



May 30, 2023

**Clackamas County Board of Commissioners  
Policy Position  
Relating to UGB Land Availability and Process**

Clackamas County supports a statutory fix to restore designated urban land back to the county that was removed in a recent UGB “land exchange” process, and to ensure decisions about developable land “transfers” within urban growth boundaries do not occur without the agreement of all jurisdictions tasked with managing the comprehensive plan of those lands.

In 2022, Metro initiated a process, referred to as a “land exchange,” affecting lands within the Metro Urban Growth Boundary (UGB). The goal of this effort was to expand the UGB in Washington County to allow the City of Tigard to move forward with planned housing development for their city. This is the first time this process has been implemented in the Portland metro area. The result was the removal of urban land from Clackamas County in order to add urban lands to the UGB in Washington County. This was done unilaterally, quickly and with insufficient engagement from the public, jurisdictions and stakeholders, and without the support of Clackamas County – the agency responsible for planning the lands that were removed. This represented a net loss of 572 acres of urban land in Clackamas County, which are now deemed not developable for urban purposes.

**We request the restoration of buildable land inventory to Clackamas County so that, as determined in past regional planning processes, we again have sufficient acreage to meet the county’s and the region’s housing and economic development goals.**

Metro’s responsibility to maintain a balanced inventory of buildable lands across a broad region is unique in Oregon. If a city outside the Metro UGB wants to make a similar change, the only impact is to themselves. However, Metro’s decisions impact multiple jurisdictions. We believe the processes undertaken in this work should be conducted collaboratively with all affected jurisdictions and stakeholders. Without a change to this process, Metro’s decision will set a precedent for land exchanges in the future that will again pit jurisdiction against jurisdiction. Instead, we urge the use of a regionally balanced approach to address our land availability challenges.

**With an eye toward the future, we also request that no “land exchange” occur within the Metro UGB without the consent of all the jurisdictions tasked with managing the comprehensive plan for selected lands.**

To thrive as a region, we must work together toward common goals and avoid picking winners and losers. Anything short of that will leave all Oregonians behind.

Please contact Chris Lyons at [clyons@clackamas.us](mailto:clyons@clackamas.us) for more information.