

## Council work session agenda

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**Tuesday, February 3, 2026**                      **10:30 AM**                      **Metro Regional Center, Council Chamber;**  
**<https://zoom.us/j/615079992> (Webinar ID:**  
**615079992) or 253-205-0468 (toll free)**

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Work session will begin at 10:30 a.m. Agenda item times are estimated and the order of items may be subject to change.

This meeting will be held electronically and in person at the Metro Regional Center Council Chamber. You can join the meeting on your computer or other device by using this link: <https://zoom.us/j/615079992> (Webinar ID: 615 079 992)

**1. Call to Order and Roll Call**

**2. Work Session Topics:**

- 2.1      Washington Park Train Task Force Update and COO Recommendation [26-6419](#)

Presenter(s):      Christine Lewis (she/her), Metro Councilor, District 2  
Olivia Clark (she/her), Portland City Councilor, District 4  
Marissa Madrigal, Chief Operating Officer

Attachments:      [Staff Report](#)  
[Attachment 1 - Recommendation from COO Marissa Madrigal](#)  
[Attachment 2 - Washington Park Train Task Force Report](#)  
[Attachment 3 - Appendices to the Task Force Report](#)  
[Attachment 4 - Oregon Zoo Geotechnical Assessment Memo](#)  
[Attachment 5 - Support Letter from Portland Mayor Keith Wilson](#)

- 2.2      Regional Supportive Housing Services and Policy Oversight [26-6430](#)  
Committee: Subcommittees Update

Presenter(s):      Liam Frost (he/him), Interim Housing Director  
Yesenia Delgado (she/her), Supportive Housing Services  
Division Director

Attachments:      [Staff Report](#)

**3. Chief Operating Officer Communication**

**4. Councilor Communication**

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**5. Adjourn to Executive Session**

This executive session will be held pursuant to ORS 192.660(2)(h), to consult with counsel concerning the legal rights and duties of a public body with regard to current litigation or litigation likely to be filed.

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# Metro

600 NE Grand Ave.  
Portland, OR 97232-2736  
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## Agenda #: 2.1

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**File #:** 26-6419

**Agenda Date:** 2/3/2026

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### Washington Park Train Task Force Update and COO Recommendation

Christine Lewis (she/her), Metro Councilor, District 2

Olivia Clark (she/her), Portland City Councilor, District 4

Marissa Madrigal, Chief Operating Officer

## WASHINGTON PARK TRAIN TASK FORCE UPDATE AND COO RECOMMENDATION

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Date: January 15, 2026  
Department: COO/Council Office  
Meeting Date: February 3, 2026

Presenter(s): Councilor Christine Lewis (she/her); Portland Councilor Olivia Clark (she/her); Marissa Madrigal, COO (she/her/ella)

Prepared by: Ina Zucker,  
ina.zucker@oregonmetro.gov

Length: 45 minutes

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### ISSUE STATEMENT

Metro convened the Washington Park Train Task Force from March - July 2025 as the result of a budget amendment sponsored by Councilor Christine Lewis. The Task Force produced a report that was presented to COO Madrigal who now presents the report along with her recommendation to the Metro Council. The report was also delivered to the City of Portland administrator and will also be presented by Councilor Olivia Clark to the Portland City Council.

### ACTION REQUESTED

Support for the COO recommendation which includes 1) endorsement of the Task Force report; and 2) commitment of \$50,000, in contingency, if at least \$200,000 is provided by others in the next two years, toward the cost of a comprehensive geotechnical assessment along the Washington Park Loop.

### IDENTIFIED POLICY OUTCOMES

Support for the COO recommendation will form the basis for continuing conversations with the City of Portland and others about the future of the Washington Park Loop which operated outside the Zoo boundaries.

### POLICY QUESTION(S)

What role will Metro play in the future with regard to the Washington Park Loop which closed in 2013?

### POLICY OPTIONS FOR COUNCIL TO CONSIDER

1. Metro Council can support the COO's recommendation which signals understanding of the complexity of restoring this historical and cultural attraction, willingness to be involved in future conversations, and contribute to the cost of a geotechnical assessment along the corridor in Washington Park.
2. Metro Council can support the COO's recommendation to the extent of endorsing the Task Force report which continues Metro's involvement in future conversations about the Washington Park Loop but not commit any funding toward the cost of a geotechnical assessment.
3. Metro Council can receive the Task Force report but deny support to the COO's recommendation.

## **STRATEGIC CONTEXT & FRAMING COUNCIL DISCUSSION**

The Washington Park Loop was operated by the Oregon Zoo until the route's closure in 2013 due to construction of the new Elephant Lands and changes to the route of the train that runs on the Zoo's campus. The trains, track and Washington Park are all owned by the City of Portland. Metro and the City of Portland have an intergovernmental agreement (IGA) that allows for (but does not require) Zoo management of the trains and operation of the Washington Park Loop.

Based on a number of challenges, including safety, financial limitations, deferred maintenance, geological instability, aging trains, and lack of alignment with the Zoo's mission and vision, the Zoo did not re-open the Washington Park Loop and has focused attention on voter-approved bond projects, and improvements to the on-grounds train loop including future electrification.

In 2018 the City of Portland updated their master plan for Washington Park and focused on the Washington Park Loop rail corridor for a future trail/multi-use path. At the Portland City Council meeting where the master plan update was considered, the commissioners supported restoration of the train as a desired future use of that corridor.

The Friends of the Washington Park and Zoo Railway is a non-profit organization dedicated to restoring and restarting the Historic Washington Park Loop. They have worked tirelessly to promote this goal, including helping to secure historic preservation status for the railway in 2020. The Friends have also expressed willingness to be the lead organization, with support from the City of Portland and in place of the Oregon Zoo, in restoration and operation of the Washington Park Loop.

## **BACKGROUND**

In 2024, the Metro Council approved a budget amendment in the FY 2024-2025 budget, sponsored by Councilor Christine Lewis, to convene a Washington Park Train Task Force to consider the opportunities and challenges of restoring the Washington Park Loop. The Task Force held meetings between March and July 2025. The Task Force included representation from the following organizations:

Explore Washington Park  
Friends of the International Rose Test Garden  
Friends of the Washington Park and Zoo Railway  
Metropolitan Exposition Recreation Commission (MERC)  
Oregon Zoo  
Oregon Zoo Foundation Board of Trustees  
Portland Japanese Garden  
Portland Parks and Recreation  
Travel Portland

Task Force discussions focused on many topics, including: costs of restarting the Washington Park Loop and future revenue generation; longer route as a visitor amenity and reflection of community values; possible impacts on the Zoo's fiscal sustainability and parking capacity for all organizations in Washington Park; future feasibility of long-term operations and maintenance of train assets; preservation of the historical trains and railway; sustainable ownership/operation agreements; access to a broad range of potential users; and the future of the Rose Garden station.

The Task Force produced and unanimously endorsed a report in August 2025 which was presented to the Metro COO and City of Portland administrator. (See attached). The Task Force endorsed future discussions between the City of Portland and Metro to include:

- Identifying secure funding for planning-level work
- Clarifying long-term operating and maintenance responsibilities
- Aligning stakeholder risk tolerance with regard to environmental, logistical, and regulatory constraints
- Exploring train consortium and ownership structures.

The Task Force also recommended evaluating the need for peer or independent review of materials and additional studies if the Washington Park Loop project moved forward, as well as conducting additional outreach to assess community support for the project after more information is available.

In December 2025, Mayor Keith Wilson wrote a letter supporting restoration of the Washington Park Loop and future conversations between the city and Metro but committing no funding to this work. (See attached).

## **ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment 1: Recommendation from COO Marissa Madrigal

Attachment 2: Washington Park Train Task Force Report

Attachment 3: Appendices to the Washington Park Train Task Force Report

Attachment 4: Oregon Zoo to the COO Geotechnical Assessment Memo

Attachment 5: Support letter from City of Portland Mayor Keith Wilson

# Memo



**Metro**

600 NE Grand Ave.  
Portland, OR 97232-2736

To: Metro Council

From: COO Marissa Madrigal

Date: January 15, 2026

Re: COO's Recommendation to the Metro Council on the findings in the Washington Park Train Task Force Report

Thank you for this opportunity to review the substantial and complicated work done by Councilor Christine Lewis, Councilor Olivia Clark of Portland and the Task Force, and to provide my recommendation on a path forward for Metro regarding this beloved amenity. My goal in this recommendation is to carve out a logical path for Metro in the future when dedicated partners, with secure funding, have been identified and are prepared to begin the long process of restoring train service on the Washington Park Loop.

The Task Force clearly worked hard and engaged with the direction provided in Councilor Lewis's budget note for the 2024-25 budget to think deeply and creatively about the benefits and burdens of restarting this train that has been closed for over ten years. In particular they grappled with the fact that the trains, tracks and Washington Park itself are owned by the City of Portland, not Metro, and that maintaining and operating the Washington Park Loop is no longer aligned with the mission, vision and financial goals of the Oregon Zoo. Task force members recognized that if and when the Washington Park Loop were to reopen, there would have to be a different owner/operator or consortium of owner/operators running this line.

My recommendation has two parts: first, I recommend that the Metro Council endorse the findings of the Task Force as laid out in their report and unanimously endorsed by the full Task Force, and second I recommend that Metro reserve in contingency \$50,000 in the COO's budget for two fiscal years that would become available if the City of Portland, the Friends of the Washington Park and Zoo Railway or other entities raise at least \$200,000 and dedicate the funds to a geotechnical assessment as laid out in attachment 4.

For the first part of my recommendation, I propose that the Metro Council endorse the Task Force's findings as a logical first step. The group's shared expertise on this subject



was impressive, and they endorsed a grounded approach to next actions on this project. They are:

- “Begin conversations between the City of Portland and Metro around the intergovernmental agreement (IGA) that currently exists for train operations. Discussions should include:
  1. Identifying secure funding for planning-level work.
  2. Clarifying long-term operating and maintenance responsibilities.
  3. Aligning stakeholder risk tolerance regarding environmental, logistical and regulatory constraints.
  4. Understanding the regional examples for train consortiums and ownership structures, including the interest expressed by the Friends of the Washington Park and Zoo Railway, to assume ownership of the trains. The Willamette Shore Trolley and the Portland Streetcar are potential local models.
- Additionally, the Task Force recommends evaluating the need for a peer or independent review of materials and additional studies, based on the needs of the organizations/governmental agencies moving forward with the train route. Another recommendation is to conduct additional outreach to understand the community’s support/interest after the review of studies is completed.” *Historic Washington Park Loop Report* p.3 (See attachment 2).

For the second part of my recommendation, I propose that Metro continue to be involved in pre-work that would need to be funded and completed before any entity could restart the Washington Park Loop. The Task Force mentions the need for additional studies above. They also noted in their report that documents and studies that were submitted during their deliberations reflected varying methodologies and levels of detail, had not been independently verified or reviewed, and may not reflect the most current information.

The first study should be a comprehensive geotechnical assessment to ensure that safe rail operations can be restored along the corridor. As the attached memo explains, the assessment should include subsurface investigation, quantitative slope stability analysis, and updated hazard mapping along the full Historic Washington Park Loop. The geotechnical assessment is currently expected to cost approximately \$250,000 which is why I propose that Metro reserve \$50,000 in contingency for two fiscal years (2026-27,

2027-28) that would match \$200,000 raised by other parties to complete this first study. (See attachment 4).

I am grateful to the members of the Task Force for the time and energy they spent considering the opportunities and challenges of restoring the Washington Park Loop, and to Councilor Lewis and Portland Councilor Clark for chairing. I look forward to discussing my recommendation with the Council on February 3, 2026.

08.05.25



# HISTORIC WASHINGTON PARK LOOP REPORT



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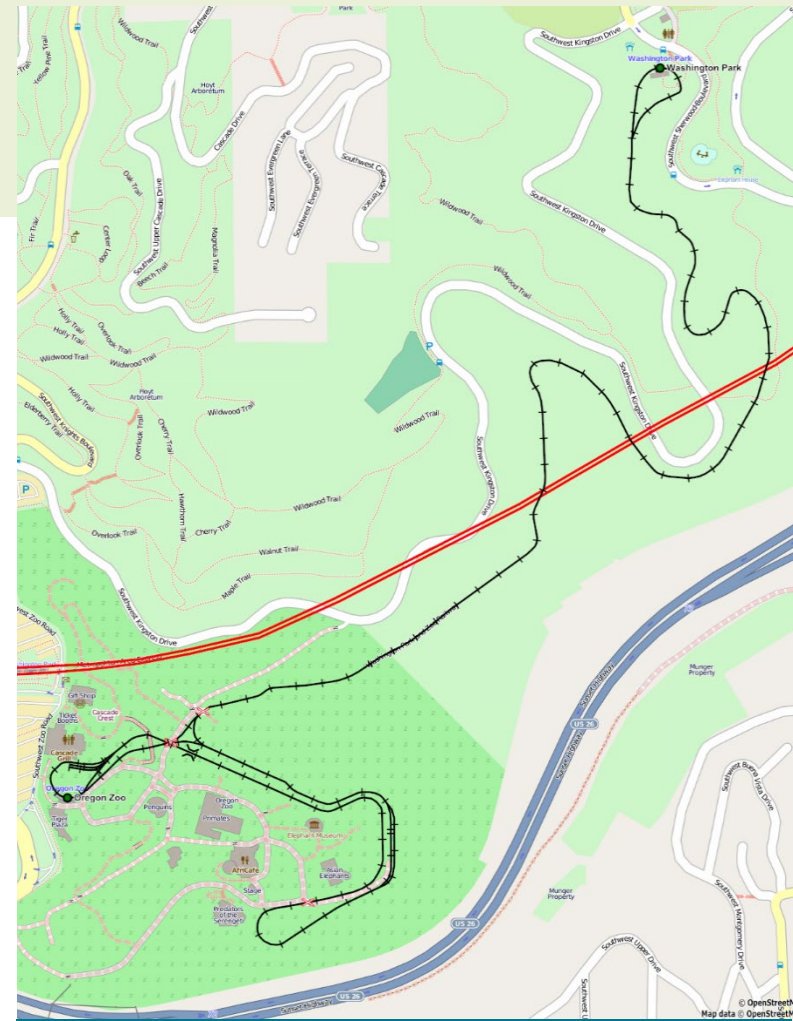


# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**The Metro Washington Park Train Task Force developed this document to record the history and current state of the potential restoration of passenger train service between the Oregon Zoo and Washington Park along the route referred to as the “Historic Washington Park Loop.”**

The Task Force unanimously endorsed this report and the action of forwarding it to the Metro Council and the Portland City Council for the following considerations:

- Begin conversations between the City of Portland and Metro around the intergovernmental agreement (IGA) that currently exists for train operations. Discussions should include:
  - Identifying secure funding for planning-level work.
  - Clarifying long-term operating and maintenance responsibilities.
  - Aligning stakeholder risk tolerance regarding environmental, logistical and regulatory constraints.
  - Understanding the regional examples for train consortiums and ownership structures, including the interest expressed by the Friends of the Washington Park and Zoo Railway, to assume ownership of the trains. The Willamette Shore Trolley and the Portland Streetcar are potential local models.
- Additionally, the Task Force recommends evaluating the need for a peer or independent review of materials and additional studies, based on the needs of the organizations/governmental agencies moving forward with the train route. Another recommendation is to conduct additional outreach to understand the community's support/interest after the review of studies is completed.



This map shows the Historic Washington Park Loop (black dashed line) which was located on Oregon Zoo property (darker cross-hatched green) and in Washington Park (light solid green).

The current Zoo Loop includes only the smaller section to the left of the property; the longer loop that is closer to Highway 26 was closed to build the Elephant Lands Exhibit.

The MAX line is also shown (red double line), along with Highway 26 (blue double line).

# OVERVIEW

## **This report was developed and endorsed by the Metro Washington Park Train Task Force.**

The Task Force examined and discussed the opportunities and challenges of restoring regular passenger train service between the Oregon Zoo and Washington Park along the historic trackway.

The Task Force developed this report to:

- Investigate and understand the history (Appendix A) and current status of the train and rail service.
- Consider the information available about the cost of restarting the Historic Washington Park Loop (which leaves/returns to the Zoo grounds from the Oregon Zoo to the Rose Garden station).
- Explore train service as an amenity for visitors, including local residents visiting Washington Park as well as visitors in the context of tourism (those traveling at least 50 miles from their residence).
- Reflect community values, and consider regional objectives, including those related to the Oregon Zoo and Washington Park and acknowledge real-world constraints.
- Provide a range of potential actions, mapping different possible journeys to the extent possible.

The Task Force also sought to make an endorsement regarding:

- Future feasibility of long-term operations,
- Electrification options,
- Management models,
- Possible impact on other zoo operations, and
- Funding strategies for train and track restoration, operation, maintenance and expected revenue generation.

# Menu of Options

**Below is the Task Force's menu of options that could be studied further or implemented in phases.**

## **Pursuing the viability of reinstating the Historic Washington Park Train Loop:**

The Task Force suggests further conversations between the City of Portland and Metro, along with the Friends of the Washington Park and Zoo Railway, around the intergovernmental agreements (IGA) that currently exist for the train operations.

Discussions should include:

- Identifying secure funding for planning-level work.
- Clarifying long-term operating and maintenance responsibilities.
- Aligning stakeholder risk tolerance regarding environmental, logistical and regulatory constraints.
- Understanding the regional examples for train consortiums and ownership structures, including the Willamette Shore Trolley and the Portland Streetcar.

**Peer review of materials:** The Task Force members generated and shared dozens of documents (Appendix B). These materials were developed by different individuals and organizations in response to their own goals and priorities. As a result, they reflect varying methodologies, levels of detail and degrees of review. They have not been independently verified or reviewed by all stakeholders and may not reflect the most current information.

- The Task Force recommends an independent review of the information by appropriate professionals and additional studies.

**Additional studies:** The Task Force identified gaps in data and planning that would be required to pursue the Historic Washington Park Loop restoration. The Task Force understands that the level of detail will depend on the owner/operator of the train, since government agencies have different requirements on data collection and documentation than a private entity might.

## Glossary

- **Current Zoo Loop:** The current train route that runs today on Oregon Zoo grounds. The map above shows a longer loop on Zoo grounds (closer to Highway 26) which was closed to build the Elephant Lands Exhibit.
- **Historic Washington Park Loop:** The route that was closed in 2013 that ran trains from the Oregon Zoo to the Rose Garden Station near the Rose Garden and Japanese Garden. This is the loop that the Task Force considered for this process.
- **Rolling stock:** These are the engines and train cars that run on a track.
- **Rose Garden Station:** The historic train depot building that is located near the Rose Garden but is currently closed.



The additional studies suggested by the Task Force include (in no specific order):

- **Public approvals:** Clarification is needed regarding zoning, permitting, review of historic preservation status, and potential updates to the Washington Park Master Plan.
- **Project leadership:** A clearly identified organization must take responsibility for funding, development, operations, and governance of the Historic Washington Park Loop. The Oregon Zoo has asserted it will not fill this role because it does not align with and will draw resources from its primary mission. The Friends of the Washington Park and Zoo Railway are willing to take on this role with support from the City of Portland.
- **Comprehensive cost modeling:** A full financial estimate is needed, including costs for start-up, infrastructure, repairs, and refurbishment of maintenance facilities.
- **Electrification analysis:** Electrification of the Historic Washington Park Loop was discussed, but no study has been completed. Costs, benefits, and feasibility are unknown.
- **Business planning:** Any proposal must include a business plan addressing ridership projections, revenue, expenses and long-term sustainability; this plan should be independently vetted.
- **Risk assessment:** Key risks include cost overruns, environmental impacts, safety concerns, conflicting stakeholder priorities, and lack of alignment with current local government agency missions and budgets.

**Stakeholder engagement:** Conduct activities and outreach to understand the level of public support and interest for the Historic Washington Park Loop after these additional studies are completed.

The Friends of the Washington Park and Zoo Railway have collected 44,000 signatures in support of reinstating the Historic Washington Park Loop. Additionally, hundreds of letters and postcards have been sent to the Metro Council in support of a longer train loop.





# TASK FORCE

## **The goal of this Task Force was to convene stakeholders for conversations centered on the Historic Washington Park Loop.**

Councilor Christine Lewis sponsored the Metro budget amendment for fiscal year 2024-25 that outlined her vision for the Task Force, and the Metro Council voted unanimously in favor of the amendment.

### **Meetings**

The Task Force met monthly from March through July 2025 to discuss and develop this report, as well as provide possible next steps based on the available information/data (see Appendix B). The Task Force was co-led by Metro and the City of Portland. Meetings were facilitated by Brandy Steffen of JLA Public Involvement.

### **Decision Making**

The final report of the Task Force will be presented to Metro's Chief Operating Officer (COO), Marissa Madrigal, and Portland's City Administrator, Michael Jordan. COO Madrigal will then present the Task Force's findings and her recommendation to the Metro Council. The final report will also be presented to Portland City Council.

All Task Force members endorsed this report being presented to COO Madrigal and City Administrator Jordan.

## **Members**

Christine Lewis	Metro Councilor, Co-Chair
Olivia Clark	Portland City Councilor, Co-Chair
Mike Murawski	Explore Washington Park
Kimberly Bown	Friends of the International Rose Test Garden
Craig Dirksen	Friends of the Washington Park & Zoo Railway
Kathy Goeddel	Friends of the Washington Park & Zoo Railway
Diedra Krys-Rusoff	Metropolitan Exposition Recreation Commission (MERC)
Utpal Passi	Oregon Zoo
Susan Hartnett	Oregon Zoo Foundation Board of Trustees
Jason Sipe	Portland Japanese Garden
Adena Long and Brett Horner	Portland Parks & Recreation
Jennifer Parks	Travel Portland

# WASHINGTON PARK TRAIN

## History

### **Train service between the Oregon Zoo and Washington Park operated from 1960 to 2013.**

Multiple times a day, three passenger trains powered by diesel engines ran on a narrow-gauge railroad line, carrying passengers on a 40-minute ride, from Memorial through Labor days, and on weekends in May and September.

The Historic Washington Park Loop closed in 2013 due to construction of the new elephant exhibit area and changes to the railway's route on Zoo grounds. The current Zoo Loop operates one train every 15-20 minutes with a single loop which lasts 6 minutes, all year. In 2020, the railway was added to the National Register of Historic Places, including rolling stock, the tracks/route, and Washington Park Station. More information in Appendix A.

## Current Situation

### **To understand the current situation, the Task Force developed the following Problem and Vision Statements.**

Robert and Ethel Kennedy, and astronaut John Glenn on the Zooliner in 1968 (Getty image BET 515542140).



They also gathered and shared as many documents as possible. The group identified additional data needs for making future decisions but moved forward with the information that was available within the time and budget constraints of this process.

### **Problem Statement**

The Historic Washington Park Loop is not currently operating outside of the Oregon Zoo grounds and faces deferred maintenance, geological instability, complex ownership

structure, funding/operations/liability challenges and aging infrastructure including the Rose Garden Station. In addition, the rolling stock (diesel engines and passenger cars) are also aged and in need of significant refurbishment or replacement, maintenance/storage facilities have been removed, and several train engineers are approaching retirement age. The Historic Washington Park Loop and the former station at the Rose Garden (which will also need to be refurbished) may present opportunities to activate these areas of Washington Park for the benefit of the community.

## Challenges

The proposal to reinstate the Historic Washington Park Loop service to the Rose Garden station faces multiple challenges, including significant capital expenses with funding uncertainties and concerns over long-term operating costs, maintenance, and preservation of the historical train among others.

Restoration of the Historic Washington Park Loop would add about 25 minutes of ride time for passengers per cycle which could impact parking and visitor logistics at the Zoo, the other cultural institutions in Washington Park, and at the Rose Garden Station. Washington Park is owned by the City of Portland, as is the Historic Washington Park Loop, including a 20-foot right-of-way, the rail lines and the Rose Garden Station/depot, along with the rolling stock. The Oregon Zoo, a self-supported Metro function, is located on land owned by Metro, and the Zoo manages the railroad assets but does not own them.

While community interest appears strong, it is unclear if political will exists to pursue the restoration of the Washington Park Loop; liability concerns, financial limitations for capital improvements, and local government budget constraints complicate any decision.

Deferred maintenance and a lack of train storage and maintenance facilities hinder progress without a

The Rose Garden Station (photo by Steve Morgan).



meaningful commitment of funds.

Competition for limited public dollars in the current environment make it difficult for the Task Force to advocate for restoration of the Washington Park Loop without better information.

A complete list of challenges identified by the Task Force are in Appendix C.

## Vision Statement

Fund and undertake the tasks necessary to determine if the Historic Washington Park Loop is feasible, including sustainable ownership/operation agreements, financially stable long-term operations and adequate start-up and renovation funding sources.

The Task Force discussed future scenarios within Washington Park that:

- Considered possibilities of reinstating the Historic Washington Park Loop and seasonal operations; and the potential to electrify the existing trains. These scenarios may impact the current on-grounds Zoo loop, as well as maintenance facilities located within the Zoo.
- Include feasible and sustainable construction/reconstruction, initiation and maintenance costs estimates, funding prospects, positive economic impacts, and potential revenue opportunities.
- Reflect the historic significance, as well as the current tourist and resident interest, in the Historic Washington Park Loop.
- Consider the current limitations of Washington

Park, including parking, transit access, seismic resiliency, connections between attractions, and agency/organization interest in train ownership and maintenance.

- Consider the long-term ownership, potential partnerships, leadership/decision-making structure, and legal implications/liability of train and tracks operation/maintenance.
- Provide access to the broadest range of potential users from an accessibility and affordability level.

Additionally, the Task Force identified alternative options for the train route, Rose Garden Station, and rolling stock (Appendix E, some of which came directly from the Washington Park Master Plan)

## Opportunities/Benefits

Restoring the Historic Washington Park Loop offers a unique opportunity to revitalize an iconic attraction while potentially delivering broad community and economic benefits. Achieving these benefits would require a committed project lead, sustainable funding, and operational planning that extends beyond the scope or mission of the Oregon Zoo.

Reactivating the Historic Washington Park Loop may provide an opportunity to enhance travel options inside the Park, support local tourism, create memorable experiences for visitors of all ages, and celebrate Portland's history of innovation and recreation.

Establishing an intergovernmental agreement (IGA) and engaging a dedicated railway operator would ensure clear ownership and operations responsibilities, professional management, streamlined decision making, and address long-term train operations of the Historic

Washington Park Loop. A thoughtfully restored and well financed train and loop could provide educational opportunities and foster partnerships with community organizations, while generating revenue to sustain its long-term operation. These outcomes would depend on the strength of leadership, funding, and alignment with regional priorities.

Opportunities that need further consideration and evaluation include:

- **Enhanced Visitor Experience/Visitor Attraction:** Create a unique, family-friendly attraction that connects key destinations across Washington Park and attracts visitors.
- **Historic Preservation:** Celebrate and preserve a beloved cultural and transportation legacy dating back to the 1950s.
- **Economic Impact:** Attract more visitors to the park, supporting surrounding businesses and tourism.
- **Accessibility and Equity:** Provide an inclusive mode of transportation for visitors of all abilities.
- **Community Engagement:** Partner with schools, nonprofits, and volunteers for educational programming and stewardship.
- **Environmental Benefits:** Reduce car trips within the park by offering a convenient alternative to driving and parking.
- **Revenue Generation:** Establish a sustainable source of funding through ticket sales, special events, and sponsorships.

Additional opportunities are included in Appendix D.

# SCENARIOS

## The Task Force considered a range of potential scenarios related to the future of the Washington Park Loop.

These scenarios reflect varying levels of ambition and complexity, including how well they align with the missions and operational capacities of different public and nonprofit partners currently involved in the discussions.

- The Oregon Zoo is not positioned to lead development or assume long-term ownership of the Historic Washington Park Loop.
- The Friends of the Washington Park and Zoo Railway have offered to take on the ownership role.

The table below outlines broad categories of ownership, operations, and potential impacts. However, all scenarios involve substantial unknowns (Appendix C). Other scenarios outside the scope of the Task Force are included in Appendix E.

Scenario		Owner / Operator	Startup / Capital Costs <sup>1</sup>	Net Revenue
1	Current Zoo Loop (no change)	Oregon Zoo / Oregon Zoo	NA	NA
2	Historic Washington Park Loop, no trail <sup>2</sup>	Friends of the Washington Park & Zoo Railway / Unknown	To be studied	To be studied
3	Historic Washington Park Loop, with trail <sup>3</sup>	Friends of the Washington Park & Zoo Railway / Unknown Portland Parks would own/operate the trail	To be studied	To be studied

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<sup>1</sup> Estimated Startup/Capital Costs come from a variety of sources and would need to be studied further; see following pages for details.

<sup>2</sup> A potential trail on Kingston Drive could provide trail access off the track right-of-way.

<sup>3</sup> The Washington Park Master Plan included a trail in place of or in addition to the Historic Washington Park Loop.



*The range of cost and revenue estimates is based on limited available data and needs to be studied further for more accurate information that is tied to the type of owner/operator, since the costs for a government agency owner/operator are vastly different from one that is a non-profit or for-profit.*

## Current Zoo Loop

### No Change (Scenario 1)

By maintaining the current Zoo Loop (Scenario 1)—entirely within the Oregon Zoo campus—ownership and operation remain with the Zoo. This model aligns with the Zoo's mission and visitor experience goals.

### Startup Costs

No new startup costs are anticipated as the existing trains and track are operational.

The Zoo is exploring future investments including electric rolling stock, charging infrastructure, and system upgrades as well as a covered storage/maintenance area for maintenance and preservation of the trains. These improvements will enhance sustainability, reliability, business model and guest engagement.

### Operations/Revenue

Maintenance costs are expected to increase with the aging diesel fleet which is why the Zoo is actively exploring new electric equipment. The current maintenance staff is below the level needed for preventative maintenance. Benchmarking other zoo railroads showed staffing at 2.5 to 3 FTEs, not 1 mechanic. This has led to higher repair costs and deferred maintenance. No plans are in place to restore the locomotives and passenger cars or to build a dedicated storage and maintenance facility. Without such investments, the railway's infrastructure and rolling stock will deteriorate over time, raising future restoration costs and leaving the long-term status of the railway uncertain.

The train requires a separate ticket and does generate direct revenue, although its profitability fluctuates seasonally. Events such as ZooLights drive higher ridership and overall engagement, contributing to broader guest satisfaction and return visitation. While revenue is recorded, the Zoo does not fully allocate

## Additional Questions

Key questions related to this scenario primarily concern modernization and sustainability within the Zoo. The Oregon Zoo has not expressed interest in extending the track or operations beyond its campus. Suggestions for future phase extensions into Washington Park fall outside the Zoo's mission and strategic priorities.

- Are there parts of the Historic Washington Park Loop that could be added over time, in a phased approach with the current Zoo Loop?
  - For example, could some of the additional data needs that the Task Force identified be accomplished in a way that would benefit both the current Zoo Loop, as well as move the Historic Washington Park Loop forward?
- What happens to the state of the rolling stock and tracks outside the Zoo? How long could they last as-is? What happens if the storage/maintenance facility is not built and the rolling stock is not restored in the next decade?
  - These are helpful questions to answer if there is a delay in advancing the longer loop into Washington Park. Answers will have implications for the startup costs for any other scenario.

all associated operational expenses for the train, which are distributed across departments.

## **Visitor Amenity**

The current Zoo Loop remains a popular part of the Zoo visit. Its draw is integrated into the overall Zoo experience.

# Historic Washington Park Loop

Scenarios involving restoration of the Historic Washington Park loop—whether with or without an adjacent multi-use trail—introduce a wide range of unresolved questions regarding startup costs, long-term operations, legal responsibility, and funding. These scenarios presume a broader effort that would require a separate organization or agency to take on ownership, capital development, and ongoing management.

*The range of cost and revenue estimates is based on limited available data and needs to be studied further for more accurate information that is tied to the type of owner/operator, since the costs for a government agency owner/operator are vastly different from a non- or for-profit organization.*

## Without Mixed-Use Trail (Scenario 2)

This scenario would restore the Historic Washington Park Loop without introducing a new multi-use trail beside the tracks as contemplated in the 2018 Washington Park Master Plan update. The Task Force proposed an option to include a mixed-use trail on Kingston Drive instead of adjacent to the train tracks. This Kingston Drive trail is included in the Washington Park Master Plan, but was not tied to the restoration of the train (Appendix E). Portland City Council discussed the idea of moving the trail to Kingston Drive during the Master Plan update adoption, but did not modify the document to reflect this.

This scenario would repair aging crib walls, clean up the tracks and culverts, as well as restore the Rose Garden Train Station and make it ADA accessible.

## Startup Costs

A detailed study is required to estimate planning, permitting, and capital construction needs.

The capital cost of this option has been estimated to be less than \$3,000,000, with startup costs of \$60,000 (Shannon & Wilson, 2023, “Revised Geotechnical Engineering Report and Executive Summary,” Appendix B). The Oregon Zoo estimates an initial \$1.75M would be required to restore the tracks and station to operating standards, plus an additional \$828K to complete

## Additional Questions

Key questions related to Scenarios 2 and 3:

- **Feasibility and phasing:** Could the loop be implemented incrementally? How would early phases be funded and governed?
- **Public interest:** What is the actual demand for the Historic Washington Park Loop service, and how would it be measured? What is the potential for the Loop as a visitor amenity and a revenue-generating asset?
- **Technical planning:** What engineering, zoning, and permitting challenges would need to be addressed? How would environmental and historic preservation factors be resolved?
- **Park-wide implications:** How would restoration of the loop affect Washington Park circulation, parking, seismic resilience, and transit access?
- **Volunteer involvement:** What are the safety and liability risks of involving volunteers or unpaid labor in restoration or operations?
- **Operational model:** What staffing and scheduling model would be used? Would the system be seasonal or year-round?
- **Governance:** Who would own, insure, maintain, and be accountable for the infrastructure and operations?



additional track restoration within four years, resulting in a total capital investment of \$2.75M. (Oregon Zoo, 2025, “Updated; Lower Washington Park Railroad Track” Appendix B).

## **Operations**

Costs are expected to increase due to aging rolling stock, staff recruitment challenges, and maintenance of infrastructure beyond current capacity.

## **Revenue**

Projecting increases in revenue is speculative. Using historical financial analysis from the Zoo (2008-13) for estimated riders, revenue is estimated to average approximately \$2.0 million/year, over \$460,000 higher than the Zoo Loop with a fare that is double the shorter route. This is in line with the historically higher profitability of the longer route.

Expenses are anticipated to increase due to additional staffing, operations and maintenance costs, which will reduce total revenue. However, more study (with current and historical data) is needed.

## **Visitor Amenity**

Proponents suggest expanded service could increase usage by local and out-of-town visitors, which was historically the case, but no validated market study has confirmed this.

## With Mixed-Use Trail (Scenario 3)

A combined train and trail option was an option in the 2018 update to the Washington Park Master Plan, but no funding, detailed design, or lead agency has been identified for this Loop extension. Adding a trail would introduce additional permitting, design coordination, and long-term maintenance obligations that fall outside Zoo operations and the City's existing Parks and Recreation budget.

*As noted in Scenario 2, there is an option to include a trail on Kingston Drive instead of next to the train tracks.*

### Startup Costs

This scenario would require a study to evaluate the design, including environmental review, for both the trail and the Historic Washington Park Loop track design.

Train costs remain unchanged from the previous scenario, but trail costs are estimated at \$10,200,000, which includes contingency, management, general requirements, overhead and profit, bonds and insurance, as well as escalation through construction, permitting and project management (Portland Parks & Recreation, 2018, "Washington Park Master Plan," Appendix E.)

### Operations

Train costs remain unchanged from the previous scenario, but trail maintenance would fall to Portland Parks & Recreation.

### Revenue

Train-related revenue would be unchanged. Trail use would not generate revenue.

### Visitor Amenity

Proponents believe the trail could add flexible access, though year-round benefits remain speculative.



This map from the Washington Park Master Plan (2018) shows the Mixed-Use Trail line (number 5) which could include the train or just the trail.

# Electrification

## **Electrification was discussed as a potential sustainability strategy for both the Current Zoo Loop and the Historic Washington Park Loop.**

There are two separate efforts for electrification which the Task Force was interested in pursuing:

- The Oregon Zoo is exploring a transition to electric trains for the current Zoo Loop at this time.
  - This includes a procurement process for electric rolling stock and the installation of charging infrastructure sized specifically for the current Zoo Loop. A 30-inch, narrow-gauge battery-operated train is not available for purchase and would require one to be custom built through the requisition of a new engine or conversion of the Oregon Express or Zooliner.
  - This effort aligns with the Zoo's sustainability goals and utility partnerships.
- A comprehensive technical or operational feasibility study has not been conducted for electrifying the Historic Washington Park Loop.

The Task Force was interested to see if:

- The Oregon Zoo transition to electric trains for the current Zoo Loop could support the Historic Washington Park Loop electrification in the future.
- The battery capacity, charging logistics, and system integration could be transferable to the Historic Washington Park Loop (which has longer distances, different route conditions, and infrastructure needs).

The City of Portland and Metro both have climate goals that support the transition away from diesel fuel.



# ADDITIONAL OPTIONS

## These options were suggested for consideration by the Metro Council and Portland City Council.

The Task Force identified gaps in data and planning that would be required to pursue the Historic Washington Park Loop restoration. The Task Force understands that the level of detail will depend on the owner/operator of the train, since government agencies have different requirements on data collection and documentation than a private or non-profit entity might.

- **Public approvals**
- **Project leadership**
- **Comprehensive cost modeling**
- **Business planning**
- **Risk assessment**
- **Electrification analysis** (see previous page)

Additionally, the Task Force noted the following options for consideration:

- **Peer/independent review of materials:** The Task Force recommends an independent review of the information by appropriate professionals and additional studies.
- **Engagement:** Conduct outreach to understand the level of public support and interest for the Historic Washington Park Loop after filling in some data gaps.
- **Non-train scenarios:** Other scenarios were outside the scope of the Task Force, but still considered important to document (Appendix E).



Photo by Explore Washington Park

# Public Approvals

## Clear Public Process and Required Approvals

A step-by-step outline is needed to understand what public agencies would need to do to move forward including whether the Washington Park Master Plan would need to be updated, land use and zoning rules that might need to be examined, applying for permits, impact of historic preservation status, and complying with environmental regulations.

It is also important to identify which agencies would need to be involved and what the early steps would look like to make progress forward with an intergovernmental agreement (IGA) between new or existing parties.

## Project Leadership

### **A clear and accountable lead organization is necessary to advance any future vision for restoring the Historic Washington Park Loop.**

The Friends of the Washington Park & Zoo Railway are willing to be the lead organization to lead restoration of the Historic Washington Park Loop with support from the City of Portland and Metro.

This lead organization would be responsible for securing funding, managing planning and construction, and overseeing long-term operations of a recreational train experience that operates on the Historic Washington Park Loop and the Rose Garden Station.

An Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) would be needed to establish the leadership, ownership and operations of a restored route to Washington Park.

## Regional Consortia

- The Willamette Shore Trolley operates through a consortium of organizations through the application of an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA).
  - The first IGA for this project was in 1988 between Portland, Metro, Lake Oswego, Clackamas County, and Multnomah County.
  - In 1994 TriMet was added to the IGA and the formal establishment of the Willamette Shoreline Right-of-Way Consortium.
  - Since then, both Multnomah and Clackamas Counties have departed the IGA.
- The Portland Streetcar is a regional consortium that could serve as a model, as is the Oregon Rail Heritage Center.

# Comprehensive Cost Modeling

**A complete, independently reviewed cost estimate will be necessary to fully understand the financial feasibility of reinstating the Historic Washington Park Loop.**

Over the course of the Task Force process, various members submitted financial estimates related to potential restoration efforts. However, these estimates were developed using differing methodologies and no unified cost assessment or consensus was reached. Such a study might include:

- Infrastructure restoration and upgrades (track, bridges, stations)
- Rolling stock acquisition or refurbishment, including potential electrification
- Support facilities such as power systems and maintenance areas
- Safety, accessibility, and regulatory compliance upgrades

# Business Planning

**Any proposal to reinstate the Historic Washington Park Loop should be supported by a comprehensive, independently reviewed business plan.**

This plan should clearly outline how the train would operate day-to-day, including projected ridership, seasonal variations, staffing requirements, maintenance needs, and cost structures. It should also provide detailed revenue assumptions—such as fare structures, potential subsidies, and fundraising strategies—as well as contingency plans for covering operational shortfalls over time.

Preliminary modeling has been produced by the Friends of the Washington



Park and Zoo Railway, based on input from professional geotechnical engineers and architects. An independently reviewed business plan will be needed for final evaluation, but existing analysis provides a valuable foundation for further exploration.

## Risk Assessment

**Restoring the Historic Washington Park Loop involves a range of financial, operational, environmental and governance considerations.**

- Financial risks include potential cost overruns for capital improvements, ongoing operational expenses, and uncertain funding sources that could strain resources.
- Operational risks involve the complexities of managing and maintaining the train system, including staffing challenges, volunteer liability, aging equipment, and scheduling complexities.
- Environmental and safety risks relate to protecting sensitive park ecosystems, geology, and ensuring passenger and public safety throughout the route.
- Legal and liability risks stem from complicated ownership and jurisdiction, potential volunteer involvement, and unclear governance structures that may expose stakeholders to legal challenges.
- Current and future funding uncertainties at the local, state and federal levels including Metro and the City of Portland (including Parks and Recreation).
- Finally, community and stakeholder risks include managing differing priorities and expectations that require clear communication and coordination to maintain public support.

Together, these risks highlight the need for clear leadership, sustainable funding, and mission alignment before moving forward with restoration efforts.

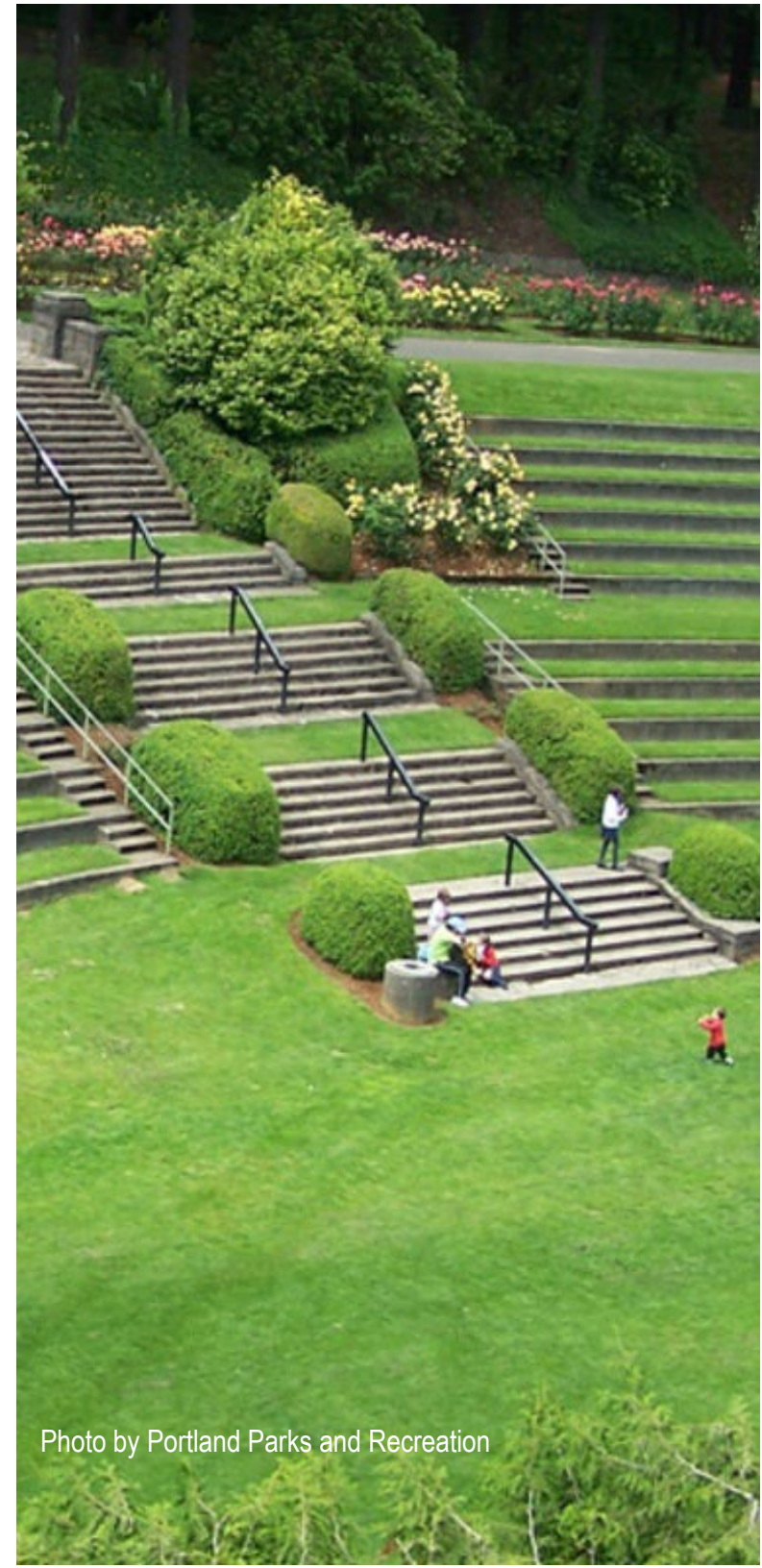


Photo by Portland Parks and Recreation

# Peer Review of Materials

## **The Task Force recommends a peer/independent review of significant data.**

The Task Force members generated and shared dozens of documents over their time together (Appendix B). These materials were developed by different individuals and organizations in response to their own goals and priorities. As a result, they reflect varying methodologies, levels of detail and degrees of review. They have not been independently verified or reviewed by all stakeholders and may not reflect the most current information.

The Task Force recommends a peer review of significant data in the future. A peer review means having a neutral and equivalent expert look at any contested data/materials to ensure the data is up-to-date and reliable.

# Engagement

## **Conduct outreach to understand the level of public support and interest for the Historic Washington Park Loop in future planning.**

The Task Force acknowledged strong community interest and noted future efforts should prioritize inclusive outreach. Public enthusiasm, demonstrated by over 44,000 petition signatures collected by the Friends of the Washington Park and Zoo Railway and local fundraising indicates a high level of engagement that should be more fully explored in future planning, regardless of the scenario selected.

Polling completed in 2023 by Metro for a Zoo Bond showed voters prioritized restoration of the Washington Park Loop at a much lower level than other Zoo improvements (see Appendix B for more details).



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

**Metro would like to acknowledge the Task Force for their time and commitment to this process.**

- Christine Lewis, Metro Councilor
- Olivia Clark, Portland City Councilor
- Mike Murawski, Explore Washington Park
- Kimberly Bown, Friends of the International Rose Test Garden
- Craig Dirksen, Friends of the Washington Park & Zoo Railway
- Kathy Goeddel, Friends of the Washington Park & Zoo Railway
- Diedra Krys-Rusoff, Metropolitan Exposition Recreation Commission (MERC)
- Utpal Passi, Oregon Zoo
- Susan Hartnett, Oregon Zoo Foundation
- Jason Sipe, Portland Japanese Garden
- Adena Long and Brett Horner, Portland Parks & Recreation
- Jennifer Parks, Travel Portland

**Staff that supported this process:**

- Ina Zucker, Metro
- Brandy Steffen, JLA Public Involvement
- Mallory Anderson, JLA Public Involvement

**Photos:**

- Steve Morgan (including the cover photo)
- Mary Ray on Unsplash
- Caroline Ashley on Unsplash
- Portland Parks and Recreation
- Explore Washington Park

**Maps:**

- OpenStreetMap from Wikipedia

**The Task Force following the final meeting in July 2025.**



08.05.25



Metro

# HISTORIC WASHINGTON PARK LOOP REPORT APPENDIX

Washington Park Train Task Force



Metro



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H	Proposal for an Intergovernmental Agreement for the Restoration of the Washington Park and Zoo Railway



# APPENDIX A

## History of the Train

### **Train service between the Oregon Zoo and Washington Park operated from 1960 to 2013.**

At the time of closure, the Oregon Zoo, which is operated through Metro, transitioned to operating a smaller loop only within Zoo grounds. The Zoo Loop currently operates one train on a 20-minute cycle during peak season. The Historic Washington Park Loop was a 30-minute ride.

In 2020, the train was added to the National Register of Historic Places under three areas of significance: Community Planning and Development, Entertainment/Recreation and Engineering. Specifically, the train exhibits these significant features:

- Physical manifestation of a one-of-a-kind state-wide cooperative effort of over twenty-five thousand people that has made a lasting and significant contribution to Oregon culture and history under the category of Community Planning and Development. The train was engineered, designed and built by professional railroad engineers and train designers and is significant as a small-scale example of railroad and train engineering.
- Physical features distinctive to post-war era recreation railroads present in the United States built to entertain the children born after the war. The contributing buildings,

structures and rolling stock possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association.

While inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places highlights the cultural significance of the train, it does not obligate any entity to restore or operate the service. Preservation may be achieved through interpretive or static displays rather than continued or resumed operations of historic route.

Since the closure of the Historic Washington Park Loop, several plans and studies (Appendix B) have resulted in the opportunity to hear from the community about their interest in the train, including:

- The 2018 update to the Washington Park Master Plan which conducted community engagement regarding changes to the future of the park. There were some Task Force members and organizations from the current Task Force that also participated on the planning committee.
- In April 2017, feedback was collected from over 2,000 people.
- In November 2017, 329 individuals completed an online survey in which more than 50% of respondents indicated that the master plan “very well” or “somewhat reflected” the vision and goals for the park.
- During the Portland City Council’s

review of the Washington Park Master Plan update in 2018, Mayor Wheeler, Commissioners Fritz, Fish and Saltzman all voiced support that restoration of the Historic Washington Park Loop remain under consideration. Community testimony was strongly supportive for the Historic Washington Park Loop in that session. Of the 26 people who testified before City Council, 8 people supported restoring the train. One person supported the multiuse path and cafe and 4 people opposed the multiuse path.

- Mayor Wheeler asked if the Master Plan was guiding future development or a mandate. He said that since the Master Plan did not include the Historic Washington Park Loop, including it in the Transportation Management Plan signaled City Council interest and invited more detailed discussion on: What does it take to run it? What would it cost to rehabilitate it? Is that a fair interpretation? The response was that the Master Plan was a framework and a guiding

document, not a mandate.

- The nonprofit Friends of the Washington Park and Zoo Railway was established in 2018.
- A petition to bring back the Historic Washington Park Loop garnered over 44,000 signatures on Change.org.
- Community members have contributed over \$60,000 in grassroots fundraising to support restoration efforts.

***The Historic Washington Park Train is most comparable to the Disney Railroad in California Disneyland, which has five steam engines and is 1.2 miles long (36-inch gauge).***

***The Zooliner and the Oregon steamer were used in the Oregon Centennial celebration.***

***The Rose Festival Rose court princesses rode the train just after its inaugural run, and annually for several years.***

# APPENDIX B

## Existing Data and Documentation

**Several documents and additional analysis have been completed since the Historic Washington Park Loop was closed in 2013.**

These materials were developed by different individuals and organizations in response to their own goals and priorities. As a result, they reflect varying methodologies, levels of detail and degrees of review. They have not been independently verified or reviewed by all stakeholders and may not reflect the most current information.

Below is a list of known data and notes regarding the contents of each document. The notes are pulled directly from the documents themselves, except some editing for ease of access including changing the names of the train loops to be consistent with what is used in the full report. Where this change has been made the report names are included in brackets ([Historic Washington Park Loop] or [Current Zoo Loop]).

### Friends of the Washington Park and Zoo Railway Documents

Studies	Author	Notes
2025 Washington Park Railroad Track Condition Report	Burgel Rail Group	<p>On April 28, 2025, Burgel Rail Group was asked by Kathy Goeddel to assess current track conditions of the Washington Park Railroad between the Zoo fence downhill to the Washington Park Station. This track has been out-of-service since October 2013, or roughly 12 years. Since that time, no maintenance has been performed on the trackage other than several groups of volunteers gathering to remove vegetation and trees that have fallen on the tracks during this time. Regardless, a recent inspection indicates that, except for a couple of minor issues, current track conditions are considered to be in fair to good shape. Minor roadbed damage at a culvert near Crib Wall #3, which occurred in 2013, could be repaired fairly easily. Also, a small landslide on a non-important section of the loop track near the Washington Park Station could be cleaned up whenever that section of track is required for future operations.</p> <p>Overall, the track structures including the rail, ties, switches and ballast are in relatively fair to good condition. The lack of weed and vegetation control over the past twelve years is evident but the track could be placed back into service without this cosmetic improvement. Furthermore, the condition of the rail and ties are such that in regards to the projected lifespan of the track structure as well as the overall</p>

		appearance of the roadbed (drainage, culverts and geologic setting), it is the author's opinion that there is no reason to suggest that the Washington Park Railroad couldn't be still operating trains without a major capital investment for another 15 to 20 years.
2025 Is another Geotechnical Assessment Required for the Washington Park Railway Roadbed?	Burgel Rail Group	<p>Based on the strength and scope of the two existing studies – KPFF's foundational geotechnical assessment and Shannon &amp; Wilson's railroad-specific refinement- another geotechnical report is likely not needed at this time. Commissioning another report could introduce unnecessary delays and expenses, especially if it would merely replicate or second-guess already-sound conclusions. The combination of KPFF and Shannon &amp; Willson provides a comprehensive, technically sound foundation for moving forward with restoration planning.</p> <p>If the scope of construction changes substantially (e.g., electrification, tunnel reinforcement or widening beyond the existing roadbed), if a regulatory agency requires an updated independent peer review, or if a funding source or permitting body demands a third-party verification as part of due diligence, then another study would be warranted.</p>
2025 Proposed Railroad Maintenance Shop Locations	Friends of the Washington Park and Zoo Railway	Three diagrams showing potential locations for maintenance shops.
2025 Comprehensive Zoo Train Operations Scenarios	Friends of the Washington Park and Zoo Railway	Eight different train operation scenarios including route, number of trains operating, departure frequency, departures per hour, average passengers per train, average passengers per hour, ticket price and average revenue per hour (maximum).
2025 Environmental Overlay Requirements	Friends of the Washington Park and Zoo Railway	Notes from the 4/21/25 meeting with City of Portland Planning Bureau discussing the City's environmental permits planning and current zoning regulations
2025 Experts for Zoo Train Task Force	Friends of the Washington Park and Zoo Railway	Two pages of resources including History & National Register of Historic Places Designation; Rail Infrastructure Restoration; Operations, maintenance & rolling stock; Portland City Council support for the train restorations (Dan Saltzman); Pathway alternatives & alignment options;

	Zoo Railway	Accessibility at the Rose Garden Station; Benchmarking leading zoo trains; and Electrification. As well as a list of tours organized outside task force meetings.
2025 Protecting Railcars in the Pacific Northwest: Preventing Accelerated Deterioration	Friends of the Washington Park and Zoo Railway	<p>In regions like the Pacific Northwest, where wet weather and high humidity are the norm, leaving railcars exposed to the elements leads to more than just gradual wear, it results in rapid and accelerating deterioration.</p> <p>Corrosion doesn't occur at a steady pace. Once rust begins to form, it actually speeds up over time. Rust creates a rough, flaky surface that traps moisture and pollutants, allowing damage to spread deeper into the metal. This process is well-documented by industry experts, including the National Association of Corrosion Engineers (NACE), who note that corrosion in damp environments like ours follows a non-linear, accelerating pattern.</p>
2024 Analysis of Restoring the Rose Garden Loop of the Zoo Train and Building a Multiuse Path	Friends of the Washington Park and Zoo Railway	<p>Friends of the Washington Park and Zoo Railway urge Portland leaders to stand behind restoring the iconic Zoo Train's [Historic Washington Park Loop] instead of developing a new multiuse trail on the rail bed. Restoring the rail line to the Rose Garden is favored by thousands of citizens who have signed a petition of support. Trackway repairs and accessibility upgrades to the "Rose Garden" Station can be made at significantly less cost and time than would be required to develop a new paved multiuse trail. Turning SW Kingston into a one-way street would provide a multiuse trail at very low cost and risk. Compared to a trail, the train would bring mobility and joy to a broader diversity of users, including seniors, young children and people with disabilities. Nearby, a trail utilizing a portion of SW Kingston Drive would accommodate cyclists and walkers with mobility issues. There are already many beautiful hiking trails between the Rose Garden and the Oregon Zoo.</p>
2024 Consist Evaluation	Friends of the Washington Park and Zoo Railway	<p>The following are some of the photos I took during a March 2022 visit to the Oregon Zoo of various cars in the consist of the WP&amp;Z Rwy. Zoo management and Jeff Honeyman, the Zoo's full-time railway employee, was kind enough to allow me access to the consist and to see first-hand some of the challenges the Zoo faces in maintaining the rolling stock for the railway.</p> <p>My goal was to take these photos and relevant information back to the committee as part of the committee's ongoing effort to assist the Oregon Zoo in building a more stable operating future for the railway. Most important, Jeff assures everyone that the trains are in good, safe running condition.</p>



2021 Plan for Restoration of the Zoo Railway Rose Garden Loop	Friends of the Washington Park and Zoo Railway	<p>The Zoo Train Restoration Team is a group of organizations and individuals interested in restoring operation of the Washington Park Line of the Zoo Railway. Key partners are the Oregon Rail Heritage Foundation, The Northwest Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society, The Arlington Heights Neighborhood Association, the Sylvan Highlands Neighborhood Association, and several individuals. This group brings considerable practical rail expertise, access to railway professionals, the potential for public outreach, and the potential for fundraising from individuals and businesses.</p> <p>Our objective is to work collaboratively with the Oregon Zoo and Metro to develop the business case for the restoration and operation of the Rose Garden Loop, to develop plans for the long-term operations and funding of the Zoo Railway, and seek approval and funding from Metro for the Zoo.</p>
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## Financial Documents

Studies	Author	Notes
2025 Updated; Lower Washington Park Railroad Track	Oregon Zoo	<p>The [Historic Washington Park Loop] is approximately 4.5x longer than the [Current Zoo Loop] and would require operation of the station near the Rose Garden. Based on input from zoo Guest Services management, an assumption of \$12.00 was used for general admission rail tickets for the [Historic Washington Park Loop] with no change to the [Current Zoo Loop] pricing of \$5.00. These prices were increased to \$14.00 and \$6.00, respectively, for the second half of our 10-year forecast (years 6 – 10).</p> <p>During past operations of the [Historic Washington Park Loop], there was approximately a \$1.50 price difference between the [Current Zoo Loop] and the [Historic Washington Park Loop]. Also, there was no choice for guests as to which train ride they could take, as the tracks ran exclusive to one another, depending on the time of year. However, if the [Historic Washington Park Loop] reopened, it has been determined that neither of these operating choices would remain feasible. Operating costs for the [Historic Washington Park Loop] require a higher ticket price for the track to remain profitable. And to remain equitable, the Zoo needs to be able to offer the cheaper [Current Zoo Loop] during the [Historic Washington Park Loop]'s operating months. The shorter trip choice with less wait times also helps maintain guest expectations and assists in managing stay times and parking lot turnover on busy days. Our adjusted revenue model assumes given the presence of</p>

choice between the two tracks, and the inherent price difference, one out of four guests that ride the train from March – September will choose to ride the [Historic Washington Park Loop].

Currently, total operations of the [Current Zoo Loop] require approximately 3.55 FTE. With the addition of the [Historic Washington Park Loop], an additional 4.25 FTE (7.55 total) would be required. Year-to-year changes in salaries range from 4% - 6.5% based on updated Metro salary schedules.

The model for estimating fuel costs was updated by using the current [Current Zoo Loop] budget as a baseline, and scaling for the [Historic Washington Park Loop] based on estimated difference in trips the locomotives would be taking per year. Year-to-year inflation factor for fuel is 2% based on current market conditions.

Based on the updated expense model, it is no longer estimated that reopening the [Historic Washington Park Loop] would be profitable over the 10-year operating period.

This is due primarily to growing personnel expenses. In 2023, the analysis projected \$8.9M in total personnel costs to operate the [Historic Washington Park Loop] over 10 years, whereas that figure is now \$12.5M. These increased costs do impact the [Current Zoo Loop] operation—as the updated analysis shows less cumulative profit/loss over the 10-year period—but the updated model now projects more gross revenue over the 10 years than the 2023 model. Another important consideration is that the Oregon Zoo now has a clearer understanding of post-COVID operations than it did in 2023. Initially, the baseline for the [Current Zoo Loop] capture rate, which reflected both pre- and post-COVID data, was 17.81%. However, with updated ridership data since the train reopened in June 2021, that baseline has increased to 21.54%. The Zoo is also using a timed and capped attendance model to ensure the best possible guest experience.

These attendance limits are carefully calibrated to support efficient parking turnover, helping to optimize both total attendance and the quality of the parking experience. Reopening the [Historic Washington Park Loop] could disrupt these efforts by extending guest visit durations, slowing parking turnover and ultimately limiting overall attendance on high-traffic days. These impacts would not only affect guest satisfaction but also reduce potential revenue.

It's also important to remember that capital costs to restore the [Historic Washington Park Loop] and [Rose Garden station]

		<p>were noted as a major consideration in the 2023 analysis, and that hasn't changed. Original estimates for that work are now 10 years old, and the economic climate continues to be unpredictable. The cost of that work would greatly impact the return on investment of reopening the [Historic Washington Park Loop].</p> <p>Based on these factors, it is still our opinion that the best financial decision for the Oregon Zoo is to continue current operations of only the [Current Zoo Loop] and not reopen the [Historic Washington Park Loop].</p>
2025 Response to the Oregon Zoo's Updated Finance Memo	Friends of the Washington Park and Zoo Railway	<p>Despite repeated requests dating back to 2019, including a formal public records request submitted on April 27, 2025, we have not been granted access to the Oregon Zoo's income statements for the train. As such, our feedback is with limited financial transparency. Nevertheless, several key assumptions in the Zoo's financial analysis are flawed. If corrected, these assumptions suggest the Washington Park Loop would be more financially viable than the current Zoo Loop, particularly with appropriate investment. (See Appendix A for the complete P&amp;L analysis.) This analysis outlines six flawed assumptions in the Zoo's financial model and presents a more realistic scenario in which the Washington Park Loop is not only viable, but strategically advantageous.</p>
2025 Washington Park and Zoo Railway Business Case	Friends of the Washington Park and Zoo Railway	<p>Our analysis draws from Metro's 2023 financial review, which shows the Washington Park Train would generate an average of \$369K annually—just \$170K less than the [Current Zoo Loop]—and we believe it will be more profitable.</p> <p>The initial capital investment for approximately the first five years would be \$6.2 million, consisting of \$3.7 million for the [Current Zoo Loop] and \$2.5 million for the [Historic Washington Park Loop]. This amount would finance replacement of the train maintenance building that was removed during the past zoo bond construction, restoration of the Zooliner and five cars (201-205) and repairs for the Oregon steam train and its four Centennial cars inside the zoo. For the [Historic Washington Park Loop], we recommend replacement of the one failed crib wall and the three crib walls that would most likely need replacement in the short term. There would be removal of a small landslide and additional minor track maintenance. The Rose Garden Station needs a new roof and painting. The Oregon Express would be restored for the run so that three trains would be available. Lastly, we would recommend a comprehensive safety audit by rail experts and a plan on training and maintenance related to the audit.</p>

Funding the capital to repair the Zoo Train is financially sound and a strategic opportunity. Not only will the return on investment be positive, but there will be tangible and intangible benefits to the Zoo for generations to come. This was true when the train was built and remains true today.

## Documents Regarding Other Zoos

Studies	Author	Notes
2024 Omaha's Henry Doorly Zoo and Aquarium Benchmarking	Friends of the Washington Park and Zoo Railway	Information about the train that runs in the Omaha Zoo, including background on railroad, financial summary, operations and train speech.
2021 St Louis Zoo Benchmarking Report	Friends of the Washington Park and Zoo Railway	Information about the train that runs in the St Louis Zoo, including background on railroad, financial summary, budget and operations costs. Financial data was update for the current year.
2023 List of zoos with trains	Oregon Zoo	Includes a list of zoos with trains, including those with over 1 million visitors and trains that extend beyond zoo propriety boundaries.
2024 Report-back on trains that run off campus	Oregon Zoo	Includes information about outside zoo route trains at the San Antonio Zoo, Fort Wayne Zoo and Reid Park Zoo in Tucson, Arizona.

## Shannon and Wilson Documents

Studies	Author	Notes
2024 Railway Reconnaissance Report Summary	Shannon & Wilson, Inc.	Shannon & Wilson staff provided responses to several of the comments by the Zoo (shown in blue) including clarification around the scope of the 2021 and 2023 revised report, as well as further studies and evaluations that would be needed in the future.
2023 Revised Geotechnical Engineering Report and Executive Summary	Shannon & Wilson, Inc.	<p>The purpose of this revised report is to update cost estimates associated with the conceptual mitigation alternatives include in the November 2021 report to account for cost escalations. This report supersedes our November 2021 draft report.</p> <p>Overall, in our opinion the tracks are in good condition. In addition to geotechnical considerations presented in this</p>

report, the railroad would benefit from removal of ivy and other vegetation that has taken over since the railroad has been out of service. Track ballast would be beneficial along most of the alignment to help hold the track in place.

We understand that the railroad only operates during daylight hours and when the weather is favorable. The train runs slow enough that the operator can stop if a tree is on the tracks or damage to the track has occurred. The Risk of landslides or retaining wall failure occurring during the summer months and during periods of dry weather when trains would be running is very low.

We identified two areas that are currently preventing the train from running and several areas that should be budgeted for and addressed in a long-term maintenance plan. Geotechnical issues which need to be addressed before operations can resume are as follows: Crib Wall Number 3 has failed as a result of uncontrolled drainage during a storm and is not retaining the track shoulder. A slide from an adjacent bluff at Station 56+00 has covered the track with slide debris and trees and needs to be cleared.

2023  
Geotechnical  
Summary

Friends of  
the  
Washington  
Park and  
Zoo  
Railway

The Shannon & Wilson Report (Dec. 2023) presents findings from a site reconnaissance conducted in September 2021 along the Washington Park Line in Portland, Oregon. The report identifies key geotechnical issues and recommends minimal repairs required to reopen the Oregon Zoo train line. This approach aligns with standard railroad industry practices: address critical failures to restore operations and revenue, then monitor and maintain over time.

Given the complex governmental ownership and management of the Washington Park & Zoo Railway (WP&ZRR), a proactive restoration strategy is recommended. Specifically, Crib Walls 1, 2, 3, and 4 should be replaced concurrently, as these present the highest likelihood of failure within the next 5–10 years. This work would be performed alongside the necessary removal of the small landslide and minor track work to expedite the reopening of the line.

Key Findings and Recommendations (Shannon & Wilson Report)

Overall Condition:



- The tracks are generally in good condition. Track ballast should be added along much of the alignment to support the rails.

Immediate Repairs Needed:

- Crib Wall 3 has failed due to stormwater drainage issues and requires replacement with a soldier pile wall or short bridge.
- Landslide Debris (STA 56+00): Approximately 300 cubic yards of debris need to be cleared to reopen the track.

Long-Term Maintenance Plan:

- Conduct annual reconnaissance inspections, ideally before seasonal operations resume.
- Monitor all remaining crib walls and repair only as inspections dictate

2021 Draft  
Geotechnical  
Engineering  
Report

Shannon &  
Wilson, Inc.

*The Friends of the Washington Park and Zoo Railway commissioned this study.*

Neal McCulloch, PE, LEG, Director of Railroad Services for Shannon & Wilson, conducted an updated geotechnical evaluation of the Washington Park train alignment building on the prior thorough studies completed by GeoDesign in 2014 and 2015 for the Oregon Zoo. The assessment concluded that overall track conditions remain stable, and there have been no significant geotechnical changes since the earlier evaluations. The observed maintenance needs primarily involve routine repairs to address localized settlement, drainage improvements and track structure maintenance consistent with normal wear overtime. No major slope failures or structural instabilities were identified, and with standard repair measures, the alignment remains suitable for continued operation.

2021 Railway  
Reconnaissance  
Report  
Summary

Oregon  
Zoo

*The Oregon Zoo responding to the 2021 Geotechnical Engineering Report commissioned by Friends of the Washington Park and Zoo Railway.*

The report provides a basic reconnaissance of geotechnical conditions along the historical railway route and includes a useful table summarizing localized wall and landslide mitigation costs. However, its conclusions remain highly limited in scope, and it significantly understates the true complexity, regulatory burden, and cost of restoring train service to the public.

# Washington Park Documents

Studies	Author	Notes
2025 Transportation Access Plan Summary	Explore Washington Park	<p>Explore Washington Park’s Transportation Access Plan (TAP) presents a 10-year roadmap to improve mobility, manage growth, and enhance the visitor experience across Washington Park. With nearly 3 million annual visitors and an anticipated 33% increase by 2035, the TAP emphasizes multimodal access and strategic parking and transportation management. This report focuses on the most critical transportation access issues—including parking constraints, shifting transportation mode share—and a strategic framework for addressing these challenges.</p> <p>Key Transportation Challenges</p> <p>Washington Park is experiencing increasing pressure on its transportation systems due to rising visitor numbers, changes in travel behavior, and limited infrastructure. Key challenges include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Limited Parking:</b> Parking is the most visible and pressing challenge across Washington Park. There are approximately 1,400 designated parking spaces within the park, with about 900 of those parking spaces concentrated in the lots near the Oregon Zoo. During the Park’s peak season (late May through early September), parking near the Zoo and Portland Japanese Garden regularly hit full capacity—often before 11am—resulting in vehicles circling the lots and park roadways in search of spaces. Parking occupancy exceeds capacity during 82% of peak season days in the areas of the park near the Portland Japanese Garden and International Rose Test Garden. Roughly 700 additional spaces are available at off-site lots located off of SW Westgate Drive and SW Raab Road near the south end of the park, which EWP operates as overflow parking primarily serving the Oregon Zoo.</li> <li>• <b>Decline in Transit Use:</b> From 2017 to 2023, transit use declined from 22% to 13%, while car use rose to 71%. In 2024, transit slid to an estimated 8-11% with private vehicle usage up to 78-81%.</li> <li>• <b>Projected Growth in Attendance:</b> Annual park visitors are projected to increase by over 30% by 2035, which would create an onsite parking shortfall of more than 1,000 spaces if current mode shares persist.</li> </ul> <p>TAP Strategic Goals</p>

		<p>To respond to the growing demand and strained resources, the TAP lays out a strategic framework emphasizing a balanced and sustainable transportation system. Key strategic goals include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Mode Shift Targets:</b> Restore the 2019 mode share by increasing transit use by 10-15% and reducing single-occupancy vehicle use by up to 14% across all park venues.</li> <li>• <b>Multimodal Enhancements:</b> Investments in park shuttles, improved wayfinding, better bike infrastructure, and expanded transit incentives are prioritized to support accessibility and reduce parking demand.</li> <li>• <b>Parking Management:</b> Strategies include assessing &amp; managing parking rates, reviewing employee and volunteer parking policies, and exploring a range of parking solutions in designated high-demand areas.</li> <li>• <b>Data-Informed Decision Making:</b> The TAP incorporates annual surveys, ridership counts, and utilization data to track progress toward access and sustainability goals.</li> </ul>
2024 Washington Park Visitor Report	Explore Washington Park	<p>The visitor report is a comprehensive analysis of attendance and engagement in Washington Park. It aims to provide insights into visitor behavior, demographics and preferences, serving as a critical tool for planning and improving visitor experiences.</p> <p><b>Age Distribution:</b> A balanced representation across age groups, with 30% aged 25-34, indicating strong interest from millennials.</p> <p><b>Cultural Diversity:</b> White/Caucasian: 71%; Asian/Asian American: 12%; Hispanic/Latino: 10%; Multiracial: 4%</p> <p><b>Economic and Educational Background:</b> 45% earn over \$100,000, with some income non-disclosure. 66% hold a bachelor's degree or higher.</p> <p><b>Local vs. Tourist Appeal:</b> International Rose Test Garden and Portland Japanese Garden attract over 60% out-of-state visitors in summer months. Oregon Zoo predominantly draws locals.</p> <p><b>Seasonal Attendance Patterns:</b> Peaks in August, with family-friendly spots like the Oregon Zoo attracting more families.</p> <p><b>Mode of Transport:</b> Private Vehicles: 78% during peak times. Active Transportation: 42% of intrapark travel. Opportunities exist to promote public transit.</p>

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Peak vs. Off-Peak Exploration: Peak: 45% visit multiple locations. Off-Peak: 32% visit multiple locations.

Venue-Specific Trends: High cross-visitation at the International Rose Test Garden and World Forestry Center. Hoyt Arboretum is notable for attracting visitors interested in exploring multiple locations within Washington Park. Oregon Zoo maintains strong standalone appeal.

2023 Washington Park Parking Program Service Delivery Plan FY 2023/24	Portland Parks and Recreation	The City of Portland has partnered with the main stakeholders of Washington Park and created the 2012 Parking and Transportation Agreement. In this agreement, Portland Parks & Recreation agreed to manage a pay to park program, provide enhanced Park Ranger presence and enhance transportation maintenance. In addition, part of the funding would support a Transportation Management Association to operate shuttles for the park and plan for future transportation needs. The funds raised in the Washington Park Pay to Park program will be utilized to improve Washington Park and the guest experience.
2023 Washington Park Parking Management Toolkit	Portland Parks and Recreation	<p>Parking is a scarce resource in Washington Park. On peak days, it is common for more than 10,000 visitors to travel to the Park and there is not enough capacity for everyone to drive and park. Nor is this desirable for parkgoers with the current infrastructure. Excessive vehicle traffic creates conflicts with pedestrians, bicyclists and other users of the Park's roadways, which can degrade the overall experience for everyone.</p> <p>To address parking scarcity, reduce congestion and incentivize the use of other access options, Washington Park implemented paid parking in early 2014 after multiple years of outreach to stakeholders, visitors and neighbors. One hundred percent of parking proceeds are reinvested within Washington Park, and a vital component of the Paid Parking program was the creation of Explore Washington Park (EWP), whose mission is to improve Park access and the overall visitor experience within a system that offers the most efficient mix of access options for all users.</p> <p>This Toolkit lays out a framework of parking management strategies with a simple goal: Use pricing, management tools and incentives to provide visitors with a wide variety of high-quality and easy access options so that they can choose the mode of travel that works best for their trip. Even with a highly successful transportation demand management (TDM) program in place, most visitors will likely continue to drive and park.</p>

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2018 Washington Park Master Plan Update	Portland Parks and Recreation	<p><i>See Appendix E for more information.</i></p> <p>Phase 1 (1-5 years): Connect the north and south ends of the park with a regional trail for bikes and pedestrians along the zoo train corridor.</p> <p>Phase 2 (5-15 years): Train Station Improvements: Improve station to include a seasonal Depot Café, and restore view point. Estimated to cost \$700,991</p> <p>Regional trail for pedestrians and bicycles: Add a modified path to the train corridor or replace the train tracks with a full 12-foot paved path and improve drainage.</p> <p>Beginning in 1960, park visitors could travel between the Oregon Zoo and International Rose Test Garden by train. The two-mile round trip took about 30 [sic] 35-40 minutes. The corridor has been quiet since September 2013. Unstable conditions and cost to repair the tracks outside of the Oregon Zoo have silenced the clack of the rails, but the corridor offers an unique experience and vantage point in Washington Park. Portland Parks &amp; Recreation is coordinating with Metro to determine how to best utilize the corridor and train station.</p> <p>A regional trail built within this corridor would improve safety for pedestrians and bicyclists in Washington Park. If the Zoo Train remains in operation, a narrower version of the regional trail should be explored. The tracks are never steeper than 4.5%, and a paved regional trail is an opportunity to reconnect the north and south ends of Washington Park.</p> <p>Regional Trail between J Gate and Train Station; \$10,200,000; Explore Washington Park, Metro: * Project to be studied as part of Transportation Management Plan. Allowed by right – assumes that no soil disturbance will take place in the Environmental Zones (c or p). Environmental Review Likely, but more specifics on the size, location and materials of project is required to make a determination if located all or partially in "c" zone given path's width and paving.</p> <p>During the development of the Washington Park Master Plan, the Oregon Zoo informed the City of Portland that the zoo was not going to make repairs to the zoo train's [Historic Washington Park Loop]. The City proposed turning the rail line to a multiuse trail. When this plan was presented to the City Council in 2018 there was considerable public testimony and City Council support to restore the loop</p>
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rather than to turn the right of way into a multiuse trail at a cost of \$10.2 million.

## Other Documents

Studies	Author	Notes
2025 The Oregon Rail Heritage Center: A Model of Public-Nonprofit Collaboration	Friends of the Washington Park & Zoo Railway	<p>The Oregon Rail Heritage Center is more than a museum—it's a living, breathing example of how public and nonprofit sectors can join forces to protect and celebrate shared heritage. Through vision, cooperation, and mutual respect, the City of Portland and ORHF have preserved vital pieces of railroad history while creating a welcoming, educational, and inspiring space for the public.</p> <p>As other communities and public agencies look for ways to safeguard their own industrial or cultural assets, the ORHC offers a blueprint for success: align public ownership with nonprofit leadership, empower community volunteers, and prioritize transparency and impact. This model doesn't just preserve the past—it builds a sustainable and participatory future.</p> <p>The Oregon Rail Heritage Center stands as a compelling case study in how public ownership and nonprofit initiative can work hand-in-hand to achieve lasting cultural and historical preservation. At the heart of this partnership is a unique division of roles: the City of Portland owns the historic locomotives and the land on which the center sits, while the Oregon Rail Heritage Foundation (ORHF), a dedicated nonprofit, takes on the operational, fundraising, and programming responsibilities.</p>
2025 Willamette Shore Trolley (Lake Oswego Trolley)	Friends of the Washington Park & Zoo Railway	<p>The Willamette Shore Trolley (WST) operates on a 7-mile route along the historic Jefferson Street Rail Line, passing through notable landmarks such as the Elk Rock Tunnel and the Riverwood Trestle. The line is owned and maintained by a consortium of local and regional agencies, including the City of Portland, City of Lake Oswego, Metro, TriMet, and the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT). This collaborative structure helps preserve the corridor and maintain its potential for future public transit use.</p> <p>The City of Lake Oswego serves as the manager and administrator of the consortium's budgets and annual work plans and oversees the operating contract with Vintage Trolley Inc. (VTI), which owns the two trolleys—cars 513 and 514—and provides day-to-day operations. The Oregon Electric Railway Historical Society (OERHS) supports the</p>

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service by providing volunteers, expertise in historic streetcar operations, and insurance coverage.

The intergovernmental agreements (IGAs) governing the WST have been instrumental to its operation and maintenance. These agreements—such as the Management IGA and the Maintenance and Funding IGA—define the roles, responsibilities, and financial contributions of each member agency. The most recent amendment extends the Maintenance and Funding IGA through 2031, ensuring ongoing collaboration and support.

The effectiveness of these agreements is evident in the transformation of the line since the consortium assumed control in 1987. At that time, the route consisted of about six miles of track in marginal condition, with no stations, passing tracks, or maintenance facilities. Since then, the consortium has overseen the construction of the Lake Oswego maintenance and storage shop, passenger stations at both ends of the line, an office and retail space in Lake Oswego, a passing track at the Sellwood Bridge midpoint, a track extension in Lake Oswego, and two secure track maintenance sidings. Much of this work has been funded through grants.

The collaborative nature of the consortium has enabled the preservation of the rail line and the continuation of the trolley service, serving as a model for regional heritage transportation management.

2025 Letter to Chair Clark and Chair Lewis	Dan Saltzman	As a long-time advocate for accessible transportation in our community, I want to express my strong support for the restoration of the Washington Park and Zoo Railway and to underscore the vital role it plays in Portland's cultural heritage and visitor experience.
2025 Portland Streetcar	Friends of the Washington Park & Zoo Railway	<p>The Portland Streetcar system is a hallmark of modern urban transit in the United States, blending historical roots with contemporary infrastructure to serve the city's dynamic neighborhoods.</p> <p>The Portland Streetcar is owned by the City of Portland and operated through a collaborative partnership involving the Portland Bureau of Transportation (PBOT), TriMet, and Portland Streetcar, Inc. (PSI). PBOT manages the system's infrastructure—including tracks, vehicles, and facilities—and oversees daily operations. TriMet, the region's transit authority, provides professional operators and mechanics, as well as financial and operational support. PSI, a nonprofit organization, plays a key role in strategic planning,</p>

budgeting assistance, private-sector engagement, and customer service.

This partnership is governed by a 2012 Master Agreement that outlines roles, funding responsibilities, and shared goals. Additional intergovernmental agreements (IGAs) support specific projects, such as expansion efforts or capital improvements. Together, this structure allows Portland Streetcar to operate as an integrated, city-owned transit service with regional support and nonprofit collaboration, enhancing mobility and connectivity within Portland's central city.

The streetcar system has been a catalyst for urban development, with nearly half of Portland's housing units built since 2001 located along its routes. Additionally, 39% of the city's affordable housing units are situated near the streetcar lines. Environmentally, the streetcar offers a zero-emission transit option, aligning with Portland's sustainability goals by reducing reliance on personal vehicles and lowering greenhouse gas emissions.

2025 Washington Park Loop – Project Development Estimated Costs	Oregon Zoo	<p>The purpose of the project development phase is to identify and evaluate the full range of requirements, risks and costs associated with restoration. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Conducting technical assessments of track conditions, structural elements and geotechnical stability.</li><li>• Evaluating rolling stock for mechanical integrity, regulatory compliance and historical preservation.</li><li>• Analyzing operational logistics, staffing needs and insurance requirements.</li><li>• Developing cost estimates for both planning and potential capital work.</li><li>• Assessing potential impacts to park operations, visitors and surrounding ecosystems.</li></ul> <p>This work is a prerequisite to any informed decision-making. Without it, the true scale, feasibility and implications of resuming [Historic Washington Park Loop] operations cannot be responsibly understood or evaluated.</p>
2025 Washington	Oregon Zoo	Resuming [Historic Washington Park Loop] operations for the Oregon Zoo train is not simply a matter of restarting a

Park Loop: Considerations, Risks, and Planning Requirements	<p>dormant service after more than a decade. Instead, it represents the launch of a new business operation. Several critical factors necessitate this comprehensive approach, including equipment aging and depreciation, infrastructure degradation, evolving geotechnical conditions, updated operational requirements, increased risk mitigation, regulatory compliance, the train's listing on the National Register of Historic Places, strategic goals, and the need for enhanced fiduciary oversight.</p> <p>This endeavor goes beyond minimal short-term repairs aimed at achieving basic functionality. It demands a holistic evaluation and significant investment to ensure safe, fiscally sustainable operations that deliver lasting value to the community. Key considerations to align resumed operations with desired outcomes include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Safety, security and risk mitigation: Implementing robust protocols, systems and upgrades to ensure operational safety, asset protection and risk minimization.</li> <li>· Accessibility and equity: Achieving full ADA compliance and enhancing inclusivity to better serve all community members.</li> <li>· Sustainability: Reducing the environmental impact of train operations through eco-friendly practices and technologies.</li> <li>· Financial stability: Assessing operational, maintenance and capital expenses while securing sustainable funding for the short and long term.</li> <li>· Operational logistics: Optimizing schedules, routes and support systems to enhance efficiency and reliability.</li> <li>· Staffing requirements: Identifying personnel needs to ensure safe, effective and sustainable operations.</li> <li>· Continuity of operations: Creating contingency plans to minimize disruptions and support long-term functionality.</li> <li>· Preservation of historic integrity: Adhering to guidelines and practices that respect and maintain the train's historic designation while enabling modern functionality.</li> </ul>
2025 Analysis of the Oregon Zoo's Document entitled Zoo Washington Park Loop Restoration	<p>Burgel Rail Group</p> <p>(1)The costs listed under each section have been inflated to justify the Oregon Zoo's position which is, apparently, to not reestablish operations on the Washington Park section of the Zoo Railroad. This report seems to forget that there is an existing train operation within the Oregon Zoo for which much of this apparent financial obligation must also be applied. I describe this aspect of their report in greater depth below. Of course, if these inflated numbers are part</p>

## Planning Requirements

of Oregon Zoo's long-term strategy to no longer continue operation of the Zoo Train which currently operates over trackage within the Zoo, then that's another story.

(2) In my opinion, much of justification used in these two reports (Zoo Washington Park Loop Restoration Planning Requirements - June 2025 plus its Executive Summary submitted in a separate report) that were furnished to Metro's Zoo Train Task Force has been based on their view that the effort to reestablish service on this historical railroad needs to be approved as a new entity. The writers of this report seemed to have forgotten that rail operations were proceeding seemingly without regard to many of their concerns prior to the cessation of service in 2013-2014. Rather, stopping train operations on the Washington Park trackage was capricious, arbitrary and without being given due process. Accordingly, none of these approvals envisioned in their report have any merit and further efforts to direct the conversation in this direction should be vigorously rejected.

(3) Concerning the cost estimate (**Infrastructure & Rolling Stock Assessments**): The Washington Park Railroad as well as the trackage within the Zoo are not connected to the general rail network and therefore the cost estimate based on Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) regulations are not, strictly speaking, applicable. To date, Zoo Railroad personnel currently working at the Zoo have resorted to using ASTM F2960-16, Standard Practice for Permanent Amusement Railway Rides and Related Devices. In personal conversation with Jeff Honeyman, former Zoo Railroad manager, he assured me that maintenance of the track structure was based on a blend of these two standards. FRA and ASTM. On May 24, 2025, Kathy Goeddel commissioned Bill Burgel, author of this report, to inspect the Washington Park Railroad. Bill is qualified to inspect track based on FRA's 49 CFR 213 regulation. His assessment, provided under separate cover, negates the requirement to perform this inspection. For the record, the Washington Park Railroad portion of the Zoo Railroad has no bridges or tunnels and has only one at-grade highway/rail crossing along its 7,400-ft alignment.

The **geotech surveys** have already been completed and accepted by Oregon Zoo staff. If additional geotechnical instrumentation is being recommended, this stipulation should also apply to the buildings within the Oregon Zoo itself as the zoo sits on the same unstable (landslide)



landform as the Washington Park Railroad. Indeed, one might argue that the Washington park Railroad is located on much more stable ground as compared to the real estate on which the Oregon Zoo now finds itself!

Assessing the **condition of the rolling stock** is incumbent on the Oregon Zoo as this equipment is still under the purview of the Oregon Zoo. Accordingly, this cost should be deleted from this report. The stated need for **environmental impact assessment** is irrelevant as the Washington Park Railroad was operating in fair to good condition without any restrictions until taken out of service in either 2013 or 2014 by officials at the Oregon Zoo for reasons known only to themselves. To now turn around and say that an environmental impact assessment is now required is disingenuous at best.

And last, the **construction and assess feasibility assessment** is not required as the maintenance along the railroad as well as the reconstruction of the crib walls, should these walls be funded in accordance to the recommendations of the two Geotech reports that have been accepted by the Oregon Zoo, will be performed by on-track equipment. Anyone knowledgeable about rail operations would quickly realize that the most economical as well as efficient method for performing work along a railroad is to perform this maintenance and/or construction from the track structure itself. Specialized equipment can be placed on railroad flatcars then transported to the work site to not only deliver the materials needed but to drive the piling necessary for crib wall construction. Track-mounted cranes can then simply drop the pre-cast panels into place with minimal if any disruption to the local environment. No roadway access would be necessary or required.

Other costs such as **planning and design** for crib wall and other structures have been included in the cost estimates already submitted to the Oregon Zoo.

The **Financial and Economic Analyses** are now underway. And finally, the **Contingency and Administrative Costs** should be included in the costs estimates for the recommended geotechnical work previously submitted.

2023 Metro Voter Views of an Oregon Zoo	Metro and FM3 Research	Poling data on voters views toward the Zoo, as well as a potential bond renewal measure. Voter priority questions included a question about converting the Zoo train engines to electric which had 38% of respondents rating it as extremely
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Bond Renewal Measure		or very important. “Rebuilding the train where they had been closed outside the zoo property” had 28% who viewed it extremely or very important. When that question was asked with an estimated budget of \$10 million, that went to 22%.
2020 National Register of Historic Places Registration Form	Melissa Darby	Information about the history of the tracks, depot and rolling stock.

# APPENDIX C

## Additional Challenges

### **The Task Force discussed the following challenges during their meetings.**

#### **Current Park-Specific Context**

Washington Park is experiencing increasing pressure on its transportation systems due to rising visitor numbers, changes in travel behavior and limited infrastructure, including:

- Limited parking in Washington Park on the north end (near the gardens) as well as the south end close to the Zoo. Closure of the Children's Museum and timed entry at the Zoo have improved the parking demand at the south end since 2019.
- Parking near the Rose Garden and Portland Japanese Garden exceeds capacity before 11am on most peak-season days, with occupancy above 100% more than 80% of the time.
- Transit use has declined since 2019, while private vehicle use has risen above 78%, underscoring the need to align any train investment with park-wide mode shift goals.
- The 2025 public opening of the Washington Park Reservoir is expected to further increase visitation to the north area of the

park.

- Access into and traffic flow through Washington Park.
- Cultural changes that decrease willingness to wait in line to access Park features, park vehicles, etc.

#### **Train/Rolling Stock**

The current condition of the train infrastructure and rolling stock reflects a broader transition in Zoo operations following the closure of the Historic Washington Park Loop. This shift was a deliberate and mission-aligned decision, enabling the Zoo to concentrate on delivering an on-campus train experience that supports guest engagement, accessibility and sustainability. The Zoo no longer maintains the personnel, facilities or operational systems required to support train service beyond its grounds.

As a result, the following barriers to restoring the Washington Park segment now exist:

- The 3 trains and 5 engines have maintenance needs.
- Age of engines, cars and infrastructure.
- Current and future availability of maintenance engineers.
- Ability to perform ongoing repairs/maintenance.

- Facilities that store and maintain rolling stock were decommissioned and are no longer available.
- Challenges finding engineers to run the current diesel trains.
- Restoring operations outside the Zoo would require investment in equipment, infrastructure, personnel and long-term ownership and operational responsibility.

## Complicated Ownership Structure

Washington Park is owned by the City of Portland. The Zoo, a Metro property, manages the railroad assets but does not own them. On May 12, 1977, an agreement was signed between Metro (Metropolitan Service District) and the City of Portland, Ordinance No. 143589, wherein the City of Portland leased the Zoo Railway to the Metropolitan Service District. The terms said no cost to Metro, and included the railroad line, a 20-foot right-of-way along the entire route of the railroad line and the entire Washington Park terminal, which is the train station southwest of the Rose Garden. This lease does not obligate Metro or the Zoo to operate the Historic Washington Park Loop.

Other barriers identified by the Task Force include:

- Lack of alignment between the Oregon Zoo's current mission and operation of the Historic Washington Park Loop. The Zoo has no plans to maintain and restore the trains needed to operate the Historic Washington Park Loop in the next 10 years,

leading to further deterioration.

- Concerns about liability with using volunteers to complete work on the tracks as was done in the past.
- City of Portland owns Washington Park, the train/rolling stock, and train tracks. However, the City does not operate, maintain, fund, improve, or manage either train loop.
- Metro has an easement for the land under the tracks within the Zoo.
- The Oregon Zoo managed the Washington Park train and was financially responsible for decisions regarding its operation.

## Funding

- The capital expense and long-term operating costs of the Washington Park train are subject to significant dispute. No comprehensive financial plan has been developed, and there is no identified source of sustained funding for capital reinvestment, operations or maintenance.
- Whether reinstating the Washington Park train would result in net financial benefit is also contested. Available data does not support a clear conclusion, and the potential for revenue generation remains speculative—particularly given the aging diesel equipment, seasonal ridership and operational limitations of the historic system.

## Topographical Considerations

- Geological instability throughout Washington Park presents ongoing challenges for infrastructure development and long-term maintenance.
- Steep slopes, soil movement and past landslide activity affect several sections of the former rail alignment, introducing considerable liability and

engineering risk for any agency or organization that might pursue restoration.

- These conditions raise substantial questions about safety, cost and long-term resilience, particularly in the absence of a designated operator or lead agency with the capacity to own and maintain such infrastructure.



# APPENDIX D

## Additional Opportunities

**Task Force members identified several opportunities, including changing who owns the rolling stock and train tracks, which can increase the opportunity for grants and donor support.**

Additional opportunities include increasing civic pride through returned operations of the historic train, as well as offering greater transportation options for visitors in Washington Park and the return of a longer train experience that many Portlanders remember fondly.

### Ownership Changes

Task Force members discussed the opportunity for a third-party operator for the Washington Park train via an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) as one possible route to restore full service to Washington Park. The IGA would need to include roles, responsibilities, performance metrics and eligibility for grants and public funding. Similar agreements for rail operations exist in Portland and include the Willamette Shore Trolley, Oregon Rail Heritage Center and the Portland Streetcar.

Management of the Washington Park Train by a third-party entity, such as a nonprofit or a public-private partnership, via an IGA with the City of Portland and Metro would shift day-to-day responsibility and financial management away from the Oregon Zoo, which has signaled that the Historic Washington

Park Loop is not a core part of its mission. The operator would manage staffing, scheduling, marketing, maintenance and ridership growth.

A third-party operator would not be burdened by the same layers of public-sector bureaucracy, allowing for faster, more cost-effective implementation of necessary repairs and upgrades. This streamlined decision-making could lead to quicker project turnaround times and better stewardship of public and private funds.

A third-party operator could bring a singular focus and specialized expertise to railway operations including restoring preventive maintenance programs, enhancing the visitor experience and increasing revenue through special events and targeted marketing. Independence from Zoo management would allow the train to be overseen by those dedicated to its long-term success and public value and not just by its profitability within a zoo-centric framework.

### Financial Revenue

Documents were shared with the Task Force that showed how comparable railways generate positive net income. The Omaha Zoo Railroad, which features a similar track gauge and includes a vintage 1890 Krauss steam engine that served in WWI, operates profitably under a well-supported maintenance and operations model.

### Grant and Donor Support

A nonprofit operator would be eligible for

historic preservation grants, tourism development funds and donations that the Zoo, as a Metro entity, may not be able to access as easily. The Oregon Rail Heritage

Center was able to raise \$5 million for a turntable with grants and individual contributions.

Quoting former City of Portland Commissioner Amanda Fritz during the Washington Park Master Plan discussion on March 25, 2018, “One of the most surprising things from my time as Parks Commissioner has been the enthusiasm of rail supporters—and their ability to raise serious money. We should not discount that.” Equally vocal was Former Commissioner Nick Fish, “ ... Commissioner Fritz noted the fundraising energy from the rail community. I think the best example is the Oregon Rail Heritage Foundation. They raised \$4–5 million and overcame enormous logistical hurdles. There’s a lot of enthusiasm for family-friendly rail amenities. I’ve rarely seen such persistent fundraising. I agree with Commissioner Fritz and Dan—this should be scoped into the Transportation Management Plan and not left to uncertain discussions with Metro.” The train is beloved by generations of Portland residents and will be well supported by the community.

## Increased Civic Pride

Restoring the train offers a chance to

### “Big Vision” ideas developed by the Task Force:

- Extend the train to light rail
- Food Service on the train
- Make train seasonal
- Tram idea – connect Zoo and Washington Park usage without a car
- Partnerships with Rail Heritage group and/or TriMet to provide input and support

reassert Portland’s tradition of civic innovation and pride in public spaces, something the community is eager to rally around again. The railway has been a source of pride for Oregonians since its inception. The train’s value goes well beyond being a fun amusement. It demonstrated the altruistic community spirit of Portland. Portland’s reputation has taken a hit in recent years. Failure to restore the train is just one more thing the city has

lost and cannot manage anymore. A dedicated operator could re-energize public support and community involvement through volunteering, education programs, and historic preservation advocacy—ensuring the train reflects Portland’s identity and values.

## Enhanced Visitor Experience and Transportation Options

When the train ran the Historic Washington Park Loop into Washington Park, visitor reviews were overwhelmingly positive, with many calling it a highlight of their trip. The longer route offered a scenic, relaxing ride that felt like a real attraction, not just a short shuttle. The Friends group has seen strong public support for its return; including thousands of petition signatures and consistent feedback that the train, as it operates now, is a disappointment. According to them, a longer, more engaging ride would likely increase ridership, boost satisfaction and give families one more reason to spend time and money at the zoo.

The return of the Historic Washington Park Loop might also help ease

congestion by spreading people out and offering a break from walking, especially

during peak days.

# APPENDIX E

## Non-Train Scenarios

**These options fall outside the scope of the Task Force (Appendix F) but were considered important to note and to consider in case funding becomes available.**

Other scenarios include:

- Rose Garden Depot Café (from the 2018 Washington Park Master Plan)
- Regional Trail without the Historic Washington Park Loop (from the 2018 Washington Park Master Plan)
- Train car attraction
- Regional Trail on SW Kingston Road

### Rose Garden Depot Café

The Task Force felt that moving forward with a visible feature connected with the Historic Washington Park Loop would keep it in the community's mind, while also making incremental improvements to Washington Park and the future of the train.

A seasonal Depot Café (using the historic Rose Garden Station) was identified in the Washington Park Master Plan (2018) as a Phase 2 project (Solidify the Vision – 5 to 15 years). This project was listed to “prepare and establish the framework for improved circulation and allow for new

amenities to be built in the park.” The Café was selected because it met the following Master Plan Goals:

- Fulfill the potential for Washington Park to become a world class park that's valued for inspirational beauty, areas of respite, recreation, health and vitality.
- Washington Park showcases horticultural excellence and preserves natural area integrity.
- Washington Park cultivates a rich educational, cultural and historic vitality, and embraces the cultural diversity of its visitors and the regional community.

The following information was included in the plan:

*With the proposed addition of a regional trail to the train corridor, the train station depot becomes an incredible redevelopment opportunity to add amenities. The train station's perch overlooking the future indoor garden, Rose Garden and city beyond will act as a trailhead overlook and seasonal café. Historically, this point afforded sweeping panoramic views from Mt. St. Helens to Mt. Hood. Since the train depot's development in 1960, the reforested hillside plantings have grown tall, eclipsing most distant views. Selective thinning and pruning of trees directly east of the depot landing will reopen dramatic views to the city and Mt. Hood,*

*presenting a stunning place to meet after a hike and enjoy the sunset. The depot can be redeveloped to provide a café setting with the focus on outdoor, open and covered seating. A restroom facility will be added.*

The total project cost was estimated at \$1,400,000, which includes contingency, management, general requirements, overhead and profit, bonds and insurance, as well as escalation through construction, permitting and project management.

Other information in the Plan included:

- The Rose Festival Foundation was

**A rendering of the Station Café from the Washington Park Master Plan.**



listed as a potential partnership.

- Conditional Use is likely but should be confirmed by the City of Portland, Bureau of Development Services. Food service and rental space are Conditional Uses in OS zone.

## Train car attraction

Task force conversations identified another similar idea to the Station Café that would keep the Historic Washington Park Loop in the forefront of the community's mind in case of a delay in funding/building a larger project. The task force thought of converting a train car to a similar attraction as the Station Café.

There is no information about this idea, so further research would be needed.

## Regional Trail without the Historic Washington Park Train Loop

A regional trail between J Gate and the Train Station for pedestrians and bicycles (as either a modified path next to the train corridor or replace the train tracks with a full 12-foot paved path and improve drainage) was identified in the Washington Park Master Plan (2018) as a Phase 1 project (Set the Stage – 1 to 5 years).

The Regional Trail was selected because it met the following Master Plan Goals:

- Fulfill the potential for Washington Park to become a world class park that is valued for inspirational beauty, areas of respite, recreation, health and vitality.
- Washington Park is easy to get to and move through once there.
- Washington Park clearly connects people of all communities to the identified venues and activities.

The following information was included in the plan:

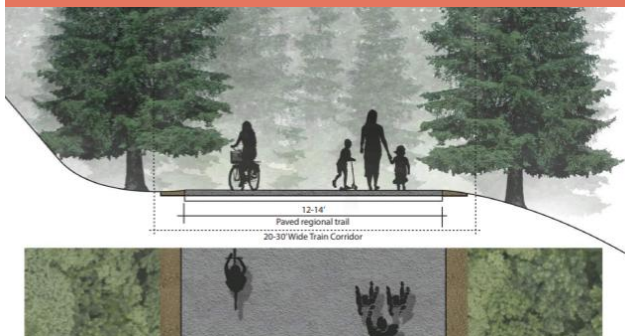
*Beginning in 1960, park visitors could travel between the Oregon*



*Zoo and International Rose Test Garden by train. The two-mile round trip took about 35-40 minutes. The corridor has been quiet since September 2013. Unstable conditions and cost to repair the tracks outside of the Oregon Zoo have silenced the clack of the rails, but the corridor offers a unique experience and vantage point in Washington Park. Portland Parks & Recreation is coordinating with Metro to determine how to best utilize the corridor and train station.*

*A regional trail built within this corridor would improve safety for pedestrians and bicyclists in Washington Park. If the Zoo Train remains in operation, a narrower version of the regional trail should be explored. The tracks are never steeper than 4.5%, and a paved regional trail is an opportunity to reconnect the north and south ends of Washington Park.*

### **A rendering of the Regional Trail from the Washington Park Master Plan without train tracks.**



The total project cost was estimated at \$10,200,000, which includes contingency, management, general requirements, overhead and profit, bonds and insurance, as well as escalation through

construction, permitting and project management. However, there is a note that this project would be studied as part of the Transportation Management Plan (2020).

Other information in the Plan included:

- Metro and Explore Washington Park were listed as partners.
- This use is allowed by right and assumes that no soil disturbance will take place in the Environmental Zones (c or p).
- Environmental review is likely needed if located all or partially in “c” zone given path’s width and paving, but more specifics on the size, location and materials of project is required to make a determination.

## **Mixed-use trail on Kingston**

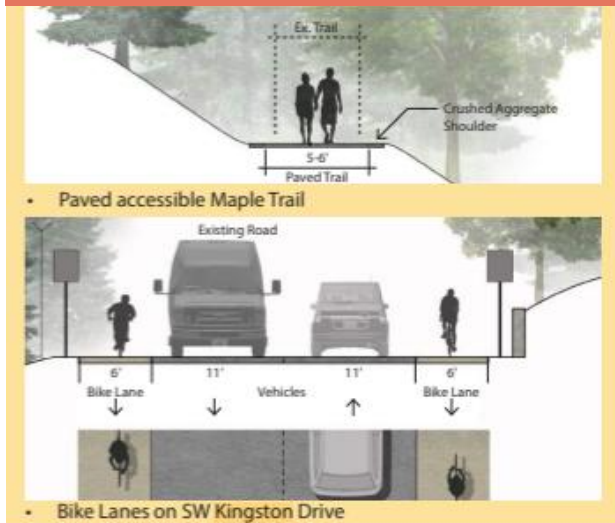
The Task Force raised the idea of having a mixed-use trail on SW Kingston Avenue since it has more gradual inclines which would make it more accessible than the train corridor. The Friends of Washington Park and Zoo Railroad suggested that this trail could be added to the Historic Washington Park Loop, instead of the Regional Trail option listed in the Washington Park Master Plan. A combined train and trail option using SW Kingston Drive was proposed at the review of the Washington Park Master Plan at City Council in 2018 by the adjacent Neighborhood Associations but was not included in the final plan.

According to the Washington Park Master Plan, “Many of the Phase 1 [1-5 years] projects are planning, programming studies, or maintenance projects. These plans and studies are required before

future design projects will be implemented. They address issues of connectivity, inclusivity and serve as opportunities to study the impacts of, or temporarily implement, changes with minor investment.”

- Pave Maple Trail to Regional Trail connection would provide a new separated route (Maple Trail) to bring bikes and pedestrians into the park from SW Canyon Ct. (just east of the Zoo’s J gate) to SW Knights Boulevard/SW Kingston Drive. Enhancement Project – Total project costs are \$532,000 which would be a partnership between Parks and Explore

### A rendering of the paved Maple Trail and bike lanes added to SW Kingston Drive.



Washington Park.

- Intersection improvements for safety and wayfinding at SW Kingston Drive/Wildwood Trail – Enhancement/Maintenance Project – Total project costs are \$64,000 and would be a partnership between Parks and Explore Washington Park.
- Trailhead parking and road repair along SW Kingstorn Drive (and decommission non-trailhead parking areas). This project would include closing inadequate parking areas/developing the best parking and view points. It would also repair/repave roadbed and improve drainage to maintain use for shuttles, buses, automobiles, and bikes. Enhancement project with estimated total project costs of \$2,800,000. Partnership between Parks and Explore Washington Park.

Additional changes to SW Kingston Avenue (near the Portland Japanese Garden) are included in the Master Plan including conversion to one-way travel, new accessible and short-term parking and entry improvements which are considered Enhancement project and expected to cost \$904,000 if new parking is on already-paved areas. These projects are included in Phase 2 (5-15 years).

# APPENDIX F

## Task Force Charter

**The purpose of this Charter is to clearly explain what is expected of each Washington Park Train Task Force member and the decision making structure, as well as the meeting process that will be used.**

The members agree to work together in good faith toward achieving the purpose and goals, creating the final report, and recommending any next steps items that the Task Force determines.

### Purpose

The goal of this Task Force, as described in Metro's FY 2024-25 budget, is to convene stakeholders for conversations centered on the future of the train that used to run through Washington Park. Councilor Christine Lewis sponsored the budget amendment that outlined her vision for the Task Force and the Metro Council voted unanimously in favor of the amendment.

The end product of the Task Force will be a report that: "[C]larifies the cost to bring a whole loop train back to Washington Park; explores the train as a tourist attraction and related revenue generation; and makes recommendations regarding future feasibility and funding scenarios, including the potential for electrification, possible impact to other zoo investments, and various funding sources." This report could be a menu of potential actions, mapping different possible journeys to the extent possible. The report may address cost estimates with the available information. The Task Force will focus on its primary charge to provide a recommendation, based on current data, regarding the future feasibility and funding for a Washington Park train.

### Decision Making

This Task Force is co-led by Metro and the City of Portland. The final report will be presented to Metro's chief operating officer (COO), Marissa Madrigal and Portland's City Administrator, Michael Jordan. COO Madrigal will then present the Task Force's findings and her recommendation to the Metro Council. The final report will also be presented to Portland City Council.

The Task Force will meet monthly to ask questions and have discussions utilizing the data currently available to inform Metro staff to develop the final report. The members will be asked to endorse the report going to COO Madrigal and City Administrator Jordan, as well as to the Metro Council and Portland City Council.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

Task Force members are tasked with the following responsibilities:

- Provide expertise throughout the process.
- Provide recommendations to the project team.
- Serve as liaisons to their organizations or agencies by representing the interests and perspectives of their organizations or agencies and ensure information from the Task Force meetings is provided back internally.
- Attend all meetings.
- Notes may be sent ahead of a meeting if a member cannot attend; these notes will be shared at the meeting.
- Members may designate an alternate at the onset of the study who may attend and participate in deliberations in place of the member.
- Actively participate by contributing to meetings and reviewing materials before meetings.
- Strive to provide recommendations by consensus when possible.
- Consensus is defined as the point where members agree on the most viable option for the entire group, even if it is not each member's personal favorite. If consensus cannot be reached, all opinions will be part of the meeting record.

## **Meetings**

The Group is anticipated to meet monthly, or as needed, from March through July 2025 on the fourth Tuesday of each month.

- Meetings will be scheduled and organized by Metro.
- Meetings will begin and end on time. If agenda items cannot be completed on time, the co-chairs will decide if the meeting should be extended or if an additional meeting should be scheduled.
- Meeting summaries will be prepared and distributed following the meetings.
- Comments on non-agenda items should be provided in writing.

## **Operating Protocols**

As a group, we agree to approach this work with honesty, openness, and willingness to work together. This includes building trust, assuming good intentions in others, and ensuring that

our behavior supports a successful process. We will work with each other and staff to address issues as they arise, utilize tools to ensure clear communication and robust participation, and meet the communication needs of members. This set of operating protocols will help guide our process and will be a living document that we can revisit as needed (with the agreement of a majority of the group).

As we fulfill our charge, we will:

- Keep the needs and concerns of the local community and the larger region at the forefront of the work.
- Keep focused on the objectives of the meetings; note additional topics for discussion.
- In discussions, challenge ideas rather than individuals.
- Approach different opinions with curiosity and seek to understand.
- Keep multi-tasking to a minimum.
- Speak from our own experience, while elevating the voices that are not present or have been historically excluded.
- Be mindful of our participation – ensure a balance in speaking time by allowing others to speak once before we speak twice.
- Be respectful of each other.
- As much as possible, share materials in advance.
- Share differences of opinion on ideas - silence is considered agreement.
- Help create an atmosphere in which differences can be raised, discussed, and melded into group decisions.
- Meeting summaries will be prepared and distributed following the meetings. All opinions will be documented in the summary.

## Definitions

<b>Ancillary Costs</b>	Additional funds needed to mitigate the impacts to the road, parking and other infrastructure in Washington Park.
<b>Charge</b>	The direction that the group will take, as determined by the convener.
<b>Collaborate</b>	To work together to achieve a common goal or objective. Collaboration is often employed where multiple parties have authority or control over the outcome and may involve a shared project or policy outcome. Parties



	may share expertise, resources, etc., to accomplish the goal or complete the project.
<b>Capital Investment or Start-up Cost</b>	The cost or funds needed to improve/enhance a train, tracks and/or station; including planning, designing changes, geotechnical reports, rolling stock inventory, modifications or repairs to rolling stock, rebuilding and/or hillside stabilization of tracks, etc.
<b>Electrification</b>	The process of converting a train from being powered by diesel to sole or redundant power through the electric grid.
<b>Funding</b>	The source money to put toward the cost of the improvement/enhancement or maintenance/operation of a train
<b>Historic Register</b>	There are national and local designations of historic places that are considered worthy for preservation. The Washington Park Train is registered as a historic site.
<b>Mentorship</b>	Trade and mentor opportunities through vision, design and construction
<b>Ongoing Cost</b>	The funds needed to continue the operation or maintenance of a train beyond the initial start-up cost, including upkeep of tracks/trains, power/fuel, staff for operations, cleaning, repairs, etc.
<b>Public Purpose</b>	Another way to say this is that there is a public benefit which is provided through government agencies and non-profits for the benefit of the community as a whole, not just a subset of the community.
<b>Protocol</b>	The group agreement for how the group will work.
<b>Proxies</b>	A person or email that is providing the group your vote or input.
<b>Revenue</b>	Funds that would come from operation of a train, including ticket sales.
<b>ROW Preservation</b>	Keep the existing land that is used for travel (and the legal rights and ownerships that go along with the Right of Way)
<b>Schedule</b>	The timeframe or length of time needed to complete a project or program
<b>Historic Washington Park Train Loop</b>	The term that will be used to describe the route which used to extend from the Zoo through Washington Park.
<b>Current Zoo Loop</b>	The existing route that runs within the bounds of the Zoo.

# APPENDIX G

## Rebuttal from the Friends of the Washington Park and Zoo Railway

Subject: Rebuttal to July 7, 2025 Draft Report on the Historic Washington

Park Loop

To: Metro Zoo Train Task Force

From: Kathy Goeddel, Friends of the Washington Park & Zoo Railway

Date: July 13, 2025

Dear Task Force Members,

We recognize the challenge of integrating diverse viewpoints, but the July 7 draft contains serious omissions, mischaracterizations, and biased framing that must be addressed before the report is finalized. This rebuttal provides fact-based corrections to ensure the report accurately reflects community support, technical feasibility, and the Task Force's full body of work.

### **1. Public Support Was Omitted or Misrepresented**

The report states that 2023 polling did not prioritize train restoration, but fails to mention over 44,000 petition signatures, \$60,000+ in grassroots donations, and consistent community engagement. Letters, testimony from the 2018 City Council hearing, and supportive statements from elected leaders such as Mayor Wheeler and Commissioner Saltzmann were excluded. This paints a false picture of public disinterest. Most notably, the question put forth to the public had inherent bias built into it. It was the only item listed in the survey with any cost estimate (one much higher than projected by professional geotechnical engineering experts and architects): "Rebuilding the Washington Park train tracks where they have been closed by landslides beyond the Zoo property, estimated at \$10 million plus undetermined future operations and maintenance costs."

### **2. Geotechnical Risk Was Mischaracterized**

The report emphasizes 'geological instability' despite clear findings to the contrary. The Zoo's own 2014 and 2015 GeoDesign reports, as well as the 2021 Shannon & Wilson assessment, all concluded the area is stable and repairs are routine. Omitting these findings misleads readers about safety and feasibility. Property inside the Zoo presents even higher geotechnical risk than the railroad. This was documented in the GeoDesign Reports and a Memo from Bill Burgel, Burgel Rail Group, June 2025.

### **3. Financial Feasibility Was Undermined**

Scenario 2, (\$1.9M revenue, \$400K profit), is labeled speculative with no context about the vetted assumptions behind it. FWPZR submitted detailed models based on historical ridership and expenses provided by the zoo. Only the mix of ridership was altered to reflect years of actual historic rider mix and the staffing of mechanics altered to match benchmarked levels of other zoos. This information was minimized or excluded.

### **4. Scenario 4: Community-Endorsed Kingston Drive Path**

If the report includes Scenario 3—constructing a multi-use path adjacent to the train—then it should also include a fourth scenario that was previously vetted and embraced by the Portland City Council. Both the Arlington Heights and Sylvan Highlands Neighborhood Associations proposed using S.W. Kingston Drive (as a one-way street) for a multi-use path. This alternative is significantly more cost effective and environmentally preferable to Scenario 3 and presents an opportunity for the public with low investment.

### **5. Scenario Evaluation Was Unbalanced**

Scenario 1 (Zoo Loop only) receives favorable treatment despite lower long-term value and higher maintenance risk, while Scenario 2 is presented with skepticism. A balanced report must evaluate all options with equal scrutiny.

### **6. Electrification Was Framed Negatively for Washington Park**

While the Zoo's electrification efforts are celebrated, applying the same approach to the Historic Loop is dismissed as infeasible. In fact, the infrastructure and lessons from the Zoo Loop could be extended to support full-loop electrification. This double standard distorts the climate and technology conversation. I have requested an edit to this section from Paul Lackey of EV Drive so that what we provide is fact based, not opinion. Electrification of the Willamette Shore Trolley at 5.25 miles between Portland and Lake Oswego demonstrates that this is within reach.

### **7. IGA and Volunteer Models Were Minimized**

Successful governance models such as the Willamette Shore Trolley and the Oregon Rail Heritage Center were mentioned only briefly. Likewise, the report focuses on liability concerns with volunteers while ignoring the widespread success of volunteer-supported rail operations in Portland and across the country. Both are critical components of a feasible future model.

### **8. Transparency and Data Access Were Ignored**

The Friends submitted public records requests and repeatedly sought access to historical train financials and Zoo operating data. These efforts are not acknowledged, omitting a major barrier to stakeholder-informed planning and undermining transparency.

## Conclusion and Recommendation

The July 7 draft does not reflect the full range of stakeholder input, omits key facts, and frames the restoration effort as impractical despite substantial evidence to the contrary. We respectfully request that these issues be addressed prior to report finalization. Should they not be, the Friends of the Washington Park & Zoo Railway reserve the right to issue a Minority Report or a public response.

We request:

- Reinstatement of public input, technical findings, and financial data
- A balanced tone that considers all scenarios fairly
- Transparency regarding source material and editorial decisions

# APPENDIX H

## Proposal for an Intergovernmental Agreement for the Restoration of the Washington Park and Zoo Railway

To: Metro Zoo Train Task Force

From: Kathy Goeddel, Friends of the Washington Park & Zoo Railway

Date: July 22, 2025

On behalf of the Friends of the Washington Park & Zoo Railway, I would like to express our strong commitment to advancing the restoration and long-term operation of the Historic Washington Park Loop through an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA).

The Friends believe there is a viable, community-drive approach—modeled on successful IGA partnerships created for the Oregon Rail Heritage Center and the Willamette Shore Trolley.

The Friends have demonstrated significant public and philanthropic support for this effort, including over 44,000 petition signatures, more than \$65,000 in grassroots contributions and endorsements from civic leaders. The Friends are prepared to step forward to initiate this next phase—while working in coordination with Metro and the City of Portland.

We propose to take the lead on the following critical components of this initiative:

- Collaborate on developing the plan for an IGA between the City of Portland, Metro and the Friends of the Washington Park & Zoo Railway;
- Conduct the necessary studies to support informed decision-making, including a business case evaluation, risk analysis, and securing permits;
- Collaborate with the City of Portland, Portland Parks & Recreation, and relevant agencies to navigate City permitting and approval processes;
- Develop a comprehensive fundraising strategy and begin securing the resources needed for capital improvements and long-term cooperation;
- Create a phased restoration plan with clear scope, defined responsibilities, and achievable deadlines.



Our intent is to implement this proposal professionally, sustainably, and in close partnership with public agencies and community stakeholders. We are committed to restoring the Washington Park Loop in a way that honors Portland's heritage and enhances visitor experience, connectivity, and accessibility in Washington Park.

We are willing to do the bulk of the work, but to succeed, we will require a commitment of resources from both the City of Portland and Metro, including:

- Designated representatives from each agency to participate in planning and to facilitate access to internal resources;
- A financial analyst from Metro to support cost modeling and analysis of operating and capital scenarios;
- Oregon Zoo Train personnel to provide insight into existing equipment, operations, and maintenance needs;
- Cooperation and resources from Portland Parks to plan for accessibility upgrades and restoration of the Washington Park Station;
- Support from Metro and the Zoo to explore siting and planning for a storage and repair facility;
- Access to historical Zoo Train data, including ridership, revenues, and expenses.

We believe this is the most viable and inspiring path forward—one that can preserve a treasured public asset while building a sustainable model in partnership with Metro, the City, and the community for future generations.



**Oregon Zoo**  
Together for Wildlife

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To Marissa Madrigal, Chief Operating Officer, Metro  
From Tim McCormack, Director of Facilities, Oregon Zoo  
Date Friday, January 16, 2026  
Subject Washington Park Geotech Assessment Scope and ROM

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You asked the team at the zoo what the most pressing technical study would be for any government entity or organization interested in restoring rail operations between the Oregon Zoo and the International Rose Test Garden.

First and foremost, we believe it requires a comprehensive geotechnical assessment beyond visual reconnaissance. This is necessary to understand the risks and requirements for safely restoring rail operations along the corridor. The findings will inform feasibility discussions, capital planning, and potential mitigation strategies, while clearly distinguishing planning-level considerations from detailed design or construction decisions.

The following is what we would consider the minimum scope for such an assessment.

### **Review existing conditions**

Conduct a thorough review of prior studies, landslide records (e.g., DOGAMI), and hazard data to identify what is known, what is outdated, and where data gaps exist.

### **Update corridor mapping and hazard identification**

Develop current topographic and hazard mapping (e.g., LiDAR-based) for the full route to identify slopes, embankments, drainage patterns, landslide features, retaining structures, and seismic exposure using modern datasets.

### **Conduct subsurface investigation**

Perform targeted geotechnical borings and testing at representative and high-risk locations to characterize soils, rock, groundwater, and slope conditions, providing defensible, measurable data.

### **Perform slope stability and landslide risk analysis**

Quantitatively evaluate slope stability under static, seismic, and seasonal groundwater conditions to assess the likelihood and consequences of future slope movement, and to identify areas requiring stabilization or ongoing monitoring.

The Oregon Zoo is part of Metro.



### **Evaluate retaining walls and earth structures**

Assess existing retaining walls and earth-support structures to determine foundation conditions, apparent capacity, remaining service life, and feasibility of repair or replacement for rail operations.

### **Assess drainage and groundwater conditions**

Evaluate surface and subsurface water conditions affecting slopes and structures, including identification of drainage deficiencies contributing to instability and concept-level improvement needs.

### **Identify monitoring and risk management needs**

Determine where long-term geotechnical monitoring may be required, identify appropriate monitoring systems, and outline likely ongoing inspection and maintenance obligations.

### **Provide concept-level mitigation guidance**

Identify types of stabilization and mitigation measures that may be required (e.g., retaining structures, slope reinforcement, drainage improvements) without advancing to design or drawings.

### **Provide planning-level cost inputs**

Estimate order-of-magnitude costs for geotechnical mitigation, monitoring, and long-term maintenance sufficient for feasibility discussions and capital planning, clearly distinguishing these from design or construction costs.

The geotechnical assessment is estimated to cost approximately \$250,000, based on typical corridor-scale geotechnical effort. Assumptions include roughly 50 hours for document review, 100 hours for LiDAR and topographic mapping, at least 6–8 targeted borings with standard laboratory testing (\$3,000–\$5,000 per bore), 80 hours for slope stability and retaining structure evaluation, and additional staff time for drainage assessment, concept-level mitigation guidance, and project management/reporting. Hourly rates of \$150 per hour reflect local consulting rates for experienced geotechnical and engineering staff. Actual costs may vary depending on site conditions, the number of borings required, and final scope adjustments. This planning-level estimate is intended to support feasibility discussions and capital planning while clearly distinguishing planning-level effort from detailed design or construction.



Office of Mayor Keith Wilson  
City of Portland

December 19, 2025

**To Kathy Goeddel, Metro Councilor Christine Lewis, and Metro Chief Operating Officer Marissa Madrigal,**

I want to acknowledge and thank the Friends of the Washington Park & Zoo Railway and all who were involved in the Metro Zoo Train Task Force for their efforts in evaluating the possibility to restore the Zoo train and evaluate pedestrian and bike enhancements in Washington Park.

Washington Park and the Oregon Zoo are well-known attractions in our city, welcoming countless visitors from all over yearly. The work from the taskforce highlighted that restoration aligns with the goals of both Metro and the City of Portland toward the visitor experience, increased mobility and activation of the park.

In my role as Mayor of Portland, I am happy to support the continued work of The Friends of the Washington Park & Zoo Railway to develop a more complete feasibility evaluation for the restoration efforts. While we cannot commit funding to support this work at this time, the city will continue to coordinate with the Friends and Metro to ensure there is alignment across the organizations on the path forward for this project.

Best,

Mayor Keith Wilson

City of Portland



# Metro

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## Agenda #: 2.2

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**File #:** 26-6430

**Agenda Date:** 2/3/2026

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### **Supportive Housing Services: Regional Policy and Oversight Committee Subcommittees Update**

Liam Frost (he/him), Interim Housing Director

Yesenia Delgado (she/her), Supportive Housing Services Division Director



## STAFF REPORT 26-6430

### SUPPORTIVE HOUSING SERVICES: REGIONAL POLICY AND OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATE

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**Date:** Jan. 26, 2026

**Department:** Housing

**Meeting Date:** Feb. 3, 2026

**Length:** 15 minutes

**Presenter(s):** Liam Frost, he/him,  
*Interim Housing Director;*

Yesenia Delgado, she/her, *SHS Division  
Director*

**Prepared by:** Liam Frost, *Interim Housing  
Director;* Alice Hodge, *Council Liaison*

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#### ISSUE STATEMENT

During Council deliberations on the SHS Regional Policy and Oversight Committee on Dec. 16, 2025, Metro Council President Peterson requested that staff return to Council with options for establishing subcommittees to support the new Supportive Housing Services Regional Policy and Oversight Committee (RPOC).

In response, Metro Housing Department staff met with the Office of Metro Attorney to explore and develop potential options. This update to Metro Council is intended to inform Councilors on those options.

#### ACTION REQUESTED

Metro Council is asked to provide feedback on the options presented. Based on input received during this work session, Council may direct staff to develop additional policy options for future consideration.

#### POLICY QUESTION(S)

- If Council wishes to consider establishing a subcommittee or a separate technical committee, the following questions should be addressed:
  - **Duration:** The committee could be established as a short-term body or continue for the duration of the RPOC.
  - **Membership:** The committee could consist of service providers who do not currently serve on the RPOC, or a combination of current RPOC members and additional service providers.
  - **Purpose:** The committee could advise on all RPOC agenda items or focus on specific topic areas.
- How can staff best balance stakeholder feedback to increase service provider representation with other considerations, such as streamlining oversight and avoiding an increase in the committee's size?

## **POLICY OPTIONS FOR COUNCIL TO CONSIDER**

- Create a separate advisory committee composed of service providers and subject matter experts to advise the RPOC.

## **STRATEGIC CONTEXT & FRAMING COUNCIL DISCUSSION**

### **Financial Implications**

Establishing an additional committee or subcommittee may require significant additional staff time and resources, depending on the scope, duration, and membership of the body. Increasing service provider representation on the existing committee may also necessitate additional staff support, though to a lesser extent.

## **BACKGROUND**

On December 16, 2026, Metro Council passed two pieces of legislation to reform SHS: the Reforms Work Plan (Res 25-5534) and the consolidation of duties of the current two SHS oversight bodies (SHS Regional Oversight Committee and the Tri-County Planning Body) into one body, the SHS Regional Policy and Oversight Committee (OR 25-1539.)

Metro Housing Department staff are currently implementing the SHS Reforms Work Plan and preparing to launch the new committee. Through this work, and with guidance from Council, staff aim to identify an oversight and policy development model that incorporates subject matter expertise while prioritizing streamlined administrative processes.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

None

No additional materials were distributed at the meeting.