

BEFORE THE METRO COUNCIL

FOR THE PURPOSE OF REPRESENTING AND) RESOLUTION NO. 25-5450
MEMORIALIZING THE HISTORIES AND)
CULTURES ASSOCIATED WITH THE) Introduced by Council President Lynn
PORTLAND EXPO CENTER) Peterson

WHEREAS, many communities and partners in the greater Portland area and the Metro region have unique and important historical and cultural ties to the Portland Expo Center (Expo) and the land upon which it is built; and

WHEREAS, the history of the lands of and adjacent to Expo includes precolonial history and importance to Indigenous Peoples who were forcibly displaced, the forced displacement and incarceration of Americans of Japanese descent during World War II, and the forced displacement of the residents of the nearby City of Vanport, which included a significant Black population, during the Vanport Flood of 1948; and

WHEREAS, Metro recognizes the past injustices that took place on or near the Expo property and their lasting impacts on the urban Indigenous, Japanese American, and Vanport and Black communities and sovereign Tribes distinctly connected to the area; and

WHEREAS, despite the injustices that Tribes, Indigenous Peoples, Japanese Americans and Vanport residents faced, each have survived and thrived, advancing their respective communities and cultural identities, making innumerable contributions to our region and country for the benefit of all; and

WHEREAS, Expo, including Hall A, is the site of the Portland Assembly Center, one of few remaining sites of incarceration of Japanese Americans in World War II and a site of national historic significance; and

WHEREAS, Metro has convened members of the urban Indigenous, Japanese American, and Vanport communities to identify these communities’ preferences for how to meaningfully represent and memorialize these communities and their history at the Expo Center; and

WHEREAS, Metro’s Tribal Affairs Program is providing support to consult and engage with interested sovereign Tribes with distinct connections to the Expo Center campus and surrounding area on approaches to meaningfully represent and memorialize the Tribes’ histories and stories at the Expo Center; and

WHEREAS, Metro has investigated potential support from federal, state, or other partners, including philanthropic partners, for financial or other opportunities for Expo and the land adjacent to the Columbia River; and

WHEREAS, the Metropolitan Exposition Recreation Commission adopted an identical resolution at its meeting on January 8, 2025; now therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED that the Metro Council

1. Recognizes the Portland Assembly Center, which included Hall A, as a site of national historic significance.
2. Accepts the *Expo Future Historical Significance & Memorialization Committee Recommendations Report* presented on December 10, 2024, and directs staff to work with members of Impacted Communities to assess the feasibility of those recommendations and to develop a strategy to pursue implementation of the recommendations deemed feasible, and to report progress regularly to Metro Council.
3. Directs staff to commence a cultural resources assessment of the Expo property within 90 days of adoption of this resolution for the purpose of identifying existing and potential historic, cultural, archaeological, and architectural resources at the site.
4. Directs staff to develop cost estimates and to request funding in Metro's proposed FY25-26 budget for additional study and analysis of the Portland Assembly Center Hall A as described in the *Expo Future Historical Significance & Memorialization Committee Recommendations Report* presented on December 10, 2024. The engineering study would assess Hall A's structural integrity, its capacity to stand independently, and the feasibility of serving uses other than as an exhibit hall and, where feasible, provide cost estimates for potential renovation or deconstruction. Within 180 days of availability of funding for the study, staff will commence the study and, once complete, present the study's findings.
5. Directs staff to commence community conversations within 90 days of completion of the engineering study of Hall A for the purpose of developing recommendations about potential use(s) of Hall A, or portions thereof, including use as a multi-use community/interpretive center as recommended by the *Expo Future Historical Significance & Memorialization Committee Recommendations Report* presented on December 10, 2024.
6. Directs staff to develop cost estimates and request funding in Metro's proposed FY25-26 budget for development of the interpretive plan for representation and memorialization of histories and cultures connected to the Expo site as identified in *Expo Future Historical Significance & Memorialization Committee Recommendations Report* presented on December 10, 2024.
7. Directs staff to present a proposed governance structure and approach to community engagement for the development of the Expo Center interpretive plan, described in Action 6 above, within 180 days of adoption of this resolution. The approach must, at minimum, invite representatives of the urban Indigenous, Japanese American, and Vanport communities and Tribes to participate in the plan's development.

ADOPTED by the Metro Council this 9th day of January 2025.

Lynn Peterson, Council President

Approved as to Form:

Carrie MacLaren, Metro Attorney