

2024

Youth
Cohort
Report



Urban Growth Boundary.

**NEXT
UP**



Our Mission

Next Up amplifies the **voice and leadership of diverse young people** to achieve a more just and equitable Oregon.

The impact of our work in Oregon

We create opportunities for young people ages 13–35, centering Black, Indigenous, youth of color and intersectional youth, to build their individual and collective power. Since 2002, our work has scaffolded a wave of young people who are leading the charge to dismantle oppressive systems and institutions so that our communities can thrive.

Impact Snapshot

1,000+

alumni of our youth leadership cohorts

7

unique leadership and internship programs

40%

Oregon youth voter turnout in 2022, compared to 27% nationwide



Background

Over the course of 2023 and 2024, Next Up and Metro engaged 15 young people in a decision-making process around expanding the urban growth boundary (UGB). Since youth are one of the groups most impacted by long-range planning decisions this was an opportunity to incorporate their unique perspectives, reflections, and recommendations for the UGB.

Program Goals

Educating

Educate youth leaders through a variety of topics included in the Urban Growth Management decision-making process.

Consulting

Incorporate youth voices and lived experiences in long-range planning decisions.

Building

Build ongoing relationships with participants, supporting leadership opportunities, and meaningful connections with Metro.

Who Took Part

15



Participants

8



Meetings Held

16



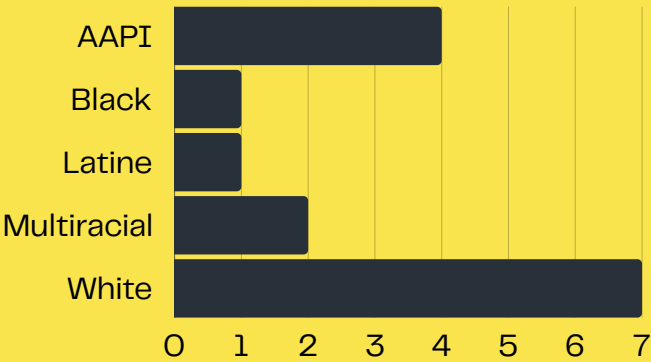
Median Age

18

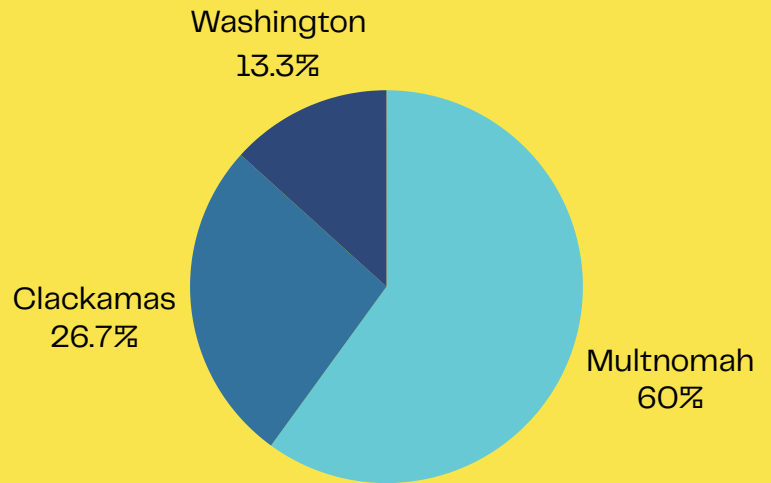


Average Age

Race and Ethnicity



County



Recruitment

To ensure that the cohort reflected the communities within Metro’s constituency we reached out to our connections in Multnomah, Washington, and Clackamas County. Over the last three years, Next Up has been a part of Metro’s Civic Engagement grant which allowed us to deepen our youth civic engagement in Clackamas County. Recruiting involved reaching out to the very engaged members from previous Next Up action groups to ask them to join. That included board members, past cohort members, past volunteers, and community members. In total, we had 27 applicants for the 15-person cohort. Our youth cohort is made up of young people from 7 cities across the Metro Region including Beaverton, Tigard, Gladstone, Gresham, Milwaukie and West Linn.

Meeting Summaries

04

September 19, 2023

Background on Metro, urban growth management, urban growth report requirements, and decision making structure

November 2, 2023

Review group goals, statewide planning history, role and purpose of zoning, group concept plans for Sherwood West

December 5, 2023

Guest speaker Glen with Metro, concept planning process and complexities, and boundary expansion requirements.

February 12, 2024

Guest speakers Andrea and Valeria with Metro, the housing crisis overview, Metro's role in regional housing funding and production, and begin to establish group values and priorities.

April 4, 2024

Guest speakers Eric and Joy with City of Sherwood, revisit and compare cohort concept plans with the Sherwood West concept plan, and learn about Sherwood's decision making process.

May 7, 2024

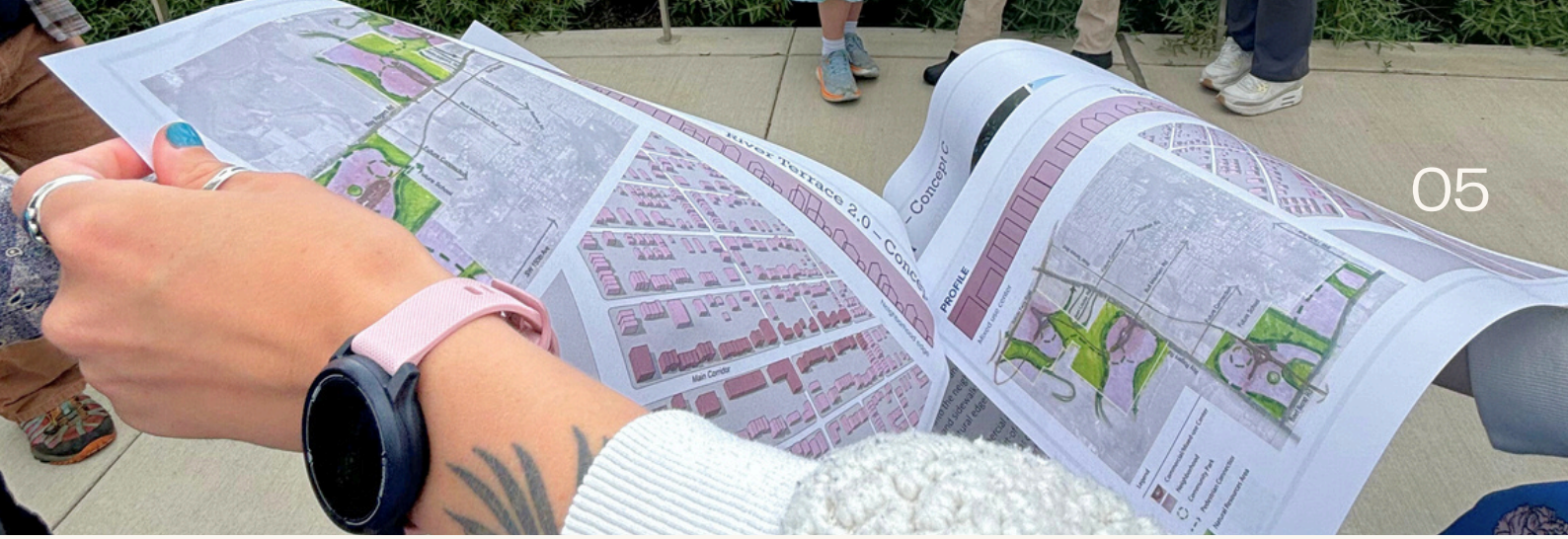
Guest speakers Eryn and Ted with Metro, overview of urban growth report analyses, introduction to the COO recommendation and conditions of approval, group activity about capacity and demand

June 15, 2024

Group field trip to Tigard to learn about the River Terrace development from Senior Planner Schuyler Warren. The group learned about the most recent expansion to the UGB and the process from concept plan to implementation.

July 18, 2024

Reviewed key takeaways of the UGB report, discussed Sherwood expansion proposal, provided ideas for Metro Council, discussed opportunities for testimony, and completed the feedback survey.



FIELD TRIP

Tigard River Expansion

To better understand the proposal and possible implementation of the Sherwood West Proposal, the youth cohort went out to visit the Tigard River Expansion.

During the trip they met with Tigard Senior Planner Schuyler Warren to learn about the Tigard River Terrace UGB expansion. They also heard about the expansion proposal process and the factors involved in creating a concept plan. Finally, the group saw current development in action and visited the edge of the Urban Growth Boundary to see the difference between urban and rural reserves. Topics explored during the field trip prompted the group to reflect on what they would like to see in the Sherwood West expansion area, based on hearing and seeing some of the outcomes of a past expansion area.

Cohort Questions

Why are commercial spaces not placed in neighborhoods but on major streets?

How do we encourage walkable neighborhood development (with access to schools, shops, and parks) within all neighborhoods of Sherwood West?

How are critical nature areas (ex. wildlife reserves) protected during a UGB expansion?

What transportation systems will be put in place in Sherwood West and what type of topographical structures are already in place that would help with stormwater systems?

Participant Reflections

After visiting the Tigard River Expansion, cohort members shared their reflections with us.

"There is a big lack in housing accessibility [in the Tigard River Expansion]. Everything is expensive [and] definitely contributes to the wealth divide and separation. There were multiple spots with a lot of beautiful nature. Seeing that highlighted the importance of preserving and incorporating nature into the expansion."

"Many of the challenges facing communities and democracies today stem from planning decisions; in expansion that does not address limited economic diversity, neighborhoods become economically stratified, which is a detriment to cities. This is a new idea that I reflected on today, and I think it is something Sherwood should consider and plan around before expanding."

"One value I'm really glad is represented is the need for higher density middle housing to support more affordable housing and a more diverse city population. I wish that they considered planting more native plants and trees in the area they are expanding into."





Youth Driven Recommendations

The UGB Youth Cohort considered the questions, “What should Metro Council consider when making a decision about the urban growth boundary?” and “What are the top values that should guide the UGB process?” to make their recommendations. They created four themes to explore these questions further:

- 01 /** Equity and Meaningful Community Engagement
- 02 /** Livability and Access
- 03 /** Sustainability, Environmental Preservation, and Climate Justice
- 04 /** Housing Affordability

Recommendations for Equity and Meaningful Community Engagement

08



01

Present perspectives that are not always heard

02

Understand how areas surrounding the proposed expansion and people living there may be affected

03

Center racial equity when considering new housing and jobs

04

Local participation and education

05

Listen to young people – they know more about youth life, priorities, and their challenges

06

Support low income and BIPOC communities

Reflections on Equity and Meaningful Community Engagement

09



As the youth cohort learned about the urban growth management decision, a primary theme in their feedback was ensuring that the process centered equity and meaningful community engagement. Many participants wanted the Metro Council to make sure that they were hearing a broad variety of perspectives, especially those that are not always heard in this process.

Sherwood West

When learning about the Sherwood West proposal the cohort considered how people living in surrounding areas may be affected. They emphasized that the plan must focus on racial equity impacts when discussing access to future homes and job opportunities. Additionally, the cohort emphasized the importance of local participation and education in community engagement processes. They shared that special focus should be given to young people when looking for feedback, as they are the generation that will be most impacted in the future by plans that are made today.

Recommendations for Livability and Access

10



01

Prioritize walkability, public transit access, jobs with livable wages, and community spaces by including coffee shops, grocery stores, mixed use development inside expansion areas to minimize car dependency

02

Livability and access in UGB development must include coffee shops, grocery stores, mixed use development inside expansion areas to minimize car dependency, easy connections to nutritious foods, and amenities and diverse multiuse community spaces

03

Planning should encourage residents to walk, not solely rely on driving

04

Residential development should have pockets of commercial so that people can meet their needs close to home without driving

05

Plan for accessibility for the disabled community

Reflections on Livability and Access



Walkable Communities

Another recurring theme throughout the youth cohort meetings was the importance of building communities with access to opportunities and a variety of community spaces, especially for access that was not car-dependent. New neighborhoods should include spaces for everyone and people should be able to meet their needs without having to rely on a car. Cohort participants emphasized

priorities of walkability, public transit access, and accessibility in connections through new neighborhoods. Accessibility also means opportunity – jobs with livable wages, and opportunity to meet needs like buying nutritious foods and gathering with other community members.

Recommendations for Sustainability, Environmental Preservation, and Climate Justice

12

01

Fight climate change

02

Incentivize developments that provide for housing, food, and water needs while encouraging biodiversity

03

Healthy and equitable tree canopy

04

Avoid the creation of urban heat islands

Recommendations for Sustainability, Environmental Preservation, and Climate Justice



A Top Priority for Metro

As the cohort discussed planning for new homes and jobs in the region, members felt that sustainability, environmental preservation, and climate justice must be a top priority for Metro Council. The group wanted to see natural resource preservation in any proposed expansion area and cautioned against creating urban heat islands. Some members of the group spoke of the importance of a healthy tree

canopy and planting native species that are more resilient to the changing climate. Overall, the cohort emphasized that Metro should strike a balance between new housing developments and jobs while protecting the natural environment and biodiversity.

Recommendations for Housing Sustainability

14

01

Housing for All



02

Support for high density and mid density housing in order to provide more options for people, while making the most sustainable use of the land

03

Question: What is the developer's mission when it comes to building homes?

04

Question: Will the expansion help with the housing crisis?

Reflections on Housing Affordability

15



A Guiding Principle

The youth cohort learned about the statewide housing crisis and the role that local and regional government played. After hearing about how our government addresses housing needs, they strongly emphasized that housing affordability must be a priority guiding the UGB process. Cohort members wanted to see plans that included housing options that would work for many different people –

including options for different housing types and price points. The expansion plan must be demonstrably proven to address the housing crisis, and if there is any expansion, it should be used to provide the most affordable housing options to the most amount of people.

Final Recommendations for the Urban Growth Boundary

16

To reach consensus on final recommendations the cohort evaluated categories based on a scale from “nice to have” to “must have.” Each member picked their top 3 categories and provided additional details. What emerged as the top 4 categories were: affordable housing, equitable access, car-free transportation options, and green infrastructure.

Car Free Transportation

- Accessible, walkable infrastructure
- Safe crossings
- Keeping disability community in mind – build it right the first time
- Bus access as development expands – needed to connect commercial and residential areas – with consistent service
- Transit-supportive densities

Equitable Access to Jobs, Neighborhood Amenities, Recreation, and Housing

Must be able to access businesses and community spaces near homes

Green Infrastructure

Such as street trees, stormwater facilities, and native plants to prevent urban heat islands

- Durable infrastructure – long term cost savings
- Relationship building with Indigenous communities
- Wildlife crossings – awareness of disruption to nature
- Steward and preserve natural resources and features to be used as green infrastructure (rather than artificially replaced)
- Natural areas are common spaces and community gathering places

Affordable Housing

- Housing to match available jobs
 - Public money investment
 - Access to transit
-

Closing Reflections



A robust conversation about potential conditions of approval prompted participants to think about what topic areas mattered most to them and provide additional detail about how they would like to see the conditions implemented. Some of these topics may be folded into the COO recommendation and topic areas with more specific details may be more suited for discussion during the comprehensive planning process.

"Protecting people, the planet, and our shared ecosystems is essential to equitable futures. [Regional Planning] makes sure there is enough housing without messing up the environment...and encourages denser development."

Participant



Closing Reflections

The following reflections were collected in July 2024 through a final feedback survey about participants experiences throughout the cohort.



Reflection on Group Goals

“I am familiar with Urban Studies, Urban Planning, Economics, Government, and Policy... but I had no idea what the process of expanding (or halting the expansion of) the Urban Growth Boundary.”

“I came wanting to better understand the urban growth boundary decision process and now I do.”

“I'm happy to have shared my perspective and experiences with Sherwood planners, Metro, and other important voices in the Sherwood West expansion.”

“What surprised me about this process was how difficult it was to navigate affordable housing and equity in the planning process. I knew that there were a lot of behind the scenes politics happening that makes it difficult but I didn't realize that more than politics, its also the past history of having lots of single family homes taking up a bunch of space and the need to consider areas for jobs and parks and libraries that go around housing. Also, it seemed unrealistic to go high density housing everywhere and having developers agree to high density very low density. It also surprised me about how understandable the process was... I thought I would get completely lost because other older youth in the group seemed to have a background in environment and regional planning, so it was nice to be able to absorb the content and participate with the group.”

“I like how the UGB process works. I hope our voices actually have the power to influence the final outcome of the Sherwood West expansion.”



Reflections on Cohort Logistics

Overall, participants appreciated how the meetings were planned, materials provided, and pacing of the cohort. Specifically, they enjoyed the field trips, presentations, and guest speakers who gave additional insight into the different aspects of urban planning. Some suggestions for the future included a summarized set of notes at the end of meetings, more interactive opportunities during the meetings, and less time between each meeting. A majority of participants remarked that the length of the cohort was ideal, with one participant sharing that it, “allows [the cohort] to connect and have more time to absorb the information.” Those that gave feedback unanimously shared that they are walking away from this experience learning or achieving what they hoped when they first joined.

Percent of Participants Who Shared We Accomplished or Exceeded the Goal

87%

Understanding Metro’s role in regional governance



87%

Understanding regional land use history and urban growth management



100%

Understanding the analyses within the urban growth report



75%

Established group values regarding regional growth



"Regional governance enables collaboration... between cities to solve today's pressing issues, whilst building capacity to reimagine tomorrow together."

Participant

Next Steps

All participants shared an interest in providing either written or in-person testimony to the decision-making bodies at upcoming public hearings.

Giving Public Testimony

Public hearing on an ordinance: The public can offer testimony before any legislative action by the council. You can join council meetings in person on Thursdays at the Metro Regional Center at 10:30 AM, or join online via Zoom.

Public hearing on a resolution: Council resolutions are not required to have public hearings, but public testimony may be accepted at the discretion of the council president.

General meeting: Every council meeting includes an agenda item called "public communications" where you can provide testimony on topics that are not on the agenda.

How to Submit Testimony: You may submit testimony to Metro Council online at any time. To be included in the record for a public hearing or meeting, testimony must be received before the start of the meeting. Written testimony received by noon on the day of a meeting will be shared with the Metro Council in advance.

Timeline for Decision Making

July 9, 2024: Public comment period on the draft UGR begins

July 18, 2024: Final youth cohort meeting

August 22, 2024: Public comment survey on draft UGR closes

August 26, 2024: Release COO recommendation

September 5, 2024: Council work session on COO recommendations and public comment themes; full public comment summary provided at Council meeting

***September 11, 2024:** MPAC discussion of COO recommendation and recommendations to Council; request any final MTAC advice

***September 25, 2024:** MPAC recommendation to Council

***September 26, 2024:** Council holds public hearing on COO recommendations

October 1, 2024: Council provides direction to staff at work session

November 21, 2024: Council first reading of ordinance; public hearing

December 5, 2024: Council second reading of ordinance; decision

* Opportunity to provide public testimony (in-person, virtual, or written) at this meeting

Appendix Notes from UGB Cohort

Notes from Meeting #4 (2/12/24)

“What should Metro Council consider when making a decision about the urban growth boundary?”

- Presenting perspectives that are not always heard (youth, BIPOC, etc) and center issues such as racism, climate change, houselessness and their interaction with housing
 - Affordable housing and public transit access
 - Has potential upzoning been considered in measuring developable lands?
 - Fighting climate change
 - Housing everyone
 - Equity and how surrounding areas may be affected
 - Affordable housing should be considered and mapped
 - Community spaces
 - High density and mid-density housing
 - Racial equity when it comes to housing and work/jobs
 - Jobs in the area that can provide livable wages
 - Who are the developers/their mission when it comes to building homes
 - Hearing what everyone says and mostly gathering what everyone had mostly think around
 - Metro Council – we as a youth cohort know more on the youth life, priorities, and how schools takes effect on distance to school, library, home, etc
 - Local participation and education
 - How much does Metro collaborate with other national metro areas and local communities to build more security and solidarity?
 - How can Metro incentivize co-op developments that provide for housing, food, and water needs while encouraging biodiversity?
 - A priority I'm hearing and seeing the importance is racial equality – I think that's always important to keep at the forefront and consider as the UGB/housing develops
 - Will this expansion help with the housing crisis?
-

Appendix Notes from UGB Cohort

Notes from Meeting #5 (4/4/24)

- Community spaces! They benefit the community – so of course that's super important. But with that, I think that mixed use spaces sprinkled throughout all areas is good, maybe ensure that's around regular neighborhoods
 - I don't see the current plan building enough affordable housing types
 - How to promote diversity among the people that move there (racial and ethnic diversity)
 - I really hope they find a way to include coffee shops, grocery stores, and mixed use development inside low density zones
 - Requiring medium density
 - Connections to nutritious foods and amenities/community spaces
 - Planning should encourage residents to walk, not drive
 - Residential (especially low density) should have pockets of commercial so that people can meet their needs close to home without driving (15 minute cities)
 - Healthy and equitable tree canopy
 - Accessibility and disability community
 - Reducing new parking infrastructure
 - Not creating urban heat islands
 - Supporting low income and BIPOC communities
 - Walkable, livable spaces for growing communities
 - Housing for new people moving into Sherwood in coming decades and more employment
-

Appendix Notes from UGB Cohort

Notes from Meeting #6 (5/7/24)

The top values that should guide the UGB process are:

- Affordability
- Walkability
- Building communities
- Equity
- Sustainability
- Future resilience
- Consciousness of environmental impact
- Needs of communities
- Awareness of context and complexity
- Racial and climate equity
- Environmental and economic sustainability
- Community engagement and PAR across a wide variety of interests
- Equity, affordability, environmental preservation, increasing density
- Equity, climate justice, affordable housing

Regional planning is important to me because:

- Collaboration and mutual trust is important to reimagine tomorrow together!
 - Regional governance enables collaboration and mutual aid between cities to solve today's pressing issues, whilst building capacity to reimagine tomorrow together
 - Protecting people, the planet, and our shared ecosystems is essential to equitable futures
 - It directly impacts the health and potential of communities and environments today and into the future
 - Because it addresses important issues through large (?) engagement. Through regional planning cities needs are better addresses and understood
 - Because it makes sure there is enough housing without messing up the environment too bad and encourages denser development
 - Because I want there to be sustainable and affordable housing options for upcoming generations
 - Because I want everyone to live in a walkable community
-

Appendix

Notes from UGB Cohort

Notes from Field Trip Meeting #7 Tigard River Terrace Expansion (6/15/24)

What's one exciting thing you've seen or learned about the Tigard River Terrace Expansion?

- Seeing a hawk and a deer at the intersection of SW Beef Bend and SW 150th at the corner of River Terrace 2.0 and Kingston Terrace, it was exciting to see an example of the boundary between urban and rural. Standing between the urban growth boundary – half inside and half outside – was also an interesting experience of what the UGB actually means on this field trip. From these experiences, I thought more about trees, wildlife, environment, and the ways our interests coexist.
- Getting to know and understand more about the history is really fascinating. But the environment is what really caught me and the know the problem that UGB is trying to solve.
- River Terrace 1.0 is very expensive, this is one of the many reasons River Terrace 2.0 is appearing to solve many issues such as economic difference.
- There were multiple spots with a lot of beautiful nature. That highlighted the

- importance of preserving and incorporating nature into the expansion
- There is ambition to build high-density, transit-rich neighborhoods!
- Seeing plants and wildlife flourishing still despite development hearing about Tigard's history like why Bull Mountain isn't a part of the city and the land swap.

What's one value represented in the Tigard expansion? What's missing?

- Represented: commitment to more housing
 - Missing: (to an extent) collaboration and coexistence of multiple priorities
 - The friendly environment really stands out to me and is really represented. But I feel like the economic status differential is something that is missing like the Art Rutkin elementary is in the middle of 1.0 and 2.0 River Terrace, but Tigard has a long history, like normal housing, the higher elevation, usually have more expensive houses. So Tigard is missing some of the differences, jobs, etc.
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- There's a big lack in housing accessibility here, everything is expensive, definitely contributes to the wealth divide/separation. But they seem to be good on some nature incorporation (better than a lot of other areas), that storm draining spot was a whole habitat!
 - Access to green space is present.
 - Affordability and equitability is missing
 - One value I'm really glad is represented is the need for higher density middle housing to support more affordable housing and a more diverse city population. I wish that they considered planting more native plants and trees in the areas they are expanding into. I understand that plants from other areas look nicer and more attractive but I think it's important to give priority and space to plants that are supposed to be there and have been in Oregon.

What's one thing you learned today that connects to the conversations we've been having around the Sherwood Expansion?

- Many of the challenges facing communities and democracies today stem from planning decisions; in the expansions that do not address limited economic diversity, neighborhoods become economically stratified, which

- is very detrimental to cities. This is a new idea that I reflected on today, and I think it is something Sherwood should consider and plan around expanding.
- Mainly how to efficiently use the boundaries, housing displacements, and how to manage the place is really similar to Sherwood expansion.
- Another connection that I've made is the transits that can be really important to save fuel, keep green transportation is pretty key.
- The importance of middle house. [Schuyler Warren] talked about Tigard's push for it, and variety in housing types is something we've talked a lot about and wanted.
- I've seen varying housing types being built and planned
- Just how important having water drainage systems are to having a successful expansion and development. I also have learned more about how nuanced housing decisions are during expansions and how we have to consider both developer perspectives and regional need.

What are questions you have?

- How similar or different will Sherwood's expansion ultimately be compared to Tigard's? What is similar or different about their communities?
-

-
- How does adding more housing affect its affordability and will it be enough to make communities more livable?
 - Why are most decisions centered around the margins? Just in general, are there ways to rethink or reconsider ways existing communities are planned and structured to address some of the issues the UGB expansion is trying to address? (like the coordination between them, especially after learning about the long lead time with new developments)
 - I'm curious generally about the developer perspective and priorities. What are the main clashes?
 - I wonder more about the plants, [Schuyler Warren] talked about bringing in non-native plants, but only really highlighted the aesthetic pros. Does that pose a threat to native plants thought? What is the potential harm?
 - Why are commercial spaces not placed in neighborhoods but on major streets?
 - How do we encourage walkable neighborhood development (with access to schools, shops, and parks) within all neighborhoods of Sherwood West?
 - How are critical natural areas (ex. wildlife reserves) protected during a UGB expansion?
 - What type of natural wetlands and other topographical structures are already in place that would help with stormwater systems? Is it similar to Tigard's situation?
 - What transportation systems will be put in place in Sherwood West?
 - How long do you think it will be before development actually starts happening in Sherwood West?
-

WIFI: NEXTUP

PASSWORD:

our future our fight

↑
LOWERCASE + ONE WORD!

* affordable housing
and public transit access

* Equity and how
surrounding areas
may be impacted

* racial equity
when accessing
housing + jobs

* Who is doing
the development?
What is their mission?

* housing everyone

* Collaboration
with local
communities

* local participation
and education

* housing, food, water
needs & biodiversity

* community
spaces

* centering
perspectives that
are not always heard

* jobs with
livable wages

* fighting climate
change

* Will the expansion
help with the housing
crisis?

What are the values and priorities Metro Council should consider when making their decision about the urban growth boundary?