



600 NE Grand Ave.
Portland, OR 97232-2736

Council meeting agenda

Thursday, February 1, 2024

10:30 AM

Oregon Zoo's Cascade Crest Ballroom Vista
Room, 4001 SW Canyon Rd., Portland, OR
97221. <https://zoom.us/j/615079992>

You can join the meeting on your computer or other device by using this link:

<https://zoom.us/j/615079992>

1. **Call to Order and Roll Call**
2. **Public Communication**

Public comment may be submitted in writing. It will also be heard in person and by electronic communication (video conference or telephone). Written comments should be submitted electronically by emailing legislativecoordinator@oregonmetro.gov. Written comments received by 4:00 p.m. the day before the meeting will be provided to the council prior to the meeting. Testimony on non-agenda items will be taken at the beginning of the meeting. Testimony on agenda items generally will take place during that item, after staff presents, but also may be taken at the beginning of the meeting.

Those wishing to testify orally are encouraged to sign up in advance by either: (a) contacting the legislative coordinator by phone at 503-813-7591 and providing your name and the agenda item on which you wish to testify; or (b) registering by email by sending your name and the agenda item on which you wish to testify to legislativecoordinator@oregonmetro.gov. Those wishing to testify in person should fill out a blue card found in the back of the Council Chamber.

Those requesting to comment virtually during the meeting can do so by joining the meeting using this link: <https://zoom.us/j/615079992> (Webinar ID: 615079992) or 888-475-4499 (toll free) and using the "Raise Hand" feature in Zoom or emailing the legislative coordinator at legislativecoordinator@oregonmetro.gov. Individuals will have three minutes to testify unless otherwise stated at the meeting.

3. **Resolutions**

- 3.1 Resolution No. 24-5375 For the Purpose of Submitting to the Metro Area Voters a \$380 Million General Obligation Oregon Zoo Bond Measure to Protect Animal Health, Provide Conservation Education and Increase Sustainability, and Setting Forth the Official Intent of the Metro Council to Reimburse Certain Expenditures out of the Proceeds of General Obligation Bonds Upon Issuance

RES 24-5375

Attachments: Resolution 24-5375
Exhibit A
Exhibit B
Staff Report

4. **Chief Operating Officer Communication**
5. **Councilor Communication**
6. **Adjourn**

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ការគោរពសិទ្ធិពលរដ្ឋរបស់ ។ សំរាប់ព័ត៌មានអំពីកម្មវិធីសិទ្ធិពលរដ្ឋរបស់ Metro ឬដើម្បីទទួលបានការប្រឹក្សាស្តីពីការរើសអើងសូមទូរស័ព្ទទៅលេខ 503-797-1700 ។ www.oregonmetro.gov/civilrights ។ បើលោកអ្នកត្រូវការអ្នកបកប្រែភាសានៅពេលអង្គប្រជុំសាធារណៈ សូមទូរស័ព្ទមកលេខ 503-797-1700 (ម៉ោង 8 ព្រឹកដល់ម៉ោង 5 ល្ងាច ថ្ងៃធ្វើការ) ប្រាំពីរថ្ងៃ មុនថ្ងៃប្រជុំដើម្បីអាចឱ្យគេបកប្រែសម្រាប់លោកអ្នក ។

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Resolution No. 24-5375 For the Purpose of
Submitting to the Metro Area Voters a \$380
Million General Obligation Oregon Zoo Bond
Measure to Protect Animal Health, Provide
Conservation Education and Increase
Sustainability, and Setting Forth the Official
Intent of the Metro Council to Reimburse
Certain Expenditures out of the Proceeds of
General Obligation Bonds Upon Issuance
Resolutions

Metro Council Meeting
Thursday, February 1, 2024

BEFORE THE METRO COUNCIL

| | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|
| FOR THE PURPOSE OF SUBMITTING TO THE |) | RESOLUTION NO. 24-5375 |
| METRO AREA VOTERS A \$380 MILLION |) | |
| GENERAL OBLIGATION OREGON ZOO BOND |) | Introduced by Chief Operating Officer |
| MEASURE TO PROTECT ANIMAL HEALTH, |) | Marissa Madrigal in concurrence with |
| PROVIDE CONSERVATION EDUCATION AND |) | Council President Lynn Peterson |
| INCREASE SUSTAINABILITY, AND SETTING |) | |
| FORTH THE OFFICIAL INTENT OF THE |) | |
| METRO COUNCIL TO REIMBURSE CERTAIN |) | |
| EXPENDITURES OUT OF THE PROCEEDS OF |) | |
| GENERAL OBLIGATION BONDS UPON |) | |
| ISSUANCE |) | |

WHEREAS, the Oregon Zoo (“Zoo”) has successfully completed implementation of investments approved by Metro District voters through the 2008 Oregon Zoo Bond, Measure 26-96; and

WHEREAS, delivered on time and on budget, these investments updated and expanded animal habitats and care facilities, increased educational opportunities, enhanced guest experience, and improved water and energy conservation across roughly 40 percent of the Zoo campus; and

WHEREAS, despite this progress, there remain aging and outdated habitats, educational facilities and other infrastructure in areas of the Zoo not addressed by the 2008 bond; and

WHEREAS, beginning in fall 2022, staff from the Zoo and Metro Capital Asset Management began work on a new Campus Plan, focusing on improvements to areas of the Zoo not improved by the 2008 bond; and

WHEREAS, staff engaged a diverse range of community organizations and leaders, Zoo guests and members, staff, the Oregon Zoo Foundation and other stakeholders to understand current needs and conditions at the Zoo, thus informing and guiding the development of the new Campus Plan; and

WHEREAS, staff also considered and applied the most modern standards for animal care and habitat design to the development of the draft Campus Plan concepts; and

WHEREAS, the Campus Plan emphasizes ensuring the highest standards of animal health and well-being across the Zoo; improving conservation education, experiences and accessibility for all visitors regardless of age, ability or background; and advancing ambitious goals for energy and water conservation; and

WHEREAS, on October 26, 2023, the Metro Council adopted Resolution No. 23-5357, approving the Zoo Campus Plan concepts for the purposes of submitting relevant portions to permitting review by the City of Portland, a necessary step to renew the Oregon Zoo’s 10-year Conditional Use Permit, and the Metro Council will consider further action on the Campus Plan following this process; and

WHEREAS, historic community support and investment has made the Zoo a pride of the Portland region and the greater Pacific Northwest, and today the Zoo is a celebrated attraction for more than a million visitors annually, including hundreds of thousands of children; and

WHEREAS, continued community investment is needed to help the Zoo continue to protect animal health and well-being; improve conservation education opportunities for children, families and visitors of all ages; conserve water and energy in zoo operations and infrastructure; support the zoo's work to protect and restore threatened and endangered species in the Northwest and beyond; improve protection from heat and extreme weather for animals and visitors; and ensure facilities are prepared for animal care in the case of a natural disaster or emergency; and

WHEREAS, zoo staff have prepared an Oregon Zoo Phase 2 Bond Program investment framework, attached as Exhibit A, that describes the most critical and deliverable investments to advance these outcomes, as well as policies and commitments that would guide implementation of the bond program; and

WHEREAS, levies for various general obligation bonds approved by Metro voters will be declining due to reducing debt service, creating an opportunity for voters to consider renewing their support through authorizing new general obligation bonds without an estimated increase in the tax rate paid now, allowing Metro to continue the Zoo's important conservation and animal protection efforts, unique educational experiences and service to our community; and

WHEREAS, the Zoo's track record of success in delivering investments through the previous bond provides confidence that implementation of a second phase of bond program investments will efficiently and effectively advance Zoo and community priorities for animal health, conservation education, sustainability; and

WHEREAS, United States Treasury Regulation 1.150-2 requires issuers of tax-exempt bonds to declare their intention if the issuers intend to use bond proceeds to reimburse eligible expenditures that are initially funded from other sources; now therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED that the Metro Council:

1. The Metro Council submits to the qualified voters of the Metro Area the question of authorizing general obligation bonds in an amount not to exceed \$380 million for the purposes of protecting animal health, providing conservation education, and increasing sustainability at the Oregon Zoo, described in the Oregon Zoo Phase 2 Bond Program Investment Framework, attached as Exhibit A;

2. Metro may issue the bonds from time to time in one or more series. Any series of bonds may mature over a period of not more than 30 years from the date of issuance;

3. The Metro Council certifies the Ballot Title attached as Exhibit B (with such changes as an Authorized Representative, as defined below, may approve) for placement of the 2024 Oregon Zoo Bond Measure on the ballot for the May 21, 2024, Primary Election;

4. The Metro Council authorizes and directs the Metro Chief Operating Officer, the Metro Chief Financial Officer or the Metro Attorney, or their respective designees (each, an "Authorized Representative"), each acting individually, to file with the county elections office the Ballot Title and related explanatory statement prepared by the Authorized Representative pursuant to Metro Code Section 9.02.020;

5. The Metro Council authorizes and directs the Authorized Representative to submit the Ballot Title to the Tax Supervising and Conservation Commission in a timely manner, as required by law;

6. The Metro Council further authorizes and directs the Authorized Representative to take all other actions necessary for placement of the 2024 Oregon Zoo Bond Measure on the ballot for the May 21, 2024, Primary Election in a manner consistent with and in furtherance of this Resolution;

7. The Metro Council hereby declares its official intent, for the purpose of establishing compliance with the requirements of United States Treasury Regulation 1.150-2, to reimburse eligible expenditures of Metro paid prior to the issuance of general obligation bonded indebtedness issued pursuant to the 2024 Oregon Zoo Bond Measure referenced herein with the proceeds of such indebtedness when issued to the extent such reimbursements fall within the limitations described in United States Treasury Regulation 1.150-2. This declaration of official intent does not bind Metro to make any expenditure or incur any debt.

ADOPTED by the Metro Council this first day of February, 2024.

Lynn Peterson, Council President

Approved as to Form:

Carrie MacLaren, Metro Attorney

Oregon Zoo Phase 2 Bond Program: Implementation Framework

February 1, 2024

Introduction

The Oregon Zoo is a source of pride for the greater Portland region, providing unparalleled access to wildlife while advancing conservation education and species recovery locally as well as around the globe. The zoo is committed to continually improving animal health and well-being, conservation education, guest and staff experience, equity, accessibility, climate resilience and conservation across its 64-acre campus in Washington Park.

In operation since 1888 and at its current Washington Park location since 1959, the zoo has received ongoing community support for daily operations as well as major investments – with untold benefits for animals, visitors, and the region as a whole.

The 2024 Oregon Zoo Phase 2 bond program will continue this tradition, building most directly on the successes of the 2008 zoo bond, which supported a first phase of transformational investments in animal care, sustainability and conservation education across roughly 40% of the zoo.

The Phase 1 2008 bond measure completed its investments in 2021, on-time and on-budget. The Phase 2 bond program proposes a second transformational phase of investments in the zoo – with no increase in the estimated tax rate property owners pay now.

The core policy outcomes of Phase 2 align with the zoo’s strategic goals; engagement with community, visitors, staff and stakeholders; and direction from the Metro Council. These core policy outcomes include:

- Advance the Oregon Zoo’s mission of connecting our community to the wonder of wildlife to create a better future for all.
- Support animal health and well-being, conservation education for youth and families, energy and water conservation, accessibility for all ages and abilities, and climate resilience at the zoo.
- Continue the zoo’s 50-year history of accreditation by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums. First accredited in 1974, the Oregon Zoo is one of only two zoos in the United States to maintain accreditation for so long.

As the zoo looks toward its approaching sesquicentennial in 2038, the investments we make now are part of our long-term commitment to protecting wildlife and supporting a livable, equitable, sustainable region for future generations.

Implementation foundation: The Oregon Zoo Campus Plan

The Oregon Zoo Phase 2 bond program will prioritize investments in animal care and well-being, conservation education, visitor experience/accessibility and sustainability identified in the zoo's 2024 Campus Plan, a 20-year vision for the future of the zoo that replaces a master plan adopted by the Metro Council in 2011.

The Campus Plan was developed with substantial community, stakeholder, staff and technical expert engagement in fall 2022 through summer 2023. The Metro Council approved the plan's concepts through the adoption of Resolution No. 23-5357 on Oct. 26, 2023. It is now under review by the City of Portland for the purposes of renewing the zoo's Conditional Use Master Plan. Following the renewal process and completion of any necessary updates, the Campus Plan will be presented to the Metro Council for final approval in summer 2024. These steps are not expected to substantially change investment prioritization, or the broad concepts and priorities approved by the Metro Council.

Investment prioritization

The Oregon Zoo Phase 2 bond program will advance the most strategic, impactful and ready investments from the Campus Plan over a construction timeline of 10 to 15 years.

Building on the successful implementation of investments funded by the 2008 bond measure — as well as policy guidance from the Metro Council — zoo staff and leadership prioritized investments in key areas of the zoo based on the following criteria:

- **Animal well-being:** Enhance the lives of animals in our care.
- **Inspiring guest and educational experiences:** Connect our community to the wonder of wildlife.
- **Infrastructure health:** Replace aging and/or failing infrastructure.
- **Risk and readiness:** High return on investment and project value.
- **Strategic alignment:** Alignment with conservation, financial sustainability, and staff experience.

Guided by these priorities, the Phase 2 bond program proposes the following areas of investment. This list will be refined and potentially expanded as the Campus Plan is finalized and detailed implementation planning continues (see below).

Protecting animal health and well-being

Priority investments include, but are not limited to, replacing aging habitats and zookeeping areas for sea otters and other marine mammals and penguins, which are among the zoo's oldest existing habitat areas, as well as an updated giraffe habitat to support optimal well-being for this iconic and imperiled species.

New habitats will incorporate modern standards for animal health and well-being, including natural design and interactive elements, better refuge from heat and extreme weather, more functional spaces for zookeeping staff, and continuity of animal care in the case of an earthquake or other natural disaster.

Providing unparalleled conservation education

The zoo plays an invaluable role in building understanding of the wonder of wildlife and the need for protecting and conserving animal species. Phase 2 bond program habitat and facility upgrades will support enhanced access for youth, families and visitors of all ages to engaging and interactive educational exhibits in several popular areas of the zoo. Improvements will also highlight the zoo's essential species conservation work, connecting and inspiring visitors to participate in this mission.

Conserving water and energy

Building on a successful track record in the 2008 bond implementation, the Campus Plan establishes ambitious goals for water and energy conservation in zoo capital investments. For new construction, the zoo aims to achieve at least a 25% reduction in energy use per visitor and 50% reduction in municipal water use compared to a minimum-code compliant building. In particular, Phase 2 bond program updates to aquatic habitats at Pacific Shores will replace outdated infrastructure and improve efficiency. All Phase 2 bond investments will support the zoo's goal to transition to a fossil-free, all-electric campus powered by 100% renewable energy by 2040.

A welcoming zoo, for all

Phase 2 bond investments in the entry plaza, as well as pathways and rest areas around the zoo, will improve accessibility for visitors of all ages and abilities throughout the zoo's hilly campus. Investments will reduce congestion in popular exhibit areas and make it easier to find exhibits, restrooms, food vendors, and so on. Investments will also provide visitors with better protection from heat and other extreme weather.

Species conservation and recovery

The zoo works closely with state and federal agencies, Tribal governments, and nonprofit conservation partners to help recover threatened and endangered species in the Northwest and beyond. Many Phase 2 investments will align with this critical work and provide the facilities needed to support it.

Overview of 2024 Oregon Zoo Phase 2 bond measure proposal

The 2024 Oregon Zoo Phase 2 bond measure asks Metro voters to renew their commitment to the zoo by supporting this phase of investments in animal health and well-being, conservation education, sustainability, accessibility and species conservation, focused on areas of the zoo not substantially improved through the first phase of bond implementation.

If passed, the measure is estimated not to increase current bond tax rates, due to scheduled debt service reductions. Bonds may be issued in multiple series and mature in no more than 30 years. The estimated average rate is 8.5 cents/\$1,000 assessed value.

Implementation commitments

If the measure is approved by voters, Phase 2 bond program investments will advance numerous Metro Council policies and goals, most of which were adopted or approved after the 2008 bond measure's passage. Below are several key policies that will be incorporated into implementation planning.

- Construction Career Pathways Framework
- Regional Workforce Equity Agreement
- Subcontractor Equity Program
- Sustainable Sites and Buildings Policy
- Clean Air Construction Policy
- Percent for Art Policy

Detailed implementation planning and accountability

To be prepared for implementation as quickly as possible, planning for investments and finalizing the Campus Plan will continue following Metro Council referral of a Phase 2 bond measure.

Should voters approve the bond measure, zoo and Metro Capital Asset Management staff will develop a detailed Phase 2 bond program implementation plan, incorporating details such as:

- Design and construction phasing
- Refined estimates of project costs incorporating escalation
- Citizens' oversight committee development, including annual report to the Metro Council
- Staffing plan, including construction management and community/partner engagement staff
- Operating cost/revenue tools

Staff will present the implementation plan to the Metro Council for review and discussion within four months of voter approval of the bond measure.

Each priority investment area will undergo more detailed design and construction planning, which may include engagement with community, zoo staff, visitors and the Metro Council.

Implementation will also include annual financial audits.

Oregon Zoo Bond Ballot Title

Title: Bonds to protect animal health; provide conservation, education; increase sustainability

Question: Shall Zoo protect animal health; save water, energy; provide conservation, youth education; issue bonds estimated not to increase tax rate?

If the bonds are approved, they will be payable from taxes on property or property ownership that are not subject to the limits of Sections 11 and 11b, Article XI of the Oregon Constitution.

Summary: This measure authorizes \$380 million in general obligation bonds for the Oregon Zoo to:

- Protect animal health and well-being by updating aging exhibits with more natural, modern habitats, including but not limited to penguins, sea otters, giraffes.
- Improve facilities to enhance educational opportunities for children and other zoo visitors to learn about animals and habitat conservation.
- Conserve water and energy in zoo operations and updated infrastructure.
- Improve facilities supporting the zoo's conservation work protecting and restoring threatened/endangered species in the Northwest and beyond.
- Increase accessibility for visitors of all abilities, including improved paths and exhibits.
- Improve protection from heat and extreme weather for animals, visitors.
- Improve facilities to prepare for animal care in a natural disaster or emergency.

This measure is estimated not to increase current bond tax rates, due to scheduled debt service reductions. Bonds may be issued in multiple series and mature in no more than 30 years. The estimated average rate is 8.5 cents/\$1,000 assessed value.

Requires annual financial audits, and annual reports to Metro Council by community oversight committee.

IN CONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTION NO. 24-5375, FOR THE PURPOSE OF SUBMITTING TO THE METRO AREA VOTERS A \$380 MILLION GENERAL OBLIGATION OREGON ZOO BOND MEASURE TO PROTECT ANIMAL HEALTH, PROVIDE CONSERVATION EDUCATION AND INCREASE SUSTAINABILITY, AND SETTING FORTH THE OFFICIAL INTENT OF THE METRO COUNCIL TO REIMBURSE CERTAIN EXPENDITURES OUT OF THE PROCEEDS OF GENERAL OBLIGATION BONDS UPON ISSUANCE

Date: Jan. 18, 2024
Department: Oregon Zoo
Council Meeting Date: Feb. 1, 2024

Presenters: Heidi Rahn (she/her),
Oregon Zoo Director

Length: 60 min.

Prepared by: Craig Beebe,
(971) 710-3029,
craig.beebe@oregonmetro.gov

ISSUE STATEMENT

The Metro Council is asked to consider referring the Oregon Zoo Phase 2 bond measure to the region's voters. If approved, the measure would support a new phase of capital investments to protect animal health and well-being, provide conservation education, increase sustainability and improve accessibility at the zoo — building on the successes of the 2008 zoo bond, with no estimated increase in property tax rates.

ACTION REQUESTED

Adopt Resolution No. 24-5375, referring the Oregon Zoo Phase 2 bond measure to the May 21, 2024 ballot, with the Oregon Zoo Phase 2 Bond Framework as guide for its implementation.

IDENTIFIED POLICY OUTCOMES

- Advance the Oregon Zoo's mission of connecting our community to the wonder of wildlife to create a better future for all.
- Support animal health and well-being, conservation education for youth and families, energy and water conservation, accessibility for all ages and abilities, and climate resilience at the zoo.
- Maintain accreditation by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums. First accredited in 1974, the Oregon Zoo is one of only two zoos in the country to be continuously accredited for 50 years.

POLICY QUESTION(S)

- Does the recommended Oregon Zoo Phase 2 bond measure and investment framework serve the needs of the zoo's animals, visitors and facilities; fulfill Council direction and policy; and reflect community and stakeholder input in the development of the Oregon Zoo Campus Plan?

POLICY OPTIONS FOR COUNCIL TO CONSIDER

- Adopt the Resolution.
- Request changes to the investment framework prior to adoption.

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

Following more than a year of engagement and preparation, staff recommend that Council adopt Resolution No. 24-5375, asking Metro-area voters to renew their commitment to supporting the Oregon Zoo's ongoing investments in animal health, conservation education and sustainability.

STRATEGIC CONTEXT & FRAMING COUNCIL DISCUSSION

The Oregon Zoo is a source of pride for the greater Portland region, advancing conservation education and species recovery locally as well as around the globe. The zoo is committed to continually improving animal well-being, guest and staff experiences, education, accessibility, climate resilience and conservation across its 64-acre campus in Washington Park.

The zoo will mark 50 years of accreditation by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums in 2024 — one of only two zoos in the country to maintain accreditation for so long. This is testament to the long-running support of our community — and our zoo's widely acknowledged leadership in animal care, education, species recovery and operations. As we look to the zoo's sesquicentennial in 2038, continuing community support and investments are essential to maintaining this leadership and ensuring the zoo continues to meet evolving standards and practices.

Ticket sales and other visitor revenue, along with a permanent property tax levy, support the zoo's day-to-day operations, including feeding and caring for animals, providing visitor services, powering and heating the zoo, doing basic maintenance and so on. Generous donors to the Oregon Zoo Foundation have supported focused investments in specific exhibits and programs. Yet broader public support has been needed to ensure the zoo campus as a whole can make essential capital investments to maintain the latest standards in animal care, visitor facilities and infrastructure.

Fortunately, the public has maintained strong support over the decades. Most significantly, in 2008, the region's voters approved Measure 26-96, authorizing Metro to issue general obligation bonds to dramatically improve animal habitats, visitor facilities and sustainability at the zoo. The zoo successfully completed implementation of the 2008 bond commitments in 2021, having transformed around 40% of the campus, including the elephant, polar bear and primate habitats, as well as a new veterinary medical center, California condor exhibit and conservation education center.

In November 2021, the final report from the bond’s community oversight committee stated that “bond funds were spent wisely, bond projects were completed on schedule and within budget, and the bond program successfully delivered on voter expectations.” However, the report also noted, “if you walk further you will find habitats in need of improvements, aged buildings in need of replacement, and infrastructure in need of upgrading,” and urged “regional leaders and voters to continue addressing the needs of all the wildlife in our care and to begin moving forward on another significant capital investment in the Oregon Zoo.”

In fall 2022, staff from the Oregon Zoo and Capital Asset Management began work on a new Oregon Zoo Campus Plan to replace the zoo’s 2011 Master Plan that guided implementation of the bond. The new plan focuses on areas of the campus that were not targeted for substantial investment from the 2008 bond. These include the zoo’s oldest existing habitats and buildings, as well as outdated educational exhibits and not fully accessible pathways and facilities.

The 2024 Oregon Zoo Phase 2 Bond Measure, through the proposed ballot caption, question and summary in Exhibit B to the Resolution, would follow on the successes of the 2008 bond to begin a new phase of capital improvements at the zoo, with no estimated increase in the tax rate currently paid by property owners in the region. This phase would implement a substantial portion of the Campus Plan, advancing the Metro Council’s goals for animal health, climate, conservation education and economic vitality in one of the region’s most beloved community institutions. These proposed investments are described in Exhibit A to the Resolution.

Community engagement and support

Development of the Campus Plan included in-person engagement sessions with historically marginalized communities, including but not limited to representatives of the following organizations:

- Adelante Mujeres
- Autism Empowerment
- Boys & Girls Club of the Portland Metro Area
- Center for African Immigrants and Refugees
- Centro Cultural
- People of Color Outdoors
- Rosewood Initiative
- Self-Enhancement Inc.
- Youth Empowerment Project PNW

Staff also engaged with youth participating in the Zoo Apprenticeship Program; the zoo’s Community Advocacy Council, composed of young professionals of color; zoo volunteers and members; staff and board of the Oregon Zoo Foundation; and zoo staff.

Zoo staff heard broad community support for the goals of the draft plan, particularly goals to improve accessibility, wayfinding and other visitor facilities at the zoo, and to update or replace outdated animal habitats. Zoo staff were also supportive of proposed improvements to behind-the-scenes care-staff facilities, guest amenities, storage areas and service access.

Through fall 2023 and into the winter, staff and partners at the Oregon Zoo Foundation have continued to engage a broad range of stakeholders, neighbors and community leaders to share the mission of the Oregon Zoo and how it is expressed through the new Campus Plan and a potential 2024 bond measure. Staff and our Foundation partners have heard broad support for continuing investments at the zoo through a new bond measure, with no estimated increase in current tax rates. Public opinion polling conducted by Metro contractors in late 2023 indicated strong support from likely voters for a potential measure.

Staff are aware that a coalition of community leaders and advocates are organizing to support a potential measure, should it be referred by the Metro Council. Staff are not aware of any organized opposition to a potential bond measure at this time.

Legal antecedents

When complete and approved by the Metro Council following City of Portland permitting, the final Campus Plan will update the 2011 Comprehensive Use Master Plan, approved by the Metro Council through Resolution No 11-4304. The 2011 Master Plan guided the implementation of Measure 26-96, the Oregon Zoo bond measure approved by the region's voters in November 2008, as well as other non-bond-funded improvements.

The new Campus Plan's finalization and implementation will also advance several other Metro Council policies, including but not limited to:

- Construction Career Pathways Framework
- Regional Workforce Equity Agreement
- Subcontractor Equity Program
- Sustainable Sites and Buildings Policy
- Clean Air Construction Policy
- Percent for Art Policy

Anticipated Effects

The effect of this resolution will be the referral to voters of a general obligation bond measure in the May 21, 2024, primary election. The text of the proposed measure is included in Exhibit B.

Work to prepare for implementation of the Campus Plan, as well as its review by the City of Portland, will continue following Council adoption of the resolution.

If voters approve the proposed measure in May, staff will work to advance the investment framework attached as Exhibit A, including the development of a more detailed bond program phase 2 implementation plan for Council review by fall 2024.

Financial Implications

The Metro Council's adopted budget for FY24 includes funding for zoo campus planning as part of the agency's capital improvement plan. Exploration of funding options is supported through Government Affairs and Policy Development's general fund budget.

The referral of this measure to the voters will require Metro to pay for election expenses, estimated at approximately \$150,000. This amount can change based on the number of issues on the ballot, and the number of region-wide items on the ballot. The Council's 2023–24 adopted budget includes appropriation for this expense.

Prior to the election, Metro would also prepare and mail an informational postcard to registered voter households regarding the proposed measure and its effects. Funds for this postcard are budgeted through Metro's general fund. Post-referral informational materials will be submitted to the Oregon Secretary of State for review under ORS 260.432.

If the measure passes in May, staff will work with Council on necessary budgetary appropriation for bond implementation in the 2024–25 fiscal year and beyond.

BACKGROUND

Council discussed the draft Campus Plan at work sessions on May 16 and Sept. 5, 2023; the latter included a tour of many of the plan's proposed focus areas. On Oct. 26, 2023, the Metro Council adopted Resolution No. 23-5357, accepting the draft Campus Plan's concepts, with emphases on animal care and well-being, sustainability and conservation, and visitor education and accessibility. The resolution directed staff to begin the work of permitting review with the City of Portland to renew the zoo's Comprehensive Use Master Plan, and to continue refining the Campus Plan for final adoption in 2024.

Additionally, Council's adoption of Resolution No. 23-5357 directed staff to prepare capital financing and business planning options for Council's consideration. The Council advanced the zoo's proposed capital project prioritization and financing approach, including the potential of a Phase 2 bond measure, at a work session on Nov. 21, 2023. At a work session on Jan. 9, 2024, the Metro Council discussed proposed priorities for a next phase of bond-funded investments and provided direction to proceed with the preparation of bond measure referral for the Council's consideration.

ATTACHMENTS

- Resolution No. 24-5375
- Exhibit A: Oregon Zoo Phase 2 Bond Program Implementation Framework
- Exhibit B: Ballot Title



Oregon Zoo

Together for Wildlife

Metro Council Meeting | February 1, 2024

Oregon Zoo Phase 2 Framework & Bond Referral

Mission

Connecting our community to the wonder of wildlife to create a better future for all.

Together for
Wildlife

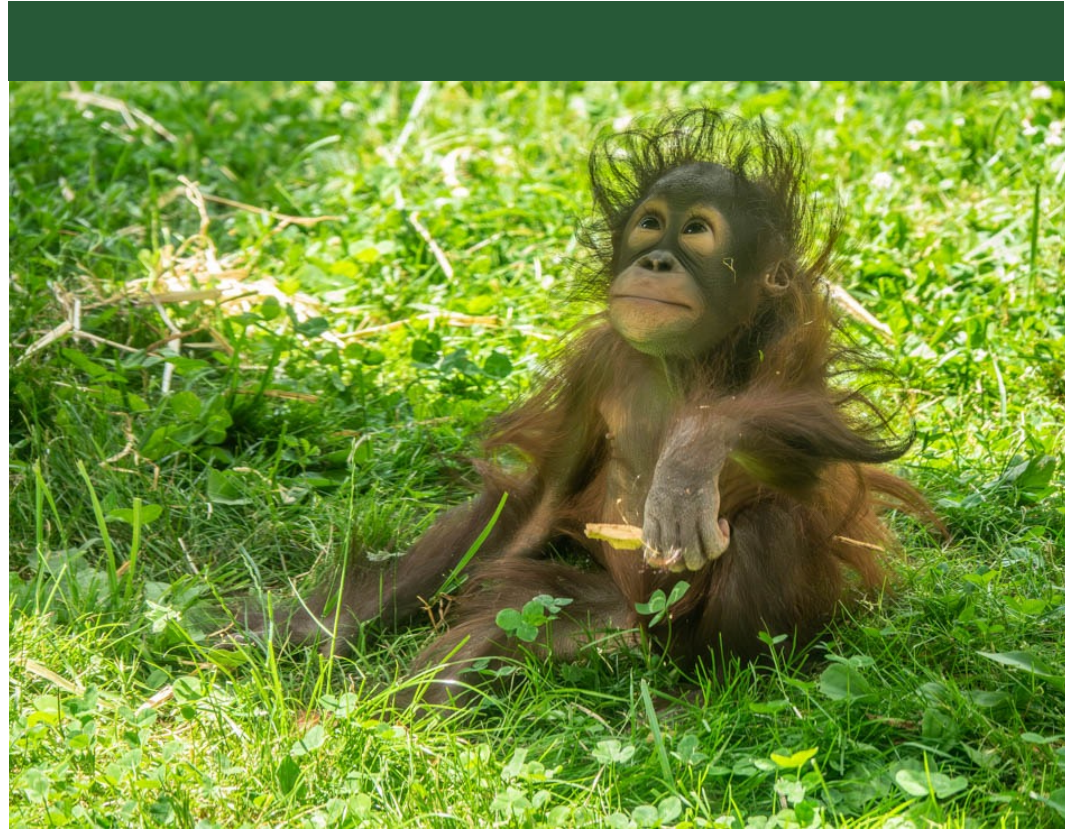


Why our zoo is different

Nearly 150 years of
community support.

50 years of AZA
accreditation.

1.3 million annual
visitors, including
400,000+ children.



Our track record

2008 Bond: Nearly
40% of zoo updated.

Focus on animal well-
being, sustainability.

All projects completed
on time and on
budget.



Oregon Zoo Campus Development

Phase 1: Completed

2008 Bond
40% of zoo upgraded

Future

Oregon Zoo Campus Plan

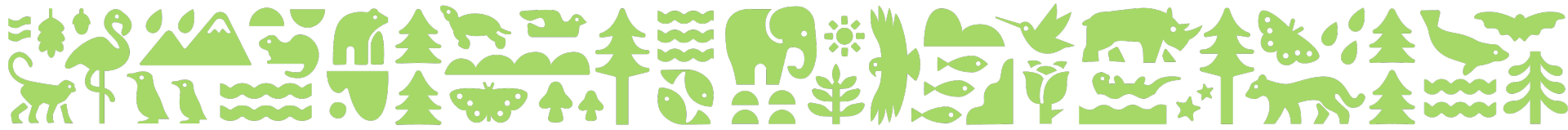
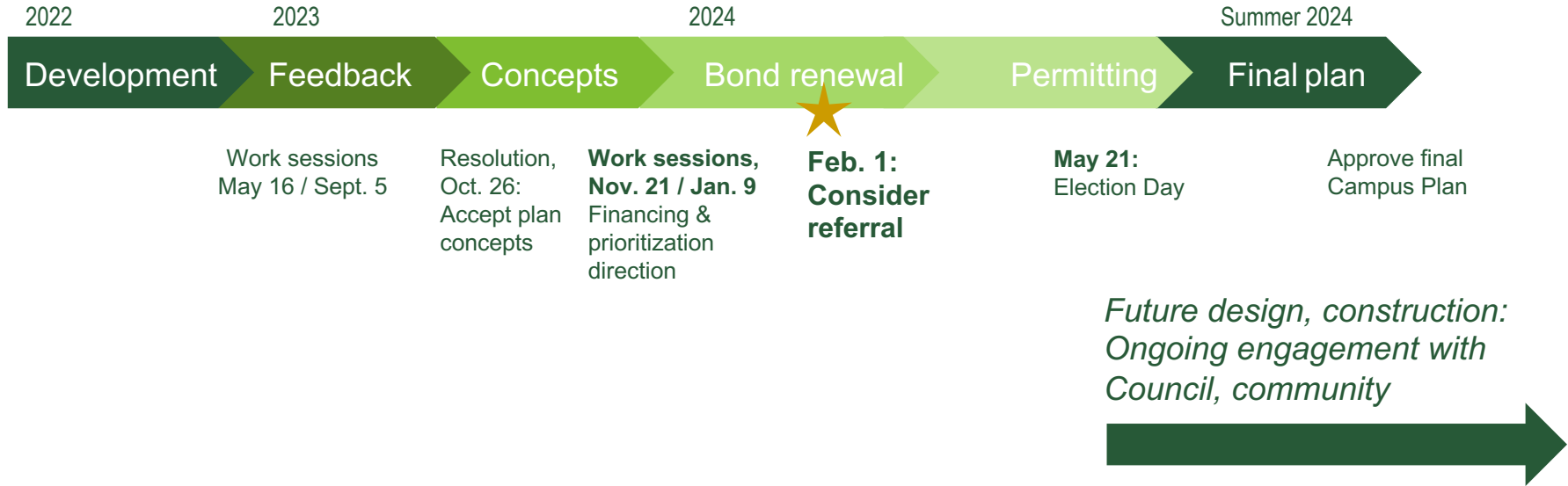


Developed with community

| | |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Portland DART School | Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians |
| Youth Empowerment Project | Rosewood Initiative |
| Autism Empowerment | Centro Cultural |
| Self Enhancement Inc. | CAIRO PDX |
| Boys & Girls Clubs | Neighborhood House |
| People of Color Outdoors | Adelante Mujeres |
| Portland Community College | ZAP Team |
| Cascade Forest Conservancy | Community Advocacy Council |



Campus Plan/Zoo Phase 2 timeline



Oregon Zoo Phase 2: Priorities

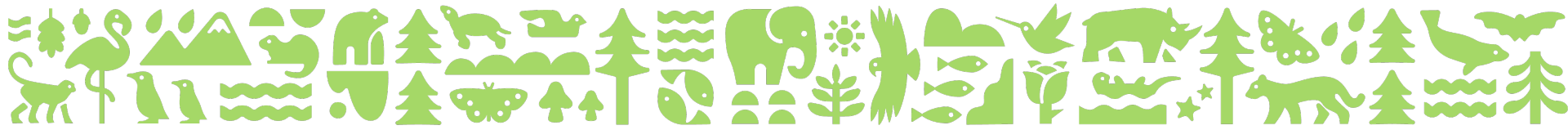
Protect animal health and well-being

Provide unparalleled conservation education

Save water and energy

Be welcoming to all

Support species recovery and conservation

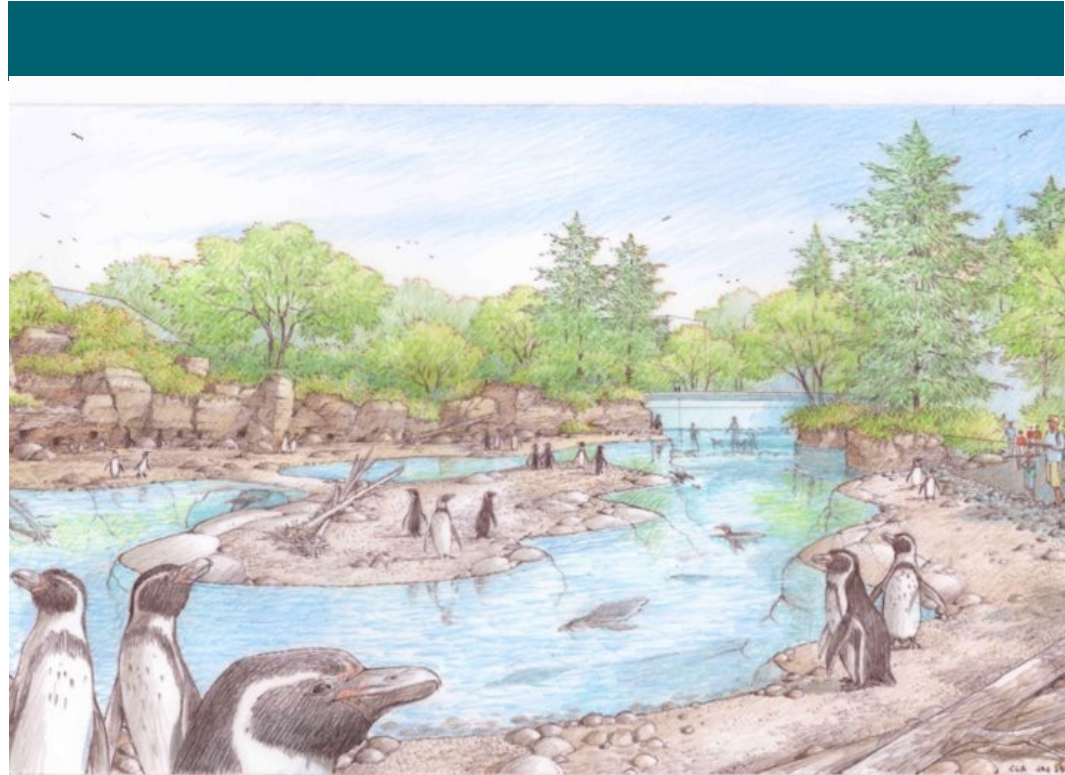


Animal health and well-being

Updated, more natural habitats, including sea otters, penguins, giraffes.

Improved protection from heat, extreme weather.

Continuity of care in case of disaster or emergency.



Unparalleled conservation education

- Engaging and interactive exhibits for youth, families and visitors of all ages
- Inspiring and building support for conservation and science



Saving water and energy

Advancing ambitious goals for reducing energy and water use.

Replacing aging infrastructure and aquatic habitats.

Support a fossil fuel-free campus by 2040.



Oregon Zoo Phase 2

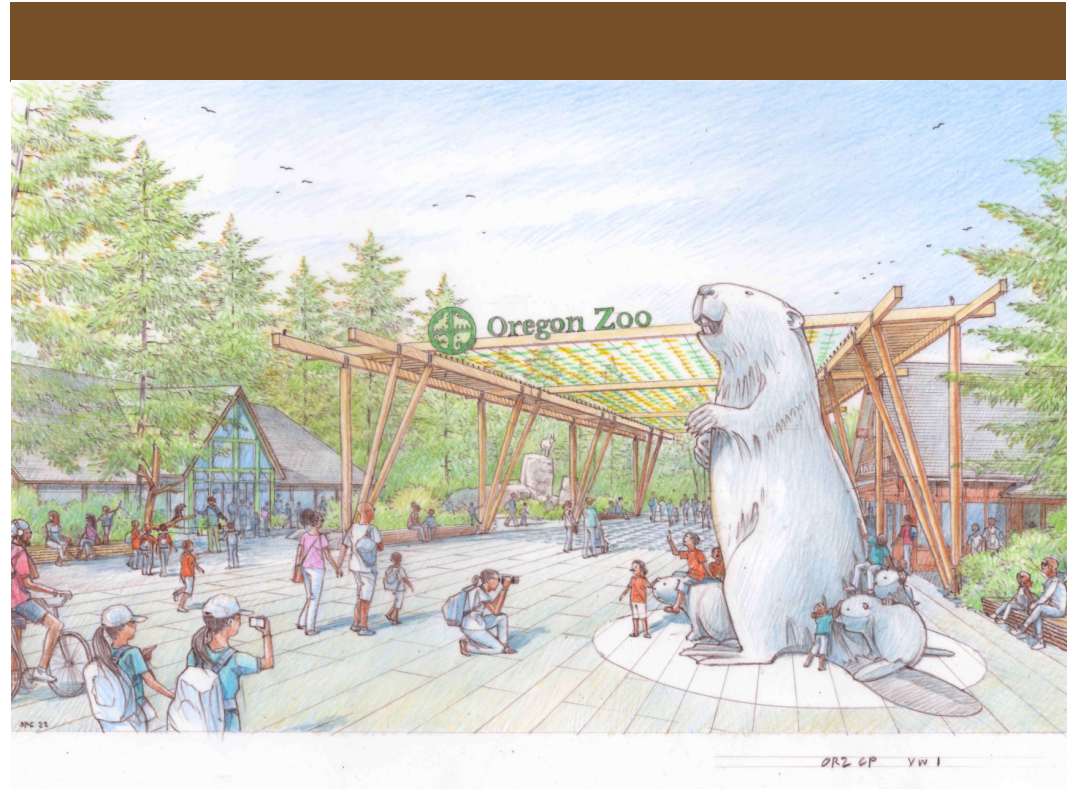
Welcoming to all

An accessible zoo for all abilities and ages.

Updated plazas, pathways, rest areas.

Easier to get around.

Refuge from heat, weather.

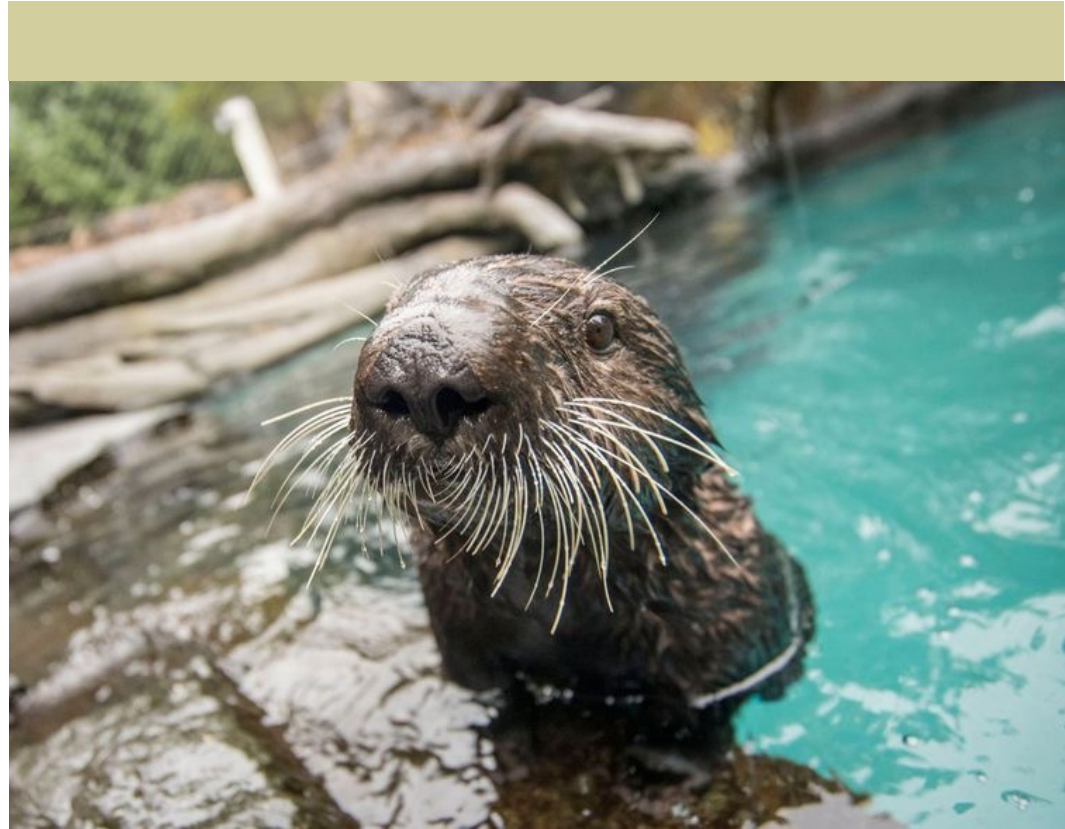


Oregon Zoo Phase 2

Species recovery and conservation

Aligning with recovery needs in the Northwest and beyond

Working with partners to protect and restore threatened and endangered species

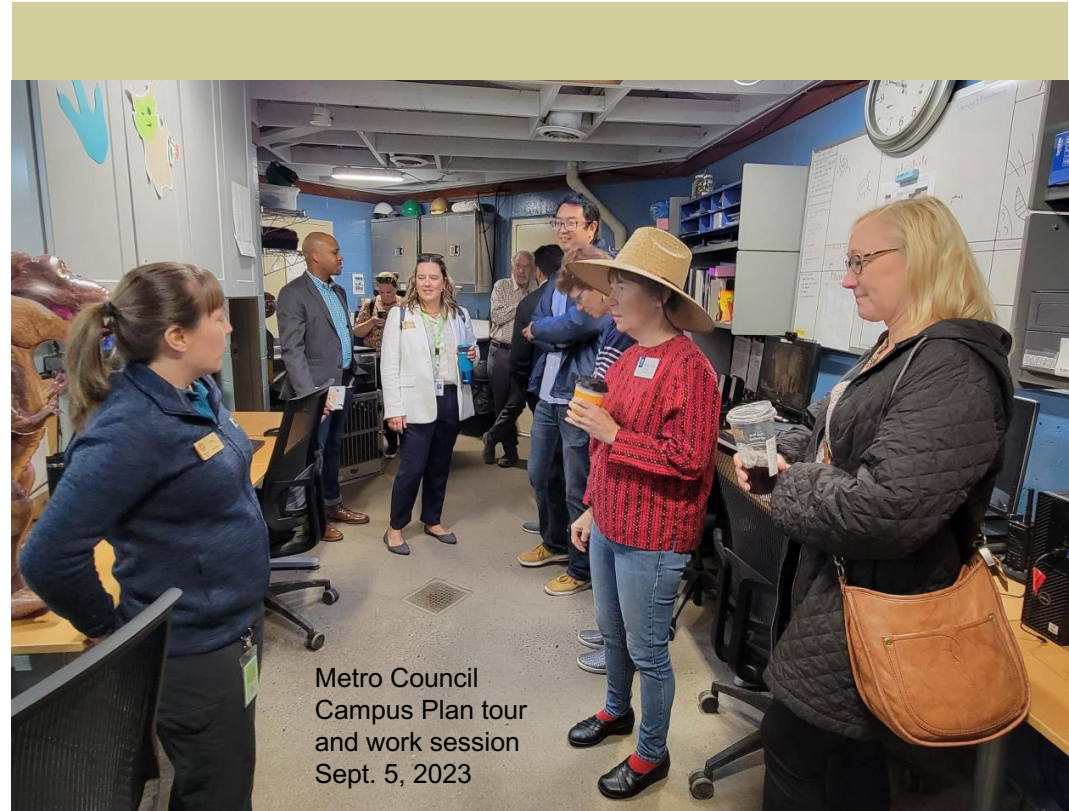


For Council's consideration

Resolution 24-5375:
Referring Zoo Phase 2
bond measure to voters

Exhibit A:
Implementation
Framework

Exhibit B: Ballot Title



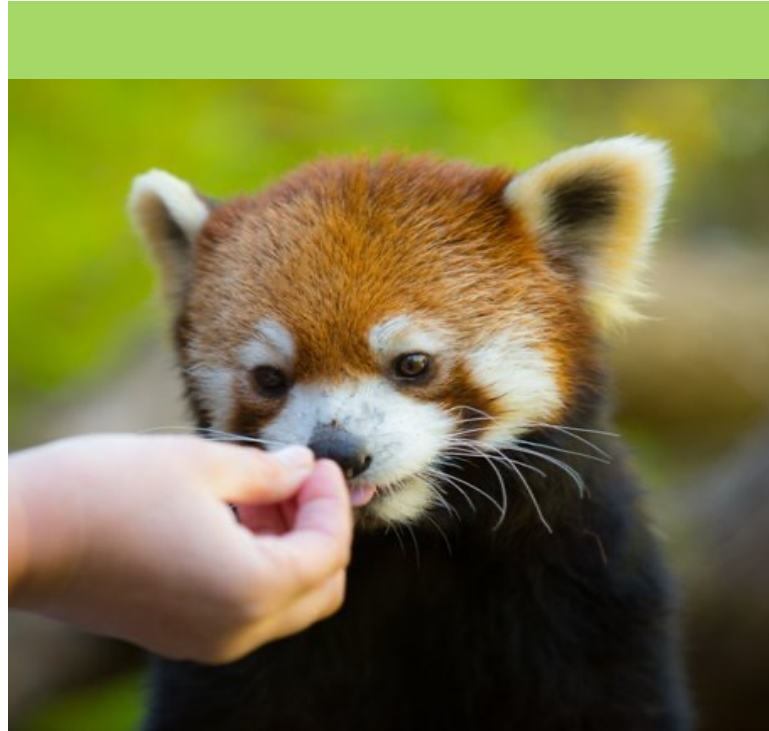
Proposed Zoo Phase 2 bond measure

Protect animal health;
provide conservation, education;
increase sustainability.

Authorize \$380 million in
general obligation bonds.

**No estimated increase
in current bond tax rates.**

Estimated rate: 8.5 cents
per \$1,000 assessed value.



Implementation commitments

Detailed Bond implementation plan within four months of election.

Advance Council policies: Workforce and contracting equity, climate, clean air, sustainability, arts and more.

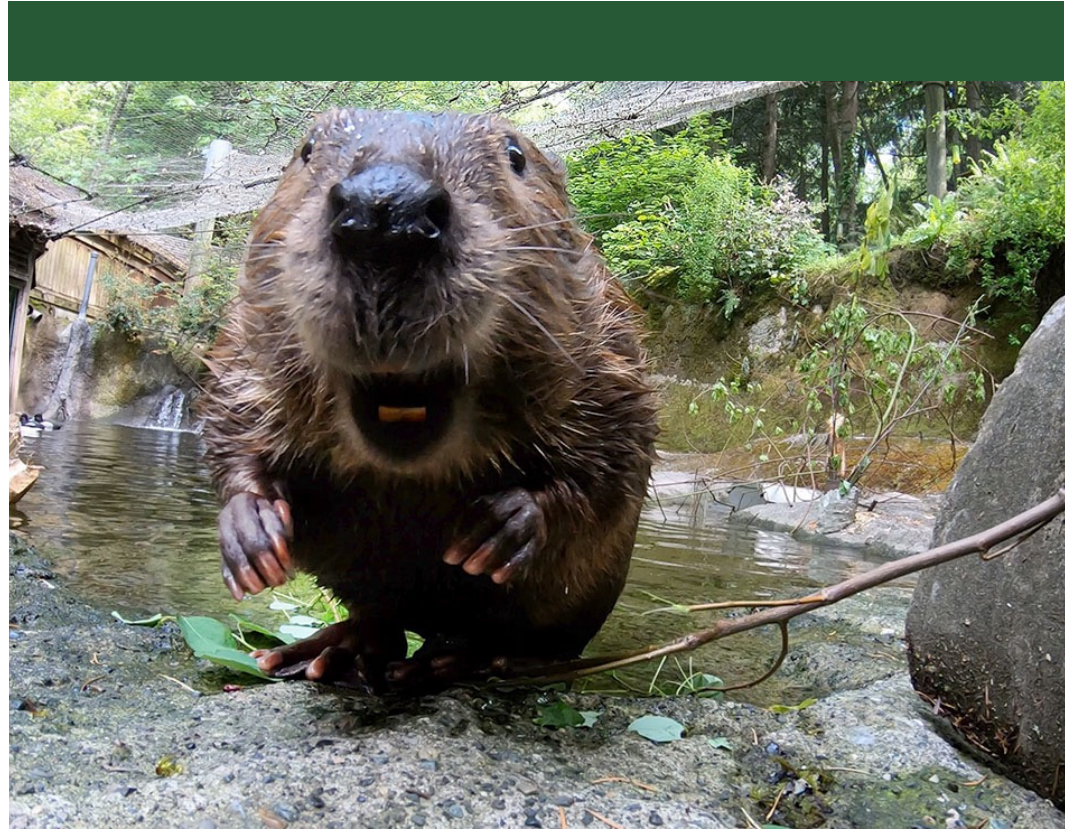


A big day for our zoo, and our region

Proud history,
bright future

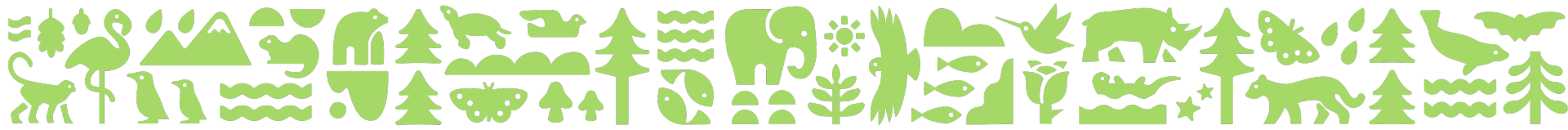
Together for wildlife,
and for our community

A broader impact



Questions

Does Council have questions prior to discussion and consideration of Resolution No. 24-5375?





Oregon Zoo

Together for Wildlife

The Oregon Zoo is part of Metro.  Metro

From: [Bala](#)
To: [Legislative Coordinator](#)
Subject: [External sender]RES 24-5375
Date: Wednesday, January 31, 2024 12:39:16 PM

Hello,

As a Metro taxpayer, I would like to register my opposition to resolution RES 24-5375 to be considered during the 1st Feb meeting.

I urge the councillors to vote AGAINST the resolution authorizing \$380 million bond measure to be put to vote.

Zoo attendance the world over is declining, since these are 19th century institutions with bored & sick animals competing for our attention, against high definition nature documentaries set in their natural habitat. Oregon zoo is no exception and we've seen the attendance flat-line even before Covid.

The previous 2008 bond measure has not changed this trend.

The 2008 bond measure spent \$57 million on elephant habitat, yet four elephants have died, not counting a miscarriage, since then. Looking at the long list of health problems that the elephants are suffering, it is clear that all this spending has not helped. The zoo has also not taken up for consideration a good-faith offer from an accredited sanctuary to retire Chendra to. This clearly shows that zoo's priorities are not cost saving and animal well-being.

The 2008 bond measure also heavily prioritized exotic species over native wildlife conservation. For a region that prides on "local" everything, it is especially jarring to note this discrepancy.

Other zoos are experimenting with virtual reality and similar exhibits to bring the experience of wild animals. Oregon zoo is unable to think outside the box.

Metro should be working towards making the zoo more financially self-sufficient, and this bond measure does not help.

Oregon just declared a drug emergency in Portland, whose downtown is now a shell of its past and whose vulnerable citizens are suffering in the streets as addicts, and we are looking to make the zoo spiffier?

Our priorities need to change.

Thank you
Bala Seshasayee

From: [Barbara Spears](#)
To: [Legislative Coordinator](#)
Subject: [External sender]Zoo Bond Measure
Date: Wednesday, January 31, 2024 9:59:39 AM

Hello -

I am writing in STRONG OPPOSITION to the proposed \$380M zoo bond measure which is up for discussion by the Metro board February 1.

The Oregon Zoo has proven itself to be an inhumane place for elephants which should have been freed from their misery years ago. The last bond measure, (a pure bait and switch) which promised an off-site acreage where elephants would roam free, never materialized. Four elephant deaths and a miscarriage have happened since then!

As such, many citizens are disillusioned with Metro leadership which allows our tax dollars to be spent subsidizing this inhumane institution. In the past ten years, Oregon Zoo attendance has declined, proving that zoos are antiquated institutions and losing favor with the public.

Please, for the sake of the elephants, oppose this misguided effort.

Thank you.

Barbara Spears
Portland, Oregon

| | |
|---------|--|
| Name * | Charissa Anderson |
| Email * | charissa.anderson@gmail.com |
| Address | <input type="checkbox"/> 2830 SW West Point Ave Portland, OR 97225 United States |

Your testimony

Dear Councilors,

My name is Charissa Anderson, and I'm the Board Treasurer for the Oregon Zoo Foundation and a parent of two young children who enjoy the Oregon Zoo.

The Oregon Zoo is an educational institution. I believe educating and inspiring young people brings a stronger focus to the purpose and importance of zoos. By seeing, smelling, and hearing animals from around the world, children and families learn about and are inspired to care for them. Due to our frequent visits, my two children know many of the Oregon Zoo animals by name, personalizing their connection and boosting their enthusiasm to support wildlife. In fact, my seven-year-old daughter will often talk about Nora and Amelia Gray (the Oregon Zoo's two polar bears) and what we need to do to help protect their species.

Teaching children about animals helps to inspire compassion and inquisitiveness. Learning about the challenges animals face in the wild helps to raise our community's understanding of our role in caring for our natural systems. In a typical year, more than 1.2 million people visit the Oregon Zoo, many of them with young children like mine, and thousands more participate in education offerings or take part in active volunteer programs. The zoo helps them build and deepen their connection to wild animals and become better stewards of the planet. The zoo needs to be able to make its campus an inclusive, welcoming, and educational environment for all the families and guests who visit, as well as provide the best environment for the animals in their care. This is why support of a bond measure is valuable to our zoo and the children and families who visit.

Thank you,

Charissa Anderson

| | |
|---|-----|
| Is your testimony related to an item on an upcoming agenda? * | Yes |
|---|-----|

From: courtney@scottwork.com
To: [Legislative Coordinator](#)
Subject: [External sender]New Zoo bond measure
Date: Wednesday, January 31, 2024 7:04:01 PM

To Metro Council and President,

I am writing to state my strong opposition to a proposal for a new \$380 million dollar zoo bond measure. This is a bad idea for a number of reasons:

It is a waste of taxpayer funds. Attendance is down at the zoo, and Metro has been propping it up with our tax monies for many years. It is time to stop bolstering a failing business.

The last bond measure in 2008 failed to deliver critical improvements that were promoted with the bond, specifically, it failed to produce an offsite multi acre facility for the elephants. The elephants' health is not improving, and in fact, is declining, so the \$58 million dollar "Elephant Lands" has failed to impact their lives in any meaningful, positive way.

This bond only subsidizes zoo waste under the guise of wildlife conservation. What wildlife is being conserved? Certainly none of the large exotic animals. None of them will ever be released to the wild, which is the core feature of successful wildlife conservation. What kind of education is this bond going to provide? Zoos are designed for entertainment, all you have to do is observe visitors at the zoo to be aware of that fact. Most barely pay attention to the animals. The children are busy at the Merry Go Round and the parents at the food kiosks and cafes. And of course there are many entertainment events including ZooLights and concerts. The animals take second place, at best. A study conducted by the World Association of Zoos (WAZA) found that very few received any education during their visit to a zoo.

The zoo has an opportunity to dramatically improve the lives of its long-suffering elephants. End the risky breeding which has resulted in many stillbirths and early deaths, and send the elephants to sanctuary, starting with Chendra who has advanced foot disease, lameness and extreme zoochotic behavior. A sanctuary has agreed to take her and if the zoo releases her it will be moving in a new progressive, more humane direction that will be appreciated by Portland's animal friendly community.

Courtney Scott
1701 SE 49th Ave
Portland, OR 97215
503-288-6142

From: [dvh](#)
To: [Legislative Coordinator](#)
Subject: [External sender]380 Million Dollar Bond Measure
Date: Wednesday, January 31, 2024 7:32:51 PM

I am going to have a great time voting NO on this one, if it presents as an actual proposal in my pamphlet.

You see, I remember the other hundreds of millions of dollars you asked for over a decade ago. You must remember that one as well: it was presented to us as a way to enlarge the elephant enclosure. And in little tiny writing, was what showed us your true intentions--because it was in actuality, used for, if memory serves, an Education Center. And the elephants got, what is known on the streets as, SHAFTEd.

So no, Metro, I will NOT be voting for your bond measure this year, or any other year. And while I think it would probably pass--because most Portlanders don't know what you did, or rather, didn't do, with their money--I will enjoy telling everyone I know to also vote no. Because every 'no' vote is proof that the word is getting out, that you are in fact not responsible stewards of those animals, and you play with words, and emotions, to ultimately get what you want. There are reasons you make the Top Ten Worst Zoos list every year. Imagine if they knew how you fleeced us out of the first bond measure.

Denine Heinemann

From: [Diana Hulet](#)
To: [Legislative Coordinator](#)
Subject: [External sender]concerns regarding the new zoo bond measure
Date: Wednesday, January 31, 2024 1:25:05 PM

Greetings,

I hope this email finds you well. I am writing to express my concerns about the proposed new zoo bond measure and its potential allocation of funds.

According to a reliable source, the 2008 zoo bond measure allocated a substantial portion (70%) of its funding towards exotic wildlife, leaving only a minimal fraction (1.5%) for native wildlife conservation. It is crucial to acknowledge that exotic wildlife often requires greater care and expenses due to their unsuitability to our local environment.

This significant disparity in funding allocation raises concerns about the zoo's priorities and its commitment to local conservation efforts.

For this and other reasons, I implore you to reconsider putting this bond measure up for a vote.

Your concerned citizen,
Diana Hulet

Diana M. Hulet



[Substack](#)
[What If We Saw Them Project](#)
[Website](#)

From: [Diana Sanchez](#)
To: [Legislative Coordinator](#)
Subject: [External sender]I object to the new zoo bond
Date: Friday, February 2, 2024 6:56:17 PM

CAUTION: This email originated from an **External source**. Do not open links or attachments unless you know the content is safe.

Dear Legislative Coordinator,

I object to the new zoo bond and don't agree with the direction the zoo is taking, would suffice. I don't think it's a good idea because the elephants should go to a sanctuary. Taxpayers would have to paid for this bond when it can go to something else like fixing roads, parks or fund schools' programs.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Diana

From: [DONNA STEADMAN](#)
To: [Legislative Coordinator](#)
Subject: [External sender]proposed funding for the OR Zoo
Date: Thursday, February 1, 2024 8:26:00 PM

To the Oregon State Legislators;

I was not able to attend the hearing today, but want to express my opinion on the proposed funding for the Oregon Zoo.

I am opposed to it on two grounds:

I believe that it is basically a waste of tax payer money to subsidize mainly exotic animals; and I do not want my tax dollars going toward subsidizing a commercial enterprise that confines wild animals for their lifetime and does little if anything for true conservation of any species.

Thank You for considering my views.

Donna B. Steadman
Tigard, OR 97224



PO Box 704

Siletz, Oregon 97380

www.elakhaalliance.org

To: Metro Council: *President Lynn Peterson, Councilor Ashton Simpson, Councilor Christine Lewis, Councilor Gerritt Rosenthal, Councilor Juan Carlos Gonzáles, Councilor Mary Nolan, Councilor Duncan Hwang*

From: Jane Bacchieri

Date: February 1, 2024

Re: Resolution No. 24-5375 For the Purpose of Submitting to the Metro Area Voters a \$380 Million General Obligation Oregon Zoo Bond Measure to Protect Animal Health, Provide Conservation Education and Increase Sustainability, and Setting Forth the Official Intent of the Metro Council to Reimburse Certain Expenditures out of the Proceeds of General Obligation Bonds Upon Issuance

Good morning, President Peterson and members of the Council.

For the record, my name is Jane Bacchieri, and I am the Executive Director of the Elakha Alliance. I am here today to express the Elakha Alliance's support for the Oregon Zoo Phase 2 bond measure proposal.

The Elakha Alliance is an Oregon nonprofit focused on sea otter restoration and marine ecosystem conservation. We are a relatively young organization, incorporated in 2018, with a staff of four. Partnerships are essential to our work and to achieving our mission of restoring a viable population of sea otters to the Oregon coast. The Oregon Zoo has been a critical partner and supported the Elakha Alliance's mission in several important ways over the past five years. These include grants to support our outreach and education efforts, incorporating information about the Elakha Alliance in Zoo programming, and providing us with opportunities to participate in Oregon Zoo programs and events. Additionally, the Zoo has produced exceptional videos for the Alliance highlighting the cultural connections between sea otters and Oregon's indigenous peoples, and the ecological and economic benefits that can be realized from sea otter reintroduction.

The Oregon Zoo's ability to educate and connect with people about species and habitat conservation is significant. Sea otters are just one example of this. Because sea otters have been missing from the Oregon coast for over 100 years as a result of the marine fur trade in the 18th and 19th centuries, the public has no opportunity to experience them in the wild. The Oregon Zoo serves an important role of fostering an appreciation for wildlife, like sea otters, and an understanding of related conservation issues by providing visitors with an opportunity to observe, learn about, and experience living animals they may otherwise not have an opportunity to see. The Oregon Zoo is able to do something other organizations like the Elakha Alliance cannot - provide in-person experiences with wildlife in a naturalistic setting and programming for thousands of visitors that serve to enhance their appreciation of species conservation needs and efforts.

The Oregon Zoo is a critical conservation, educational, and cultural institution that serves the region, Oregonians, and visitors to our beautiful state. To meet its mission, the Zoo needs the resources to fully implement its Campus Plan and modernize its facilities. The proposed bond measure will provide for habitat and building improvements, updated educational displays, and better accessibility that will improve animal welfare and provide for enhanced visitor experiences. Sea otters are just one of the animals at the Zoo that will benefit from these improvements! Previous bond measures have allowed the Zoo to develop habitats that best meet the needs of the resident animals and facilitate an understanding for visitors about the connections between species and essential habitats. These types of investments have also enabled the Zoo to evolve into an internationally recognized conservation leader.

Visiting the Zoo is an enriching experience for children and adults alike. I hope the Metro Council will continue to support the exceptional efforts of the Zoo to provide these experiences, and their dedication to animal welfare and conservation.

From: [holly.huston](#)
To: [Legislative Coordinator](#)
Subject: [External sender]Objection of new bond measure
Date: Thursday, February 1, 2024 7:48:28 PM

I object the new bond measure for the zoo. I do not support this zoo or any zoo.
Holly Cooper

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Julia N Allen, PhD, DVM](#)
To: [Legislative Coordinator](#)
Subject: [External sender]Testimony Public Meeting re Zoo Bond Measure 2/1/24
Date: Wednesday, January 31, 2024 11:40:28 AM

CITY ZOO
by VY Laramore

*The tick of time is out of rhyme,
Where wild things wait for death.
Watching the stars through iron bars,
And breathing each other's breath.
But little man with his civic plan,
To conquer and subdue,
Acquires a thrill from broken will,
Of beasts in the city zoo.*

Stop funding animal abuse. Captivity isn't conservation or education. It's animals in cages.
It's selfish, and it's cruel.

Julia N Allen, PhD, DVM
DrJNA@comcast.net

From: [Kelly Tansy](#)
To: [Legislative Coordinator](#)
Subject: [External sender]Oregon zoo
Date: Thursday, February 1, 2024 3:20:29 AM

CAUTION: This email originated from an External source. Do not open links or attachments unless you know the content is safe.

Hello. Due to my concerns over captive animal welfare I am opposed to any funding to further breed or capture wild animals for public display at the expense of American taxpayers. Many unwanted and suffering animals in zoos end up at sanctuaries funded entirely by private donors and their supporters would like the supply of unwanted animals to stop. Funds could be better used funding ways to get homeless people self sufficient and off the streets. Thank you. Mr. Kelly Tansy, Spokane, Washington
Sent from my iPhone

From: [Wufoo](#)
To: [Legislative Coordinator](#)
Subject: [External sender]Submit testimony to Metro Council [#218]
Date: Wednesday, January 31, 2024 7:20:28 PM

Name * Kim Overhage

Email * kimoverhage@gmail.com

Your testimony

Dear Metro Council President Peterson, and members of the Council,
I am writing to express my heartfelt support for Oregon Zoo Phase II, dedicated to preserving and enhancing our beloved zoo – a true community treasure. The zoo holds a special place in the hearts of our residents and serves as a symbol of our shared commitment to nature, education, and the well-being of our community.

Generations of families have created lasting memories within the zoo's gates, making it an integral part of our community's identity. It provides a tangible place for the community to come together for wildlife, fostering a sense of connection and stewardship for the environment.

The zoo also serves as an educational hub, offering unique opportunities for children and adults alike to learn about the diversity of our planet's ecosystems. It instills a sense of wonder and curiosity, encouraging a deeper understanding and appreciation for the natural world. By referring a bond measure to voters, we are investing in the continued growth of this educational resource, ensuring that future generations can benefit from the invaluable lessons the zoo has to offer.

It is crucial to acknowledge the role the zoo plays in fostering a sense of community. The zoo serves as a gathering place for friends and families, providing a space for shared experiences and community events. From educational programs to cultural celebrations, the zoo contributes to the social fabric of our city, bringing people together in a spirit of unity and appreciation for the world around us.

However, although we've come a long way thanks to the 2008 bond, the zoo's infrastructure needs attention to preserve its status as a community treasure. Aging facilities and habitats require thoughtful renovation to maintain a safe and enriching environment for both visitors and the animals in residence. The campus plan and proposed bond referral represent a critical opportunity to ensure that the zoo continues to be a source of pride and joy, a bright spot for our community. In conclusion, I urge you to lend your support to advance the zoo bond measure, recognizing the zoo as a vital community treasure. By investing in the zoo, we are investing in the heart of our community, preserving a legacy for current and future residents.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Kim Overhage

Is your testimony related to an item on an upcoming agenda? * Yes

From: [Linore Blackstone](#)
To: [Legislative Coordinator](#)
Subject: [External sender]Zoo bond measure: I vote no
Date: Wednesday, January 31, 2024 9:24:19 AM

Dear Zoo People, it occurs to me that you do not care about the animals you contain but practice target management for entertaining humans. Do you practice wild life conservation or just housing wild beings to be gawked at.

You will not release an elephant to a wild life preserve because? You “house” few native species to breed and release.

What is your ethic? What is the science and the philosophy concerning incarcerating wild beings for our entertainment? You know that your creatures suffer; you know they are lonely.

I am appalled that those of you working at the zoo cannot fathom acting with understanding that all life is our kin.

Please vote no for more funds to capture and hold more wild beings.

Linore Blackstone
1745 NE 49th
Portland, Oregon 97213

From: [marla katz](#)
To: [Legislative Coordinator](#)
Subject: [External sender]Vote NO to the zoo's request for \$380 million bond!
Date: Thursday, February 1, 2024 5:40:05 AM

Dear Legislative Coordinator,

Please vote NO to the Oregon Zoo's request for \$380 million bond measure.

When I was a child, my school took a field trip to a zoo, it was one of the saddest experiences in my life. All I learned was how unhealthy, depressed and bored the animals seemed in their cruel captivity.

As an adult, I've learned far more about animals from Internet media, books, documentaries, and 3-D films. I've seen free Internet live cams that let us watch all types of exotic and local species in the wild, behaving naturally, hunting, mating, and interacting with each other in ways you will never experience in a zoo. I've watched hummingbirds build nests, lay eggs, and feed their babies until they've fledged. I've watched hundreds of live cams, and videos and rescues of elephants, rhinos, tigers, and other animal rescues from all over the world. I've seen animals released back into the wild after having being rehabilitated by organizations who rescued and cared for them. I've seen elephants taken out of oppressive zoos and brought to sanctuaries where they can be rehabilitated and experience as close to freedom and natural lives as possible. These are just some of the many more humane ways we can interact with nature and animals -- I don't see why the Oregon Zoo doesn't evolve with the rest of us?

Thank you for considering my views,
Marla Katz

Volunteer Animal Welfare Advocate

From: [Marna Herrington](#)
To: [Legislative Coordinator](#)
Subject: [External sender]\$380 million bond measure for the zoo
Date: Wednesday, January 31, 2024 8:55:51 PM

Dear Metro Council members,

If the Oregon Zoo were to put its substantial resources into supporting wildlife and wildlife habitat both right here and across the world (such as supporting reputable range state conservation organizations and strongly supporting habitat protection right here) instead of putting the majority of its funding toward expensive enclosures for a small number of wild animals whose needs can never be met in a zoo (like elephants and large primates, and all animals biologically suited to vastly different climates, such as orangutans) I would be in support of a bond measure to fund them.

As it stands, however, the Oregon Zoo spends huge sums of money on exhibit enclosure refurbishments that can never meet the habitat and social needs of the animals, while they also do not do nearly enough to help animals struggling to survive in the wild both here and throughout the world.

Saddest of all, the Oregon Zoo breeds its zoo animals, which only keeps wild animals in zoos in perpetuity (a huge expense) and does nothing to help support wildlife decimated by habitat destruction, human encroachment, and climate change.

If the Oregon Zoo really cared about the zoo animals, they would transfer the ones that suffer the most, like the elephants, to reputable, accredited sanctuaries where they would finally have plenty of room to roam in natural habitats. Leaving them for their entire lives in small, man-made zoo enclosures is cruel.

Wildlife needs our help, and depressingly, the Oregon Zoo is not up to the job. The Oregon Zoo appears to be focused on entertainment and sustaining themselves, not serious wildlife conservation, and this is a tragedy. Our tax dollars need to be better spent.

Thank you,
Marna Herrington

From: [Mary Chakhtoura](#)
To: [Legislative Coordinator](#)
Subject: [External sender]Zoo bond measure
Date: Thursday, February 1, 2024 7:47:33 AM

To Whom it May Concern,

Throwing money at a disgrace is of no benefit to Portland. Our zoo consistently ranks in at the top 5 or 6 worst zoos in the nation, and visitors are appalled at the elephants' foot disease and other illnesses. Despite an offer by an accredited sanctuary to take Chendra the elephant, who has many illnesses, at no cost to taxpayers or the zoo, Chendra remains, suffering, at our zoo. She is seen as a pawn for making money and entertainment and not a magnificent creature that deserves health and a life without undue suffering. Shame on the Oregon Zoo for their treatment of animals and shame on throwing money at the zoo that does not hasten its closure. History will certainly judge the Oregon Zoo unkindly, as it should. Shame, shame, shame.

Mary Chakhotura

From: [michelle](#)
To: [Legislative Coordinator](#)
Subject: [External sender]please read
Date: Wednesday, January 31, 2024 7:26:47 PM

I am writing to you because I am aware that Metro is considering a new bond measure for the Oregon Zoo. Its price is \$380,000,000! This is over three times that of the 2008 bond measure, which was itself a failure.

Over \$57 million was spent on upgrading the Elephant habitat, and yet there have been FOUR DEATHS (Rama, Packy, Tusko, Lily) AND a MISCARRIAGE (Chendra's) since then.

The surviving elephants have a whole host of diseases, with all of them having foot diseases to varying degrees. One of the promises of the 2008 bond measure was increased space to improve elephants' health, but clearly this has been insufficient.

Seeing Chendra's long list of illnesses, an accredited elephant sanctuary in the US even offered to take her at NO COST to the zoo or taxpayer, and yet this proposal was not taken up for consideration. This ALONE speaks VOLUMES about these people's characters. It VERY clearly shows/proves the zoo's lack of interest (which is of no surprise) in the well-being of the animals (prisoners) there. It's just ALL about any profit \$\$\$\$ they can make off of the backs of ALL these long-suffering animals that are trapped there.

Zoo attendance has been flat-lining over the last two decades (even before Covid-19) and has not been keeping pace with the region's population growth. This shows a waning interest (and a fact that some people are simply against animal cruelty) in zoos with the general public. The 2008 bond measure has made no noticeable impact to the zoo attendance. Metro's subsidy of Oregon Zoo has only been increasing over the last two decades.

The 2008 zoo bond measure spent a bulk of funding on exotic wildlife (70%) and just a tiny fraction (1.5%) on native wildlife conservation. Exotic wildlife require greater care and expenses, as they are ill-suited to this environment, and unlike native wildlife, species reintroduction is not possible.

In conclusion, the upcoming bond measure only ends up subsidizing zoo waste and lining the pockets of a few under the guise of wildlife conservation.

So PLEASE vote against the bond measure. ALL of the animals should be sent to reputable sanctuaries. The animals are the ones paying the highest prices, because they are imprisoned and suffering in SO MANY ways.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Michelle Krueger

From: [Sandy Miller](#)
To: [Legislative Coordinator](#)
Subject: [External sender]Oregon Zoo bond measure (Resolution 3.1 on Metro agenda 2/1/24)
Date: Wednesday, January 31, 2024 11:17:13 AM

As a tax paying resident of Portland, I strongly OPPOSE this measure for the following reasons:

- Zoo attendance has been declining over the last two decades (even before Covid-19) and has not been keeping pace with the region's population growth. This shows that public interest in zoos is decreasing--a trend I applaud because zoos are a 19th century phenomenon which have outlived their usefulness. Today we can see wild animals living healthy lives in their native habitat or in sanctuaries with the click of a button.
- Metro's subsidy of Oregon Zoo has been increasing over the last two decades, and continuing to pour dollars into it is a fiscally irresponsible use of our taxes. There are so many more useful things to do with that money!
- The 2008 zoo bond measure spent a bulk of funding on exotic wildlife (70%) and just a tiny fraction (1.5%) on native wildlife conservation. Exotic wildlife require greater care and expenses, as they are ill-suited to this environment, and unlike native wildlife, species reintroduction is not possible.
- The elephants are an especially egregious case. Over \$57 million was spent on upgrading the Elephant habitat, and yet there have been four deaths (Rama, Packy, Tusko, and Lily) and a miscarriage (Chendra's) since then.
- The surviving five elephants have many diseases which are seen only in captivity, with all of them suffering from foot diseases to varying degrees. One of the promises of the 2008 bond measure was increased space to improve elephants' health, but clearly this has been insufficient.
- Seeing Chendra's long list of illnesses, an accredited elephant sanctuary in the U.S. has offered to take her in at NO COST to the zoo or the taxpayer, yet this proposal was not taken up for consideration,

showing the zoo's lack of interest in cost savings.

- There may be a legitimate case to be made for the zoo in terms of supporting the conservation of species native to the Northwest, but in my view we taxpayers are being burdened by the cost of care for exotic animals who do not belong here.

From: [Susan Behr](#)
To: [Legislative Coordinator](#)
Subject: [External sender]Zoo elephants
Date: Wednesday, January 31, 2024 12:53:31 PM

Please take into consideration the elephants at the Portland Zoo. There must be a better solution for the public to view these magnificent animals in a better setting. At age 76, I have seen them so many times and it no longer does something wonderful for me to see them in captivity as it once did when I went to see the first one in person, Rosy. Nature programs on TV do a better job now when they carry me right into natural habitats where I can enjoy the beauty of families of little ones. I am ashamed that my local government spends my money in such a hurtful way to animals. This is a city of animal lovers. Legislators have looked to protect animals in this city in the past. What changed? For now, all three generations of this family will boycott the zoo.

Susan Behr, Portland tax payer.