

From: Cherry Amabisca
13260 NW Bishop Road
Hillsboro, OR 97124

Date: October 6, 2011

To: Metro Council President and Councilors

Re: **NO UGB expansion** *this cycle*

Dear President Hughes and Councilors:

I'd like to weigh in on your very difficult decision about expanding the UGB this year.

1. No need for a UGB expansion in 2011

The housing market is in a recession and we have not hit the bottom of it yet in the Portland area, according to expert observers. You probably just read Richard Read's article in the Oregonian where Tim Duy, the U of O economist who correctly predicted the last recession, predicts that Oregon faces better than even odds of another one. He bases that forecast on the 5th straight month of decline in the monthly report on state and national economic indicators. The 2010 Census shows that the region is growing slower than expected. My recommendation to you is "Not Now". It doesn't mean "Never" - it just means let's wait until 2015 and see if conditions have changed. Source: Oregonian, October 3, 2011.

2. Hillsboro does NOT need 310 acres for industrial use

a) Hillsboro alone has 917 acres of undeveloped industrial-zoned land that was brought into the UGB in the past 10 years: Shute (128 acres), Helvetia (250 acres) and Evergreen (539 acres). These are still awaiting development and Hillsboro has found it necessary to make plan amendments to these areas in order to make them more attractive to potential industrial users. Source: US-26/Brookwood Parkway/Helvetia Road Interchange Area Management Plan, Technical Memorandum #1, prepared for ODOT, Region 1, May 17, 2011, pages 20, 21, 24. Also, City of Hillsboro Planning Commission Order No. 8040.

I find it contrary to good planning that these areas of productive farmland were brought into the UGB in the past but Hillsboro is now saying that the Evergreen area, in particular, is too parcelized and they need to jump over that area to farmland closer to the freeway that is less parcelized and easier (i.e. cheaper) to develop. By approving this request, you are endorsing the idea of taking more farmland out of production FURTHER OUT, because it is more convenient and cheaper for developers to aggregate. Leapfrogging over areas that aren't "easy" to develop leaves islands of undeveloped land already in the UGB. Is this the innovative, "visionary leadership" that Hillsboro and Metro should be known for? Source: City of Hillsboro Mission statement: "The City of Hillsboro is dedicated to providing visionary leadership..." Also, City of Hillsboro Planning Commission Order No. 8040.

b) Look beyond Hillsboro's mantra that "if we only had the land, they will come"

Hillsboro likes to quote its table of "Industrial Siting Prospects for the 3 years 2007 to 2009" to show all the prospects that have inquired about siting in Hillsboro and how they lost them all and therefore they need a big inventory of large lots to offer. What you don't have, though, are the REASONS why these companies chose not to locate in Hillsboro. Of the 34 prospects, only 2 listed size of parcels or shovel ready as issues. Source: Email dated July 8, 2011, from Sarah Garrison, Economic Development Manager, City of Hillsboro.

4 (11%) needed a site served by rail (sounds like St. Mary's)	2 (6%) econ. or tax climate unfavorable
2 ((6%) said the land in Hillsboro was too expensive	2 (6%) other priorities, early in search
4 (11%) said they wanted better subsidies	10 (29%) inactive or dead
1 (3%) wanted "shovel ready"	1 (3%) mult. owner-parcels too small

1 (3%) wanted existing building "they liked the look and feel of Hillsboro but did not want to be developers"
11 chose other sites: 3 (Salem, Fairview, Gresham), 1 (Asia), 1 (N. Mex), 1 (NY), 2 (Georgia), 3 (N. Am). One went bankrupt.

HAVING AN INVENTORY OF LARGE LOTS IS NOT A PANACEA. Please don't harm one industry -agriculture -that has had certainty, growth and productivity for 150 years, for the uncertainty of another.

Let's wait until 2015 and see how the economy and markets shake out. Hold off on expanding the UGB this year.