



600 NE Grand Ave.  
Portland, OR 97232-2736

## Council work session agenda

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**Tuesday, January 6, 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 Parks and Nature Road Map Project Update [25-6346](#)

Presenter(s): Jon Blasher (he/him), Director, Parks and Nature  
MG Devereux (he/him), Deputy Director, Parks and Nature  
Beth Cohen, Strategic Funding Program Manager, Parks and Nature

Attachments: [Staff Report](#)

2.2 Willamette Cove Nature Park Update and Draft Funding Strategy [25-6413](#)

Presenter(s): Jennifer D'Avanzo (she/her), Senior Regional Planner  
Jon Blasher (he/him), Parks and Nature Director  
Andrew Scott (he/him), Deputy COO and Willamette Cove Project Sponsor

Attachments: [Staff Report](#)  
[Attachment 1 - Resolution No. 20-5149](#)  
[Attachment 2 - FY2021-2022 Budget Note](#)  
[Attachment 3 - Draft Preferred Design](#)

**3. Chief Operating Officer Communication**

**4. Councilor Communication**

**5. Adjourn**

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oregonmetro.gov

**Agenda #: 2.1**

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**File #:** 25-6346

**Agenda Date:** 1/6/2026

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## **Parks and Nature Road Map Project Update**

Jon Blasher (he/him), Director, Parks and Nature

MG Devereux (he/him), Deputy Director, Parks and Nature

Beth Cohen, Strategic Funding Program Manager, Parks and Nature

## PARKS AND NATURE ROAD MAP PROJECT UPDATE

Date: November 17, 2025

Department: Parks and Nature

Meeting Date: January 6, 2026

Prepared by: Beth Cohen, Craig Beebe

Length: 45 minutes

### ISSUE STATEMENT

With the support of the voters of the region, Metro has been able to protect close to 20,000 acres of natural areas and parks, provide unique nature experiences at destination sites and provide funding to park providers and community organizations all in support of local nature priorities.

Fulfilling voters' expectations means that our natural areas portfolio and operational needs have grown substantially. While the Metro Council has emphasized the need to develop a stable, long-term funding source to support regional parks and nature services, rising obligations and costs are straining the operating revenue currently available.

The Parks and Nature road map project describes a process to leverage a collection of planning projects to deliver the following outcomes for Council consideration:

1. Ensure that the Parks and Nature System Plan is updated to accurately capture agency policy, service priorities, guiding values and measures of success for the next 5-10 years
2. Parks and Nature funding strategies in the short, medium and long-term, including a path for potential levy replacement, before the current levy expires in June 2028.

This work session provides an early opportunity to review with Council how efforts to update the Parks and Nature system plan update can effectively build toward demonstrating urgency, readiness and clear outcomes of a future local option levy.

### ACTION REQUESTED

Review and affirm staff's plan to compile information as part of the road map process that aim to support future Council conversations about priorities for service delivery, site amenities and service standards, how we deliver services and how we can ensure that our service delivery is addressing Tribal priorities, ADA commitments and community priorities. Identify additional information needed to support future Council decisions, including potential funding decisions.

### IDENTIFIED POLICY OUTCOMES

Metro Parks and Nature has a unique role in the region, restoring priority habitat in natural areas and supporting a system of destination sites across the region. Council direction helps determine Metro Parks and Nature's role in the region as well as the values governing how we provide services and measure progress. The Parks and Nature system plan approved by the Metro Council in 2016 establishes three key roles for Metro in regional parks and nature:

- Protected and restored lands

- Regional parks and nature experiences
- Grants, community funding and convening local partners

Subsequent Council direction has also established values and goals for how Parks and Nature delivers these services to achieve desired outcomes on climate, access and resilience economies. The Metro Council adopted frameworks for 2022 levy renewal and 2019 bond measures that articulated criteria and desired outcomes in four primary impact areas—healthy fish and wildlife habitat, proximity and experience of nature, community empowerment, and economic impact and equity.

The department's governing protocol is designed to advance strategies, actions and investments that can fit within these four impact areas. For example, the Parks and Nature 2025-2032 equity, diversity and inclusion action plan (also known as REDI) identifies actions in categories of environmental, economic and cultural equity, health equity and restorative justice. In addition, Parks and Nature is working to update protocols and policies to address commitments for ADA accessibility and advancing Tribal relationships and priorities.

## **POLICY QUESTION(S)**

- Does the proposed approach to compiling information through the Parks and Nature road map process align with Council expectations?
- What additional information or engagement could support Council discussions in 2026 and beyond on parks and nature system plan update or future levy?

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

*Explicit list of stakeholder groups and individuals who have been involved in policy development:*

The road map process is and will be informed by Parks and Nature's ongoing coordination with the region's park providers, conservation organizations, members of the urban Indigenous community and community organizations to ensure the department's current project, program and service delivery reflects community priorities. In addition, the department is actively engaging community and partners in specific planning and project efforts, ranging from community engagement on the Willamette Cove master plan to focused conversations with community partners to review, affirm and help prioritize actions articulated in the 2025-2032 REDI plan.

Parks and Nature will continue to ensure that the feedback received through these efforts around protecting nature for nature's sake, extending the life of existing beloved Metro sites and being innovative in our ability to support community identified priorities, helps shape efforts to update the Parks and Nature system plan and a future levy. In addition, Parks and Nature will identify opportunities for expanding touchpoints with a range of interests including business, transportation, travel and tourism, agriculture, education,

housing/real estate, and emergency responders. The Metro Council may decide to prioritize additional stakeholder engagement activities as part of future levy conversations.

Finally, Parks and Nature is working closely with Metro's Tribal Affairs staff to improve relationships and foster proactive interactions with Tribal governments on the management of Metro's portfolio.

*Broader department and agency context—dimensions of access with Metro's system*

Large majorities of voters have repeatedly indicated their support for enhancing nature for nature's sake—protecting and restoring fish and wildlife habitat and improving water quality in our streams and rivers. Furthermore, the ability to experience nature on a daily basis is a value that's woven into the fabric of the greater Portland region.

Metro Parks and Nature manages close to 20,000 acres of public land, open to the public with both formal and informal access and benefits to people and place. This portfolio has grown over time as Metro has fulfilled voters' direction in supporting the 1995, 2006 and 2019 bond measures. Metro's natural areas offer informal entry without developed infrastructure, much like the national forests. Metro also invests in ongoing restoration activities at over 100 unique natural areas at any given time for ecological benefit.

Furthermore, the Metro Council has emphasized the value of increasing opportunities to experience nature and its benefits for all. Metro maintains, increases and enhances 19 people-centered sites that ensure safe, welcoming experiences to all visitors, spanning from regional destinations to boat launches to cemeteries and nature parks. Finally, Metro provides nature and stewardship programming to youth and adults and supports local priority parks, trails and natural areas in communities across the region.

The department tracks annual performance in the following categories—healthy habitat, proximity and experience, community empowerment and economic vitality.

*Financial implications*

Since receiving Smith and Bybee from the City of Portland in 1990, Metro has added three nature parks a decade and has grown its portfolio of parks and natural areas from 8,000 acres to nearly 20,000 acres. Metro's portfolio of developed sites is very diverse, including several boat launches, cemeteries, a golf course and a historic farm, and as such, poses unique challenges for management. Like other park providers across the region experiencing increased demand for outdoor spaces, Metro is working to keep up with demand on developed sites like Oxbow and Blue Lake Regional Parks in a budget-constrained environment, while also trying to stay ahead of evolving land management challenges like extreme weather, invasive species and the risk of wildfire.

The growth of the system for which Metro is responsible means that the roughly \$19 million raised annually by the current operating levy is not keeping pace with increasing

costs to fully serve the needs of nature and communities, including for staffing, supplies and overall system management.

Affirming goals for service delivery in tandem with conversations about a future levy through the road map process will allow Metro to ensure its parks and nature responsibilities are closer in line with financial capacity. The department is already implementing strategies to bolster its ability to manage through these financial headwinds. Strategies include documenting service delivery needs and costs planning for future long-term capital investments with an understanding of timing requirements related to the bonds and levies that support our work and including operational considerations at the front end of capital planning projects.

## **BACKGROUND**

While the Metro Council has recently heard from Parks and Nature on efforts to update policy direction for the department through updates on the Tribal government consultation strategy and the 2025-2032 REDI action plan, the December 4 work session is designed to be responsive to requests from Council to launch comprehensive conversations about system-wide challenges and opportunities as well as future funding strategies over the next eighteen-plus months.

This fall, Metro Councilors were invited to visit Chehalem Ridge Nature Park, Oxbow Regional Park, Scouters Mountain Nature Park to hear directly from staff about the ongoing opportunities and challenges of operating sites where residents of the region can connect with nature and restoration and land management supports meaningful ecological benefit to our region's land and waterways.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

None



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**Agenda #: 2.2**

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**File #:** 25-6413

**Agenda Date:** 1/6/2026

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## **Willamette Cove Nature Park Update and Draft Funding Strategy**

Jennifer D'Avanzo (she/her), Senior Regional Planner

Jon Blasher (he/him), Parks and Nature Director

Andrew Scott (he/him), Deputy COO and Willamette Cove Project Sponsor

## WILLAMETTE COVE NATURE PARK UPDATES AND FUNDING STRATEGY

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Date: December 18, 2025

Department: COO/PN

Meeting Date: January 6, 2026

Presenter:

Jennifer D'Avanzo, she/her, PN Senior

Planner

Jon Blasher, he/him, PN Director

Andrew Scott, he/him, DCOO

Prepared by: Jennifer D'Avanzo,

971.422.7515,

jennifer.davanzo@oregonmetro.gov

Length: 20 min

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### ISSUE STATEMENT

Metro Council passed Resolution 20-5149 on December 10, 2020, followed closely by 2021/22 Budget Note in June 2021 directing the COO to take certain actions supporting improvements at Metro-owned Willamette Cove property. The COO has directed and supported staff actions to respond to Council expectations and would like to update Council on progress since the last time the project was before Council in November of 2024. Staff seeks Council direction on the draft preferred design and potential funding strategy for the future nature park at Willamette Cove.

This presentation describes staff actions

- a. to identify Tribal and community priorities for future passive recreational opportunities and trail development, aligned with cleanup designs and the protection and restoration of natural resources at this regionally important nature park;
- b. to identify tradeoffs and discuss investment in Willamette Cove nature park to connect communities and wildlife to the Willamette River; and
- c. to discuss future funding recommendations for the nature park construction for trail development, water access, habitat restoration, and a broad range of passive recreational activities at Willamette Cove.

## Master Plan and Engagement Timeline



### ACTION REQUESTED

Staff will be presenting an update to action items a, b and c above and will be seeking:

- Council input on the draft preferred design, including approaches to habitat restoration, regional and nature trails, water access, amenities, and gathering spaces, to inform the final design to meet Council priorities for Willamette Cove; and
- Council input on tradeoffs to ensure the preferred design reflects Council values, community and Tribal feedback, and long-term operation and maintenance.
- Council feedback on the proposed funding strategy, including alignment with Council priorities and guidance on next steps to support construction of the nature park; and

### IDENTIFIED POLICY OUTCOMES

Through resolution 20-5149, the Metro Council instructed staff to develop a plan for meaningful public engagement regarding future passive recreation opportunities and trail development at Willamette Cove. Staff have been actively collaborating with Tribes and the community to shape the vision for the nature park at Willamette Cove while coordinating with in-water and upland cleanup groups and Metro's PN departments. It is important staff provide Metro Council with a comprehensive update on the direction provided and the feedback received thus far.

### POLICY QUESTION(S)

1. Do the draft preferred design and overall design approaches meet Council's priorities for Willamette Cove?
2. Does Council have enough information about trade-offs to provide initial guidance on funding?

### POLICY OPTIONS FOR COUNCIL TO CONSIDER

1. Council can affirm staff's direction on the draft preferred design and potential funding.

2. Council can request additional information from staff to inform final park design and potential funding recommendations.

## **STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS**

Staff recommends Council discuss the draft preferred design and funding strategy to identify any questions they would like to have answered prior to providing guidance.

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

This report strives to address the direction from Council and the feedback we are hearing from Tribes and Community.

- How is this related to Metro's Core Mission?
  - Upon completion of the cleanup, the Willamette Cove nature park will create an opportunity to enjoy nature through a regional trail and protected natural area. This regionally important park supports our agency-wide mission to plan for the region's future and ensure that this region remains a great place to live.
- How does this advance Metro's racial equity goals?
  - This work session includes an overview of Tribal consultation and community outreach. Staff has collaborated with many partners and communities including: the Indigenous community, Black community, people of color, youth, people with disabilities and the houseless community, in addition to conservation advocacy groups. Advancement of Metro's racial and community equity goals includes hearing from all concerned and affected communities during the master planning process and future design and permitting.
- How does this advance Metro's climate action goals?
  - Environmental cleanup of Willamette Cove is anticipated to require removal of all large trees. The development of a nature park will restore those trees, creating canopy, shade, habitat and minimizing erosion.
  - Removing invasives and riparian and shallow water habitat restoration will improve habitat conditions and resilience for salmon and steelhead that move through the area enroute to spawning grounds upriver.
- Known Opposition/Support/Community Feedback
  - The draft preferred design staff are bringing to council are the direct result of Tribal consultation, community engagement, partner and staff feedback. They are supportive of draft design.
  - While there is no known opposition to the project, some community members have requested additional hydraulic studies in the cove to support efforts to evaluate harmful algal blooms in the Lower Willamette River. Metro, DEQ, and the City of Portland are coordinating with the community to determine how existing cleanup-related studies can inform these efforts.
  - Community feedback from October 26, 2025 open house was overwhelmingly positive, emphasizing excitement about river access,

environmental restoration, accessibility, and a nature park that balances human use with preserving natural areas for future generations. A few concerns were raised about the long project timeline and the potential overuse of asphalt and concrete, with requests to avoid overdevelopment.

- Explicit list of stakeholder groups and individuals who have been involved in policy development.
  - Coordinated public engagement for the Willamette Cove upland remedy and master planning efforts has involved a broad range of stakeholders, including Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde Community of Oregon, Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians, Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation of Oregon, Yakama Nation, Nez Perce Tribe, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, Portland Harbor Community Advisory Group, Portland Harbor Community Coalition, Oregon Health Authority, Environmental Protection Agency, Port of Portland, and Oregon Department of Environmental Quality. Since 2021, additional stakeholders have participated over time, including npGreenway, Cathedral Park Neighborhood Association, St. Johns Neighborhood Association, City of Portland Parks and Recreation, Department of State Lands, Blueprint Foundation, Experience Life Science Outdoors (ELSO), Verde, Groundscore, Bird Alliance of Oregon, Human Access Project, Aim 4 Access, People of Color Outdoors, Loco Por la Aventura, Adventure Without Limits, Growing Gardens, and Disabled Hikers.
- Legal Antecedents
  - Not applicable at this time.
- Anticipated Effects
  - Development of Willamette Cove Nature Park represents an important environmental justice action for North Portland and the region.
- Financial Implications (current year and ongoing)
  - Is this item in the current budget?
    - The nature park project is partially funded:
      - Master planning is funded as part of the Parks and Nature Bond.
      - Design, engineering and permitting is also funded through the Parks and Nature Bond.
      - Construction costs for the nature park of roughly \$15.5 million is not funded.
    - Development of a nature park will also include long-term operations and maintenance. Current revenues do not cover O&M costs across the entire parks system, so additional O&M will strain the system.

## **BACKGROUND**

Metro purchased the 26-acre Willamette Cove property in 1996 pursuant to the Open Spaces, Parks, and Streams Bond Measure 26-26 and has held the property for purposes of creating a green space and extension of the multi-use North Portland Greenway trail. Habitat restoration plans support aquatic, riparian, bird and native vegetation species. The North Portland Greenway trail is shown on the City of Portland's comprehensive plan and is part of the regional trail plan.

In November 2000, Metro and the Port of Portland entered into a Voluntary Agreement with Oregon Department of Environmental Quality to perform a remedial investigation/feasibility study (RI/FS) and implement any needed source control measure to prevent releases to Portland Harbor. In December 2000, the US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) identified the Portland Harbor area of the lower Willamette River as a Superfund Site and placed it on the National Priorities List, primarily due to concerns of contamination in the Willamette River sediments and the potential risks to human health and the environment from consuming fish. Metro's agreement with the Port of Portland has supported a significant investment in environmental studies and testing to ensure the site is eventually cleaned up to support our region's desires for healthy, sustainable natural areas. In addition to the many studies and samples taken at the site, Metro and the Port of Portland have ensured interim actions were taken to stabilize and secure the site. In 2004, a petroleum sheen was observed on the water, in the innermost portion of the cove adjacent to the East Parcel. Later that year, approximately 20 tons of soil were excavated and placed offsite in a permitted landfill. In 2008, approximately 987 tons of soil containing lead and other metals were removed from the site, including 356 tons of soil that was stabilized and 631 tons of soil that did not require stabilization, and placed offsite in a permitted landfill. In 2015/16, approximately 5,000 tons of soil containing dioxins/furans and other contaminants were excavated and disposed of offsite at a permitted landfill.

In March 2021 DEQ issued its Record of Decision following six months of public input and comments. In 2022, pre-remedial design soil samples were collected across the site and analyzed to create a strategy for upland site cleanup consistent with DEQ's Record of Decision. The basis of design report for the upland cleanup was completed in fall 2025. The upland cleanup is in 30% remedial design and is working concurrently with the in-water cleanup. In-water cleanup is in 60% remedial design.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

1. Resolution No. 20-5149
2. FY2021-2022 Budget Note
3. Draft Preferred Design for Willamette Cove

# Attachment 1

## BEFORE THE METRO COUNCIL

FOR THE PURPOSE OF DIRECTING THAT ) RESOLUTION NO. 20-5149  
WILLAMETTE COVE BE INCLUDED IN THE )  
LIST OF METRO PARKS AND NATURAL ) Introduced by Council President Lynn  
AREAS ELIGIBLE FOR 2019 BOND FUNDING ) Peterson  
AND DEVELOPMENT OF A PLAN FOR )  
PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT )

WHEREAS, in July, 1992, Metro completed the Metropolitan Greenspaces Master Plan which identified a desired system of natural areas interconnected with greenways and trails and designated Willamette Cove as a greenspace of regional significance; and

WHEREAS, in 1995 Metro Area voters approved an Open Spaces, Parks and Streams Bond Measure (“1995 Open Spaces Bond Measure”) with a stated goal of acquiring land in 14 regional natural areas and six of the regional trails and greenways identified in the Greenspaces Master Plan; and

WHEREAS, in 1996, by Resolution No. 96-2266, Metro authorized the purchase of Willamette Cove with 1995 Open Spaces Bond Measure funding; and

WHEREAS, in 1996, by Resolutions No. 96-2340 and 96-2350, Metro approved a refinement plan and adoption of target area boundaries and objectives for Willamette Cove Target Area used to guide implementation of the 1995 Open Spaces Bond Measure, acknowledging community support for natural resource restoration and passive recreation at the site; and

WHEREAS, since its purchase, Willamette Cove has been the subject of an Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) remedial action for hazardous waste clean-up on the Willamette Cove uplands (ECVC-NWR-00-26), extending from top of riverbank landward, east and away from the Willamette River; and

WHEREAS, Oregon DEQ intends to issue a remedial action clean-up remedy, following which Metro can begin engaging the community to establish objectives for passive recreation, equitable access, and natural area protection at the site; and

WHEREAS, the Willamette River provides a critical migratory corridor and rearing habitat for salmon and steelhead; and

WHEREAS, Willamette Cove has the potential to provide important fish and wildlife habitat; and

WHEREAS, the Willamette River holds great importance to several tribes as a natural and cultural resource; and

WHEREAS, Metro has heard from a diverse array of advocates, including the Portland Harbor Community Coalition, Portland African American Leadership Forum, American Indian Movement-Portland Chapter, Audubon Society of Portland, Portland Harbor Community Advisory Group, neighborhood representatives, Willamette Riverkeeper, and University of Portland, that there is community support for public access, natural resource restoration, and passive recreation at Willamette Cove, and desire to begin a broad community engagement process; and

WHEREAS, in 2019, by Resolution No. 19-4988, voters in the Metro area approved a Parks and Nature Bond Measure (“2019 Bond Measure”) with a stated goal to fund natural area and water quality protection and to connect people to nature close to home; and

WHEREAS, the 2019 Bond Measure includes six program investment areas and program criteria to guide project prioritization and selection; and

WHEREAS, the 2019 Bond Measure “Taking Care of Metro Parks” investment area intends to use bond funds to provide safe, welcoming places to connect with nature, and includes a list of Metro parks and natural areas that are eligible for bond funding; and

WHEREAS, Willamette Cove is not included in the list of Metro parks and natural areas eligible for 2019 Bond Measure funding; however, Resolution No. 19-4988 provides that Metro Council may identify new locations that are eligible for capital investments using bond funding provided they meet the program requirements described in the 2019 Bond Measure; and

WHEREAS, Metro Council has determined that Willamette Cove meets the program requirements described in the 2019 Bond Measure and should be included in the list of Metro parks and natural areas that may be eligible for bond funds; and

WHEREAS, the 2019 Bond Measure was crafted to ensure that people of color are part of the decision-making and benefit from public investments in parks and nature, in accordance with Metro’s Strategic Plan to Advance Racial Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion; and

WHEREAS, the 2019 Bond Measure centered racial equity, community engagement, and climate resiliency as necessary criteria for all bond projects; and

WHEREAS, Metro recognizes that Willamette Cove represents a unique and important opportunity to restore ecological health and reconnect the community to the Willamette River; and

WHEREAS, to further the goal and objective for which Willamette Cove was acquired, now therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED:

1. Metro Council authorizes and directs Metro Chief Operating Officer to include Willamette Cove as a Metro parks and nature destination listed in Exhibit E to Resolution No. 19-4988 eligible for 2019 Bond Measure funds; and

2. Metro Council affirms its support of and commitment to explore trail development, habitat restoration, and a broad range of passive recreational activities at Willamette Cove consistent with its use as a natural area, for example but not limited to, walking, hiking, bicycling, beach access, wildlife viewing, picnicking, and cultural interpretation; and

3. Metro Council shall convene a work session within 30 days of the issuance of the DEQ record of decision for Willamette Cove to discuss additional and voluntary actions that Metro could take at the site to further improve its environmental condition.

4. Metro staff shall prepare a plan for meaningful public engagement to identify community priorities for future passive recreational opportunities and trail development consistent with protection and restoration of natural resources at Willamette Cove, and submit this plan to Metro Council within four months of the date DEQ issues its record of decision on remedial action.

ADOPTED by the Metro Council this 10th day of December, 2020.

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Lynn Peterson, Council President

Approved as to Form:

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Carrie MacLaren, Metro Attorney

## Attachment 2

### Councilor Stacey Budget Note #1: Willamette Cove Future Funding

**FY 2021-22 Council Proposals**

**For Budget Note Discussion**

Councilor	# 1
Stacey	

**Budget Note Title:**

Willamette Cove Future Funding

**Budget Note Narrative:**

The Willamette Cove property is made up of 27 acres and approximately 3000 feet of Willamette River shoreline. For anyone that has had a chance to visit this remarkable property it's clear that there are tremendous opportunities and challenges on this site. Metro has worked with partners over the years on several cleanup efforts however contamination remains throughout the site. As the landowner Metro has a responsibility to current residents and future generations to clean up the site and make it safe for a range of passive recreational activities. Metro also has a responsibility to engage with stakeholders at the site including tribes that have historical uses at the site, community groups and neighbors.

In December 2020, the Metro Council voted to include Willamette Cove in the list of projects that would be eligible for funding from the 2019 Parks and Nature bond measure. Since that time, the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) has selected a cleanup plan for the upland portion of Willamette Cove that would leave some contaminated soil on-site under a cap. While the selected environmental remedy does not have universal support from the community, Metro Council recognizes that a different cleanup may have serious drawbacks including prohibitive costs, and that there are other portions of work at Willamette Cove beyond the uplands cleanup for which the costs are still unknown.

Because the extent of the costs associated with a different cleanup of the upland portion of Willamette Cove are not known in May 2021, the Metro Council directs staff to return in November 2021 and provide a report on the project and receive further direction regarding the type of cleanup the Council will authorize. To ensure adequate funds are at the Council's disposal, the Council directs the COO to reserve \$10 million of beginning fund balance in the Parks Bond Fund for potential allocation by the Metro Council to the Willamette Cove project in the future.

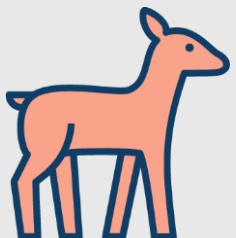


Materials following this page were distributed at the meeting.



January 6, 2026

# Building On Our Success: Parks and Nature Road Map



# Objectives for January 6 work session



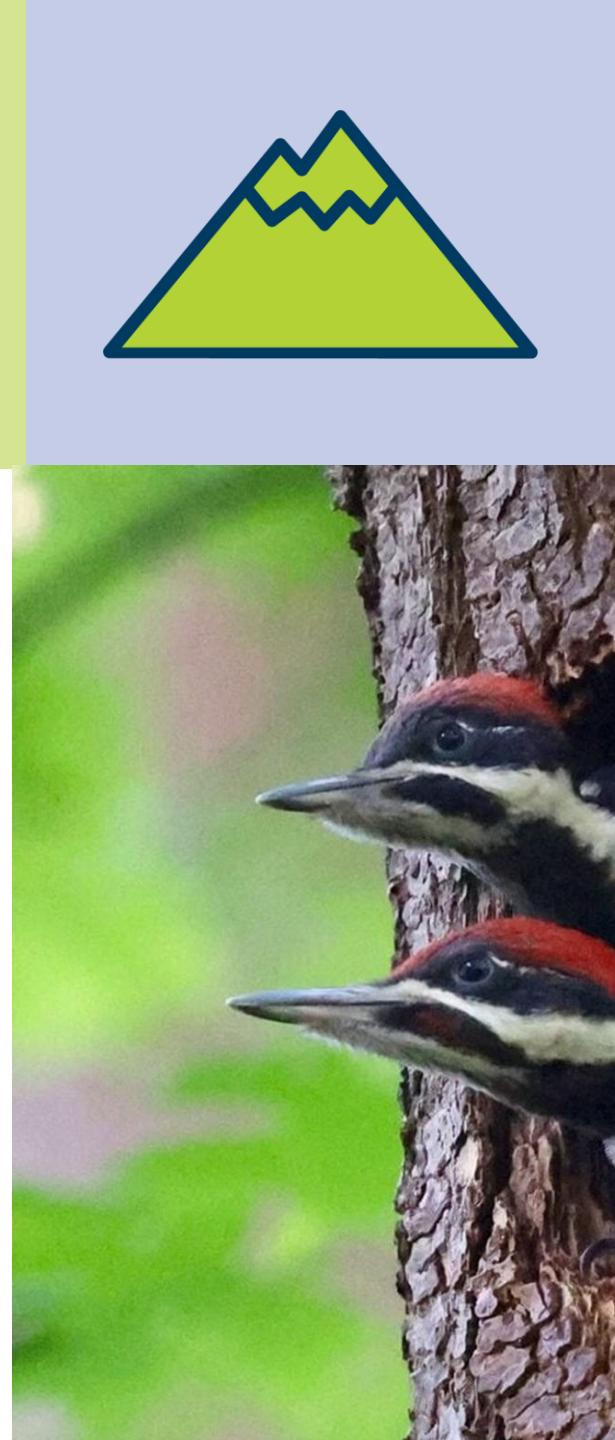
Council review road map process for Parks and Nature system plan update and levy replacement

Hear from Council about additional information or tools needed



# Discussion topics for today

- 1. Where we've been:** Metro's growing role as parks and nature provider, planner and convener.
- 2. Current needs and opportunities:** Introduction to road map process and work to update Parks and Nature system plan.
- 3. Looking forward:** Preview future Council discussions.
- 4. Discussion:** How does available information and assumptions meet Council expectations? What else is needed currently to support future Council engagement?



# Metro's unique role as a parks and nature provider



Protected  
and  
restored  
lands

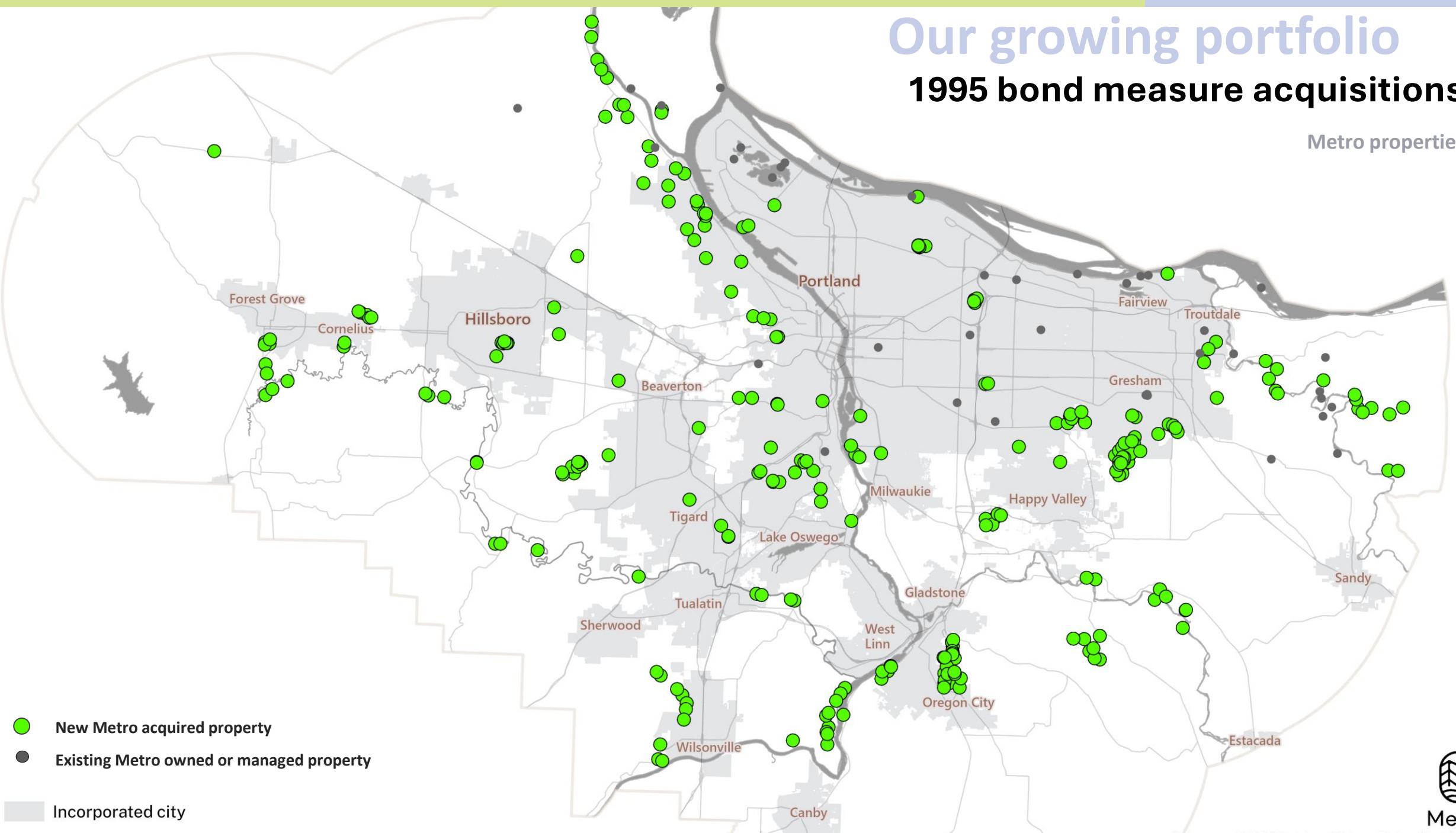
Regional  
parks and  
nature  
experiences

Grants,  
community  
funding

# Our growing portfolio

## 1995 bond measure acquisitions

Metro properties

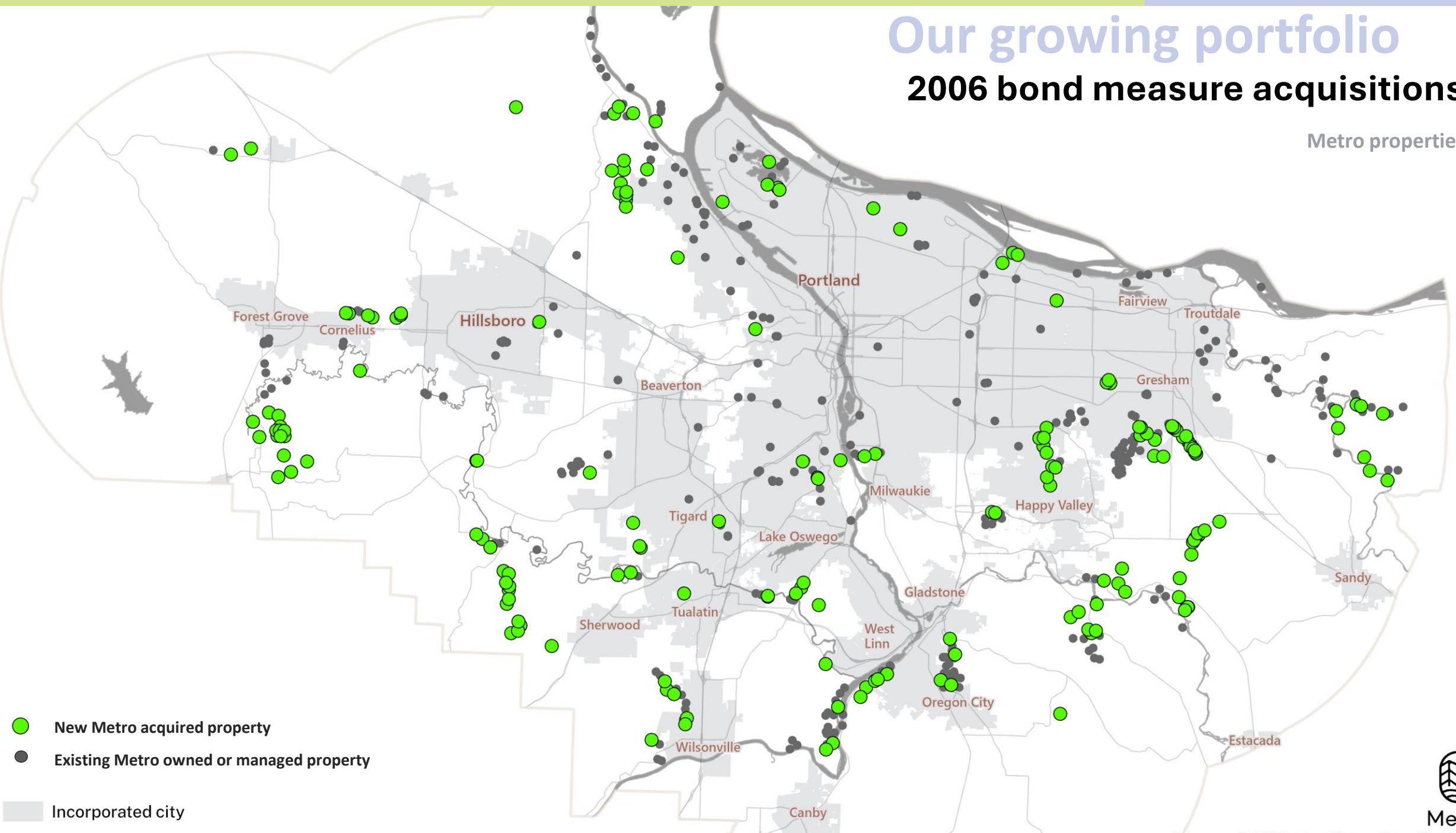


Metro

# Our growing portfolio

## 2006 bond measure acquisitions

Metro properties



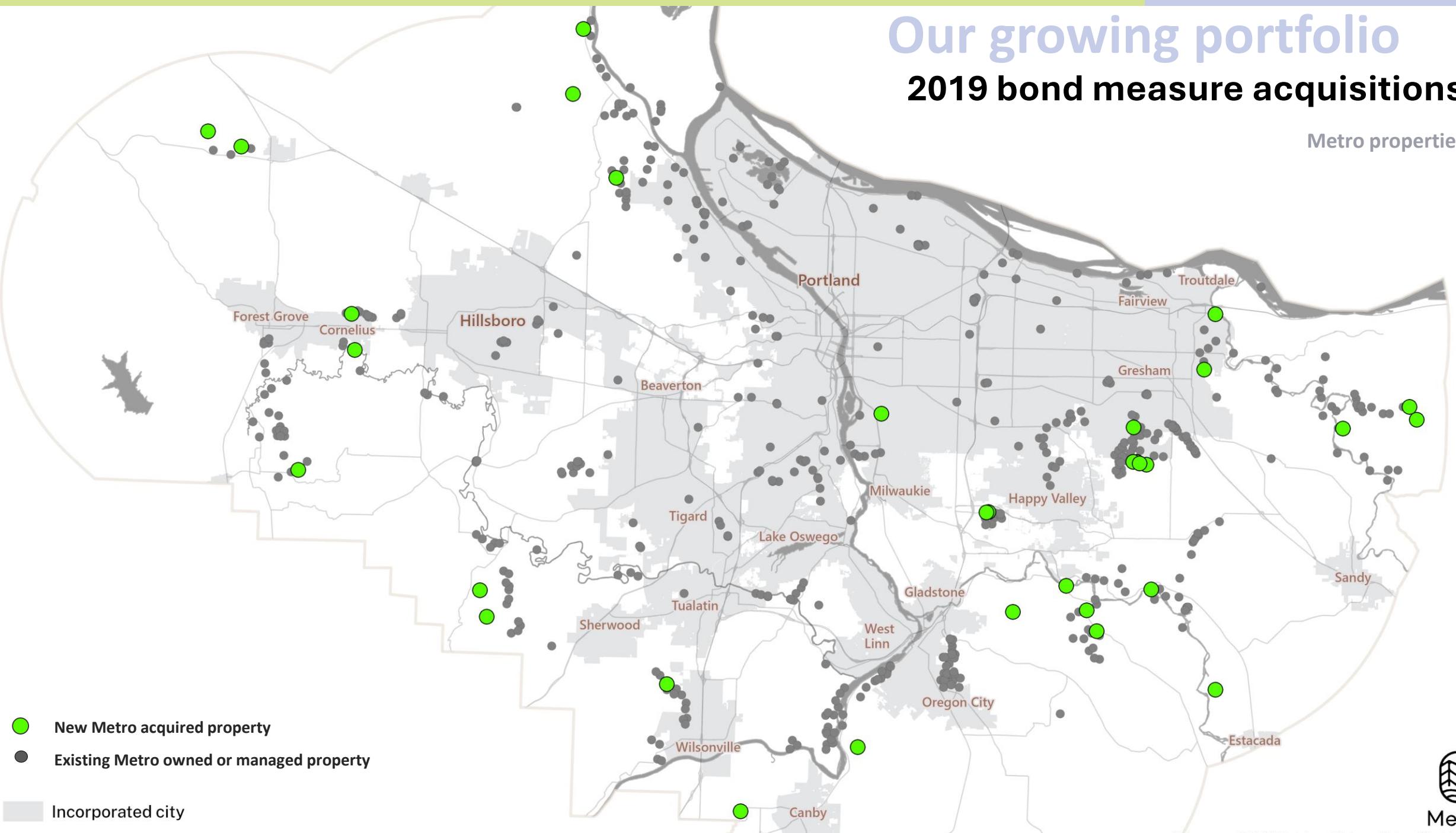
Metro

Data sources: RIIS ORCA data and Parks and Nature Site data - 2025

# Our growing portfolio

## 2019 bond measure acquisitions

Metro properties



● New Metro acquired property

● Existing Metro owned or managed property

■ Incorporated city



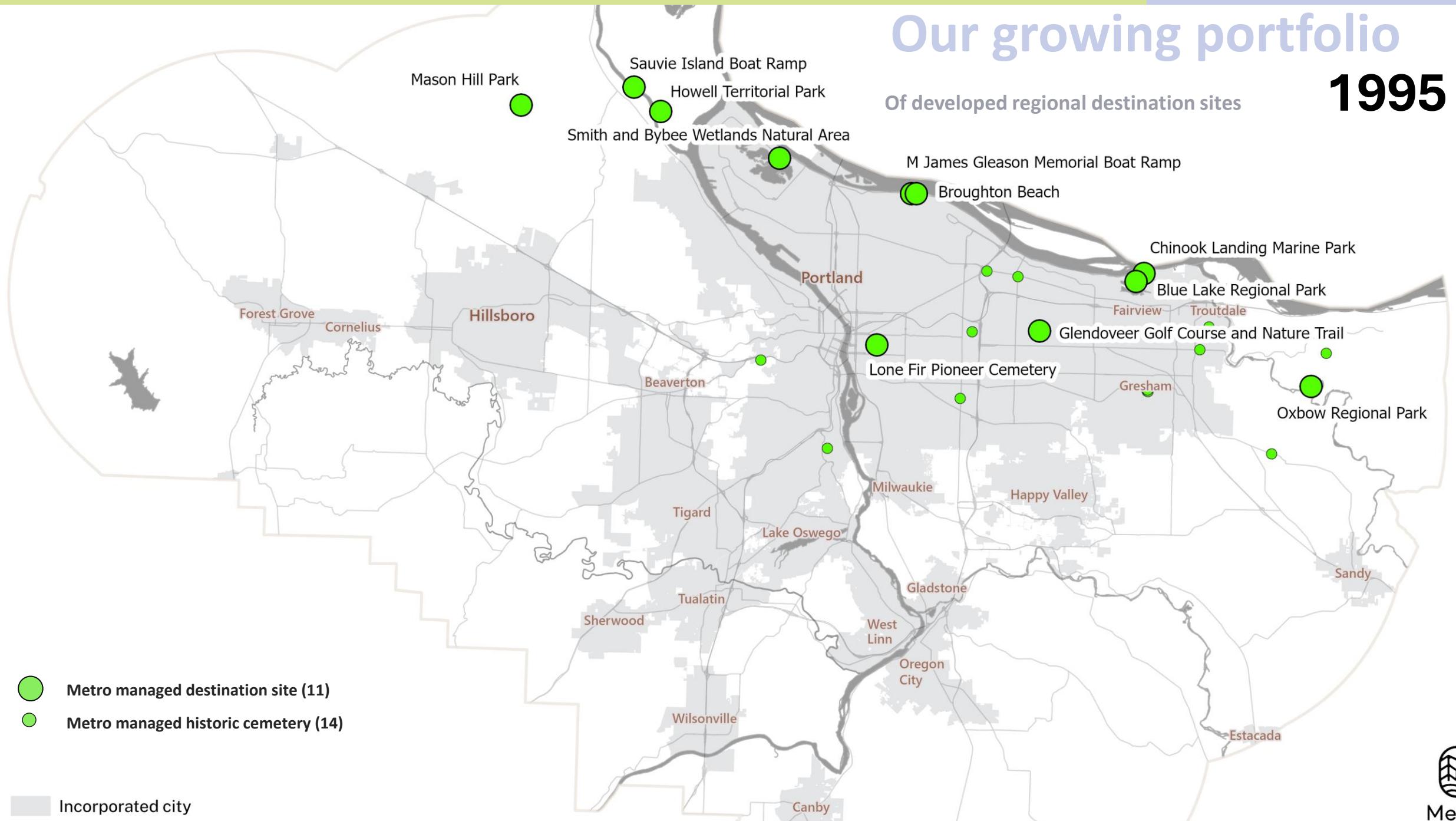
Metro

Data sources: RIIS ORCA data and Parks and Nature Site data - 2025

# Our growing portfolio

## 1995

Of developed regional destination sites

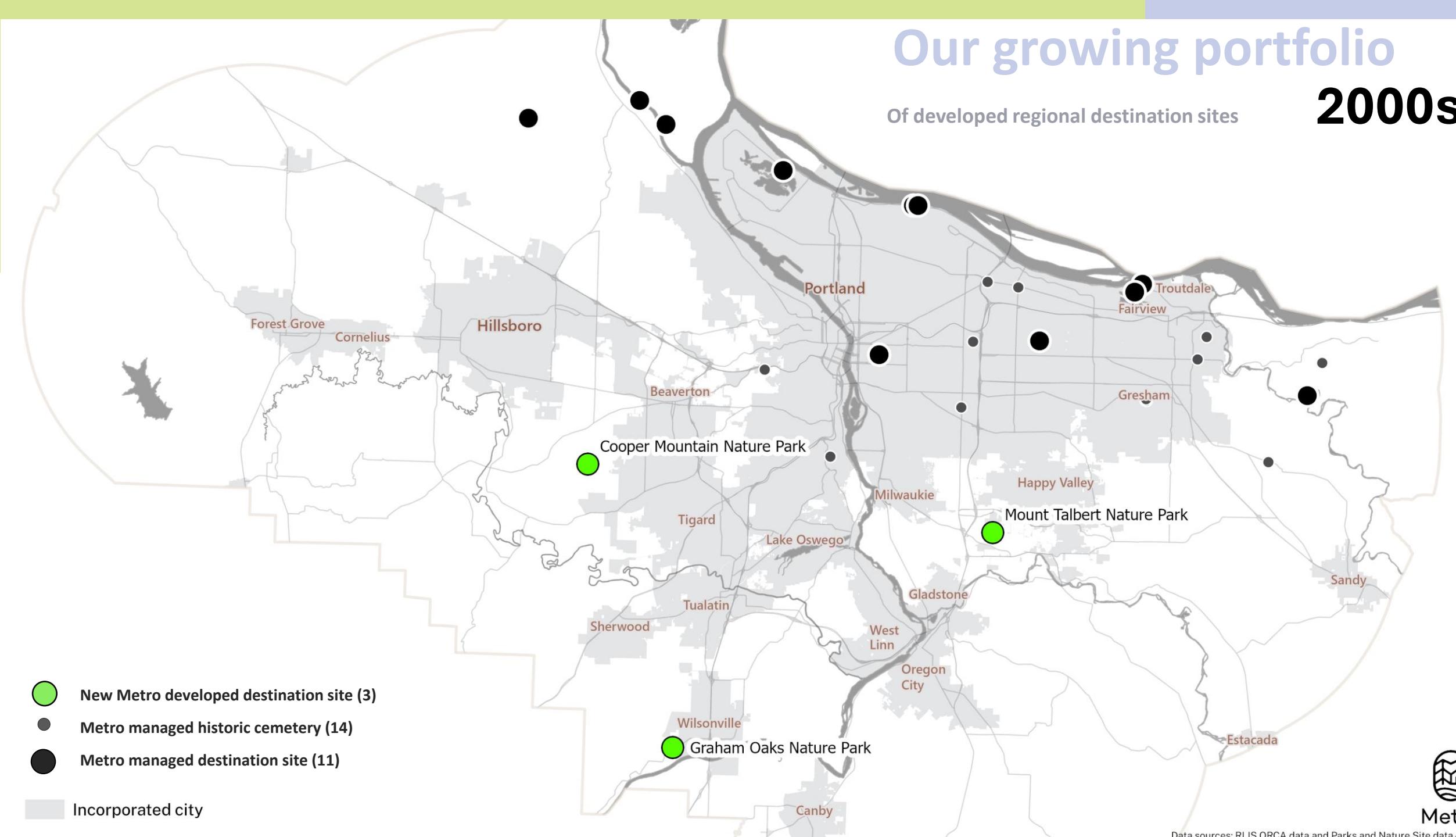


Metro

# Our growing portfolio

2000s

Of developed regional destination sites



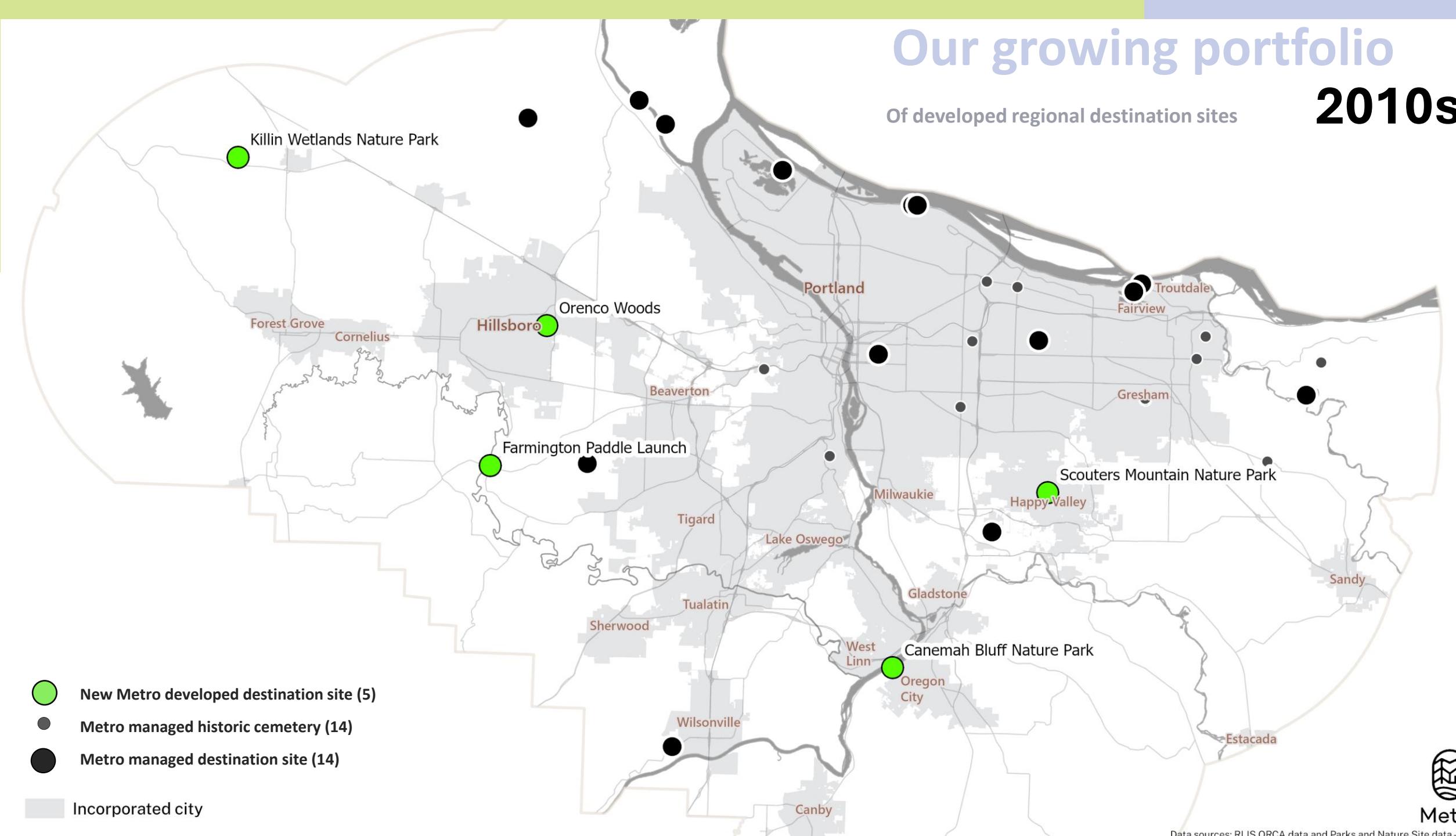
Metro

Data sources: RIIS ORCA data and Parks and Nature Site data - 2025

# Our growing portfolio

2010s

Of developed regional destination sites



- New Metro developed destination site (5)
- Metro managed historic cemetery (14)
- Metro managed destination site (14)

■ Incorporated city



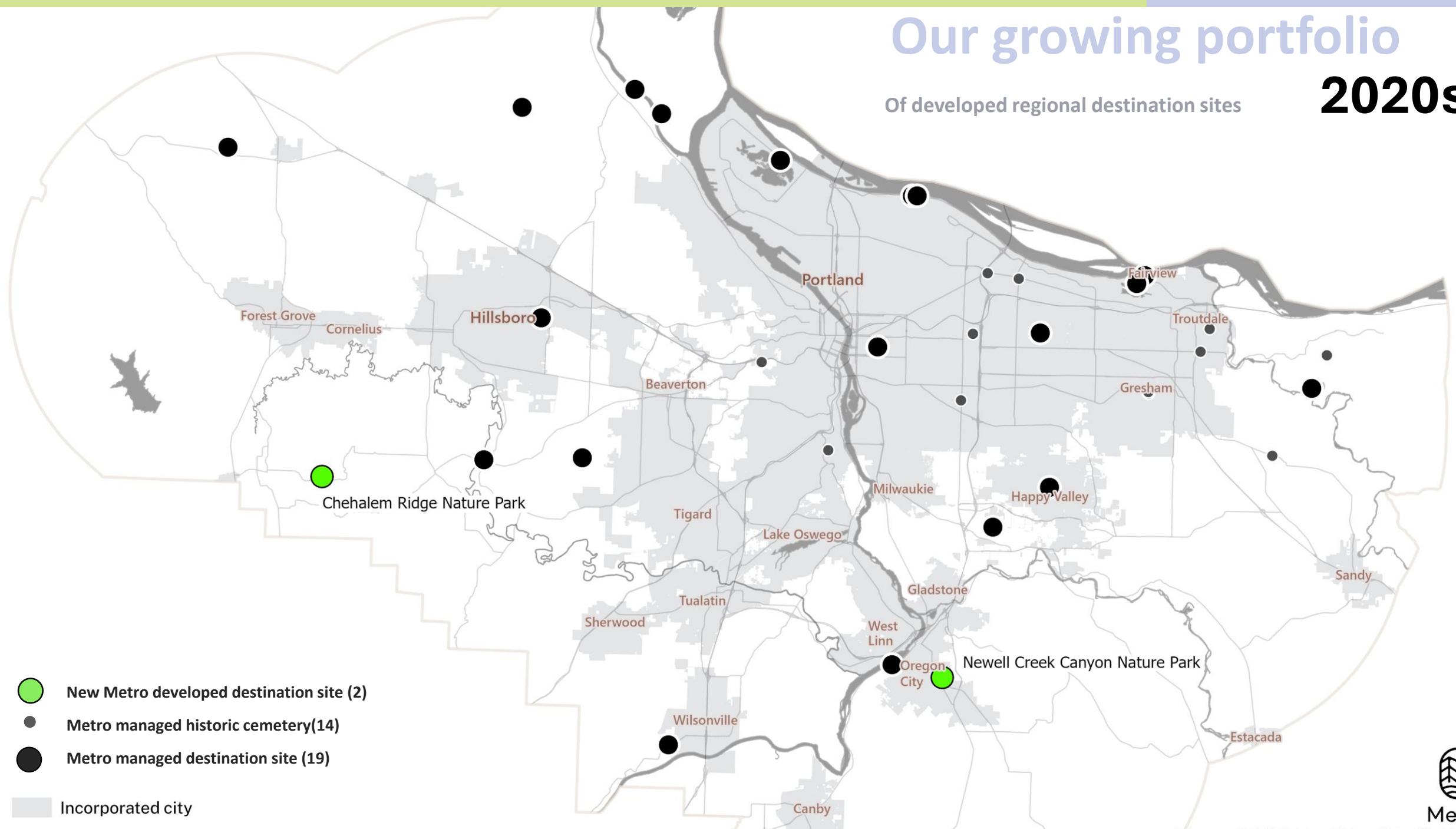
Metro

Data sources: RIIS ORCA data and Parks and Nature Site data - 2025

# Our growing portfolio

2020s

Of developed regional destination sites



● New Metro developed destination site (2)

● Metro managed historic cemetery (14)

● Metro managed destination site (19)

■ Incorporated city

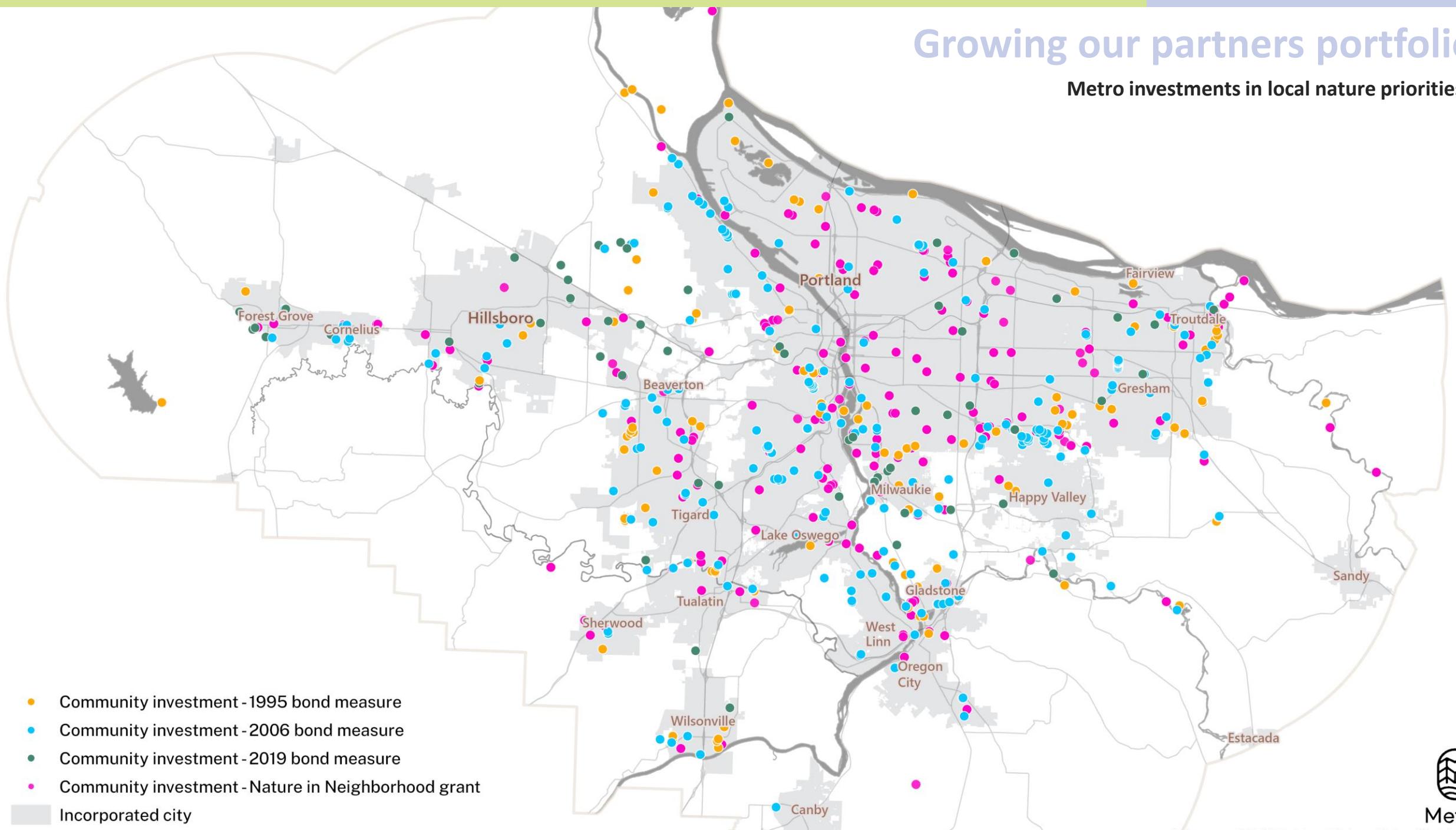


Metro

Data sources: RIIS ORCA data and Parks and Nature Site data - 2025

# Growing our partners portfolio

Metro investments in local nature priorities



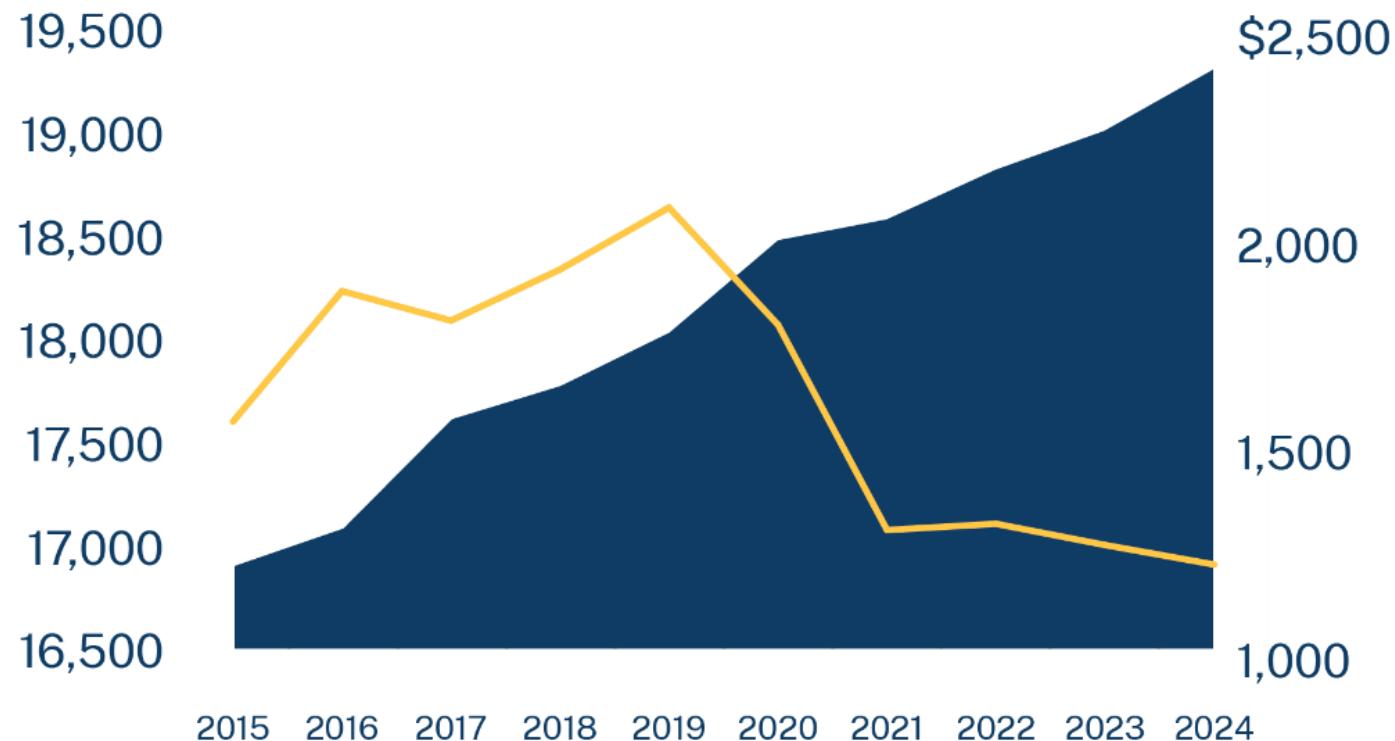
Metro

Data sources: RUS ORCA data and Parks and Nature Site data - 2025

# Our growing portfolio



Acres to operating dollars, 2015-2025



# Our sites

Caring for what we have

Protecting nature as we grow

Passing the baton



# Council direction shapes Parks and Nature policy and program delivery



Metro's role as a unique nature provider

Take care of existing developed sites

Ensure that parks and nature investments benefit people, economy and environment



# Planning ahead to help us meet the moment



The road map process is designed to deliver the following for Council consideration in parallel:

1. Updates to the **Parks and Nature system plan**
2. Pathway for **future funding** (including levy replacement by June-2028)



# Guiding assumptions for the road map process



Explore a range of service and portfolio scenarios and respective funding models to ensure we can still deliver on outcomes for the region.

Set direction for the next 10-15 years and stay aligned with Future Vision

Make a clear case for the need to invest in nature.

We can't do this alone. Need broad allies



# Information we're updating through the road map process



## What services do we provide?

- Description, cost of service delivery
- Site classifications
- Capital project priorities
- Asset inventory (built and natural systems)
- Mapping of existing conditions

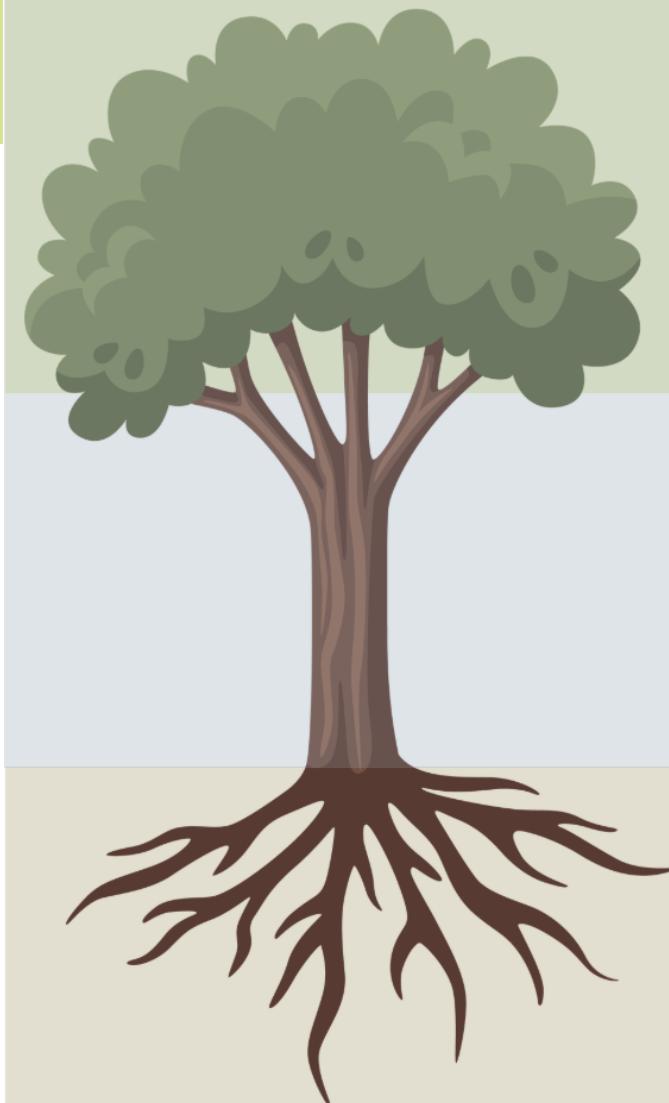
## How do guiding values shape our service delivery?

- Tribal government consultation and engagement plan
- 2025-2032 Racial Equity Diversity and Inclusion Plan (REDI)
- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) transition plan priorities

## How can we measure success in outcomes like access, climate and economy?

- Annual budget metrics and strategic targets
- Timebound targets for bond
- Bond evaluation outcomes

# Looking ahead: Exploring future funding



## **The Canopy: Campaign**

*Private campaign and factual agency communications inspire and inform voters*

## **The Trunk: Framework**

*Community support, coalition development and technical analysis come together to define the measure framework*

## **The Roots: Foundation**

*Analysis of the need, urgency, feasibility and readiness to begin active development of a successful ballot measure*

**We are here**

# Proposed Council milestones by year



2026

- Scenario development
- Initial stakeholder engagement

2027

- Building coalition and champions
- Levy replacement framework

2028

- Levy expires in June 2028
- Parks and Nature system plan implementation

# Questions for future Council discussions



## **Protected and restored lands:**

How can we improve ecological benefit?

## **Regional parks and nature experiences:**

What do we want the public to experience at our sites?

## **Community grants, programs and convening:**

How should we strengthen relationships and partnerships?



# For today: Are we planting the right seeds?



**Assumptions:** Do the current assumptions for this process align with your expectations?

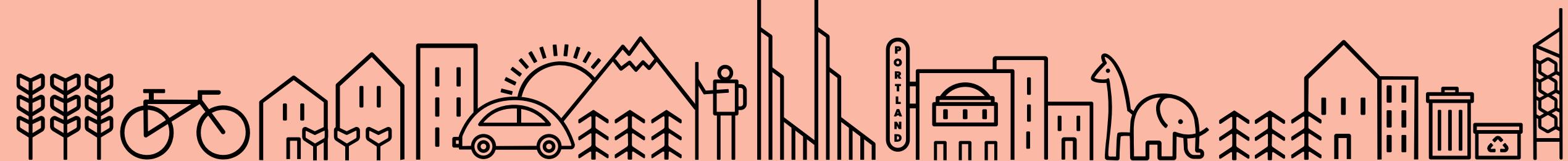
**Information:** Are we gathering the right information to support future Council discussions? Is anything missing?



# Metro

Arts and events  
Garbage and recycling  
Housing and supportive services  
Land and transportation  
Parks and nature  
Oregon Zoo

[oregonmetro.gov](http://oregonmetro.gov)

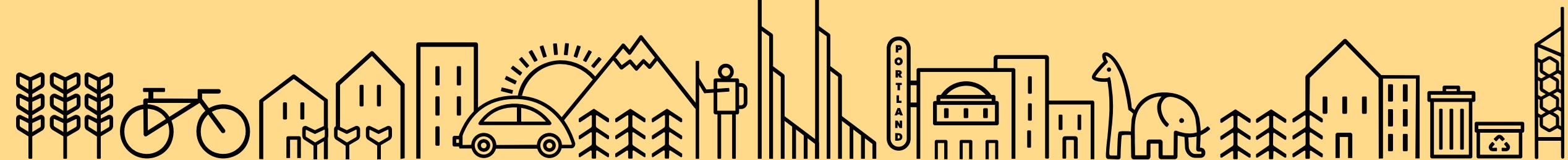


January 6, 2026

# Willamette Cove Nature Park Updates



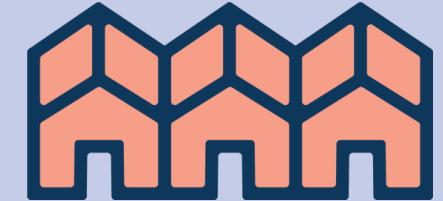
# Willamette Cove Nature Park



# History and background

## **Letter to DEQ from Metro Council – November 11, 2020**

- Explore a broad range of passive recreational activities



## **Resolution 20-5149 – December 10, 2020**

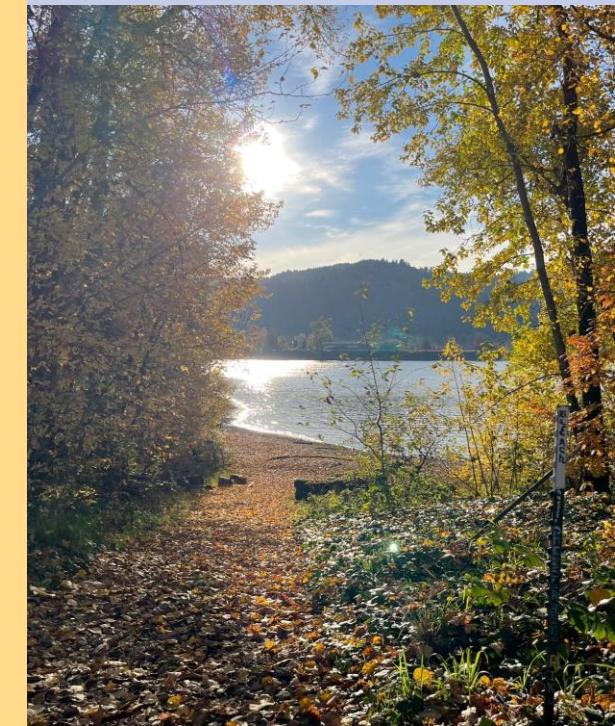
- Include WC property as eligible for funding
- Support and commitment for passive recreation, trail development and habitat restoration
- Direct staff to create engagement plan

## **Upland ROD issued – March 2021**

- Contingency Remedy

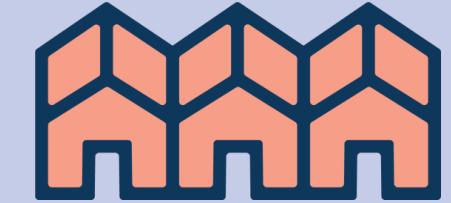
## **Councilor Stacey Budget Note - June 14, 2021**

- \$10M set aside for Willamette Cove Project



# Question for Council

- 1. Does the draft preferred master plan and overall approach to programming meet Council's priorities for Willamette Cove?**
- 2. Does Council have enough information about trade-offs to provide initial guidance on funding?**





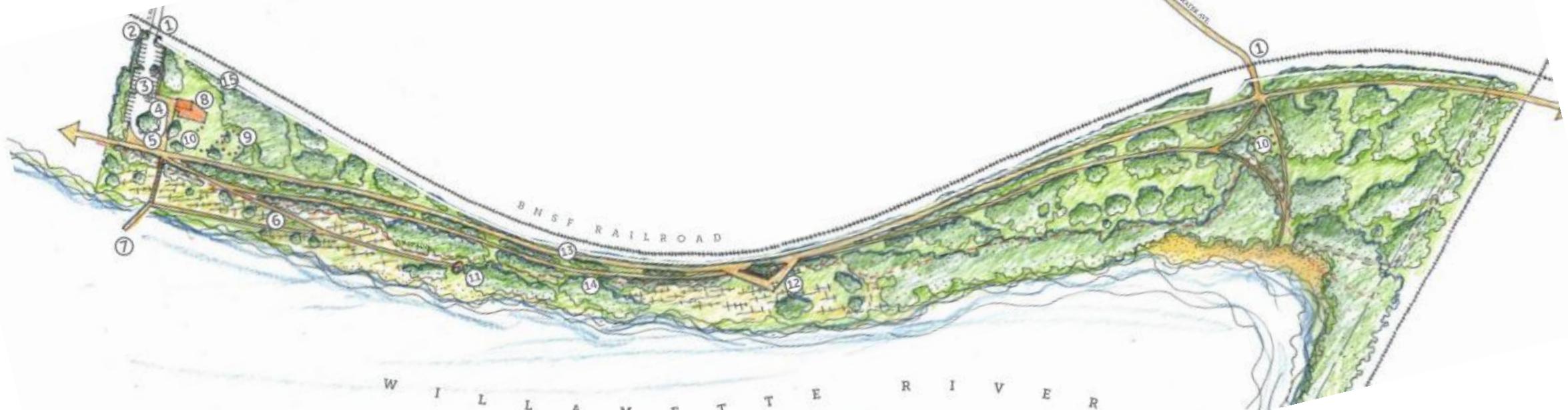
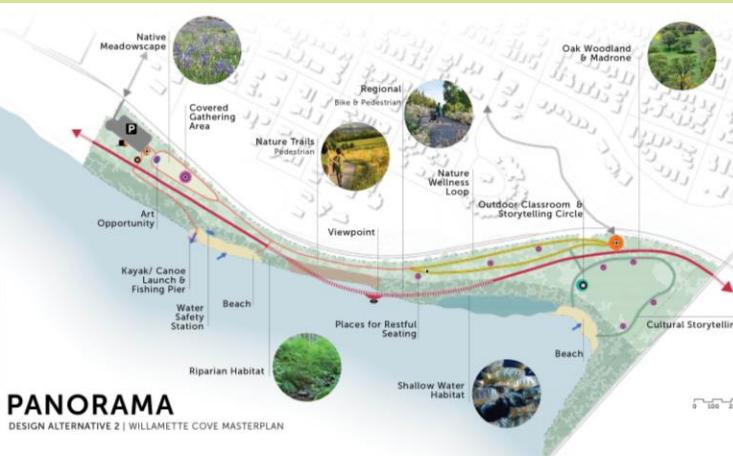
# Nature park master planning goals

- Create a vision including habitat and passive recreation
- Conduct consultation and engagement with Tribes and community
- Provide accessible layout, regional trail, nature trails and water access
- Define parking areas and gathering areas
- Create opportunities for cultural elements and education

# Master planning process



# Nature park: from concepts in 2024 to preliminary draft plan 2025





# Master plan revisions since 2024

## CONSULTATION and ENGAGEMENT

- PN Managers
- PN Directors
- Tribes
- Community
- In-water party collaboration- monthly

## MASTER PLAN UPDATES

- Reduced trails and other elements to increase habitat
- Based on Operations and Maintenance concerns and costs
  - Small overlook rather than over the water walkway
  - Hard versus soft surface trails
  - Dock has been replaced with pathway from parking lot to beach

# Park entrances

- North Richmond Ave – vehicular
- North Edgewater Ave – pedestrian/bike and emergency access



# Gathering spaces

- Picnic shelter and restroom
- Gathering spaces
- Plaza
- Overlook



# Regional trail and nature trails



# Water access

- Stairs
- Inundated accessible pathway
- Beach path



# Restoration

- Shallow water habitat
- Riparian forest
- Oak madrone woodland



# Draft renderings



Entry and gathering



Nature trail

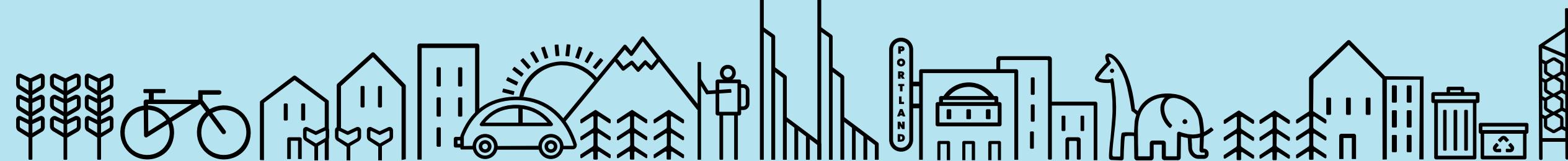
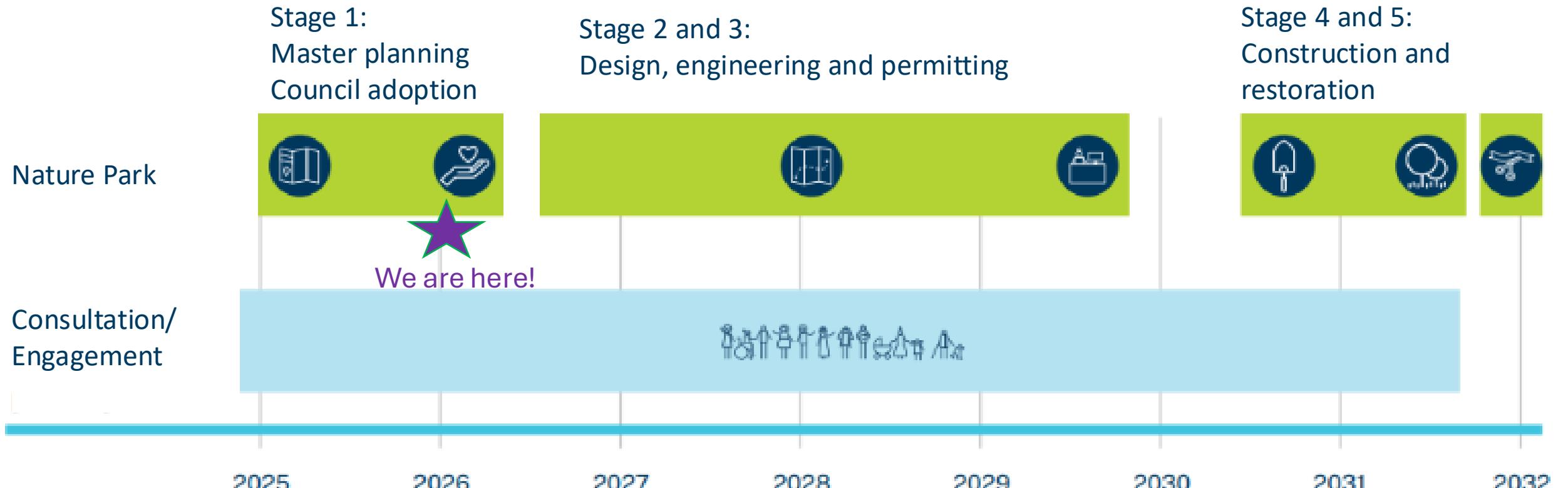


Water access – inundated pathway



Regional trail and overlook

# Master planning to construction



# Current nature park funding

Nature Park Stage	Amount	Funded	Bond Program	Funded through \$10M Budget Note
Stage 1: Master planning and engagement	\$1.1 M	Yes	Take Care of Metro Parks	Yes, (with \$8.9M for clean up)
Stage 2 and 3: Design, engineering and permitting	\$2M	Yes	Take Care of Metro Parks	No
Stage 4 and 5: Construction, restoration and close out	\$15.5	No	TBD	No

# Considerations, trade-offs and constraints

- Tribes, community and partner relationships
- Park system enhancement/expansion desires and site repair/replacement needs
- Capital construction funds and operations and maintenance dollars available or needed
- Bond spend timing (construction schedule, opportunity costs)
- Construction phasing constraints due to the site being remediated



Overview of the cove

# Potential bond funding and impacts

Fund or Program	Total Funds	Impact
Bond Earnings*	\$30.9M	Low
Large Scale Community Visions	\$50M	High
Local Share	\$92M	High
Nature in Neighborhoods Capital Grants	\$40M	Medium
Protect and Restore (P&R)	\$155M	High
Take Care of Metro Parks (TCMP)	\$98M	High
Trails	\$40M	Medium to Low

\* Per Resolution #19-4988, Council directed bond earnings to go to P&R and TCMP

# Funding options

## Major funding sources

- Bond earnings
- Reallocation of bond funding

## Minor funding sources

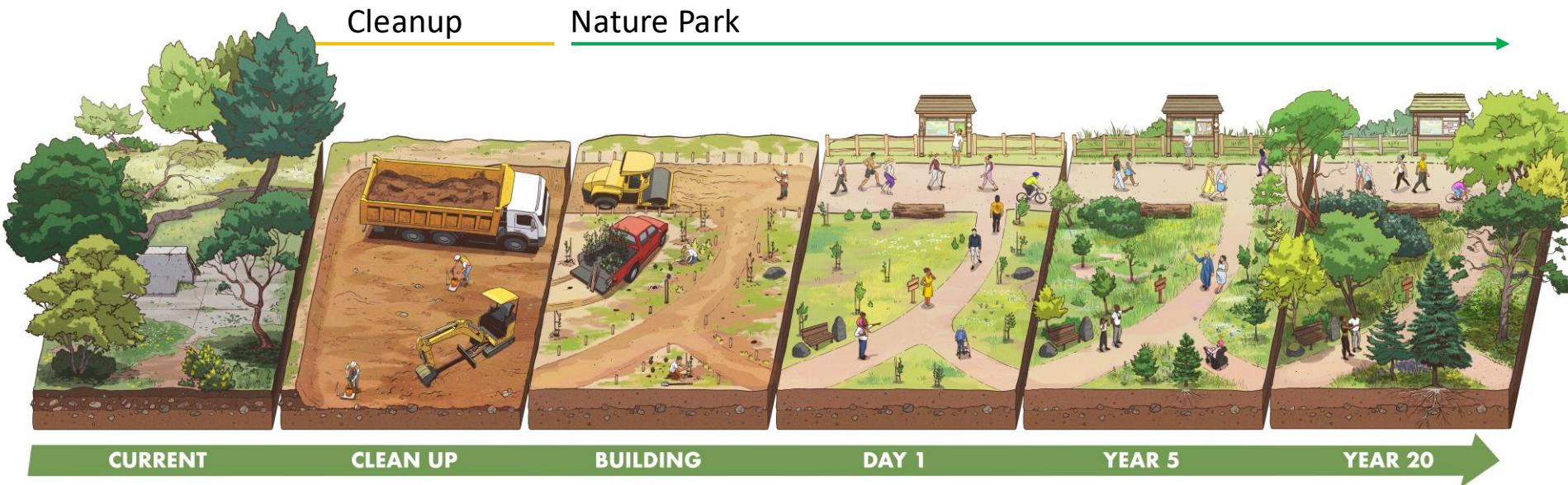
- Regional trail
- Other (grants)



Regional trail and overlook

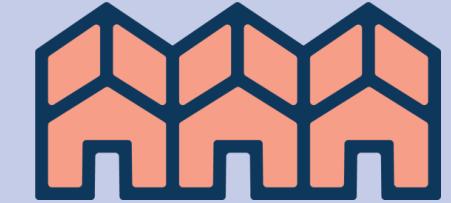
# What's next

- February 4 - Steering committee meeting
- March 5 – Proposed adoption by Metro Council
- March 15 – Solicit request for proposal design and engineering consultant
- July 1 – Initiate contract to begin design and engineering process



# Question for Council

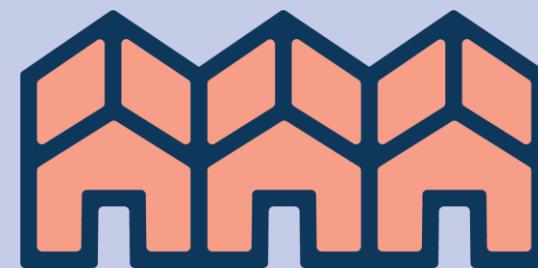
- 1. Does the draft preferred master plan and overall approach to programming meet Council's priorities for Willamette Cove?**
- 2. Does Council have enough information about trade-offs to provide initial guidance on funding?**



END

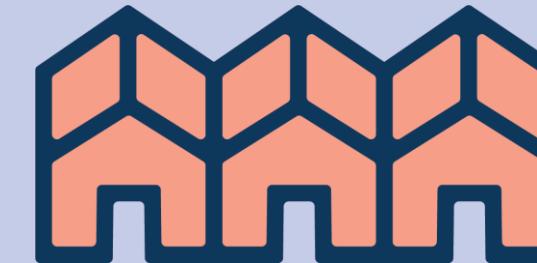
		Total
Site Preparation and Demolition		\$1,029,992
Site Improvements		\$4,489,602
Site Utilities		\$1,575,000
<i>Site Development</i>		<i>\$7,094,594</i>
<b>Site Construction</b>	<b>Rate</b>	
Contingency	30.00%	\$2,128,378
General Conditions and Requirements	12.50%	\$1,152,872
Office Overhead and Profit	5.50%	\$570,671
Subcontractor Default Insurance (OR)	1.75%	\$191,564
Corporate Tax (OR)	0.40%	\$44,552
Bonds and Insurance	2.00%	\$223,653
Metro policies	10.10%	\$1,152,035
<i>Site Construction</i>		<i>\$5,463,725</i>
<i>Construction Cost before Escalation</i>		<i>\$12,558,319</i>
Escalation to Start Date 2030		\$2,897,955
<b>Recommended Budget</b>		<b>\$15,456,273</b>

## Master Plan draft design cost estimate



PCW001	Nature Park Master Plan	
Studies		\$ 10,000.00
Master Planning Community Engagement		\$ 400,000.00
Master Planning Consultant		\$ 300,000.00
Master Planning Tribal Engagement		\$ 32,000.00
		\$ 742,000.00
	Nature Park Design Services	
Nature Park Design Services Consultant		\$ 800,000.00
Art and Interpretative Sign Design		\$ 200,000.00
Nature Park Permitting		\$ 275,000.00
Nature Park Community Engagement		\$ 15,000.00
Nature Park Tribal Engagement		\$ 36,000.00
Studies		\$ 25,000.00
Railroad and ROW Coordination		\$ 50,000.00
Subtotal		\$ 1,401,000.00
<i>30% contingency</i>		\$ 420,300.00
Total DEP		\$ 1,821,300.00
	Nature Park Construction	
Nature Park Construction Services Consultant		\$ 200,000.00
Nature Park Construction		\$ 15,500,000.00
Nature Park Community Engagement		\$ 10,000.00
Nature Park Tribal Engagement		\$ 24,000.00
		\$ 15,734,000.00
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$ 18,297,300.00</b>

## Master Plan DEP and Construction



# Why no dock in the design?



Accessible floating dock on pilings



Inundated accessible pathway

# Potential bond funding and risks

Fund or Program	Total Funds	Spent, Awarded or Budgeted Funds	Impact
Bond Earnings	\$30.9M	\$0	Low
Large Scale Community Visions	\$50M	\$40M	High
Local Share	\$92M	\$92M	High
Nature in Neighborhoods Capital Grants	\$40M	\$31M	Medium
Protect and Restore	\$155M	\$155M	High
Take Care of Metro Parks	\$98M	\$95.5M	High
Trails	\$40M	\$40M	Medium to Low