

Governor's task force report addresses Oregon's growth

The Associated Press

SALEM, Ore. — Gov. John Kitzhaber asked a blue-ribbon panel to find answers to Oregon's problems about growth. But the task force's report only raises more questions.

When the committee releases its findings in December, the final report won't even say whether

growth is good or bad. The answer: "It depends."

Cities and counties that are struggling to deal with growth issues also won't get much guidance from the panel's findings.

But the report will tell them something they already know: Growth is expensive, and there isn't enough money made available

by the state's tax structure to deal with its impact.

Members of the task force spent Tuesday holed up in the basement of the Capitol and labored through the first draft of their report.

They agreed on much of the background material, which addresses growth trends — but they

couldn't agree whether to recommend any specific steps to deal with growth.

"This isn't what I was expecting," said Jodi Eagan, Jefferson County Commissioner and task force member. People in smaller towns need to know about how to deal with growth and its costs, she said.

Instead, the panelists — who include utility officials, builders, lawyers and government officials — politely disagreed about wide-ranging issues from impact fees to the "real cost" of growth.

The committee also found that some communities want less growth, while others want more.

If you can't get it when you want it, what good is it?

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