

Dear Councilors:

I am writing to you as a member of the state Board of Agriculture and on behalf of the Portland Farmers Market where I have been a board member for six years. I have also been involved in the urban/rural reserves issue as a member of the Coalition of Agriculture and Natural Resources since January. When the Metro Council met in February and adopted each county's urban reserve plan, I was not happy with the Washington county plan and urged the Council members to not go north of Council Creek, to preserve more of the Evergreen area as rural reserve and reduce the designation of 'undesigned lands' north of Highway 26. I did not believe that designating so much

valuable farmland as urban reserve made any sense given all the land already within the urban growth boundary that is not being developed due to cost of infrastructure and a lagging economy.

And because of Oregon's growing 'farm-direct' industry that serves restaurants, farmers markets and CSA's, we need to preserve as much of the high quality farmland within our three counties for future production of food.

Now I am deeply troubled to see that Washington County is coming to the Metro Council requesting additional properties be designated urban reserve and to urbanize rural roads. There has been a two year reserves process underway and incredible political wrangling over property lines, designations and the like. Now Washington County is wanting to bring additional properties into urban reserve? Where were these property owners during the deliberations of the last two years. Approving these parcels would set a terrible precedent of supporting someone who sits on the sidelines during a public process and then after the decisions are made, requests a change. Unconscionable in my mind.

Regarding the Peterkort property: How can we negotiate with an individual property owner when we are supposed to be evaluating properties based on the 'factors' in the law. Based on the factors (important farmland) the land north and west of Rock Creek qualifies as rural reserve-the current designation. Also this same parcel is not contiguous to any other urban development, thus begging the question of how it could develop with urban services and access. It is also currently farmed and surrounded by other farms. I am very concerned about the precedent that isolated parcels being designated urban reserve could create, not just for Washington county, but for the rest of the state.

My other big concern is around the issue of rural roads. As a Board of Agriculture member, I have heard for years about how urbanized roads in rural areas create opportunities for commuters to cut through existing farming areas. People in cars speeding towards a freeway or other destination create real hazards for farm machinery that use rural roads as access to various parcels and for the sharing of large equipment by multiple land owners. Upgrading rural roads to meet urban standards creates problems for the continuity and safety of farm operations. Please do not allow Washington County to designate current rural reserve or undesigned areas as urban reserve for the purpose of upgrading rural roads.

Thank you for your attention.

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