The Assessors for Marion and Curry Counties included brief explanations of urban renewal in tax statement inserts to residents in these counties. This information is reproduced below, and may be of help in explaining urban renewal to residents in other areas of the state. Thanks to both Doug Ebner and Jim Kolen for providing us with this information.

MARION COUNTY EXAMPLE (Doug Ebner, County Assessor)

**Q:** I noticed something new on my tax statement this year. What’s Urban Renewal?

**A:** If you live in Salem, Keizer, or Woodburn, you will see a line on your tax statement that refers to Salem, Keizer, or Woodburn Urban Renewal. Urban Renewal allows taxing districts to establish areas within their boundaries that they consider to be blighted. Although it appears to be a new tax, it’s really not. What happens is a portion of the taxes that you pay to districts that overlap an urban renewal district are used to fund the urban renewal projects that are put in place to improve the blighted areas. If you’re within the city of Salem or Keizer boundaries, you have been paying a portion to urban renewal all along, but because of a new law implemented last year, it is now being displayed on the tax statements. The city of Woodburn will be seeing the urban renewal on their tax statements for the first time this year.

If you would like to know more about the urban renewal in your area, please contact:

- **City of Salem Urban Renewal**
  - (503) 588-6173
- **City of Keizer Urban Renewal**
  - (503) 390-3700
- **City of Woodburn Urban Renewal**
  - (503) 982-5222

CURRY COUNTY EXAMPLE  (Jim Kolen, County Assessor)

Property owners within the City of Brookings will also notice changes on their property tax bills due to the formation of the Brookings Urban Renewal Agency (URA). The URA was approved by the City in August of 2002. They will see an amount on their tax bills that they are paying into the URA for the first time this year.

“The Urban Renewal Agency does not increase the property tax of any property owner within the City of Brookings,” said Kolen. “Urban Renewal Agencies receive their money from the amount taxpayers would have paid to other taxing districts and shifting that amount into their agency,” Kolen added.
Kolen explained that the computations and procedures for the funding of a URA are extremely complex. The purpose for this URA is to provide funding to eliminate blight within a defined area of the City of Brookings. The amount of funding the URA will receive can be no more than what the assessed value increase of that area would have produced in property taxes.

The assessed value increase for the Brookings URA was approximately $8.7 million which generates total agency revenue of $92,975.30 for 2003-04. Since the URA gets its money from the other taxing districts that property owners from within the City of Brookings pay into, those other districts will forego the following amounts: Curry County $4,963.09; ESD $3,828.67; SWOCC $6,050.26; 17-C $28,218.74 regular levy, $9,122.64 bond amount; City of Brookings $32,661.89 regular levy, $2,174.31 bond; Port $1,134.42; Cemetery $283.60; Library $3,686.87; Extension District $850.81.

These amounts are calculated as tax rates for the various districts and subtracted from their regular tax rates. The subtracted amounts are then added to form a total tax rate for the Brookings Urban Renewal Agency and used to calculate the tax bill for taxpayers within the City. The tax rate for the URA totals $0.1967 per thousand. Therefore, a property valued at $100,000 will show a Brookings Urban Renewal amount of $19.67 on the tax bill.

“The thing to remember about the Brookings Urban Renewal Agency is that it does not increase taxes,” said Assessor Jim Kolen. “The total tax rate for properties within the city would have been $10.7356 per thousand, without the URA. With the URA the total tax rate is still $10.7356 per thousand, the difference is the $0.1967 rate for the Brookings Urban Renewal Agency reduces the total rate for the other districts to $10.5389 per thousand,” Kolen explained. “The assessor calculates the taxes for the agency, but questions regarding the purpose and goals of the agency should certainly be directed to the City of Brookings,” he concluded.