



# **Rural Reserves Review 2016**

## **Public Outreach and Comment Summary**

**July 28, 2016**

**Prepared for Clackamas County**

**by EnviroIssues**



# Table of Contents

Introduction .....	<b>3</b>
Outreach Activities .....	<b>3</b>
Public Comments and Survey Findings .....	<b>5</b>
Summary of Comments Observed Across All Review Areas .....	<b>8</b>
Springwater Road Review Area: Comment Summary .....	<b>11</b>
East of Canby Review Area: Comment Summary .....	<b>13</b>
South of Wilsonville Review Area: Comment Summary .....	<b>14</b>

## **INTRODUCTION**

This document summarizes outreach activities conducted by Clackamas County and characterizes public comments collected on a proposal to remove the rural reserve designation from all or part of three areas outside of the Portland Metropolitan urban growth boundary (UGB). The purpose of this summary is to inform deliberations by the Board of County Commissioners on whether to move forward with additional analysis and public input.

## **PROJECT OVERVIEW**

Under Oregon law, lands outside of urban growth boundaries (UGBs) can be reserved for urban development (urban reserves), for rural/agricultural uses (rural reserves) or left undesignated. Also, lands outside the Portland Metropolitan UGB that are not in urban or rural reserves cannot be considered for development until 75 percent of existing urban reserves have been used.

Clackamas County is reviewing the land use designation of three areas classified as rural reserves due to changing economic conditions, legal challenges and uncertainty about the ability of the county's two largest urban reserve areas (Damascus/Boring and Stafford) to accommodate future, long-term development. All or part of the three areas are being considered to be removed from the rural reserves to provide the county with additional flexibility to meet future development land needs in the next 40-50 years. The county is reviewing the following areas:

- Approximately 800 acres south of Wilsonville
- Approximately 400 acres east of Canby
- Approximately 425 acres south of the Clackamas River along Springwater Road

## **DECISION SCOPE**

The County's Comprehensive Plan map is being considered for amendment. A recommendation to alter the reserves lands on the map must be based on procedures, analysis and factors identified in state law and consistent with recent Court of Appeals decisions. Three areas of rural reserves are being evaluated to provide greater land use flexibility for the County in the future. The County Commission will make the final decision after a public engagement process.

## **OUTREACH ACTIVITIES**

Clackamas County conducted the following outreach activities in summer 2016 to notify the public, other jurisdictions and potentially interested parties about the process and invite feedback. Comments were collected between June 27 and July 15, 2016. Clackamas County planning staff will continue to collect and consider comments and answer questions through the life of the project.

*Project Web Page:* The project web page hosted on Clackamas County's website was updated in May and June 2016 with information about the Rural Reserves Review proposal and open

house materials. An online survey was posted to the web page on June 27 to collect public input on the proposal. Project web page: <http://www.clackamas.us/planning/reserves.html>

*Postcard:* A postcard was mailed the week of June 13 to invite landowners and interested parties to learn about the project and come to public open houses. The distribution list included:

- Approximately 1,500 addresses for people who own land inside the review areas and within a half-mile of the review area boundaries
- Community Planning Organizations and Hamlets within or near the review areas
- Staff in the planning offices of the cities of Wilsonville, Oregon City, Happy Valley and Canby
- Other interested parties including but not limited to watershed councils, chambers of commerce, friends groups and state transportation offices

*Print Media:*

- News releases with public open house dates were sent the week of June 13 to all regional media, including local newspapers such as Canby Herald, Wilsonville Spokesman and Estacada News.
- A display advertisement inviting people to submit comments on the proposal was published the week of July 4 in the Wilsonville Spokesman, Canby Herald, Clackamas Review and Estacada News.
- The Wilsonville Spokesman posted a news article on July 7 covering the recent open houses and information about the public comment period.

*Email:* Notice for the public open houses was distributed via GovDelivery on June 22. A follow-up email was sent on July 8 to people who provided email addresses at an open house to thank them for their attendance and remind them to submit comments.

*Social Media:* Information about the proposal and open house dates was posted to Clackamas County's Facebook account on June 25 and posted 10 times to the County's Twitter account from June 22-26. Information about the proposal was shared by local officials, residents, media and stakeholder groups between June 22 and July 7.

*Public Open Houses:* Three open houses took place on June 27, June 28 and June 29. These dates were chosen based on the need for time to prepare information for the open houses, provide advance notice to the public, avoid the July 4 holiday weekend and allow time to compile the input for the Board of County Commissioners policy session originally scheduled for August 3. Open house attendees were asked to sign in and provide their contact details to remain informed about the project.

Table 1 – Public Open House Attendance

Location	Date	Attendance*
Canby: Canby Adult Center	June 27, 2016	51
Wilsonville: Clackamas Community College	June 28, 2016	302
Springwater Road: Harding Grange	June 29, 2016	54

\*Number of people who formally signed in at the open house. Actual attendance is estimated to be higher.

Each open house included an array of display boards and handouts with information about the review areas and process. Project staff provided a presentation and hosted a question and answer session. Open house attendees were also able to speak with project staff individually outside of the presentation. Comment forms were available and attendees were encouraged to submit their comments at the open house, mail them to the County office or submit them online.

Staff from the City of Wilsonville provided their own informational materials regarding the need for the project at a booth outside the open house room at the June 28 open house.

## PUBLIC COMMENTS AND SURVEY FINDINGS

Clackamas County collected comments to be included in this summary between June 27 and July 15, 2016. Comments were collected in hardcopy at public open houses and mailed to the Clackamas County Planning and Zoning Division. Comments were also collected through an online survey. The comment form included a quantitative survey component that asked respondents to select their level of agreement with the proposal. Copies of the comment forms are in *Appendix A*.

While the quantitative data collected was not statistically representative of Clackamas County’s population as a whole, engagement levels were high. In total, Clackamas County received 736 responses within the comment period, including 244 in hardcopy and 492 responses to the online survey. Respondents were not required to answer all questions.

The comment form and online survey asked the following questions for each of the three review areas.

- Given the changes that have occurred in Clackamas County and the region, it is appropriate to remove the rural reserve designation from this area:
 

<i>Strongly agree</i>	<i>Somewhat agree</i>	<i>Somewhat disagree</i>	<i>Strongly disagree</i>	<i>I don’t know</i>
---------------------------	---------------------------	------------------------------	------------------------------	---------------------
- Please provide your reasons for your answer.
- What additional information would you like to have about the decision-making process as these rural reserve area designations are reviewed?

A large majority of respondents indicated they strongly disagreed with the proposal for the three review areas. A small minority indicated they somewhat agreed or strongly agreed with the proposal.

*Figure 1 - Springwater Road Review Area: Level of Agreement*

Value	Percent	Count
Strongly agree	1.9%	10
Somewhat agree	1.5%	8
Somewhat disagree	4.7%	25
Strongly disagree	76.6%	407
I don't know	15.3%	81
<b>Total</b>		<b>531</b>

*Figure 2 - East of Canby Review Area: Level of Agreement*

Value	Percent	Count
Strongly agree	2.1%	11
Somewhat agree	4.0%	21
Somewhat disagree	7.8%	41
Strongly disagree	74.1%	392
I don't know	12.1%	64
<b>Total</b>		<b>529</b>

*Figure 3 - South of Wilsonville Review Area: Level of Agreement*

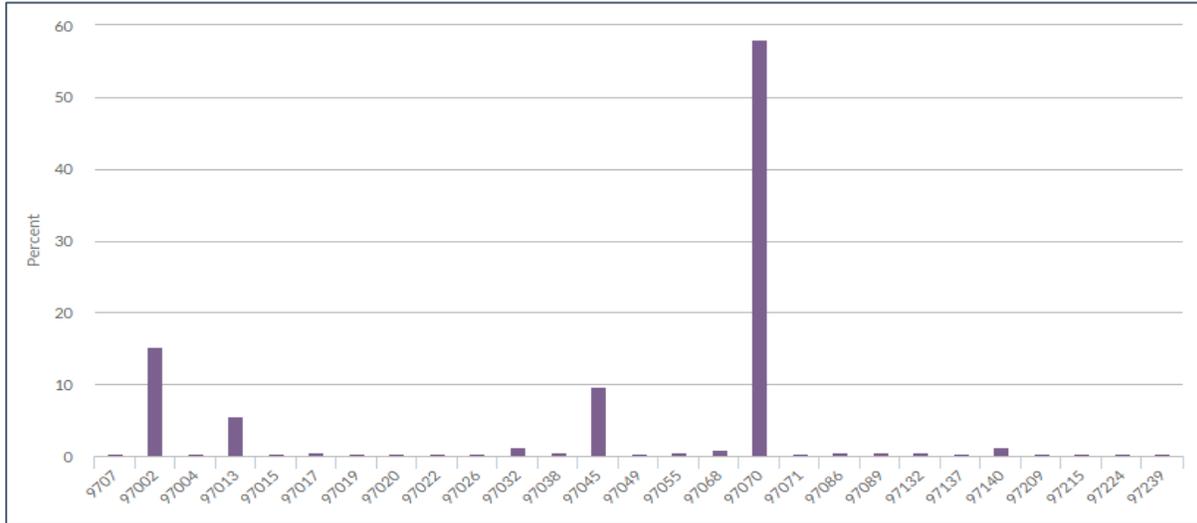
Value	Percent	Count
Strongly agree	2.0%	11
Somewhat agree	0.5%	3
Somewhat disagree	1.6%	9
Strongly disagree	90.5%	498
I don't know	5.3%	29
<b>Total</b>		<b>550</b>

Almost 500 respondents provided written comments with their survey responses. A summary of written comments begins on page 8. All written comments are in *Appendix B*.

## RESPONDENT ZIP CODE

At the end of the online survey, respondents were asked to enter the ZIP code of their home address. Of the 322 ZIP codes provided, 58 percent were from Wilsonville (97070), 15 percent were from Aurora (97002), 10 percent were from Oregon City (97045\*) and 6 percent were from Canby (97013). Twenty-two other ZIP codes made up the remaining 11 percent.

Figure 4 - ZIP Codes of Respondent Home Address



\*97045 ZIP code includes the Springwater Road review area.

## RESPONDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

The online survey asked respondents to provide demographic information. The respondents who provided this information tended to be older and less diverse than Clackamas County as a whole. More than 40 percent of respondents said they were over the age of 60, while the median age in the county is 40.6 years according to 2010 U.S. Census data. More than 90 percent of respondents said they were white or Caucasian compared to Census data showing the population to be about 83 percent white. About half of respondents were female, which is similar to Clackamas County as a whole.

Table 2 Survey Respondent Demographics

<b>Age</b>	Under 18	0.30%
	18-29	5.90%
	30-44	21.60%
	45-59	24.40%
	Over 60	40.10%
	Prefer not to answer	7.70%
<b>Gender</b>	Female	49.40%
	Male	38.20%
	Transgender	0.30%
	Non-binary	0.30%
	Prefer not to answer	11.80%
<b>Ethnicity</b>	African America/Black	1.60%
	American Indian	1.30%
	Asian-American/Pacific Islander	2.20%
	Latino(a)	0.60%
	White/Caucasian	91.10%
	Other	7.30%

## **SUMMARY OF COMMENTS OBSERVED ACROSS ALL REVIEW AREAS**

The following comments were found to be common across all review areas. Verbatim comments are available in *Appendix B*.

### *Comments about Designation Suitability*

- The review areas have rural characteristics that should be protected by a rural reserve designation.
- Protect the rural quality of life enjoyed by local residents.
- Non-rural development would reduce property values for area land-owners.
- Clackamas County's rural areas distinguish it from other counties in the Portland metropolitan region.
- There should be rural "buffers" between urban areas.
- Need more clarity on the definitions and criteria of rural reserves, urban reserves and undesignated areas.
- Need more information on the changes expected if the review areas become undesignated.

### *Comments about Project Need*

- There's enough developable land within the Metro UGB and urban reserves to serve the region's long-term need for employment lands; focus development in these areas before changing the designation of rural reserves.
- Clackamas County "wastes" land that could be put to better use.
- Other local governments don't agree with the County's assessment of long term employment land needs.
- Clackamas County has a significant supply of vacant industrial land that should be used before other areas are considered.
- It would be more efficient to develop areas currently zoned for industrial use and have better access to public services and infrastructure.
- Request to see studies or documentation that support the need for the Rural Reserves Review and identify the review areas.
- Request to see an inventory of developable land and when it is projected to be used.
- Need to understand why the Rural Reserves Review is happening now.

### *Comments about Decision Process*

- The Board should consider how the proposal would negatively affect the quality of life of residents near the review areas, and value the desires of residents over potential economic benefits.

- The review should not take place until there is more certainty about how quickly urban reserves will be exhausted.
- There is a small group of large land-owners in the review areas who would directly benefit financially from the proposal, and they are getting special treatment from the County.
- Don't trust the Board of Commissioners and other local governments to act on public input or make a decision in the best interest of residents.

#### *Comments about Timeframe*

- The timeframe of possible development needs to be clearly defined.
- Clarify how soon development could be expected if the rural reserve designation is removed.
- Removing the rural reserve designation is the first step to development, even if it doesn't occur immediately.
- It doesn't make sense to remove the designation now if development is not needed in the short term.
- Land-owners will find a way to develop their land in the short-term if rural reserve designation is removed.

#### *Comments about Previous Process*

- The outcome of the previous process should be honored because it took a significant amount of time, resources and public involvement; there was agreement that the review areas should have a rural reserve designation and the process doesn't need to be repeated.
- Conditions in Clackamas County have not changed enough to warrant another review.

#### *Comments about Public Involvement*

- Not enough people were aware of the review process.
- Do not trust consultants supporting public outreach activities.
- Do not trust there will be additional opportunities for public input on the proposal.
- The information provided in outreach materials was misleading and a waste of public money.
- Commissioners should have been available for questions at the public open houses.
- Interest to attend future public meetings and receiving notification about public comment periods and decision points.
- The public survey was biased and should have provided more information about the opportunities and challenges of the proposal.

### *Comments about Agriculture*

- The review areas have prime agricultural land with valuable soils that make farming the best use of the land.
- High quality farm land is irreplaceable once it is developed; good farm land should not be lost for employment lands or economic growth reasons.
- Urban growth and climate change is causing farm land to become scarcer worldwide, especially near metropolitan regions.
- It's important for a region to be able to grow its own food now and for future generations.
- Any development would have negative effects on neighboring agricultural practices.

### *Comments about Economics*

- Agricultural lands employ many people and agriculture is a significant sector of Oregon's economy.
- Development may provide many short term construction jobs, but we don't know the number of long term jobs development would produce.

### *Comments about Taxes*

- How will the proposal affect local tax rates and revenues?
- Local tax rates are already high and the required investment in public services and infrastructure would increase tax rates.

### *Comments about Natural Resources*

- Natural areas need to be protected.
- Removing rural reserve designation could negatively affect the area's ecology and natural beauty.

### *Comments about Public Services and Infrastructure*

- The review areas don't have adequate public services or infrastructure to support development or industrial activities.
- Infrastructure is already under strain and any more development would aggravate the situation.
- More information is needed on the cost of required infrastructure improvements.

### *Comments about Transportation*

- The review areas have traffic congestion issues and any development would make traffic worse.
- The review areas are not located near population centers and would require commuting by automobile.

- The amount of investment required to improve transportation infrastructure to accommodate development would be excessive.
- Need more information on long-term transportation plans for the areas.

### **SPRINGWATER ROAD REVIEW AREA: COMMENT SUMMARY**

More than 80 percent of respondents strongly disagreed or somewhat disagreed that the rural reserve designation should be removed from the Springwater Road review area. Less than 4 percent of respondents either somewhat agreed or strongly agreed with the proposal.

The reasons respondents provided for these opinions specific to the Springwater Road review area are reflected below. Verbatim comments are available in *Appendix B*.

#### *Comments about Designation Suitability*

- The area’s rural characteristics include high quality soils suitable for farming, grazing lands, forests, natural scenic areas and wildlife habitat.
- Rural areas in general are becoming scarce; rural reserve designation is needed to control urban growth and protect the area from land uses inconsistent with rural characteristics, including commercial and industrial developments and high density housing developments.
- It is not a logical place to plan for future development because it’s not adjacent to a growing urban area.
- There are land designations that would restrict the ability to develop large portions of the area, including the Clackamas River’s Wild and Scenic River designation.

#### *Comments about Project Need*

- There is land available north of the Clackamas River in Damascus and Boring.
- The review area should be smaller than proposed.
- The review area would benefit from a small amount of commercial services such as a grocery store or gas station.

#### *Comments about Decision Process*

- The area is an illogical place to propose future development.
- Why is this area being proposed for review?
- One large area land-owner would directly benefit financially from the proposal; wonder if that land-owner is influencing the decision process because the land-owner is interested in developing the land but can’t with current zoning.

#### *Comments about Agriculture*

- Any development would have a negative effect on local agricultural activities.

#### *Comments about Cultural Resources*

- There are historical sites in the area that should be protected, including an historic log cabin.
- Springwater Road is part of the historic Oregon Trail and should be protected.

#### *Comments about Natural Resources*

- Removing the rural reserve designation could negatively affect the area's environment, natural scenic beauty and wildlife habitat.
- Concerned about how development would affect the area's watershed health.
- Several protected fish species would require mitigation if affected by development.
- Development would increase the amount of impervious area, which would increase runoff, lead to flooding in local waterways and affect roads.
- Concerned about air quality and noise pollution.

#### *Comments about Recreation*

- Development would negatively affect recreational uses near the area, including rafting, fishing, swimming and cycling.

#### *Comments about Public Services and Infrastructure*

- Infrastructure in the area is inadequate to support development or industrial activities, such as access to water, sewer and electricity services.
- The cost of building required infrastructure would be prohibitive, and it is not clear what entity would provide services to the area.

#### *Comments about Transportation*

- The area is unsuitable for further development because transportation improvements cannot keep up with current levels of development.
- Carver Bridge and Barton Bridge are particularly significant congestion points.
- Clackamas River Drive is closed to large truck traffic and cannot be expanded due to topography.
- Increases in traffic are becoming a safety concern in the area.
- There are other areas that are more prepared to absorb the increases in traffic.

## **EAST OF CANBY REVIEW AREA: COMMENT SUMMARY**

Nearly 82 percent of respondents strongly disagreed or somewhat disagreed that the rural reserve designation should be removed from the review area east of Canby. About 6 percent of respondents either somewhat agreed or strongly agreed with the proposal.

The reasons respondents provided for these opinions specific to the review area east of Canby are reflected below. Verbatim comments are in *Appendix B*.

### *Comments about Designation Suitability*

- The area's rural characteristics include high quality soils suitable for farming, natural scenic areas, wildlife habitat, open spaces and a quiet setting.
- Canby's small town feel is being lost to development.
- Non-rural land uses will cause the area to lose the characteristics sought by residents who moved there.
- It's important to preserve rural areas and open spaces and teach younger generations to value rural areas.
- This is not a logical place to plan for future development because of land use restrictions related to Dietz Airpark, seasonal wetlands and topography.
- The area would be good for long-term development because Canby is growing and it is near the city's UGB, has good access to Highway 99E and does not have many residential areas that would conflict with industrial use.

### *Comments about Project Need*

- There is vacant industrial land in Canby that could serve long-term needs if development is conducted prudently.
- The County needs to resolve with local governments how the Stafford area may be used before changing the designation in Canby.
- One purpose of a UGB is to encourage urban density, and Canby is not a dense city.

### *Comments about Decision Process*

- The City of Canby should be fully involved in the decision of whether to remove the rural reserve designation.
- The long-term quality of life of residents should be prioritized over the short-term economic benefit of development.

### *Comments about Previous Process*

- The outcome of the previous process should be honored because it took a significant amount of time, resources and public involvement.
- Participants in the previous process expected the rural reserve designation to be implemented and last 50 years.

### *Comments about Agriculture*

- Increases in traffic congestion make transporting farm equipment on public roads unsafe.

### *Comments about Natural Resources*

- Removing the rural reserve designation could negatively affect the area's greenspace and wildlife habitat.
- There are seasonal wetlands near Dietz Airpark that serve as habitat for migratory birds.

### *Comments about Public Services and Infrastructure*

- Does the City of Canby plan to extend infrastructure into the review area?

### *Comments about Transportation*

- There are significant congestion issues on roads that enter and exit Canby.
- Highway 99E cannot absorb more traffic from the area.
- There needs to be more analysis of how development could affect airfield activities at Dietz Airpark.
- The area has good access points that connect to Highway 99E and could absorb traffic increases better than the other review areas.

## **SOUTH OF WILSONVILLE REVIEW AREA: COMMENT SUMMARY**

About 92 percent of respondents strongly disagreed or somewhat disagreed that the rural reserve designation should be removed from the review area south of Wilsonville. Less than 3 percent of respondents either somewhat agreed or strongly agreed with the proposal.

The reasons respondents provided for these opinions specific to the review area south of Wilsonville are reflected below. Verbatim comments are in *Appendix B*.

### *Comments about Designation Suitability*

- The area has rural characteristics including high quality soils suitable for farming, natural scenic areas and a quiet, rural lifestyle.
- Small amounts of limited development could lead to more development in the future.
- Development should not be allowed south of the Boone Bridge; developing the review area could lead to further development into the Willamette Valley toward Marion County and Salem.
- Too much development has occurred in the area already.
- The Villebois area should be developed before the rural designation is removed.

- The review area is a logical place for future development because it has already been disturbed and has good access to transportation facilities like I-5, the Aurora Airport and railroads.

*Comments about Project Need*

- There are 8,000 acres of developable land available.
- Clackamas County needs to reach a resolution with local governments on how the Stafford area may be used before changing the designation south of Wilsonville.
- Current expansion into the Coffee Creek, Frog Pond and Basalt Creek areas should satisfy long term needs for employment lands.
- There is a higher need for development on the east side of Clackamas County.

*Comments about Decision Process*

- Changing the designation would set a precedent that designations can be easily changed in the future.
- The review process is biased because some Clackamas County Commissioners have accepted campaign contributions from land-owners in the review area.
- The review process should not move forward because the City of Wilsonville and Metro do not agree with it.
- The review process is long, complicated, costly and should be simplified.
- A development plan should be proposed for review before deciding whether to remove the rural reserve designation.

*Comments about Cultural Resources*

- Historical resources should be protected in the area; a century farm was replaced with a golf course.
- French Prairie could be an historic tourism area.

*Comments about Economics*

- Wilsonville is generating a significant number of jobs; employment lands are needed more on the east side of Clackamas County.
- Developing the review area is more likely to employ residents of Marion County than Clackamas County.

*Comments about Natural Resources*

- Removing the rural reserve designation would have a negative ecological effect, increasing air pollution, water pollution and loss of wildlife habitat.
- Development would have a negative effect on children's health.
- The area has a high water table and is prone to flooding.

### *Comments about Recreation*

- Development would negatively affect golf courses.

### *Comments about Public Services and Infrastructure*

- Public services and infrastructure in the area is inadequate to support development or industrial activities, including the need for public schools, emergency services and access to water and sewer services.
- Wilsonville and Aurora would be strained to provide services to the area; the Boone Bridge cannot carry additional service lines.
- Developers should pay for any infrastructure improvements required.

### *Comments about Transportation*

- There is significant congestion along I-5 through Wilsonville and south of the Boone Bridge; I-5 congestion affects traffic in town as cars wait to enter the freeway.
- Boone Bridge is a major congestion point that needs improvements now and would need to be further improved if any additional development occurred.
- Transportation investments would be needed on Ehlen Road, Donald Road, Miley Road and Arndt Road to accommodate increased traffic.
- Increases in large trucks would worsen traffic on I-5, Highway 551 and other access roads in the area.
- Transit options should be extended into the area if it is developed.
- Development would prompt expansion of the Aurora Airport, which some residents do not support.