

October 14, 2009

Councilor Kathryn Harrington  
Commissioner Jeff Cogen  
Commissioner Tom Brian  
Commissioner Charlotte Lehan  
Members of the Reserves Steering Committee

Re: Neighboring Cities Comments to Core 4

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Please accept these written comments from Metro's neighboring cities as part of the written record for this decision-making process.

First, we appreciate the opportunity to have a seat at the table during this long and extensive process. While those neighboring cities located in Clackamas and Washington Counties have had the opportunity for involvement as part of those counties' reserves designation process, those of us in Marion, Yamhill and Columbia Counties would not without the opportunity Metro has offered us. We appreciate Metro's recognition that its decisions have impacts beyond its current and future boundaries.

The term "neighboring cities" describes a ring of cities ranging in size from a few hundred to 25,000 or so, and located distances ranging from a few hundred feet to several miles from Metro's current UGB. While we are not a homogeneous group of communities demographically, economically, or philosophically, we share some concerns and some values that we would like to share with the Reserves Steering Committee and the Core 4:

1. Without exception, we value our unique qualities, our sense of place, and our physical separation from the Metro UGB. We have no wish to be a formal part of Metro, and some of us are reluctant to engage with Metro at any level. Others of us recognize our interdependence with nearby communities in the Metro boundary, or Metro as a whole, in the realm of transportation, other infrastructure and economic development. We welcome the opportunity to collaborate in solving mutual problems or meeting mutual needs – but, we hope to do so as neighbors, not roommates.
2. All of us serve as significant bedroom communities for the Metro area. This can be explained by several factors:

- a. Housing prices and housing choices within the Metro area are perceived as unaffordable or undesirable by many who live in our communities and work within Metro's boundaries.
  - b. Multiple jobs per household, or even per individual, are a reality in our communities. While living near one's job may be desirable, in many cases individuals and households are splitting the difference between job locations, or one member works near home while another commutes a significant distance. In many of our communities, the school district and state or local government are some of the biggest employers within our city limits, and the biggest employers immediately outside the city limits are agricultural in nature. Given the low average pay in much of the agricultural sector and the limits of the small-town economy, large numbers of working-aged people in our communities are likely to continue to live there and commute to a job somewhere in greater Portland.
  - c. Each of our cities has its individuality, and its appeal to people who find that it feels like home to them. People like their home, their neighborhood, or their neighbors. They are unwilling to leave them to follow employment.
3. Having said that, most of the neighboring communities of any size have completed or plan industrial or commercial expansion. We want to offer our residents more opportunities to shop and work locally, and offer non-residents who work in our communities the incentive to live in them as well. Further, we recognize that we cannot afford to provide the services citizens expect from a full-service city from a residential tax base alone.

We hope the above points will provide some insight into our values, aspirations and concerns. However, we recognize that this process is not about us, it's about you. We would like to address a few global policy decisions you are facing from the perspective of interested outsiders, and conclude with a few comments about specific urban or rural designations that have particular impact on one or more of our communities.

First, we observe that constrained land supplies and increasing densities in parts of the Metro region have led to the flight of younger families and lower income individuals into outlying parts of the Metro region – or, indeed, into our communities. We are concerned that urban reserves drawn too restrictively and an over-reliance on building up in residential areas will intensify this trend. As it stands, school districts on the edge of Metro and in many of our communities are struggling to deal with rapid student population growth. Even greater out-migration might provide a pressure valve for those in existing higher-end neighborhoods, but add infrastructure and housing stock deficits

to educational woes in some outlying Metro areas and many of the neighboring cities.

Second, we would encourage you to err on the side of generosity, not conservatism, when designating urban reserves intended for employment. The most restrictive proposals for urban reserve expansion seem very low on flat industrial land and very optimistic about the possibilities for redevelopment on brownfields or underused sites. In the short run, a shortage of industrial land in Portland or Hillsboro might be a great opportunity for Newberg, Canby, Woodburn, or Salem, but over a 40 or 50 year period it is likely to be a limit on our region's economic potential.

Third, we observe that some areas in the current UGB are unlikely to develop at their originally intended density and may not develop to any significant extent for many years. It seems wise to add employment and residential land near areas where large numbers of people currently either live or work.

Finally, we want to pass on some site specific comments from areas outside of Clackamas and Washington Counties:

Highway 99W/Yamhill County:

- The City of Newberg believes it is very important to keep a permanent greenbelt between Sherwood and Newberg. We think it is appropriate to have rural reserves extending from west Sherwood to the Washington County border.
- Newberg has a strong sense of place, which is partly based on its separation from the Metro area by both distance and topography. The urban reserves should minimize westward expansion along Highway 99W to preserve the distance between the two urban areas. Chapman Road may be a more appropriate southern boundary for the urban reserve area.
- The urban reserve locations west of Sherwood should respect the significant natural landscape features in the area, such as Parrett Mountain to the southwest, and the heavily forested corridor along Hwy 99W west of the railroad bridge/overpass. This forested corridor serves as a natural gateway and emphasizes to travelers heading west that they are leaving the Metro area.

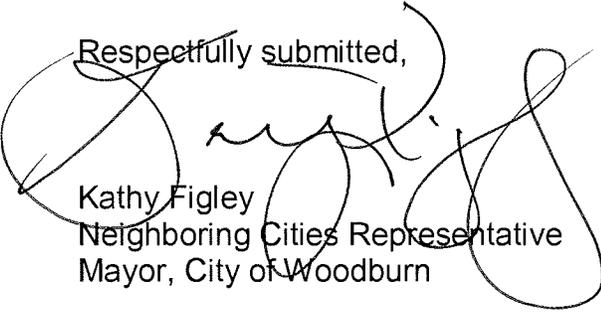
French Prairie/North Marion County:

The cities of North Marion County (Aurora, Hubbard, and Woodburn) and Marion County commissioners and staff firmly support the recommendation to designate the Clackamas County portion of French Prairie as Rural Reserves. We believe that this designation respects the versatility, quality and economic importance of the agricultural sector in this area. We also believe that the infrastructure on both the Clackamas and Marion County sides of the line (particularly the Boone Bridge and the Charbonneau and Donald interchanges) are grossly inadequate to support the industrial uses which are the main possible alternative to

agriculture. There are other locations in the greater Metro area which have greater capacity to support additional industrialization.

In closing, we would like to repeat our appreciation for being offered a seat at the table. We hope our comments have value to you, and we hope for continued positive communication with you.

Respectfully submitted,



Kathy Figley  
Neighboring Cities Representative  
Mayor, City of Woodburn