

Frequently Asked Questions: Technical Staff

How was the Urban Reserves Study Area determined?

The Urban Reserves Study Area was developed consistent with state guidelines. In general, it includes all land within at least a one-mile radius of the urban growth boundary, with a few notable exceptions: the study area ends at Interstate 5 and at the McKenzie River, and extends up to 1.5 miles where there are contiguous Priority 1 Exception Areas/Non-Resource Land that go beyond the one-mile radius. The study area also extends beyond 1.5 miles where the Metro Plan Boundary or contiguous public lands are present. In November 2019, the study area was expanded to include additional land when suitability analysis results showed there was not enough developable land identified in the study area for a 30-year Urban Reserve option. Staff evaluated possible expansion areas and with input from a variety of stakeholder groups identified the area around Fisher Road and Highway 126 as a logical expansion of the study area. See the [project page](#) for more information.

What is the Land Supply Model?

Staff has developed a geospatial model that categorizes all the land in the study area in order to determine which land is developable and to what degree. There are three categories of land that we removed from consideration for future urbanization: Protected, Committed, and fully developed. In total, approximately **15,000 acres** of land in the study area were excluded from further analysis, as they are not considered to have future development potential. Approximately **42 percent** of the study area has development potential – on partially vacant and undeveloped taxlots. An immense amount of detail is included in the model, and more information can be found on the [Urban Reserves project page](#).

What types of land are considered ‘protected’ and ‘committed’?

Protected lands are reserved to protect natural resources or prevent the impact of natural hazards. They include: Lane County Goal 5 riparian corridors; National Wetland Inventory and West Eugene Wetlands; critical habitat for federal and state-listed threatened and endangered species; historic and cultural resources; natural resources plan designations; designated Natural Areas on the Oregon State Register of Natural Heritage Resources; Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) floodway and 100-year flood plain; prohibitively steep slopes (>30 percent); and state-identified high-risk landslide areas (DOGAMI). **Committed lands** include public lands and other lands that have no development potential because they are committed to other uses. They include public parks and open spaces; non-surplus properties owned by schools, utilities, cemeteries, the airport; transportation rights-of-way; and Bonneville Power Administration easements.

If land is categorized as ‘protected,’ does that mean it is protected from future development?

For technical analysis purposes, land identified as ‘protected’ was assumed to have no development capacity and therefore was not included in the amount of land where future homes and jobs could be built. The protected and committed categories are used only for our analysis and do not place or change any additional restrictions on land.

What do the priority categories in the Study Area mean?

To help protect farm and forest land (sometimes called “resource land”), state law has specific requirements about how to prioritize land to study for inclusion in Urban Reserves, similar to the analysis required for urban growth boundary expansion. Eugene’s first consideration for urban reserve analysis must be land that Lane County has identified as **exception areas** (or *non-resource land*). Exception areas are places outside of the urban growth boundary where Lane County allows residential, commercial, or industrial uses. In the Study Area, they mostly include rural residential land, but also include the airport, Lane Community College, and commercial uses north of 30th Ave. Many of these areas are already developed to some degree. If there is not enough exception land to accommodate the amount needed for Urban Reserves, the second consideration is land that Lane County has designated as **marginal lands**. Marginal lands are lands designated for non-resource use due to having marginal value for farm or forest production. The third consideration is **agricultural or forest resource lands**, with higher priority given to land of lower resource value.

Did you consider things like existing road conditions and future traffic in your analysis?

Yes, the Suitability Analysis considered existing conditions, future service provision, and impacts to current residents among many other criteria. Service providers (e.g., water, wastewater, transportation, transit, stormwater, fire and emergency services) provided a high-level assessment of the cost and difficulty of bringing existing infrastructure, like roads, to urban standards. This is detailed in the [Public Facilities and Serviceability report](#). Serviceability was evaluated along with the rest of the suitability criteria in each subarea analysis.

What else was considered in the suitability analysis?

After completing our technical analysis, we developed [suitability criteria](#) to further evaluate our study area. These suitability criteria were based on the state-directed outline of analysis and reflect the City’s [Triple Bottom Line Framework](#). The suitability analysis evaluates all the developable land in the study area by considering it in terms of the following four factors (dictated by state rules), then dismisses land that, on balance, would be unsuitable for Urban Reserves based on this evaluation:

- Efficient accommodation of identified land needs
- Orderly and economic provision of public facilities and services
- Comparative environmental, energy, economic and social consequences
- Compatibility of the proposed urban uses with nearby agricultural and forest activities occurring on farm and forest land outside the UGB