such as new roads or additional lanes for cars. No we don't want to ride a bus or train out here, that's something for Beaverton, Portland and Gresham...(City X) is unique and continually disrespected for the diversity it brings to Metro by a lack of transportation investment. Don't take the position of "well it works good for the Pearl so it must be good for everyone else, they're just too dumb to know it so we'll just show them what they don't know by building it in their backyard..."

I am aware that there is a petition going around to take Metro out of the land use process. People who do not understand the process and then react out of fear that Metro is trying to take their car away and force everyone to live on small lots without parking, could sign the petition.

I believe Metro provides valuable services. Now it needs to find a better way to communicate, brand and promote its business model to the general public. Need a new face...

Dissolve and give back local planning to the counties and parks back to the local jurisdictions.

Stop spending monies on things which private business should be taking care of, such as a large hotel at the expense of other business, stop taking land off of tax rolls.

The only time we see our Metro Councilor is when it is election time, time impose a new fee or tell us we need to be in compliance. While they were elected to represent us they only represent Metro and do not offer us their support.

Stop trying to create density at all cost. Listen to the marketplace and stop subsidizing projects like the Beaverton Rounds

Timely responses on requests for information

Keep a strong focus on best practices, derived from within the region as well as from other areas of the country and the world.

More respect and assistance for local communities in regards to land-use planning.

