

STAFF REPORT

IN CONSIDERATION NO. 26-5582, FOR THE PURPOSE OF ALLOCATING FUNDS FROM THE 2019 METRO PARKS AND NATURE BOND MEASURE TO FUND THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE WILLAMETTE COVE NATURE PARK

Date: March 3, 2026

Department: COO and Parks and Nature

Meeting Date: March 12, 2026

Presenter(s): Andrew Scott, DCOO

(he/him); Jon Blasher, Director (he/him)

Length: 15 minutes

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ISSUE STATEMENT

On March 5, 2026, the Metro Council approved the Willamette Cove Nature Park Master Plan. This resolution brings a proposal to allocate funding from the 2019 Parks and Nature bond measure ("2019 Bond Measure) to fund construction of the Willamette Cove Nature Park.

ACTION REQUESTED

Approval of the funding plan for the Willamette Cove Nature Park construction.

IDENTIFIED POLICY OUTCOMES

Approving a funding plan will allow work to proceed on the Willamette Cove Nature Park which furthers Metro's work in protecting natural areas and water quality and connecting people to nature close to home.

POLICY QUESTION(S)

Should funding from the 2019 Bond Measure be used for construction of a nature park at Willamette Cove?

POLICY OPTIONS FOR COUNCIL TO CONSIDER

If Council decides to utilize 2019 Bond Measure funds, those funds will provide necessary funding for construction at the Willamette Cove Nature Park.

Not allocating funding for Willamette Cove Nature Park from the 2019 Bond Measure will require Metro to find funding from other sources for this project.

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff recommends adoption of the resolution.

STRATEGIC CONTEXT & FRAMING COUNCIL DISCUSSION

This resolution reflects staff efforts to follow the direction provided by Metro Council regarding funding of the nature park at Willamette Cove. The approval of the Willamette Cove Master Plan on March 5, 2026, is the precursor to this resolution which allocates funding to construct Willamette Cove Nature Park. The strategic context and framing provided in the staff report for the master plan adoption in resolution 26-5561 is synthesized in an abbreviated fashion here.

- How is this related to Metro’s Strategic Framework or Core Mission?
If funding is allocated, and when the cleanup is complete at Willamette Cove, this new nature park will provide a place for people in the region to enjoy nature close to home and utilize a regional trail while natural area nearby is protected.
- How does this advance Metro’s racial equity goals?
Metro staff collaborated with diverse communities and engaged with them through all phases of the planning, design and permitting process. This is also the first comprehensive project where Metro had informal Tribal consultation from the outset, and where Tribes collaborated on the site conservation plan.
- How does this advance Metro’s climate action goals?
Nature park development will include trees and vegetation to create canopy, shade and habitat while minimizing erosion. Also invasives will be removed and riparian forest, oak madrone woodland and shallow water habitat will be restored.
- Known Opposition/Support/Community Feedback
Community feedback has been overwhelmingly positive.
- Explicit list of stakeholder groups and individuals who have been involved in policy development.
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, Portland Harbor Community Advisory Group, Portland Harbor Community Coalition, Oregon Health Authority, Environmental Protection Agency, Port of Portland, Oregon Department of Environmental Quality, 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
 - Resolution 26-5561, approving the master plan
 - 2021 Budget Note from Councilor Bob Stacey

- Resolution 20-5149, including Willamette Cove in the list of eligible projects for bond funding
- Anticipated Effects
Funding will allow staff to proceed toward the goal of constructing the Willamette Cove Nature Park.
- Financial Implications (current year and ongoing)
Design, engineering and permitting will be funded through the Parks and Nature bond in the FY27 budget. If approved through this resolution, construction costs will be funded from bond earnings along with other allowable areas of the bond.

BACKGROUND

This funding resolution arrives on the heels of the Metro Council's adoption of the Willamette Cove Nature Park master plan and responds to Council direction that funding for this nature park be provided by the 2019 Bond Measure.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Resolution No. 26-5561 (Master Plan Adoption)
2. Willamette Cove Nature Park Master Plan
3. Willamette Cove Nature Park Master Plan Appendices
4. Councilor Bob Stacey Budget Note (2021)
5. Resolution No. 20-5149 (Bond Eligibility)