

**Testimony of Anneliese Koehler, State and Regional Affairs Advisor  
In Opposition of Senate Bill 1051 -2  
Senate Committee on Housing and Development  
March 20, 2023**



Metro is the regional government for the greater Portland metropolitan area, tasked by Oregon statute with making decisions every six years about how and where the region will grow. Our region has a strong track record of supporting the core purposes of Oregon’s statewide planning system – protecting farms and forests by facilitating efficient urban development, while providing additional room for people and jobs when needed by expanding the urban growth boundary.

Metro opposes SB 1051 -2.

Metro is committed to working alongside our partners to ensure that our region’s residents of all income levels have a safe and affordable place to call home. One of our primary roles is managing the Portland metropolitan area’s urban growth boundary. We ensure that we have enough land in our region to facilitate needed housing development, and we have worked over many decades to improve this process to get the housing outcomes that we all need. This has included the adoption of urban and rural reserves to pinpoint future areas of urbanization and the areas that will be protected from urbanization for 50 years, requiring and funding concept planning to ensure that UGB expansions will result in needed housing, financially supporting local efforts to make the most of existing land, and working alongside our partners to pass agreed upon legislative solutions for updating and modernizing our land use system.

In addition to our urban growth management work, in the past five years, Metro has really stepped up in our efforts to address our current housing and homelessness crisis. In 2018, Metro received voter approval for \$652.8 million bond to support the building of affordable housing in our region. With just under 60 percent of the funding committed, we are over 80 percent of the way to meeting our current total unit goals. Additionally, in 2020, Metro received voter approval for approximately \$250 million a year for supportive housing service to address homelessness in the greater Portland area.

We are acutely aware of the importance of addressing the housing needs of all people in our region, especially those with low and moderate incomes. However, we believe that we can and should do so within the framework, and with respect for the integrity, of Oregon’s existing land use system. Housing supply, not land supply, is at the crux of Oregon’s housing crisis.

**There is not a shortage of land in Metro’s urban growth boundary.**

Metro is the only government in Oregon that is required by statute to maintain a 20-year supply of land for all uses within its UGB, and to replenish that supply every six years. Metro’s

2018 Urban Growth Report indicated that there was buildable capacity within the Portland region's urban growth boundary for 320,000 housing units. (This is much less than the region's zoned capacity, which includes land that is unlikely to develop for a variety of reasons, all of which is left out of the buildable land inventory.) The Metro Council also added land to the UGB in 2018 sufficient to accommodate another 9,200 homes, plus associated urban uses. And none of this takes into account the thousands of potential additional units of "middle housing" that is starting to be developed under HB 2001 from 2019.

**Our region already has additional processes to expand the boundary for needed housing through a mid-cycle expansion and through a UGB land exchange.**

In 2017, a regional task force comprised of mayors, county chairs, home builders and land use advocates unanimously supported HB 2095, which enables cities to propose UGB expansions midway through our six-year UGB cycle. Cities now have an opportunity to request a UGB expansion every three years. In addition, we are about to conclude our first UGB land exchange in order to add about 500 acres for housing in Tigard. This involves an innovative process in Oregon's land use system that allows for the expansion of the urban growth boundary in one area as long as a comparable amount of developable land is removed elsewhere. This process can be used at any time.

There is nothing to prevent a landowner from "petitioning" a city to propose an UGB expansion under our normal six year cycle, our mid-cycle or at any time for a land exchange.