



# USEAct

## Urban Sustainable Environmental Actions



Third Meeting | Implementation Phase

Istanbul | Turkey

25<sup>th</sup> | 27<sup>th</sup> February 2014

AN URBACT II PROJECT

INTERVENTIONS ON “REUSE” OF URBAN AREAS:  
MANAGEMENT, PARTNERSHIPS, FUNDING, FUNCTIONS I



Connecting cities  
Building successes



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## 3. THE USEACT ISSUE: INTERVENTIONS TO “REUSE” URBAN AREAS: MANAGEMENT, PARTNERSHIPS, FUNDING, FUNCTIONS

### 3.1 Lessons from the World: Urban Growth in the USA: From tracing boundaries to complex management. The Metro Portland case study

*Adolf Sotoca, Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya. BarcelonaTech, USEAct Guest Thematic Expert*

Urban sprawl occurred in the US 40 years before Europe. The focus then was mostly on physical planning, and a lot of reports were produced, such as “Drosscape”, and “The end of the suburbs”. US planning policy is mostly decentralized. In Oregon there were real policies: the metropolitan area is considered as a whole. In the 70s the Metropolitan area covered two states, and seven counties. However the two states work independently.

A “green” boundary was defined in the 70s, allowing no action outside the boundary, by preserving farmlands outside the boundaries. But the area inside the boundary needed to develop, with limited extension of the boundary. 1M people live within the boundary, over approx 1000 square kilometres. The urban boundary is revised every five years, and must foresee the extension of the city over the following 20 years. In the late 90s it was decided to address the question of inner growth.

**Complex organization:** Competences are at state level (the constitution does not enforce the union with urbanism competences). However there are some legal constraints, bills and specific laws and programmes that affect urban planning (environmental laws). States organize differently. In general, they are extremely decentralized. Most of states enforce municipalities to manage their own urban planning. The character of land (buildable or not) defined at municipal level by a Master Plan. Zoning defines uses but in a generic way (by zoning

ordinances or amendments). Oregon (together with Hawaii and Vermont) has its own authorities or agencies in charge of planning: the “*land conservation commission*”, origins in 1973.

Oregon is the state where urbanism is most regulated, with licences, on-site reviews, conditional permits, public audiences and information, for variations, conditional permits, and greenways session.



#### Portland Case-Study: Urban Boundary

The **urban boundary** controls urban expansion onto farm and forest lands. Land inside the urban growth boundary supports urban services such as roads, water and sewer systems, parks, schools and fire and police protection that create thriving places to live, work and play. The urban growth boundary is one of the tools used to protect farms and forests from urban sprawl and to promote the efficient use of land, public facilities and services inside the boundary.

The Oregon Metropolitan Authority is responsible for managing the Portland Metropolitan area’s urban growth boundary and is required by state law to have a 20-year supply of land for future residential development inside the boundary. Every five years, the Metro Council is required to conduct a review of the land supply and, if necessary, expand the boundary to meet that requirement. This is called the urban growth management process. When undertaking this review, Metro also considers needs for future jobs in the region during this same 20-year period. The current urban growth boundary encompasses approximately 400 square miles. As of 2012, about 1.5 million people lived within the urban growth boundary.

**The history of the urban boundary:** The Columbia region association of governments, the Metro's predecessor, engaged in a complete planning process and proposed an urban growth boundary for the region in 1977. When Metro was created by voters in 1979, it inherited the boundary planning effort. A year later, the land conservation and Development Commission approved the boundary as consistent with state-wide planning goals.



The location of the Metro urban growth boundary involved more than simply drawing a line on a map. The plans and growth projections of Washington, Multnomah and Clackamas counties, along with 25 cities and more than 60 special service districts, had to be accommodated. The initial urban growth boundary was based on a projection of the need for urban land as well as the land development plans of individual property owners.

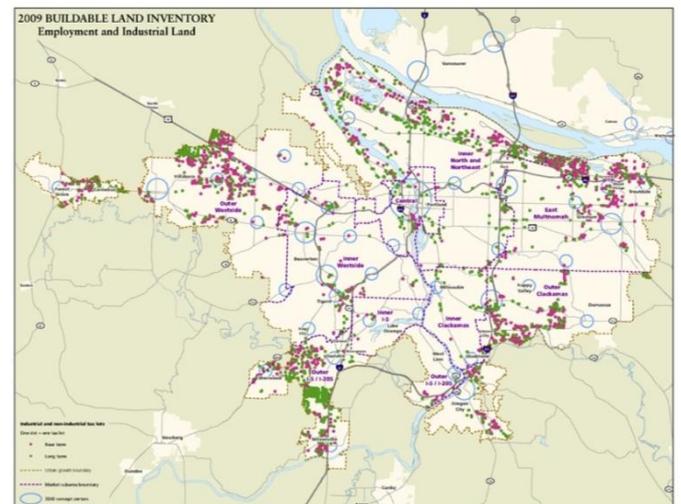
The urban growth boundary was not intended to be static. Since the late 1970s, the boundary has been moved about three dozen times. Most of those moves were small – 20 acres or less. There have been other times when the Metro Council approved larger, legislative additions: in 1998, about 3500 acres were added to make room for approximately 23000 housing units and 14000 jobs. Acreage included areas around the Dammasch state hospital site near Wilsonville, the Pleasant Valley area in east Multnomah, the Sunnyside Road area in Clackamas County, and a parcel of land south of Tualatin.

In 1999, another 380 acres were added based on the concept of "subregional need." An example of "subregional need" would occur when a community needed land to balance the number of homes with the number of jobs available in that area. In 2002, 18867 acres were added to the urban growth boundary to provide 38657 housing units and 2671 acres for additional jobs. This action also created regional policies to support neighbourhoods, protect

industrial areas and enhance regional and town centers. These expansions represented an increase of only about 9 percent, even though the population has increased by about 17% since 1990. In 2004, 1956 acres were added to the boundary to address the need for industrial lands identified as part of the 2002 planning process. In 2005, the Metro Council added 345 acres of land for industrial purposes which will complete the 2002 planning process. In 2011, the Metro Council added 1985 acres to the boundary to help address the anticipated 20-year need for new housing and jobs.

**The revision of 2009:** first strategies involved industrial refill (redeveloping plots, providing big plots for big companies), residential refill, diversification and phasing, and others (industry cluster, community based development, employment policies). The first action involved the optimization of existing urbanized land, the mapping tax lot, short and long term, the awareness of ineffective use of urbanized land. Two different strategies were planned: the urban refill of existing already built plots and the optimization of empty large plots and putting them onto the real estate market. On small plots different floor ratios within three different zones are defined: central, corridor etc... For big plots smaller plots are put together to prepare for bigger plots. Land is 100% private. Infill is to increase ratio, and replace buildings.

**2009 buildable land inventory (employment and industrial land)**  
Source: Metro, FCS Group, based on local review, 2009



**Expected effective refill:** the first type of capacity is zoned capacity inside the current Urban Growth Boundary that is market feasible (by the year 2030) with no change in policy or investment trends. Finally, half of the capacity in new urban areas (land brought into the urban growth boundary since 1997) is deemed to be market feasible by the year 2030 and will be counted towards meeting the region's

20-year employment demand. This capacity is the capacity that can be legally counted towards meeting the region's identified 20-year residential demand.

**Potential refill:** the second type of capacity is zoned capacity inside the urban growth boundary that is likely to require changes to policies and investments to make it market feasible by the year 2030. Policy and investment actions can increase FAR System (Federal Acquisition Regulation System), increase the refill rate and increase the market feasibility of developing vacant land. An example of these types of actions is targeted infrastructure investments. The potential result of these actions is taken at the local or regional level. This capacity requires documentable local or regional action to count towards meeting the region's identified 20-year residential demand by the end of 2010. The complete range of capacity over the next twenty years includes key assumptions that influence the low and high ends of the supply range.

Despite the fact that FAR increase is not required according to the demand prognosis for 2030, the FAR is increased for the 2040 scenario and in order to provide additional growth that will avoid an eventual lobby on land management. Supply-side FAR assumptions in most instances exceed today's market-based (demand-side) FAR assumptions. Zoning regulations have been found to be ahead of the market and thus provide plenty of regulatory "headroom" to allow additional density and growth to be accommodated in the near term as well as long-run time frame (2040). These FARs describe an average of maximum zoning densities permitted by local zoning codes:

- MUR: Mixed Use Commercial and Residential: FAR varies by location.
- CC: Central Commercial: allows a full range of commercial typically associated with CBD's and downtowns. More restrictive than general commercial in the case of large lot and highway-oriented uses, this encourages higher FAR uses including multi-story development.
- CG: General Commercial: larger scale commercial districts, often with a more regional orientation for providing goods and services. Businesses offering a wider variety of goods and services (including large format retailers) are permitted in this district and include mid-rise office buildings and highway and strip commercial zones.
- CN: Neighbourhood Commercial: small-scale commercial districts permitting retail

and service activities such as grocery stores and neighbourhood service establishments that support the local residential community. Floor space and/or lot sizes are usually limited to between 5 000 to 10000 square feet.

- CO: Office Commercial: districts accommodating a range of low-rise offices; supports various community business establishments, professional and medical offices; typically as a buffer between residential areas and more intensive commercial districts.
- MUE: Multiple use employment: an employment district that accommodates a broad range of users including offices, retail stores, warehouse distribution, and light industrial including manufacturing, fabrication, and assembly.
- IL: Light Industrial districts permit warehousing and distribution facilities, light manufacturing, processing, fabrication or assembly. May allow limited commercial activities such as retail and service functions that support the businesses and workers in the district.
- IH/RSIA: Heavy Industrial districts permit light industrial and intensive industrial activity such as bottling, chemical processing, heavy manufacturing and similar uses with noxious externalities.

**The process of definition:** supply side FARs. The FAR assumptions are derived from local zoning ordinances and represent the maximum regulatory capacity. These FARs were utilized in the preliminary UGR to estimate both the industrial and commercial building square foot capacity from vacant buildable land. Applying these FAR values to the buildable land inventory (vetted by consultants and reviewed in part by local governments) resulted in a set of building supply estimates for industrial and commercial building space capacity. Using the regulatory or supply-side FAR values allowed for an estimate of the regulatory capacity of the buildable land to accommodate a variety of industrial and commercial building formats and types. Conversion from acres of supply to building density capacity estimates allowed policymakers to compare how regulations and not just vacant land can be utilized to accommodate realized and potential capacity demand in the future.

However, a shortcoming of using supply-side or regulatory FAR values is that many zoning ordinances are well ahead of building densities that the market can feasibly build in the next 5 to 20

years. In some instances, the FAR values were unrealistic given prevailing and expected market conditions. As a result, this revised employment analysis employs expected market-based FAR projections. This approach provides less potential capacity than the regulatory FARs but is more reflective of market conditions. These demand-side or market-based FAR values have been vetted with local governments and a variety of trade and business organizations as well as by the Hovee consultant team. The demand-side FARs are also consistent with Metro Scope scenario results reflecting current policies and trends.

**The Revision of 2009: Industrial refill. plot grouping. vacant buildable large lot map:** it is likely that many future large parcel needs will need to be accommodated on vacant buildable land rather than refill. Refill would appear to be a more likely source of capacity for smaller lot needs. The buildable land inventory for employment uses was amended by metro's regional partners to incorporate local knowledge of available land.

There are three lots in the large lot inventory that have questionable buildable acreage values reported by the jurisdictions that amended the vacant lands inventory. Two lots in the 25 to 50 acre range reportedly have more buildable acres than total acres. The total acreage for each of these lots is in the 25 to 50 acre range, so they are assumed to be 100% developable and are included here. One lot over 100 acres appears to have been previously developed but the full tax lot area is reported as buildable acres. This lot might more properly be identified as a redevelopment opportunity than a large vacant lot; however it is still included here.

It is common practice to assemble multiple tax lots. A number of the large lots (over 25 acres) are adjacent to one another. In addition there might also be opportunities to assemble smaller lots that are already under common ownership into parcels of at least 25 acres. The comparison of supply and demand begins with the large lot supply as it currently stands before addressing the possibilities of tax lot assembly to meet projected large lot demands. It is likely that many future large parcel needs will need to be accommodated on vacant buildable land rather than refill. Refill would appear to be a more likely source of capacity for smaller lot needs. The buildable land inventory for employment uses was amended by Metro's regional partners to incorporate local knowledge of available land. There are three lots in the large lot inventory that have questionable buildable acreage values

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#### **Revision of 2009. Residential refill. Refill rate.**

The "refill rate" is the percentage of new dwelling units that are built on land that is already considered to be developed, instead of on vacant land. It is important to note here that we are comparing the number of refill units to the total of all new units built over a particular time period. So the refill rate is a proportion of new development, not a proportion of some land base. Multifamily developments accounted for about 39% of new dwelling units built from 2001 to 2006 while single family dwellings made up 61% of new residential units. The refill rate for multifamily dwelling units was much higher than single family, at 46% compared to 25%. Accordingly, the overall residential refill rate is sensitive to the proportional distribution of multifamily developments and single family development. If the long term share of multifamily dwelling units compared to single family dwellings were higher in the future than that observed over the study period, we could expect a higher overall residential refill rate. If the multifamily share were lower, we would expect a lower overall residential refill rate over the long term.



The strategy is to promote multifamily housing so that future urban policies (not only refill) will have a wider impact in a smaller territory. All new developments where the Metro is participating are multifamily. Multifamily dwelling (MFD) refill rates are generally expected to increase across the

region, potentially reaching an overall MFD refill rate of nearly 70% for the region given current policies. The reasons for this are the lack of infrastructure on newly urbanized land within the projected time (intentional shortage of public investment in those areas) and increasing demand for dwelling units closer to the city center and other concentrations of jobs, retail and services.

Accordingly, new dwelling units in these areas must be created through refill development, and multifamily dwellings are particularly well suited for this purpose. Oregon City – Milwaukie is the only subarea where the future MFD refill rate is expected to fall in comparison to the historical data. However, since so little MFD development occurred for the subarea from 2001 to 2006 the estimated historical MFD refill rate of 87.8% should be interpreted with caution. The MFD refill rate is expected to increase dramatically in the Lake Oswego – West Linn area, from 21.9% to 79.9% since the model is anticipating no new vacant land for MFD development in this area by 2030.

**Revision of 2009. Diversification and intentional fragmentation of urban extensions:** In January 2008, Clark County added approximately 19 square miles of urban growth areas. A portion of the 19 square mile expansion was overturned and was appealed at the Washington State Superior Court. Scenario assumptions for Clark County urban growth boundary expansions are based on the Superior Court decision.

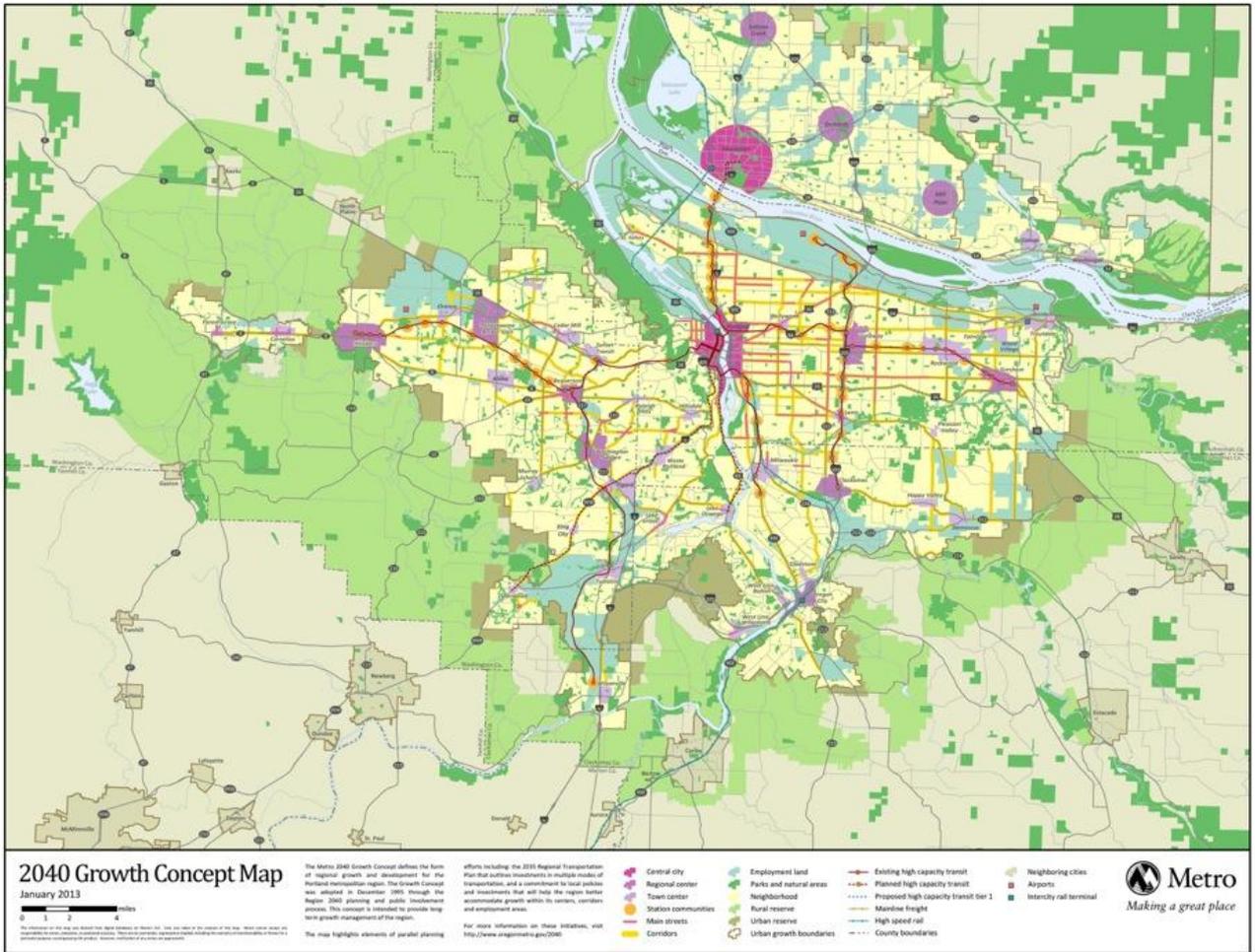
**Portland case-study: urban boundary revision of 2009 phasing and timeline:** sequences of prospective UGB expansions are assumed for this scenario, including the aforementioned areas that have been added to the UGB since 1998. New enlargement of the urban boundary is only considered when previous extensions are already developed.

**Urban growth concept 2040:** from 1992 to 1994, Metro used urban development analysis tools and forecasting technologies to study different growth management strategies. A wide range of possible approaches were identified and analyzed for impacts to the region's neighbourhoods, transportation system, natural resources and key urban services. This intensive study, originally called Region 2040, allowed Metro to focus on a number of options to prepare for local jurisdictions and the public to review. Metro ultimately tested four scenarios for how the region could grow. Each option was analysed for its effects on: land consumption, travel times and distances, open

spaces and air quality, and various urban landscapes. The four options, called "growth concepts," presented different philosophies about how the region should actively manage growth. In September 1994, a new idea emerged. Drawing from the best features of the different approaches – the 2040 Growth Concept won the unanimous support of local government partners on the Metro Policy Advisory Committee. The Metro Council adopted the 2040 Growth Concept in 1995. Land-use decisions are aimed to: encourage more efficient use of the land in cities, business centers on "main streets" and on major transit routes, protect natural areas, parks, streams and farmland both inside and outside the urban growth boundary, mobility diversification, by promoting a transportation system that includes all types of travel, such as bicycling, walking and using mass transit, as well as cars and freight, metropolitan scope work with neighbouring cities just outside the region, such as Sandy, Canby and Newberg, to keep the separation between communities, and promoting diverse housing options for all residents of the region.

**Spatial hierarchization** is based on **multimodal structure** involving central city, regional centers and town centers; an **axial structure**: main streets (retail commercial), transit corridors (transportation axis) and station communities (TOD), and **areas of homogeneous identities**: neighbourhoods (existing, preservation; new, more density), neighbouring cities (green belts instead of urban continuum) and rural reserves (preserved areas).

**Strategies: redevelopment Transit Oriented Development (TOD).** In considering **walkability**, the street pattern in the surrounding area determines not only whether residents and workers can access rail and bus transit, but also whether they can access the shopping, jobs, and services that might be located in their immediate neighbourhood (if these uses are even present). Non-work trips continue to grow as a share of Americans' travel patterns, making local walkability a critically important component of building vibrant communities. Block sizes are a good proxy for the walkability of a neighbourhood, and small block sizes have a demonstrated correlation with reducing vehicle miles travelled. While central Portland has the smaller block sizes associated with increased pedestrian connectivity, there are notable walkable areas throughout the region. However, block sizes are less consistent, and often not directly connected to light rail or bus transit in communities outside of central Portland, making it more challenging for nearby households to reduce their auto use.



**Impact on the real state land value:** new development is a fundamental way to improve the vibrancy of station areas and corridors, but the potential to attract private investment is clearly predicated on both neighbourhood market conditions and regional market demand for more compact housing types. The land value and historic real estate market transactions are both indicators used to understand local market strength, in the absence of the ability to do a detailed market analysis for every transit community in the region. Additionally, with the current real estate downturn, it is important to gauge the long range potential demand for compact development, including multifamily ownership and rental housing, town homes, and smaller single-family detached units.

During the last housing market boom, downtown and other neighbourhoods at the region's core, such as the Pearl District, absorbed a significant share of new regional growth, much of it in compact housing types including apartments and condominiums. Frequent bus corridors in Portland's inner east side also saw significant infill housing development, including three to five-story apartment and condominium buildings, many with limited or no on-site parking. Outlying suburban station areas and frequent bus corridors have thus far been less successful at attracting compact apartment and

condominium development. Future market potential for new high-end multifamily housing will clearly be impacted by the current surplus of condominiums in the core of the region, but to what extent did the most recent strong market cycle absorb longer term demand for all multifamily development?

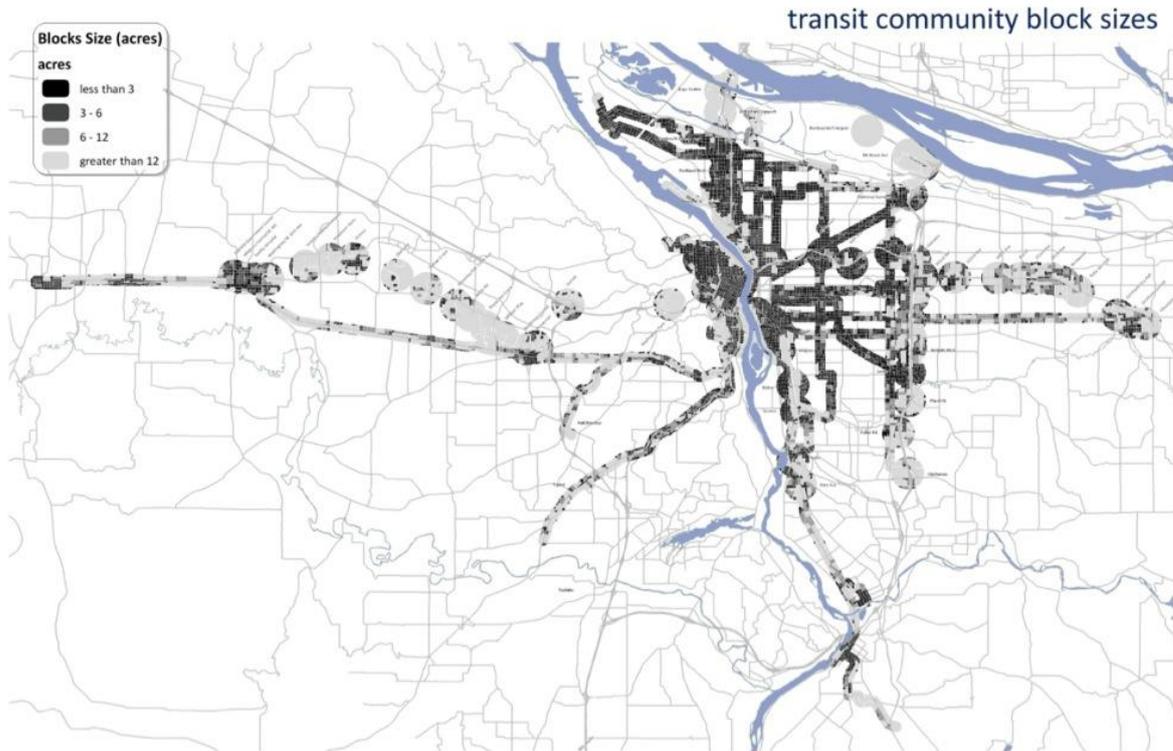
260 000 sq feet have been developed for mixed-use development, 580 000 transit trips/year, 2324 affordable housing (652 for 60% median income, 704 for 80% median income).

Metro's resources in the TOD program are quite limited, and investments should work with the market and leverage private investment with targeted public investments. We see two major roles for the programme: the first of these would be what can be referred to as "proof of concept" investments, supporting projects that test and hopefully demonstrate market support and achievable pricing for a targeted development form. Examples of this type of intervention would be the crossings at Gresham station and north main village in Milwaukie, both of which demonstrated that a significant premium could be achieved for untested urban development forms in these markets. The second type of investment would be related to increasing the attractiveness of a center, thereby generating a marketable premium that would be

reflected in higher achievable pricing. This could include infrastructure investments (quite expensive), common area improvements (parks, plazas, streetscape), and active support for targeted “urban infrastructure” that have a demonstrated positive impact on achievable pricing (specialty grocers,

theatres, etc.). An example of an investment type that this analysis would support would be providing funding to assist in the renovation and possible expansion of a theatre, a restaurant, café, or bookstore within a centre.

Figure 4: Block sizes in transit communities



**Revitalization of downtowns:** Downtown and the Pearl District include significant amounts of employment and businesses and an expanding housing stock. The area is the primary tourist destination in the region, boasting multiple theatres, museums, restaurants and high-end retailers. The area has a population of 16 316 residents and a total of 79 750 employees, highlighting its primary function as the regional employment centre. The area includes a substantial amount of housing stock in the form of urban-style condos and apartments, allowing for many to live and work within the district.

Downtown and the Pearl is considered a 24-hour activity center, with daytime uses that include office jobs, high-end and speciality retailers, grocery stores, farmers markets, museums and many limited-service restaurants. Nighttime’s activity includes fine dining restaurants, coffee shops, theatres, bars and nightclubs. Within the area there is a wide range of businesses, especially restaurants, coffee shops and specialty clothing stores, with additional businesses that include:

bakeries, dry cleaners, fitness gyms, and childcare and book stores.

Residents, workers and visitors can easily access the area through a variety of transportation options. The area is served by multiple light rail and bus lines, a streetcar system, multiple bike routes, and pedestrian-friendly streetscapes based on an urban-style small grid network and narrow streets. Additionally, this center serves as the central hub for all bus lines in the region, meaning most major bus routes stop in this district at some point. Auto access is prevalent with access to several major highways and thoroughfares that further support the area’s accessibility to others from outside the region. Land values in this center allow for the strategic placement of structured parking throughout. Large, mixed-use parking structures and underground parking are prevalent. In addition, surface parking lots can be found in key locations along the edge of the district. Various forms of public transit and walkable streetscapes help make the car a secondary choice for transportation into and out of the district. Parks are found in abundance

throughout the district, and are utilized by workers, residents, and tourists alike.

The Clackamas Regional Center is located directly adjacent to Interstate 205 and serves as the retail hub of northern Clackamas County and much of East Portland. Located in unincorporated Clackamas County, the center is home to a large regional mall and many destination shops and services. It is the final southbound stop on the newly opened MAX Green Line. This MAX station is also home to a 750-space park-and-ride facility, which allows for extended transit service to 10 bus lines. The regional center is part of an active urban renewal district and contains abundant surface parking. The center has 5 227 residents, 12059 employees and 2680 dwelling units.

The Lake Oswego Town Center covers the majority of downtown and land along the Willamette River waterfront. The town center is serviced by three separate bus lines that connect to Portland and eastern Washington County. Highway 43, an ODOT facility, serves the center. The center has 2194 residents, 2054 employees and 1429 dwelling units.

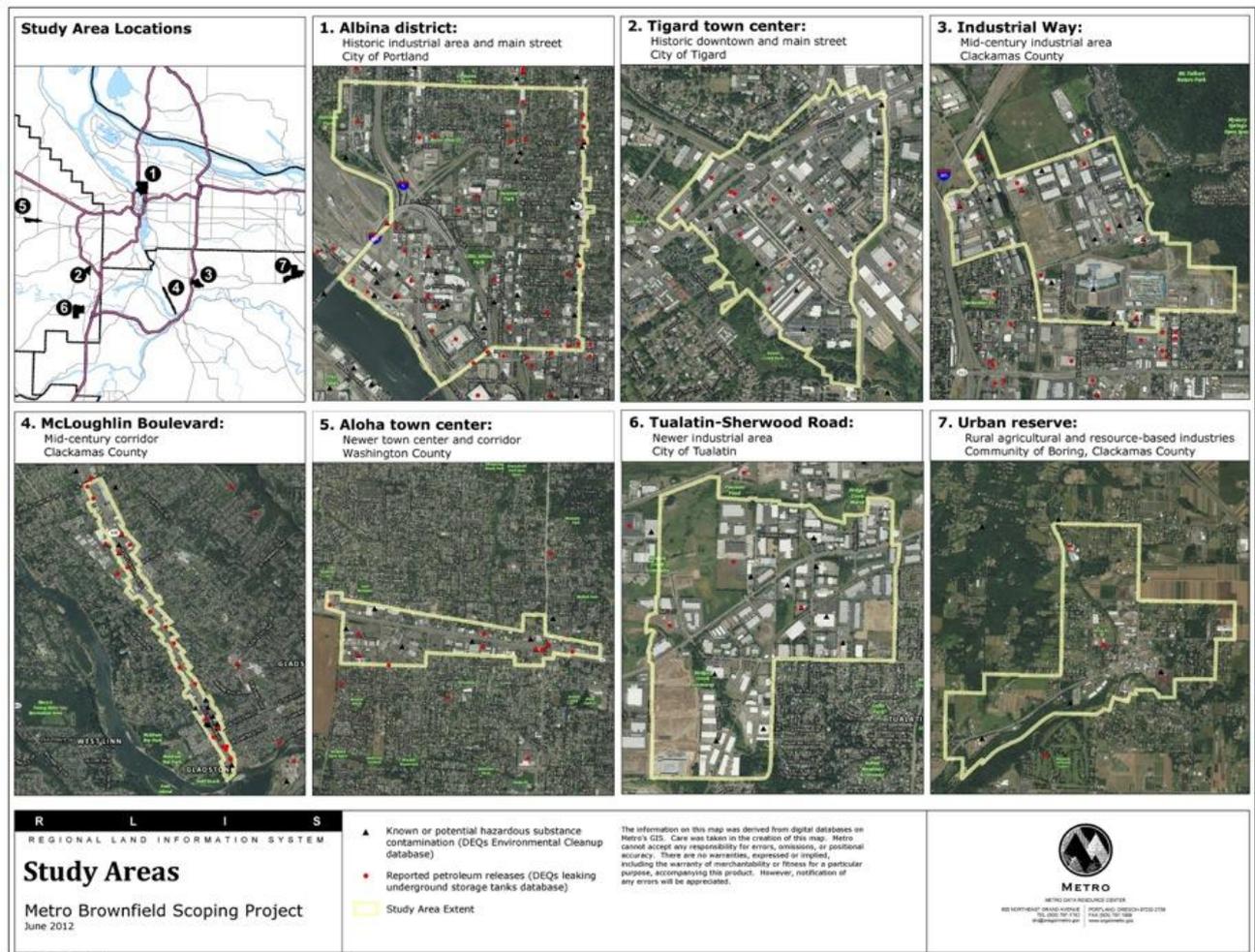
**Restructuring brownfields:** brownfield properties are typically located in older neighborhoods with a longer history of industrial and commercial uses. It is interesting to note that the reported sites in the DEQ (Oregon Department of Environmental Quality) database tend to be concentrated in the older parts of the metropolitan area, near the Willamette River and Columbia Slough. Many of the candidate sites that are suspected brownfields are located in the more recently developed areas of the metropolitan region, typically along transportation corridors and in industrial and agricultural hubs. Approximately 50 percent of the DEQ sites are in, or within 1000 feet of, sensitive environmental areas, such as wetlands and streams, as designated by Title 3 and Title 13 of the region's Urban Growth Management Functional Plan. Over 200 brownfields are within a quarter mile of a community garden, and 50 are within 200 meters

#### **Brownfield typologies:**

- type 1: **small commercial sites.** Common historical uses were gas stations, repair shops, and dry cleaners, characterized by small parcel size and located along highways and arterials, and in commercial centers, including main streets and small

downtowns. These properties are commonly redeveloped for commercial, office, multifamily, and mixed uses. The small size of these sites can be a challenge to redevelopment, because they often cannot generate enough value to balance remediation costs. this typology represents approximately 80 percent of the number of brownfield properties in the metro region, but only 20 percent of the acreage. These types of sites are typically located in centers and corridors, and scattered in employment areas.

- type 2 **industrial conversion sites:** these properties range in size and are historically found in areas that have transitioned from industrial to office, retail, and mixed-use centers. Change of zoning and location often drives redevelopment of these properties. Sites in highly attractive, high-density areas, such as the pearl district, often are redeveloped by the private sector.
- type 3 **ongoing industrial:** these properties are located in areas with an industrial past that continues today, particularly through regulatory controls such as metro's title 4 requirements and local employment sanctuary overlays. The types of historical uses vary, but they share constraints on land value and future use that can be a challenge to redevelopment opportunities. These properties are typically large; while they represent only approximately 14 percent of the number of brownfield parcels, they encompass nearly 60 percent of the acreage. Difficult intervention due to the sensitive issue of job numbers.
- type 4 **rural industry sites.** These properties are associated with rural natural resource extraction industries and agriculture. They are typically large and located on the edge of the UGB, especially within urban and rural reserves. Structural economic changes can make these properties difficult to redevelop. There are relatively few of these types of brownfields in the Metro region and its urban reserves, but they individually can occupy large areas and can have significant regional impacts. Environmental issues at regional scale



**Restructuring brownfields a prioritization in public investment.** Brownfields are also highly likely to be located in a community designated by Metro's Equity Composite (conducted originally for the Regional Flexible Funding Allocation) as underserved, an analysis that highlights areas that simultaneously have a high underserved population (nonwhites, elderly, low-income, non-English speaking, youth), a low density of essential services (food, essential retail, health, civic, financial/legal), and low proximity to non-auto transportation. 19% of all DEQ sites are in underserved communities, but these properties represent a much smaller proportion of all land in the region. When normalizing by acreage, every brownfield in a non-underserved area represents 1.7 brownfields in an underserved community. Sixty percent of the brownfields in underserved communities are also located in the region's designated centers and corridors.

**Restructuring brownfields: policies and tools** include creating tax incentives (all mean statutory change and legislative action: long term) tax credit for remediation; tax abatement (extend duration of tax abatement in infill and remediation areas); control tax assessment valuation rules in time (discourage mothballing); tax increment

financing in brownfields; building capacity (all legislative, mid-long run); public land bank; public clean up tax; integrated planning; community based complementary actions, guidebooks (non effective); regulatory framework (short term, municipality, effectiveness); deregulation; interagency funding coordinated by municipality to promote brownfield restructuring; transfer rights and duties (not innovative, dangerous); GIS, database (non effective); guide books (non – effective.

There are still some differences regard the European context: preservation of natural land by specific regulation, limiting urban growth and lack of attention to individual urban structures. Engaging people is a key element.

**Conclusions and lessons are: strategic floor area increase, typological organisation (from single to multifamily units), land readjustment (new uses), stakeholder diversification (no big blocks), land extension (limiting extension till all land is in use), metropolitan scale, Spatial ... densification. Tax treatment can also be useful.**

## 3.2 Interventions on “reuse” of urban areas: management, partnerships, funding, functions: Public Private Partnerships and governance models in reusing European Cities

### 3.2.1 The Stuttgart “Inner-development vs external development strategy” and the “Sustainable management of Building areas” programme

*Vittorio Torbianelli, USEAct lead expert*

The municipality of Stuttgart launched a strategy of “Inner Entwicklung” (**Inner development**) in 2001: full exploitation of the building potential of public and private areas deemed “suitable for building” in the urban plan, and as such avoiding further urban expansion.

**National and «Regional» targets:** German federal government : reducing land consumption for new settlement and transport-related areas from about 115 hectares in the year 2002 to 30 hectares per day by 2020”; Regional government of Baden-Württemberg : “zero growth” as early as 2016, setting specific goals to tackle a worrying trend in land use.

**Working with an «urban model».** The general reference framework for the containment policy is the Stuttgarter Innenentwicklungsmodell” (SIM). It defines the needs and the general qualitative and “social” goals of the city in terms of housing (and its qualitative and “social” characteristics), land uses with related policies of urban fees and reinvestment. It defines target of containment of urban expansion through densification, “mixed use”, valorisation of the land (including changes of urban uses where appropriate), and reduction of infrastructure.

The main target of the “Nachhaltiges Bauflächenmanagement”, NBS “**Sustainable management of building areas**”, programme is the the development of “building potential” in areas that are already categorized as “suitable for building” is the key goal of the programme. The target areas of the NBS programme are two types of zones with an unexpressed building potential: single areas greater than 2000 sq.m, categorized in the “Urban Uses Scheme” as “suitable for building”, and Interstitial spaces in building areas. In 2011, the building areas not yet developed amounted to only 6% of the total potential of development in the urban areas categorized as suitable for building.

The NBS programme is integrated with other different projects developed by the Municipality of Stuttgart, for example the Cobraman project, a European-funded project dealing with the revitalisation of brownfield sites, and “Klima” certification, which assesses the microclimate effects of the building, with a “certification” programme of the microclimate of new buildings. It involves around 80 people in the Municipality of Stuttgart, and is based on a strong collaboration between the municipality departments (urban planning, economic development, property, and environmental protection). It is implemented through the creation of a working group, with its own administration, headed by the mayor, which meets every three months. The three main components of the programme are: data acquisition and development of an up-to-date catalogue containing all existing potential developing areas, data management, and strategies and concepts to activate, in particular, privately owned areas for potential development.

**Operational Targets** of the Working Group are the development of a “data platform” of the areas with exploitable building potential, the implementation of PR and communication, the management of development processes of the sites, and the exchange of information on procedures between the offices, in order to facilitate processes.

The main **database** is dedicated to areas (public and private) greater than 2000 sq.m with exploitable construction potential. The database is updated continuously. In 2011, the database reported around 350 sites totalling 500 ha. with access to the «public» section (60% of the areas) of the interactive tool.

Since 2007, the NBS has been integrated in the **Geographic Information System** of the City dedicated to polluted sites (ISAS). ISAS is the municipal information system of contaminated sites of Stuttgart. In fact, the database includes areas owned by the city of Stuttgart (17% of the total), by private individuals, by other public institutions and “mixed” (the city of Stuttgart and private).

**Appraising potentials and feasibility:** the areas are “categorized” according to macro-categories: unused areas, underused areas, interstitial zones, areas with potential for changes in current urban use, and areas for “new buildings” (not yet developed).

**Evaluating the time-horizon:** the NBS management programme also carries out, for every

area, an assessment of the degree of “readiness” of the areas for possible development interventions. The degrees of potential temporal development are three: short term (possibly within three years), medium term (possibly within six years), and long term (possibly after six years).

**Risk factors:** the degree of availability takes into account factors such as: probable delays in procedures to be complied with (e.g. characterisation areas for pollutants), presence of hazardous waste and the need for recovery, ongoing requests for different uses of construction, difficulty in identifying owners, and current owners not willing to collaborate.

In 2011, the “short term” developable areas accounted for 22% of the total and the “medium” totalled 38%.

«**In-between areas**»: there is another separate information system, for the “interstitial” spaces between buildings in built-up areas. 85% of these areas are owned by the municipality (including road infrastructure). Between 1999 and 2013, around 920 of these spaces have been recovered (providing 5260 residential units in total). The total potential is estimated at about 10 000 housing units. The NBS programme has also in the case of these interstitial areas, supported the owners of private areas through “mediation” and advice to facilitate the access to funds and participation.

**Integration with the urban policy:** the programme is closely integrated with policy decisions: based on available data and “feasibility” assessments provided by the programme, the municipality selects the areas for priority focus for the projects. The municipality has highlighted some high priority “pilot projects”, with important social and environmental effects, coordinated amongst them. Alongside the pilot projects, different smaller projects have also been developed.

**Small incentives to enhance trust...** The municipality plays an important role also in the management of recovery processes: it offers private areas support and advice for pollution analysis and recovery. A special fund was also set up for this purpose, an overall modest figure (40 000 Euros per year) to encourage analysis by the owners in the areas. The fund, despite its almost symbolic scale, has been successful as an “attention stimulator” and as a vehicle for the objectives of the project.

In conclusions... lessons to be learnt: strong integration with national and regional objectives of landtake reduction; integrated approach, based on the knowledge and management of data related to areas with unexpressed potential builders via information platforms integrated with the GIS; very strong frameworks of political support and management, based on the involvement of top level (mayor in the working group); interdisciplinary integration of the municipal offices and external consultants where necessary; strong orientation towards public communication, the visualisation of area potential (internet platform), involvement of stakeholders and support for the collection and use of funds; high capacity for integration of different projects and funds.

## Discussion

Questions for the partners: Which partners do manage similar tools or could imagine doing it? What the main problems/constraints?

