



Frequently Asked Questions about Land Use in Oregon City

What is the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB)?

The Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) separates land that can be developed for housing, jobs, schools, parks, and other services from land that is protected to preserve our farms and forests. The state of Oregon requires Metro, our regional growth management agency, to review the UGB every five years. If land within the UGB cannot accommodate the land use needs for the upcoming 20 years of projected population, the agency must either increase the density within the UGB or expand the boundary area. Expansion areas are chosen with consideration of protection of resource land (such as farming and forestry) and suitability for development. Metro facilitates discussion between the citizens and local jurisdictions in conjunction with a technical analysis to understand the most logical areas for expansion. The 1.5-year process includes an abundance of public outreach such as workshops, regional conferences, 24-hour comment lines, websites, direct mailing and public meetings. Oregon City's growth boundary last expanded in 2002. For more information about our Urban Growth Boundary see <http://www.oregonmetro.gov/urban-growth-boundary>

What is the Comprehensive Plan and Why Do We Need One?

A Comprehensive Plan is the primary document for guiding the growth and development of the city. Like any good business plan, it is kept up-to-date, so that it is effective and reflects the needs of Oregon City residents. The Plan intends to protect and maintain the quality of life and social and economic vitality of the community. The Comprehensive Plan is based on the belief that good planning is necessary to ensure that land resources are thoughtfully and efficiently used, that public services are cost-effective and adequate, that natural and historic resources that help define the city's character are protected and preserved, and that citizens will have continuing influence on the on-going decisions about the growth and development of their community.

What is a Concept Plan and When Will it be Built?

Metro requires concept plans be created for lands recently added to the Urban Growth Boundary, which may eventually be annexed into the city. Concept plans provide an opportunity to prepare for development of the land in a manner that meets the needs of current and future residents by determining the location of various land uses, open spaces, parks and public facilities, major road connections, and desired design requirements and environmental protection measures.

Oregon City has completed the South End Concept Plan, the Park Place Concept Plan, and the Beavercreek Road Concept Plan. These are long term-plans are not expected to be fully implemented for a while.

How Does Annexation Work?

Annexation is usually initiated by a property owner when that owner wants to develop the property. Annexation requires approval by a majority of Oregon City voters. The land must be contiguous to the existing city boundary. Zoning is assigned once the property is annexed. A concept plan does not have to be complete prior to annexation to the city, but it is required prior to development.

How Can I Participate in Development Discussions?

Public participation is a priority in Oregon. Oregon City requires developers to meet with Neighborhood Associations before applying to develop property in Oregon City.

Your comments matter. Anyone may comment on land use applications (Type II, II, and IV) in Oregon City. Each comment received during the comment period is reviewed and addressed in either a staff report or at a public hearing. All land use hearings are open to the public and your input is encouraged.

In order to make the most effective comments, familiarize yourself with the application. Talk to the planner who is responsible for reviewing the application and feel free to ask any questions you may have. We are here to help.