

WORKSESSION STAFF REPORT

PARKS AND NATURE BOND'S LARGE SCALE COMMUNITY VISIONS PROGRAM THIRD CYCLE APPLICATIONS

Date: June 11, 2026

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Department: Parks and Nature

Meeting: June 30, 2026

Presenters: Jon Blasher, he/him, Parks and Nature Director, Linda Bartolini Venegas, she/her, Large-scale community visions program manager

Length: 30 minutes

ISSUE STATEMENT

Funded through the 2019 Parks and Nature bond and codified in Resolution No. 19-4988, The Large-scale community visions (LSCV) grant program supports large-scale projects that uplift communities by leveraging nature to achieve benefits such as affordable housing, transportation improvements and job opportunities.

At the June 30 work session, staff will provide an overview of the program criteria and process, as well as a high-level summary of applications received and potential pathways for Council consideration in terms of project selection. Council's feedback during the work session will allow staff to advance a funding award recommendation for Council consideration in July.

ACTION REQUESTED

Review staff's initial screening of the applications submitted for the third round of the LSCV program and describe additional information, considerations and next steps needed before Council will be ready to make a final determination on project selection and funding in July.

IDENTIFIED POLICY OUTCOMES

Council direction has shaped the Large-scale community visions program and will continue to do so. Projects awarded under the program are expected to deliver on policy outcomes identified in the 2019 Parks and Nature bond. By focusing on the intersection of nature and greening with existing or planned housing and transportation developments, the program advances investments that strengthen climate resilience across the region while leveraging regional outcomes in housing, community and economic development and transportation.

Projects invited to apply are in alignment with Council approved bond criteria, eligibility and program requirements as stated in the Council approved LSCV program handbook. The Metro Council will select projects and make all awards for funding allocations.

POLICY QUESTIONS

- What additional information or discussion is needed for Council to make a funding designation and advance next steps?
- How is the third cycle of applications aligning with Council's desired outcomes for the program and with the current funding and program parameters?

POLICY OPTIONS FOR COUNCIL TO CONSIDER

To support Council prioritizing the distribution of limited funding consistent with Council values and vision, staff will describe the readiness of each project and its ability to meet bond legal requirements and criteria.

Additionally, staff will ask for Council feedback on balancing funding needs across the region as the total requested amount of the applications submitted exceeds the \$8M available in this funding cycle.

STRATEGIC CONTEXT AND FRAMING COUNCIL DISCUSSION

Through the Parks and Nature bond measure, Metro has awarded over \$100 million to date through Local Share, grants, trails and LSCV. Staff are planning for this final cycle of LSCV and one additional cycle of Nature in Neighborhoods Capital Grants during the second half of the life of the bond. Together these investments will touch every community in the region.

The LSCV program's third round opened on December 1, 2025 and letters of interest (LOIs) from interested applicants were accepted through February 28, 2026; applications are by invitation only. Eleven letters of interest were submitted and screened by a staff review committee; seven LOIs that meet Council approved program criteria and bond requirements were invited to submit a full application by May 31, 2026. Summary details of the submitted applications are in the table in Attachment 1.

Metro is planning for the majority of bond funds to be spent down by July 2031, in order to maintain legal compliance, bond rating, and accountability with voters in the region. In May 2026, Council affirmed establishing a timeline of June 2028 for all LSCV projects to finalize public-private ownership agreements, submit fully drafted scopes of work and enter into contract with Metro. By establishing these timelines, staff aim to support accountability, transparency, and a structured path toward delivering the public benefits envisioned through the program.

Large-scale projects require extensive master planning, design, permitting, and construction sequencing that may extend beyond traditional capital timelines and create delivery risk within the bond spend-down timeline, so the third cycle of the program is focused on project delivery and readiness.

LEGAL ANTECEDENTS

Metro Council approved the criteria, processes and desired outcomes described in the program handbook through approval of Resolution 22-5269 on June 23, 2022 and directed

the Chief Operating Officer to implement the first cycle of funding for the program generally in accordance with the framework described in the program handbook.

Approval of Resolution 23-5322 in May 2023 “For the purpose of selecting three Parks and Nature bond large-scale community visions projects and awarding funding for the initial program cycle” which designated three projects for funding.

In March 2024, Metro Council approved Resolution No. 24-5391, which advanced a set of adjustments to program criteria that is intended to better meet the landscape of project opportunities on the ground and create program accessibility across the region, as well as allowed for a notice of funding availability to begin in spring 2024.

In December 2024, Metro Council approved Resolution 24-5445, for the purpose of awarding the Kellogg Creek Restoration and Community Enhancement Project up to \$10 million in program funding.

ATTACHMENTS

- **Attachment 1 – Summary of applications submitted**
- Is legislation required for Council action? Yes No
- If yes, is draft legislation attached? Yes No N/A
- What other materials are you presenting today?

Attachment 1: Summary of Applications Submitted

Applicant	Request	Project Description	Location
City of Beaverton	\$8,000,000	<i>The Creekside Connections</i> project directly addresses Beaverton’s need to enhance and protect natural resources, provide public open space, and create multi-modal transportation options, and executes on a long-term vision to create a vibrant downtown destination, where nature and the built environment interact. Creekside Connections includes creek restoration and floodplain enhancement, a 1.5 mile segment of the Beaverton Creek Trail, new multi-modal connections between Hocken Avenue and Lombard Avenue, development of Lombard West affordable housing and public park, and upland open space and nature-themed placemaking.	Beaverton, Washington County, District 4
City of Tigard	\$3,855,000	<i>Ash Creek Nature Link: A Metzger Community Greenway</i> is a 2,400-foot, ADA-accessible greenway that will provide non-motorized access to affordable housing and economic hubs in the Metzger community and the Washington Square Regional Center. Coordinated with CWS's Metzger Trunk Line, the \$14.4M project will deliver connected multimodal infrastructure, wetland restoration, and equitable access in the last undeveloped tract north of OR-217, resulting in the acquisition of 12.82 acres of public, and permanent green space.	Tigard Washington County, District 3
Multnomah County	\$8,000,000	<i>The Vance Vision park</i> development project transforms a 40-acre industrial gap into a vibrant regional park that serves as the ecological and social hive for the Rockwood and Centennial neighborhoods. The project will leverage a clean fill program via a public-private partnership to restore the industrially scarred quarry landscape and create safe and accessible nature experiences, reestablish native plants and trees, and shape essential green space for one of Oregon’s most diverse communities.	Portland, Multnomah County, District 1
Bird Alliance of Oregon	\$5,000,000	The <i>East Portland Nature Center</i> project will transform a neglected brownfield into a multi-benefit community space along NE 82nd Ave. The project centers around a community designed nature park that will be connected to a tree shaded bus plaza and sidewalk along NE 82nd and a meandering nature trail that connects the Madison South neighborhood to our site and McDaniel Highschool. Design elements focus on improving climate resiliency and connectivity for both people and wildlife.	Portland, Multnomah County, District 5
Mt Hood Community College	\$2,500,000	The <i>Kelly Creek Restoration Project</i> is a connectivity project at every scale-restoring habitat and creating healthier waters, linking fragmented habitat and the Metro greenway, and connecting people to nature through an accessible trail tied to transit and campus routes. By replacing the dam with a bridge, restoring the creek, treating polluted runoff, and providing meaningful job training, the Project delivers lasting nature uplift, climate resilience, and vulnerable community benefits by 2029.	Gresham, Multnomah County, District 1
City of Tualatin	\$2,000,000	The <i>Downtown Tualatin Riverfront Park</i> project will restore six acres of City-owned riverfront, connecting the Tualatin River to downtown, the surrounding mixed-use district, and the 27-acre Community Park. The project will help catalyze redevelopment in the CORA urban renewal area and complete the 4.7-mile Tualatin River Greenway. LSCV funds would go towards habitat restoration, invasive species removal, native plantings, wildlife enhancements, and inclusive river access.	Tualatin, Washington County, District 3
Working Theory Farm, City of Hillsboro, and Centro	\$6,500,000	The <i>Working Theory Farm</i> project will acquire 24 acres of working farmland, protecting an invaluable ‘farm park’ for habitat, nature access, and active community programs in rapidly urbanizing South Hillsboro. With Working Theory Farm and Centro Cultural, the project expands workforce development for BIPOC and justice-impacted youth, regenerative agriculture, and ecological restoration. Partners will restore a critical riparian corridor and build trails connecting to Hillsboro's regional network.	Hillsboro, Washington County, District 4
Total Requests:	\$35,855,000		