

Oregon Statewide Planning Goal 14 Dictates How Cities Expand Urban Growth Boundaries

If Springfield cannot accommodate the 20 year need for growth within the existing UGB, a UGB expansion will be required. State law requires Springfield to evaluate land around the existing UGB to select locations to add land to satisfy the unmet need. The city makes findings on each potential parcel or group of parcels under the four Boundary Location Factors in Goal 14. This section of Goal 14 states: "The location of the urban growth boundary and changes to the boundary shall be determined by evaluating alternative boundary locations consistent with ORS 197.298 and with consideration of the following factors:

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

ORS 197.298 establishes the following priorities for including lands in the UGB:

1. First priority is land that is designated urban reserve land (Springfield currently has no urban reserves, so this would not apply to Springfield's current UGB analysis);
2. Second priority is land adjacent to an urban growth boundary that is identified as an exception area or non-resource land. Second priority may include resource land that is completely surrounded by exception areas unless such resource land is high-value farmland;
3. Third priority is land designated as marginal land pursuant to ORS 197.247; and
4. Last priority is land designated in an acknowledged comprehensive plan for agriculture or forestry, or both. Higher priority shall be given to land of lower capability as measured by the capability classification system (for farm lands) or by cubic foot site class (for forest lands), whichever is appropriate for the current use.

If lower priority lands are selected for inclusion in the UGB when higher priority lands are available, the city's findings must justify why higher priority lands were rejected, based on one or more of the criteria in ORS 197.298(3): "1. Specific types of identified land needs cannot be reasonably accommodated on higher priority lands; 2. Future urban services could not reasonably be provided to the higher priority lands due to topographical or other physical constraints; or 3. Maximum efficiency of land uses within a proposed urban growth boundary requires inclusion of lower priority lands in order to include or to provide services to higher priority lands."

Methodology. The general steps taken by the City, as set out in OAR 660-024-0060, include applying the statutory priorities to available parcels, starting with the highest priority that applies to Springfield.

1. First, Springfield is required to determine which parcels are the highest priority lands, which includes: exception areas most likely currently zoned rural residential; designated urban reserves; and/or designated marginal lands. Springfield must determine which of these parcels satisfy the identified land need by analyzing each parcel according to specific characteristics regarding the suitability of the parcel for the intended use (*i.e.*, residential, commercial or industrial), if such specific characteristics were identified in the need process. If the resulting list of suitable highest priority parcels provides more land than needed; Springfield must apply the four Boundary Location Factors in Goal 14 to each such parcel. (Note that Springfield does not need to make a finding that a proposed expansion area satisfies each individual location factor better than all other alternatives. Rather, the considerations embodied in the factors should be applied to each alternative expansion area, and the area or areas that, on balance, best satisfy the goal should be selected.) This provides a tentative list of suitable parcels in the highest priority to add to the UGB.

2. If the highest priority lands do not accommodate all of the demonstrated land need, then Springfield will examine the next lower priority lands. The steps described for highest priority land would then be applied to each available parcel of lower-capability farm and forest land, providing a tentative list of suitable parcels in this priority to add to the UGB.

3. Only if the previous analyses do not identify sufficient land to meet all of the identified need(s) should the city's analysis consider lower priority lands (*i.e.*, higher capability farm and forest lands), providing a tentative list of suitable parcels in this final priority to add to the UGB. If Springfield determines that one or more of parcels in any priority category should be rejected in favor of land in a lower priority, then findings explaining why must be made according to the criteria in ORS 197.298(3).