

## Survey shows strong support for Metro's tight growth policies

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All that griping about Metro's recommendation to keep a tight urban growth boundary and accommodate much of the Portland region's population and job increases through infill and redevelopment?

Turns out the public agrees -- strongly.

A survey this summer by the Portland firm Davis, Hibbitts & Midghall, Inc. showed there is widespread support for the growth policies espoused by Metro, the regional government that coordinates land-use and transportation planning in the area.

According to the survey, "80 percent of voters agreed that over the next 25 years, building on all vacant lots and redeveloping all substandard buildings along commercial streets near their neighborhoods is a reasonable choice to make so that less farm and forest land will have to be developed."

Six hundred voters in Multnomah, Washington and Clackamas counties were surveyed July 31 to Aug. 3. Nearly 60 percent believe things in the region are "headed in the right direction."

"There is widespread support for the region's Urban Growth Boundary (UGB), smart growth, and protecting the region's farmland, natural areas and standing forests," a survey summary said.

Multnomah and Washington county voters showed stronger support for the UGB, higher density development and alternative transportation than those living in Clackamas County, according to the survey.

The survey results, released by Metro this afternoon, come as Metro and its partner counties are engaged in three major policy decisions. Over the next year, the region will adopt a regional transportation plan, determine whether to expand the urban growth boundary and designate urban and rural "reserves." The latter will determine which areas are developed and which are preserved for farm, forest or natural areas for the next 40 to 50 years.

Voters do want some assurances about development, the survey showed. New development should be walkable and should be accompanied by parks, natural spaces and access to public transit, they said. And voters indicated they understand that higher density development is a way to conserve farm and forest land and is an alternative to sprawl, according to the survey.

Support diminished somewhat when voters were asked about higher density development near them, however. About 43 percent said they would not want even well-designed apartments built on the closest busy street near their home.