

March 6, 2009

To: RESERVES STEERING COMMITTEE

From: Brent Curtis, Planning Manager,
Washington County Dept. of Land Use and Transportation

Subject: Interim Staff Report on Washington County's Phase 3 Technical Analysis on
Urban and Rural Reserves

Attached is a copy of Washington County's 'Phase 3 Interim Staff Report' on Urban and Rural Reserves Planning. This report describes Washington County staff's ongoing technical analysis addressing the Urban and Rural Reserves Rule (OAR 660-027) suitability factors.

Each of the three counties is utilizing a somewhat different analysis approach to determine suitability as potential Urban or Rural Reserves. Washington County staff has developed GIS-based modeling tools to assist in the technical analysis work and to simplify the process of analyzing alternative scenarios. The approaches of each county are all designed to ensure conformance to applicable OAR criteria and are being coordinated region-wide by the Project Management Team.

March 6, 2009

To: Washington County Urban and Rural Reserves Coordinating Committee

From: Brent Curtis, Planning Manager

Subject: Amendments to “Phase 3 Interim Staff Report”

As you may recall at your March 2nd meeting, Jim Johnson, Land Use and Water Planning Coordinator with the Oregon Department of Agriculture, raised a number of concerns regarding the technical analysis utilized by county staff in determining conformance with the factors outlined in OAR 660-027. Following Mr. Johnson’s presentation to your Committee, staff agreed to address the concerns raised by Mr. Johnson and to amend the Interim Staff Report accordingly.

Throughout the Reserves analysis process, we have solicited and received input from a variety of individuals, organizations and agencies; a partial list of whom can be found in attachment ‘A’ to the revised staff report. One of those whose input we sought was Jim Johnson with the Oregon Department of Agriculture. County staff communicated with Mr. Johnson on the phone, through email and met with him in person a number of times. Mr. Johnson sent an email listing some of his comments and concerns about the suitability analysis for rural reserves to which we prepared and provided a written response; both of which are found in attachment ‘B’. We appreciate his assistance and will be mindful of his comments as we continue to work through the process of identifying rural reserves.

A copy of the amended staff report with the attachments referenced above is attached.

DRAFT

Urban and Rural Reserves Planning in Washington County

Phase 3 Interim Staff Report

Submitted to: Washington County Reserves Coordinating Committee

Prepared by: Department of Land Use and Transportation
Long Range Planning Division

February 9, 2009

I. Recommendation

The Planning Directors of Washington County presents the Washington County Reserves Coordinating Committee (RCC) potential Draft Urban and Rural Reserves Candidate Areas. Staff recommends RCC members review these candidate areas with their staff and prepare to concur, at the March 2, 2009 RCC meeting, on those candidate areas that will receive further analysis.

II. Background

A. Introduction to Urban and Rural Reserves

Washington, Multnomah and Clackamas counties and Metro are collaborating on a regional effort to help shape future growth in the tri-county region over the next 40 to 50 years. The designation of Urban and Rural Reserves are a significant component of this process and are intended to provide greater certainty as to where future growth may take place both inside and outside the current urban growth boundary (UGB), while protecting important farmland and natural areas from urbanization.

B. Oregon Administrative Rules Factors

The Urban and Rural Reserves designation process derives from Senate Bill 1011 adopted in 2007. The LCDC adopted an administrative rule to govern how Urban and Rural Reserves are determined. OAR 660-027-0050 and OAR 660-027-0060 provide the framework for how future reserves are determined through the application of “factors” used to identify and select lands appropriate for designation. Washington County staff analysis is based on the OAR’s eight urban factors and four (plus subset clarifications) rural factors. All of the factors are of equal importance in the designation process and all factors will be addressed in the course of the analysis. Relevant factors shall be applied. Factors will be applied with increasing specificity in successive process refinements.

C. Washington County efforts

Washington County staff began presenting preliminary maps to the public in late October 2008 addressing the suitability of lands for rural and Urban Reserves. These maps represent initial efforts to use spatial data and geographic information system (GIS) applications evaluating different factors to identify candidate reserves areas. The analysis was subject to continuous refinements and improvements. This work constitutes the Reserves Work Program Phase 3 and will conclude in summer 2009 with final recommendations for both Urban and Rural Reserves.

D. Using screens to refine analysis

Initially, the administrative rule factors were broadly applied encompassing all potential county areas suitable for both reserve candidates. Successive “screens” have been applied which provide a greater measure of detail in considering the reserve candidate area. Results from these screenings have been brought back to stakeholders, interested parties, the Reserves Coordinating Committee and planning directors for review and comment. Efforts toward a final determination of reserves as described in this interim staff report continue to be refined with successive screenings. Staff considers all work to date to be draft.

II. Suitability Analysis

A. GIS and suitability mapping

One of the approaches Washington County has taken to identify candidate areas is to perform a suitability analysis for Rural and Urban Reserves. This method processes spatial data in a geographic information system (GIS) to measure the suitability of a location for a particular purpose. Data layers that can define or quantify criteria are selected and then their attributes are ranked based on their ability to support the intended use and given a numeric value. Once all of the layers are selected and assigned they are weighted based on their relative importance and added together to generate a suitability layer that can be mapped. Some of the benefits of this approach are that it allows the user to objectively measure the outcomes of decisions and by changing the weightings different scenarios or values can be easily mapped and compared.

B. Suitability values and weightings

Staff utilized data layers to represent or define the LCDC factors identifying Urban and Rural Reserves. Figures 1 and 2 indicate which factors staff used for the initial reserves analysis. Attributes for each factor were assigned a value from one (1) up to nine (9) with nine (or the highest value for that attribute) being the most suitable for reserve consideration. For instance the agricultural inventory was assigned three values (based on foundation, important and conflicted lands) with three being most suitable. Irrigation was assigned nine values with nine the most suitable for consideration. For some factors, we were unable to determine a data layer to use or how to apply it.

Multiple factors were then combined into one map with each factor given a “weighting” relative to other factors. In all cases the total weight of any compilation is 100%. Tables 1 and 2 indicate the relative weightings of the initial compilation of six factors (with Water Resources representing three attributes) for Rural Reserves and five factors (with Transportation representing eight attributes) for Urban Reserves. The following two sections provide greater detail regarding specific factors.

C. Rural Reserves suitability factors

For Rural Reserves eight data layers were identified, one of which is identified in the rule itself; the Oregon Department of Agriculture’s (ODA) Agricultural Lands Inventory (divided into Foundation, Important and Conflicted lands.) The Oregon Department of Forestry’s (ODF) Wildland Forest Inventory was used to represent forestry in the same way as ODA’s inventory represents agriculture. A second set of ODA attributes, soil types, was also used and their productivity Classes I, II, III, & IV soils were all valued as being most suitable. Acknowledging the impact of water resources on farming, three data layers were ranked and weighted for this component. The first was whether a location was inside or outside of the Tualatin Valley Irrigation District because it would allow for the possibility of receiving irrigation. The second was for properties with existing point-of-use water rights for agriculture or forestry use, this data came from the Oregon Water Resources Department (OWRD). The third layer was to identify those lands located inside ground water limited areas as determined by ORWD. To address the criteria for being subject to urbanization, proximity to an existing urban growth boundary (UGB) was used as a proxy with areas closer to the UGB presumed to be more suitable for a rural reserve than those farther away. The final element used was to identify those lands meeting the requirements for being an American Viticulture Area in Oregon. These elements were then weighted, with water resources, the ODA inventory, and the ODF inventory given a total weight of 70% and soils, proximity to the UGB, and viticulture given the remaining 30%. The values and weights assigned to data layers for rural reserves can be found in Table 1.

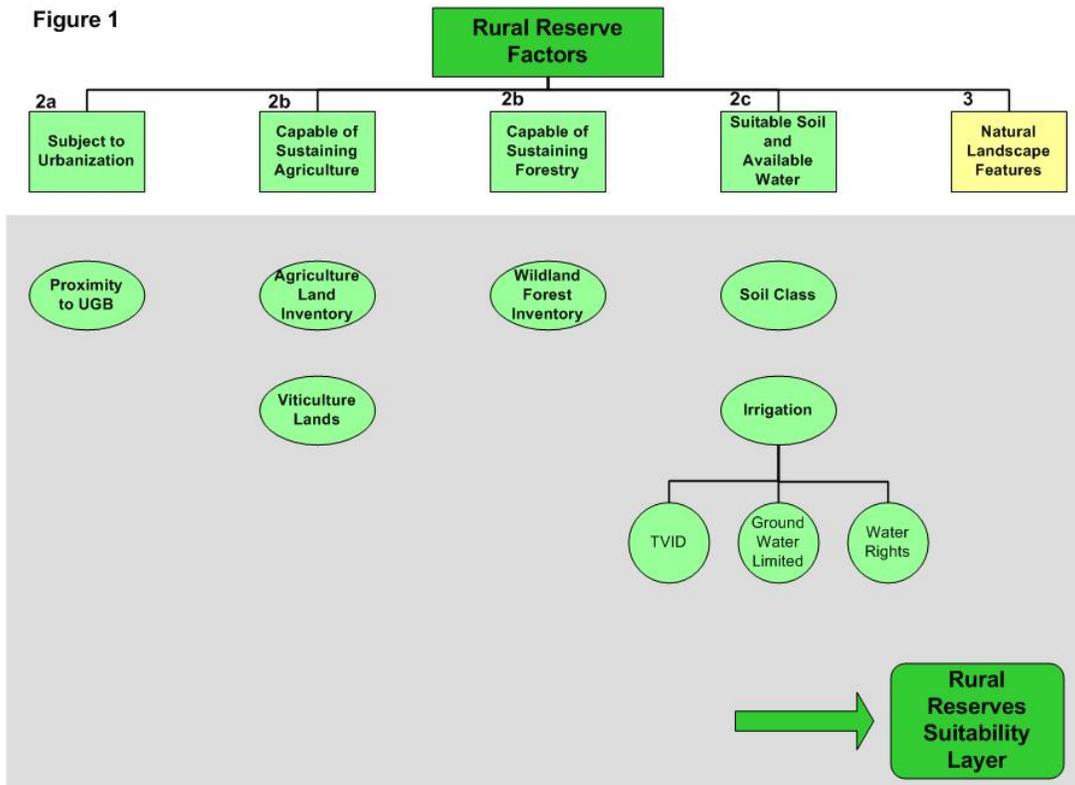


Table 1. Rural Reserve Suitability Values and Weighting

Value	ODA Lands	ODF Lands	Soil Type	Viticulture Lands	Water Resources			Proximity to UGB
					Irrigation District	Water Rights	Ground Water Limited Area	
9	Foundation	Wildland Forest	I, II, III, IV	Inside	Inside	Agriculture or Forestry Use	Outside	< 0.25 mi
8		Wildland Range						0.5 mi
7								0.75 mi
6								1 mi
5	Important	Mixed Forest Agriculture	V					1.5 mi
4		Mixed Range Agriculture	VI					2 mi
3		Intensive Agriculture	VII					2.5 mi
2		Low Density Residential/ Commercial	VIII					3 mi
1	Conflicted	Urban & Other	No Data	Outside	Outside	No Agriculture or Forestry Use	Inside	> 3 mi
Wgt.	20%	20%	10%	10%	30%	30%	40%	10%

D. Urban Reserves suitability factors

Twelve data layers were used for reviewing urban reserve suitability, eight of which were related to transportation. The ranking of attributes for most of the data layers focused on efficient uses of existing investments and infrastructure. As with the Rural Reserves suitability, proximity to an UGB was used with locations closer to an existing UGB being assigned higher values than those farther away. Proximity to an existing incorporated area was also used because of a working agreement in Washington County that future urban areas will be governed by cities. The limitation of slope on urban development was likewise considered. Limited development can occur on steep slopes given environmental constraints and the difficulty of creating well-connected, compact communities. For these reasons, Staff ranked slopes less than 7% as the highest scoring. Three of the eight elements of the transportation component were based on the distance from the following features (or layers in the GIS): freeway access, proximity to light-rail/commuter rail, and proximity to railroads. The remaining five elements were based on 2005 data for evening two-hour peak modeled travel times. The overall attempt was to depict how an existing rural transportation zone may relate to the rest of the region. Travel times from the central city, regional centers and industrial areas were used to tie into the existing investment in 2040 centers. The average travel time for each zone was also used as was the percentage of trips on congested routes. The percentage of trips on congested routes identified zones that may exacerbate existing roadway deficiencies and was used because such deficiencies may be difficult, expensive or impossible to fix. A final element was the County’s Mineral and Aggregate Areas. These areas are comprised of District A, which would be the site of extraction, and District B, which is a buffer of that use. The inclusion of these districts is due to the often incompatible interface between quarries and urban uses. Transportation and distances to a city and UGB received 75% of the weighting with each being assigned 25%. Slope was weighted with 15% and mineral and aggregate areas 10%. The values and weights for data layers for Urban Reserves can be found in tables 2 and 3.

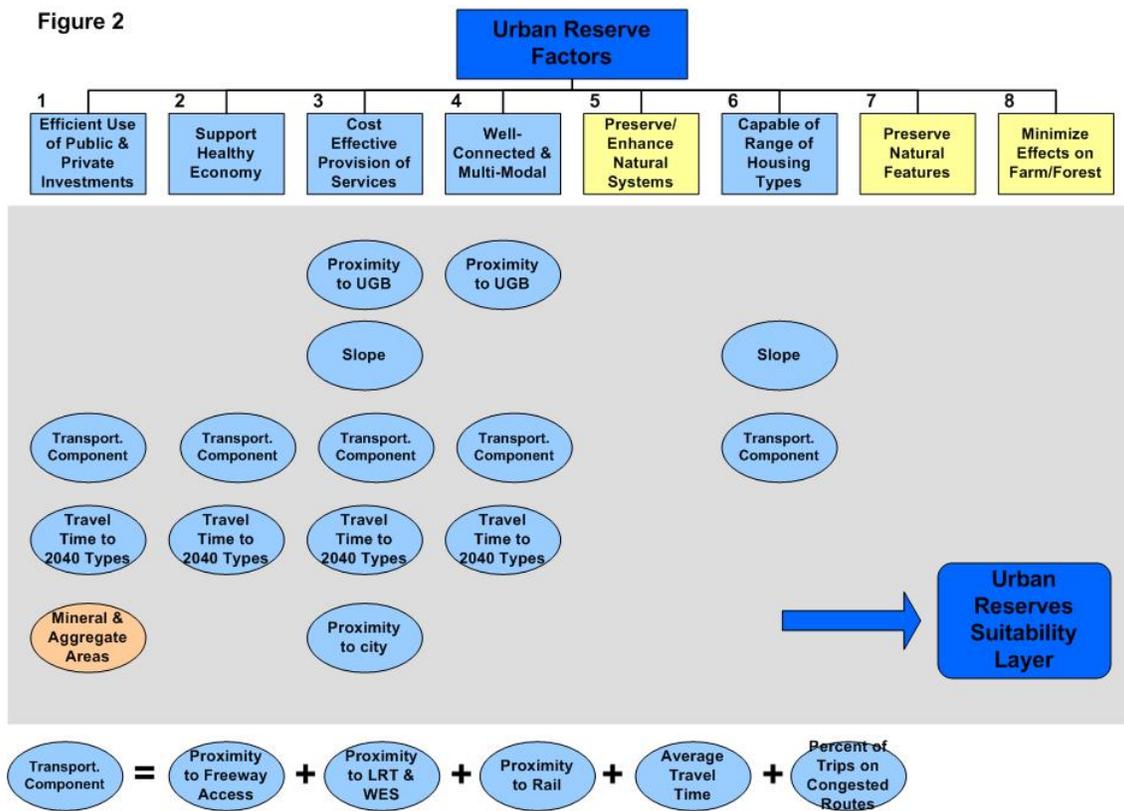


Table 2. Urban Reserve Suitability Values and Weighting

				Transportation	
Value	Distance to UGB	Distance to City	Slope	See Table 3 for detail	Mineral & Aggregate Areas
9	0.25 mi	< 0.25 mi	7%		Outside All
8	0.5 mi	0.5 mi			
7	0.75 mi	0.75 mi	10%		
6	1 mi	1 mi			
5	1.5 mi	1.25 mi			Inside District B
4	2 mi	1.5 mi	15%		
3	2.5 mi	2 mi			
2	3 mi	3 mi	20%		
1	> 3 mi	> 3mi	> 25%		Inside District A
Wgt.	25%	25%	15%	25%	10%

Table 3. Detailed Transportation Component

Value	Freeway Access	Proximity to LRT/WES	Proximity to Rail	Average Travel Time	Time from Central City	Time from Regional Centers	Time from Industrial Areas	Percent on Congestion
9	1 mi.	0.25 mi	250 ft	< 15 min	< 10 min	< 10 min	< 10 min	< 10%
8	2 mi	0.5 mi	500 ft	15-20 min	11-15 min	11-15 min	11-15 min	10%-20%
7	3 mi	0.75 mi	750 ft					20%-30%
6	4 mi	1 mi	1000 ft		16-20 min	16-20 min	16-20 min	30%-40%
5	5 mi	2 mi	1250 ft					40%-50%
4	6 mi	3 mi	1500 ft	21-25 min	21-25 min	21-25 min	21-25 min	
3	7 mi	4 mi	1750 ft	25-30 min	26-30 min	26-30 min	26-30 min	50%-60%
2	8 mi	5 mi	2000 ft	30-35 min	31-35-min	31-35-min	31-35-min	60%-75%
1	> 8 mi	> 5 mi	>2000 ft	> 35 min	>35 min	>35 min	>35 min	> 75%
Wgt.	6%	6%	7%	20%	12%	12%	12%	25%

E. Summary of suitability factors application

While the suitability maps do not provide a definitive answer on where to draw a boundary for reserves, they do provide guidance into what areas would likely make better reserves than others. For both Urban and Rural Reserves the areas along existing UGBs are the highest scoring. With regards to Urban Reserves this is largely due to their proximity to existing infrastructure and service providers. The scores are high mostly from the almost ubiquitous assessment of a large percentage of rural Washington County as Foundation lands in the ODA inventory along UGBs in Washington County and from being considered as subject to urbanization through the use of proximity to UGBs.

IV. Subject to Urbanization

A. Proximity to Urban Growth Boundary

One of the factors to be addressed when selecting land for designation as a rural reserve requires a consideration of the potential for urbanization. Rural Reserve Factor (2)(a) requires a consideration of those areas that: “Are situated in an area that is otherwise potentially subject to urbanization...or proximity to properties with fair market values that significantly exceed agricultural values for farmland, or forestry values for forest land.”

B. Fair Market Value

Staff has compiled more than a dozen analysis variations to address this factor. Because adequate data necessary to explore fair market value was not readily available, Staff utilized real market values (RMV) for individual parcels as recorded in Washington County's Department of Assessment and Taxation. Study areas included land at one to nine mile intervals from the existing Urban Growth Boundary. Based on the results, elevated RMVs occurred within one, six and eight miles of the UGB. Successive iterations included:

- Utilizing only natural resource lands' zoning designations (Exclusive Forest and Conservation – EFC; Exclusive Farm Use – EFU; and Agriculture and Forestry, 80-acre minimum lot size – AF-20) with .5 acre minimum lot size and 10 acre minimum lot size.
- Removing non-natural resource use lands, for example golf courses.
- Adding updated A&T data.
- Changing the data to only lands in farm and forest deferral (zoned farmland, un-zoned farmland, and forestland) with attention to calculating the RMV per acre values from the portion of the tax lot in deferral.
- Comparing RMV's in quarter-mile increments from the Urban Growth Boundary for lots of similar size (0-10 acres, 10-20, 20-40, 40-80, 80-120 and greater than 120 acres.) For example, this provided comparable average costs for 10-20 acre plots beginning at one-quarter up to 3 miles from the UGB.
- Applying visualization method (Kriging) as additional aid to viewing the data.

Based on results from the above iterations, planning staff determined that the notion of "Fair Market Value" independent of other indicators does not provide a conclusive indication of land areas that may be "subject to urbanization".

V. Status of Population/Employment Projections and Capacity Analysis

A. Status of Population and employment projections

OAR 660-027-0040 requires that land designated as Urban Reserves be planned to meet the needs of at least 20 but not more than 30 years of population and employment growth.

In order to determine the approximate amount of land to be designated as Urban Reserves, Metro must first determine the amount of population and employment growth that is likely to occur in the area where Urban Reserves are to be located. In recognition of the need for this determination, Washington County has sought a regional and sub-regional population and employment forecast for many months.

In the fall of 2008 Metro prepared and analyzed a series of future growth scenarios incorporating growth projections to the years 2035 and 2060. In November of 2008 those scenarios, which included both regional and sub-regional dwelling units and jobs allocations were distributed to the three metropolitan counties and the regional Reserves Steering Committee. The materials included with the distribution included two scenarios (Reference Case and Tight UGB) both of which included sub-regional growth allocation tables. Following this distribution, Washington County staff reviewed these scenario based forecasts and allocations and reported the results of that review to the WCRCC at their meeting on Monday, December 5th. This review included recommendations that Metro do further analysis and develop both a "base-case" growth scenario tied to historic growth trends as well as a second "reference-case" scenario utilizing a more market based approach based upon the new Urban and Rural Reserve Rule(s) in OAR 660-027. Additionally, the Washington County review of the Metro growth scenarios included a series of important questions designed to assure that future modeling scenarios incorporate inputs that are reasonably achievable and assumptions that would not lead to unrealistic growth allocations.

Following this meeting, Metro staff prepared and distributed a memorandum intended to clarify the scenario modeling results. This memo stated that the scenario results were not intended as “an official allocation of households and employment”.

As of February 6th, 2009, Metro has not responded to the Coordinating Committee acknowledged request for additional scenario modeling and has not addressed the questions included in the memorandum. Metro staff has, however, verbally agreed to prepare growth allocations to be utilized in developing land needs estimates.

B. Capacity within Washington County

A core data element in determining long-term land need is the existing capacity of our urban areas to accommodate future growth. Washington County staff, in cooperation with city staff throughout the county has begun to develop detailed estimates of current and projected growth capacity. This effort is being developed in four phases:

- a. Vacant lands
- b. Infill opportunities
- c. Redevelopment opportunities (next 20 years)
- d. Growth ‘Aspirations’ (Long-term redevelopment – years 2029 to 2060)

As of February 6, 2009, technical staff working on this effort has begun to compile preliminary estimates of vacant land capacity and have begun to develop the infill estimates. Completion of preliminary estimates of overall growth capacity is expected within the next couple of months. Refinement of these estimates will likely continue along with the refinement of emerging Urban Reserve and Rural Reserve Candidate Areas. In conjunction with forecast growth, these capacity estimates will aid in estimating long-term land needs.

C. Cities’ aspirations

As noted above, city aspirations are an important element of the long-term growth capacity of urban Washington County and Metro has begun a concurrent effort to solicit long-term growth aspirations from cities throughout the region.

Aspirations focus on the desired future characteristics of urban design in each city, with special attention to primary centers and transportation corridors. The main urban design characteristics include building heights (low-rise, mid-rise, high-rise), activity hours (8, 12, 18 hrs. /day), housing densities and accessibility (walk, bike, transit...etc). It is expected that the relative change from existing plans expressed through these aspirations, will generally give rise to estimates of increased growth capacity.

Most cities in Washington County have developed at least preliminary concepts reflecting the general character of expected future growth. At the January 2009 WCRCC meeting, the cities of Hillsboro, North Plains and Sherwood presented their preliminary aspirations. The majority of remaining Washington County cities will present their preliminary aspirations at the February WCRCC meeting.

VI. Stakeholder Discussions and Analysis Refinements

A. Stakeholder discussions

A variety of stakeholders have been invited to review and comment on iterations of staff efforts. Staff has attended meetings of key stakeholders and has held discussions with business, agricultural, real estate, and environmental interests and property owners seeking their comment. Staff has also solicited base data some stakeholders may have used for other analysis purposes.

B. Analysis refinements

Every stakeholder comment has been reviewed by staff and many have contributed to significant analysis approach changes. Stakeholder input will continue to refine staff efforts.

VII. Summary of Analysis

Several sources and issues were used to reach recommendations for potential candidate rural and urban reserve areas. The approach for identifying areas for potential consideration as Urban Reserves will be explained first. Discussions with cities in Washington County about their aspirations and what areas they deemed more conducive to meeting the factors for Urban Reserves were a primary source. The suitability analysis highlighted many of the same areas and in some locations went further. Input was also received from Group Mackenzie, on behalf of a coalition of business interests, requesting the inclusion of areas not constrained by steep slopes, floodplain, or wetlands. Those three sources were brought together and aggregated with the boundary drawn so as not to create Urban Reserve islands. A 1000 foot buffer was then added to ensure consideration of impacts to adjacent uses. If there had been a known need for population and employment that could have been used to estimate the amount of land needed as Urban Reserves it would have been possible to assess whether there was too much, too little or the correct amount of land inside that boundary. Since those needs are unknown the boundary was left at the extent shown in Exhibit B.

The potential Rural Reserve Candidate Area is shown in Exhibit A. It represents the entirety of the regional reserves study area in Washington County. This recommendation was reached due to a number of reasons. Labeling areas as potential candidates for Urban Reserves also results in them being considered as potential Rural Reserves (those areas are “subject to urbanization.”) Additionally the Natural Landscape Features Inventory has not been incorporated into the analysis so impacts have not been identified. Staff decided not to pare any lands from consideration at this time.

VIII. Next Steps

A. Test cases – assessment of additional attributes

Considerable additional analysis will be conducted, regarding:

- 1) Parcelization and ownership patterns
- 2) Soil productivity

B. Additional Regional Considerations

Staff is attempting to map agricultural/forest infrastructure. Food producing farms involved in direct market sales in the Portland metro region are also mapped to visualize the geographic extent of farms engaged in direct marketing through farmers' markets, CSA, U-pick, restaurants, etc. Other data being mapped includes precipitation patterns, rural communities, historic structures, rural churches, and century farms. This mapping effort attempts to show rural connections to the land by mapping a visual perspective of existing rural communities.

1. Apply additional and more specific criteria

Consistent with the overall project methodology, increasingly finer “screens” will be applied to the emerging candidate urban and rural reserve areas. These increasingly finer screens will rely on increasingly higher levels of detail in the technical analysis being applied to increasingly smaller areas of land. Examples of additional and more specific criteria include: information related to existing and potential buffers between urban or potentially urbanizing areas and important agricultural, forest or sensitive natural areas; relative costs of service provision (water, sewer, transportation ...etc.); preliminary concept planning to determine potential achievable densities; relative efficiencies in

utilizing existing infrastructure; ability of service providers to serve the area in a cost effective manner ...etc.

2. Factor population/employment projections into consideration of need

As discussed under section V-A above, the population and employment projections are key to developing long-term land need estimates. The most recent discussions with Metro staff suggest that these projections should be available in March. In conjunction with the capacity estimates currently under development, preliminary land need estimates may then be developed.

C. Stakeholder and public involvement

The reserves public involvement staff from the three counties and Metro are developing materials and planning events that will engage citizens in a robust discussion during Phase 3 of the work program. The factors used in analyzing lands within the study area and the implications of each reserve designation are central to the discussion agenda. The focus is on the suitability of lands for consideration as an urban or rural reserve.

Many of the same activities and tools used for raising public awareness in Phase 2 will be used in Phase 3, including:

- Public meetings hosted by counties and Metro
- County coordinating committee deliberations
- Presentations, publications and articles provided to: advisory committees, organizations and citizen groups
- Media coverage
- Up-to-date county and Metro reserves websites

The public involvement team has identified a number of other potential outreach tools and activities including:

- Self-guided, thought-provoking interpretive displays in public places such as malls and schools
- Radio talk shows
- Interactive web pages
- Workshops and charrettes

The public involvement team is setting priorities based on those activities that best support the reserves decision process, that provide citizens the opportunities for learning and commenting and finally are feasible to carry out effectively with limited time and resources.

Outreach Content

The Coordinated Public Involvement Plan focuses Phase 3 activities on educating the public regarding the application of factors to the reserves study area and soliciting feedback on how the Metro Council and county commissions might weigh various factors when designating reserves.

As candidate areas are identified, the team sees value in working with citizens in these areas via their county planning organizations (CPOs) or other appropriate local community groups in order to collectively explore the application of factors to particular areas and to seek a deeper understanding of the implications of each reserve designation. The focus will remain on land suitability for urban or rural use.

Although these meetings are still in the planning stage, we currently anticipate that at each meeting the team will:

- Present an overview of the reserves designation process and the Making The Greatest Place context for regional decision-making.
- Discuss the factors in-depth and their relative local importance
- Present candidate areas and the refinement process used to identify them
- Explore implications of urban, rural or no designation
- Share aspirations of nearest city/cities and discuss implications
- Ask citizens for their support of the candidate areas or if candidate areas are not supported what additional information should be considered.

Activity Timeframe

Phase 3 public outreach activities began in January. Because the candidate areas will not be identified until early March, public meetings and workshops will likely take place in late March, and April.

IX. Recommendations

The Planning Directors of Washington County presents the Washington County Reserves Coordinating Committee (RCC) potential Draft Urban and Rural Reserves Candidate Areas. Staff recommends RCC members review these candidate areas with their staff and prepare to concur, at the March 2, 2009 RCC meeting, on those candidate areas that will receive further analysis



Potential Candidate Rural Reserve Areas

February 9, 2009

Approx. 171,390 Acres in area

-  Reserve Study Area
-  Potential Candidate Area
-  Washington County Line

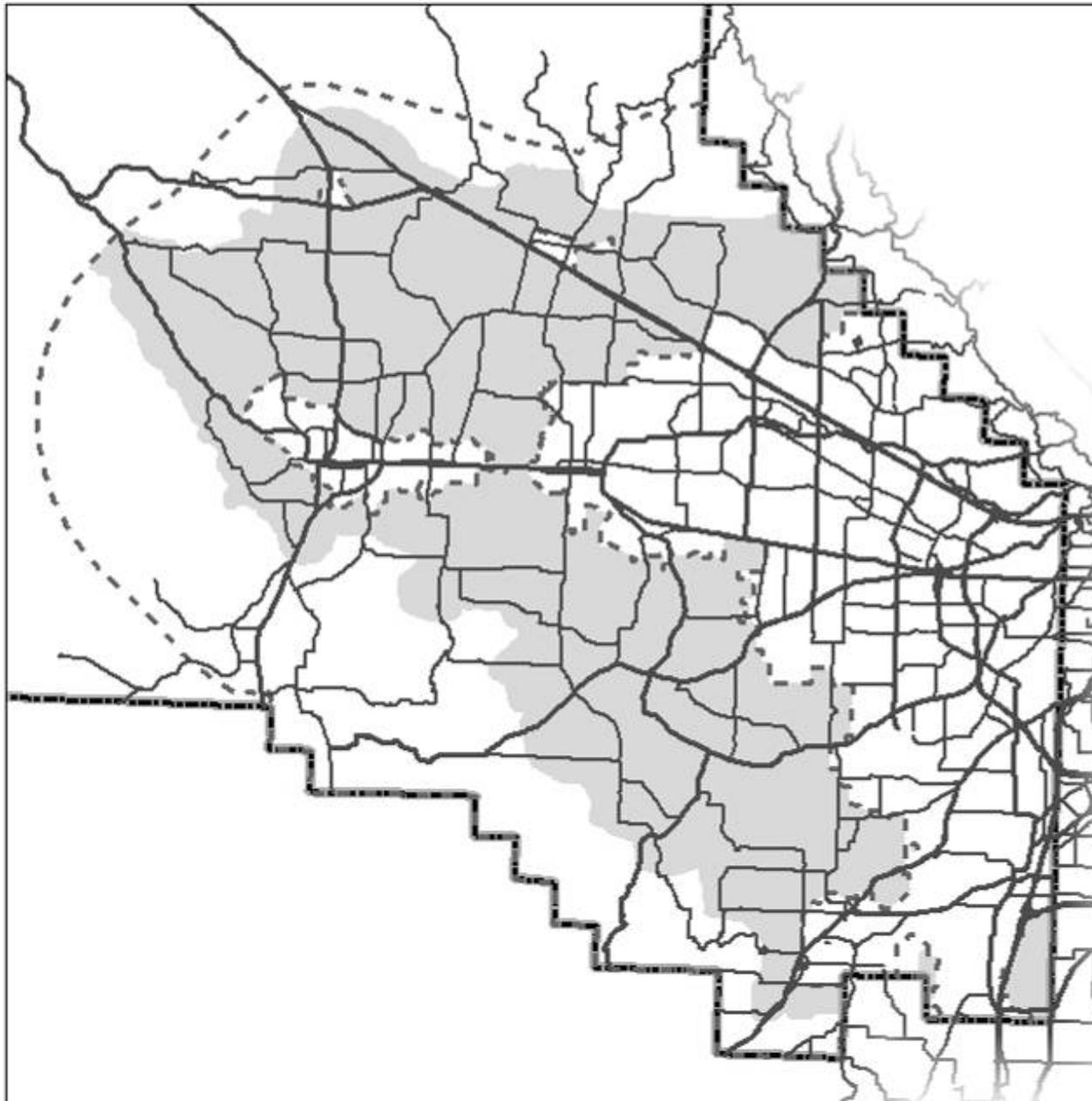
1 inch = 20,000 feet

Disclaimer:

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Potential Candidate Urban Reserve Areas

DRAFT

February 9, 2009

Approx. 106,010 Acres in area

-  Reserve Study Area
-  Potential Candidate Area
-  Washington County Line

1 inch = 20,000 feet

Notice:

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**Washington County Urban and Rural Reserves Project;
Stakeholders and Interested Parties / Meetings with Staff:**

Following is a preliminary / partial listing of Stakeholders and Special Interest representatives that have participated in meetings and/or discussions related to the ongoing technical analysis efforts being undertaken by County staff:

- Washington County CCI;
- Washington County CPO's;
- Jim Johnson, Land Use and Water Planning Coordinator with the Oregon Department of Agriculture;
- Mike Houck, Urban Greenspaces Institute – Center for Spatial Analysis and Research, Portland State University;
- Mary-Kyle McCurdy – staff attorney, 1000 Friends of Oregon
- Washington County Farm Bureau (2 meetings)
- Two farmers from the Roy area
- Two farmers from the Bethany area
- Farmer from south Cornelius area
- Bob Terry - farmer
- Two rural real estate appraisers
- Fred Van Domelen – farmer, south Hillsboro area
- Dave Vanasche – Farmer
- State agencies, including: Department of Land Conservation and Development, Department of Agriculture, Department of Forestry, Department of Fish & Wildlife, Department of Environmental Quality and Department of Economic and Community Development.

ATTACHMENT 'B'

Subject: Comments to Washington County regarding County GIS technical analysis and mapping related to Rural Reserves.

Copy of E-mail memorandum from Jim Johnson, Land Use and Water Planning Coordinator, Oregon Department of Agriculture.

From: Jim Johnson [mailto:jjohnson@oda.state.or.us]

Sent: Wednesday, November 19, 2008 3:42 PM

To: Jim Tice

Cc: Katy Coba; Brent Curtis; Doug McLain; Chuck Beasley; kathryn.harrington@oregonmetro.gov; John Williams; Robin McArthur; Richard Benner; David Morman; Bill Ferber

Subject: Rural Reserves Mapping

Jim

As promised, here are some of my initial thoughts about the mapping Washington County is conducting for Rural Reserves as it relates to agricultural lands. For your consideration:

1. First and foremost, I would say that using GIS to apply and overlay data related to the RR factors is an excellent process. However, I am not convinced that that a process that places weights on list of "values" (factors) is a good methodology to use when dealing with an industry as diverse as agriculture. This is especially the case in the northern Willamette Valley where the number of crops, type of operations and the number of agricultural practices is quite extensive. Having said this, I provide comment on your factors and weighting below.
2. In the Washington County memo (Oct. 30) explaining the county's GIS Suitability Mapping Project, it states that the RR factors in OAR 660-027-0060 are a "guide" for designating RRs. This is not how I understand the law. The statute states that the county and Metro "SHALL base the designation [of rural reserves] on consideration of factors, including, but not limited to...." and then lists the factors. The rule states: "...the county SHALL apply the appropriate factors in either section (2) [ag/forest] or (3) [natural resources] of this rule, or both." OAR 660-027-0060(1).
3. Therefore, while the county may be able to look at other factors, and I would support this in some cases (see below), I believe those other factors cannot be used to undermine the listed factors. It is also important to note that the rule & statute appear to give equal weight to all the listed factors. You may wish to discuss this with Dick Benner.
4. Proximity to the UGB is used as a measurement of "subject to urbanization." After reviewing your mapping which uses concentric circles around UGBs, I would remark that this is too simple a tool. Not all lands located within the first (or any) ring should be considered as equal. Proximity to major transportation corridors, interchanges and known "aspirations" and past actions should further inform the analysis of this factor. For example, the recent mapping/planning of the City of Hillsboro, past attempts such as the City of Cornelius' to include lands north of Council Creek and the "demand" for industrial lands near major transportation routes render the subject lands more subject to urbanization than other lands located within the same ring. In some cases, this would equate to lands in further out rings being more subject to urbanization than many lands located in the first ring.

Perhaps more important, this factor should be used to determine which agricultural lands should be protected. It appears from your mapping that the county is using this as a limitation on agricultural lands resulting in a lower value for those lands located closer to an UGB. That appears to be the sole reason as to why a band of agricultural lands located around the county UGB is rated at a lesser value. The ODA work took into account the implications of urbanization on long-term viability. A great deal of Foundation Land shares an edge with an UGB. What your proximity measure should indicate is not a lesser agriculture value but a higher need for protection. You may wish to review some of our discussion about edges, buffers and compatibility.

5. Another factor used in the county analysis is the ODA mapping (Foundation, Important, Conflicted). Many of the additional factors that the county maps are duplicative to those we used. Isn't this double counting a factor? And why some of the ODA factors, not all of them, used? Of specific concern:
 - a. The lack of any additional measure/weight to the existence of or blocking of agricultural/forest lands. This is in fact a factor listed in OAR 660-027-0060(d)(A)-(C).
 - b. Irrigation. Too much reliance on whether or not lands are located within the Tualatin Valley Irrigation District (TVID) and it's associated infrastructure. Many high-value crops are grown in the region without irrigation. In a future situation where need is established and other lesser land is not available for urbanization and it gets down to deciding between one tract of agricultural land and another, then we should look at such elements. There are many examples of irrigated land in the areas the county has identified with a lesser value such as northwest and north of North Plains and in the Jackson School Road area. There are also many areas located within the TVID boundary that are not irrigated.
 - c. The Wildland Forest Inventory should not be used as a tool to measure the value of land for **agriculture**. This factor appears to devalue most of the agricultural lands ODA determined to be Foundation Lands (they show as 5.99-6.76 on your scale). These lands are the heart of Washington County agriculture. This factor should not be used to evaluate lands for agricultural value. A separate measure of agriculture, a separate measure of forestry and a separate measure of natural features could be combined to see where they overlap but each should not be involved in a measure of the others value.
 - d. Viticulture lands. Why the greater weight when compared to other agricultural lands? Again, this tends to devalue the bulk of the county's agricultural land base located in the Tualatin Valley. I would be the first to agree that these lands are an important part of the regions agriculture base. But they do not provide the wider range of options for agriculture as do the valley floor and they do not rank higher in total value than other products grown in the county such as nursery and

I will continue to evaluate the rural reserves work and also take a look at the urban reserves. If I come up with more thoughts, I will forward to you. Please contact me should you have any questions .

Jim

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Date: November 24, 2008

To: Jim Johnson, Oregon Department of Agriculture
From: Brent Curtis, Washington County
Subject: **Rural Reserve Mapping**

Thank you for your emailed comments on Washington County's suitability analysis for identifying rural and urban reserves. Staff has reviewed and discussed your points and would like to meet with you again to go over these topics, but until that time here are some written responses.

- 1. First and foremost, I would say that using GIS to apply and overlay data related to the RR factors is an excellent process. However, I am not convinced that that a process that places weights on list of "values" (factors) is a good methodology to use when dealing with an industry as diverse as agriculture. This is especially the case in the northern Willamette Valley where the number of crops, type of operations and the number of agricultural practices is quite extensive. Having said this, I provide comment on your factors and weighting below.*

As we stated in our October 30, 2008 memo and have tried to make clear when we have presented this work, this analysis doesn't provide the answer. It is our attempt to gain a better understanding of how the various factors function together and where they occur. The intent has always been that this analysis would not be a replacement for professional knowledge and experience in designating rural or urban reserves but a tool to be used in that process.

- 2. In the Washington County memo (Oct. 30) explaining the county's GIS Suitability Mapping Project, it states that the RR factors in OAR 660-027-0060 are a "guide" for designating RRs. This is not how I understand the law. The statute states that the county and Metro "SHALL base the designation [of rural reserves] on consideration of factors, including, but not limited to...." and then lists the factors. The rule states: "...the county SHALL apply the appropriate factors in either section (2) [ag/forest] or (3) [natural resources] of this rule, or both." OAR 660-027-0060(1).*

We agree that the OAR is not a guide for designating rural reserves and that this is an instance of some writing in need of clarity. The point we were trying to make was that the OAR was used as a template for the analysis. Since the analysis is dependent on assigning values to different attributes, which is not part of the rule, we are applying some judgment and were trying to make it clear that this analysis isn't a requirement of the rule but an interpretation.

- 3. Therefore, while the county may be able to look at other factors, and I would support this in some cases (see below), I believe those other factors cannot be used to undermine the listed factors. It is also important to note that the rule & statute appear to give equal weight to all the listed factors. You may wish to discuss this with Dick Benner.*

The County's intent was never to undermine any of the requirements of the OAR. The data considered was meant to provide an enhanced application of the factors. While the rule and statute appear to give equal weight to all the listed factors, we believe that the criteria used to determine a

requirement, for example, whether lands “are suitable to sustain long-term agricultural or forestry operations,” are not necessarily equal.

4. *Proximity to the UGB is used as a measurement of “subject to urbanization.” After reviewing your mapping which uses concentric circles around UGBs, I would remark that this is too simple a tool. Not all lands located within the first (or any) ring should be considered as equal. Proximity to major transportation corridors, interchanges and known “aspirations” and past actions should further inform the analysis of this factor. For example, the recent mapping/planning of the City of Hillsboro, past attempts such as the City of Cornelius’ to include lands north of Council Creek and the “demand” for industrial lands near major transportation routes render the subject lands more subject to urbanization than other lands located within the same ring. In some cases, this would equate to lands in further out rings being more subject to urbanization than many lands located in the first ring. Perhaps more important, this factor should be used to determine which agricultural lands should be protected. It appears from your mapping that the county is using this as a limitation on agricultural lands resulting in a lower value for those lands located closer to an UGB. That appears to be the sole reason as to why a band of agricultural lands located around the county UGBs is rated at a lesser value. The ODA work took into account the implications of urbanization on long-term viability. A great deal of Foundation Land shares an edge with an UGB. What your proximity measure should indicate is not a lesser agriculture value but a higher need for protection. You may wish to review some of our discussion about edges, buffers and compatibility.*

We agree that the straight-line distance to the existing UGB is a simple tool. We had always planned on adding greater detail as we worked our way through the process as we learned more from our previous work and the input of others such as ODA, the cities, and Metro. At this time local governments are working with Metro to identify their aspirations and as that process moves farther along we will be able to incorporate it into our analysis. Initially we did score areas closer to existing UGBs lower for rural reserves thinking that it would be more sustainable for agricultural uses to be farther away. Based on input from our meetings with you and the Washington County Farm Bureau we flipped the scores on the “Distance to UGB” attributes so that those areas closer to the UGB score higher for rural reserves than those farther away. We have reviewed the discussion about edges, buffers, and compatibility and have been unable to determine how to identify and quantify those categories in a way to add them to our analysis. We would welcome the opportunity to work with you on implementing that suggestion.

5. *Another factor used in the county analysis is the ODA mapping (Foundation, Important, Conflicted). Many of the additional factors that the county maps are duplicative to those we used. Isn’t this double counting a factor? And why some of the ODA factors, not all of them, used? Of specific concern:*

We are going to put ODA, DOF & Natural Landscape Features Inventory/environmental data on separate maps. We are then going layer them all on one map with equal weighting. This will be our first screen.

However, note that the ODA mapping is too general to provide the detail we need in order to identify study areas for both the RR and the UR. For example, by mapping and weighting soil types, the steeper slopes are shown as less suitable for agriculture. Therefore future screening will

attempt to fine tune the data.

- a. *The lack of any additional measure/weight to the existence of or blocking of agricultural/forest lands. This is in fact a factor listed in OAR 660-027-0060(d)(A)-(C).*

This is another instance of something we would like to work through with you. As we remarked above, we haven't determined how to identify and quantify this factor. We are currently working on a methodology to map blocks and parcel patterns.

- b. *Irrigation. Too much reliance on whether or not lands are located within the Tualatin Valley Irrigation District (TVID) and it's associated infrastructure. Many high-value crops are grown in the region without irrigation. In a future situation where need is established and other lesser land is not available for urbanization and it gets down to deciding between one tract of agricultural land and another, then we should look at such elements. There are many examples of irrigated land in the areas the county has identified with a lesser value such as northwest and north of North Plains and in the Jackson School Road area. There are also many areas located within the TVID boundary that are not irrigated.*

Since our meetings with you and the Washington County Farm Bureau we have added in the point-of-use data from the Water Master to identify those parcels with water rights for irrigation regardless of whether they are inside or outside of the TVID boundary. We have also removed proximity to TVID pipes and wells from the analysis. The County's belief is that while need for urban land has not yet been established we should begin to look at whether one tract of agricultural land is better than another. The overall weight for irrigation is still something we are trying determine and continue to need input on.

- c. *The Wildland Forest Inventory should not be used as a tool to measure the value of land for **agriculture**. This factor appears to devalue most of the agricultural lands ODA determined to be Foundation Lands (they show as 5.99-6.76 on your scale). These lands are the heart of Washington County agriculture. This factor should not be used to evaluate lands for agricultural value. A separate measure of agriculture, a separate measure of forestry and a separate measure of natural features could be combined to see where they overlap but each should not be involved in a measure of the others value.*

We agree that the Wildland Forest Inventory should not be used to measure agricultural land, but the process is to identify rural reserves. While forestry is not as large a use in the regional reserves study area in Washington County as agriculture the OAR treats the two equally and we feel obligated to include it. An important point is that the final scores do not have an inherent value. So while a location with a Foundation designation, Class I soil, water rights located inside the TVID boundary, and located next to an UGB doesn't end up with a perfect score of 9 because it isn't a wildland forest it doesn't mean it shouldn't be a rural reserve. We don't believe that excluding the forest inventory will make such a site any more likely to be included in an rural reserve.

- d. *Viticulture lands. Why the greater weight when compared to other agricultural lands? Again, this tends to devalue the bulk of the county's agricultural land base located in the Tualatin Valley. I would be the first to agree that these lands are an important part of the regions agriculture base. But they do not provide the wider range of options for agriculture as do the*

valley floor and they do not rank higher in total value than other products grown in the county such as nursery and

This continues to be one of the most remarked upon elements in our analysis. Since viticulture lands are subject to limitations under Measure 49, we believe that these land should be given some weight even though these lands overlap with other factors such as capability class. However, the weighting can be reduced. It is important remember that we are identifying study areas for further analysis and types of crops that are dependent on special conditions such as slope or water may need more protection than other crops that can be grown anywhere.