

Metro

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Metro

Minutes - Final

Thursday, March 7, 2024

10:30 AM

**Metro Regional Center, Council chamber
<https://zoom.us/j/615079992> Webinar ID: 615 079 992 or
888-475-4499 (toll free)**

Council meeting

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://www.youtube.com/live/RI4_BMsohnA?si=Z8gT2kKuDG10Czkl,

<https://zoom.us/j/615079992> Webinar ID: 615 079 992 or 888-475-4499 (toll free)

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Council President Peterson called the Metro Council Meeting to order at 10:30 a.m.

2. Public Communication

Council President Peterson opened the meeting to members of the public wanting to testify on a non-agenda item.

Melody Jordan, Metro Council Chambers:

Melody Jordan (she/her) testified on the Oregon Convention Center ten-plate carrying standard banquet server qualification. This standard was implemented in 2011 and it is rooted in ageism and misogyny towards those suffering with disabilities and mobility issues.

Ryeen Slipher, Metro Council Chambers:

Ryan Slipher (he/him) Oregon Convention Center catering captain, testified on the new policy implementation of carrying a ten-plate minimum. He stated that since the policy implementation there has been several complaints of misogyny and sexual harassment. These complaints were rooted in falsehood that older women were not able to perform at the level of everyone else. In his second complaint he expressed that the ten-plant minimum is counter-productive since it leaves some of the strongest players of the team behind. He wished a revision on this policy that is non-discriminatory to those working in his team.

3. Consent Agenda

Present: 7 - Council President Lynn Peterson, Councilor Christine Lewis, Councilor Juan Carlos Gonzalez, Councilor Mary Nolan, Councilor Gerritt Rosenthal, Councilor Duncan Hwang, and Councilor Ashton Simpson

3.1 Consideration of January 25, 2024 Council Meeting Minutes

Attachments: [012524c Minutes](#)

approved

3.2 Consideration of the February 1, 2024 Council Meeting Minutes

Attachments: [020124c Minutes](#)

approved

3.3 Consideration of the February 8, 2024 Council Meeting Minutes

Attachments: [020824c Minutes](#)

approved

3. Resolutions**3.1 Resolution No. 24-5386 For the Purpose of Approving Fiscal Year 2023-24 Funding for Grants Funded with the Construction Excise Tax - Batch 2**

Presenter(s): Eryn Kehe (she/her), Urban Policy & Development Manager, Metro
Serah Breakstone (she/her), 2040 Planning & Development Grants Program Manager, Metro

Attachments: [Resolution 24-5386](#)
[Exhibit A](#)
[Staff Report](#)
[Attachment 1](#)

Council President Peterson called on Eryn Kehe (she/her), Urban Policy & Development Manager, Metro and Serah Breakstone (she/her), 2040 Planning & Development Grants Program Manager, Metro to present to Council.

Staff pulled up the presentation to present to Council.

Presentation Summary:

Eryn Kehe (she/her), Urban Policy & Development Manager announced to Metro Council the second group of grants for requesting funding for the 2040 Planning and Development Grant program. This program has been active for many years, aiming to facilitate land development within the urban growth boundary and support long-term planning efforts. Grants have been provided for various planning projects, including concept planning, community planning, and neighborhood intensification work. Despite delays caused by COVID-19, efforts are underway to catch up on missed years and ensure the continuation of vital funding for planning projects. All grants have been reviewed and recommended by a screening committee, with the council providing endorsement in October. Intergovernmental agreements have been established for this second batch of grants, with the remaining funds from the total budget of approximately 4 million being requested. Kehe passed the presentation to Breakstone to present on the details of the grant.

Serah Breakstone (she/her), 2040 Planning & Development Grants Program Manager expressed that the total award today amounts to just over \$2.6 million. Council will vote on resolution 24 5386 to finalize this award, bringing the grand total for cycle eleven to approximately \$4.4 million, slightly higher than the endorsed amount from October. The grants cover various categories such as equitable development, industrial land readiness, and community engagement. Some grant amounts have increased since the endorsement, primarily to accommodate additional project needs and community engagement efforts. These adjustments total just over \$300,000. Once the resolution passes, agreements will be finalized, and contracts executed to commence

project work. Additionally, plans are underway to initiate a new cycle for 2024.

Council Discussion:

Councilor Rosenthal wanted to know more about proportion of these grant and the staff enhancement working alongside consultant work.

Serah Breakstone stated that the grants do not pay for staff time and the bulk of the work will go to consultants and community-based organizations.

Councilor Hwang wanted to know more about the green loop project and its intended outcomes from that process.

Serah Breakstone explained that the management and governance of various parts of Portland focus on programming, operation, and equitable design elements. This includes ensuring cohesion and way finding along the trail, as well as incorporating design elements that reflect the specific districts it traverses with the primary focus is on west side park blocks.

Seeing no further discussion on the topic, Council President Peterson moved on to the next agenda item.

adopted

Aye: 7 - Council President Peterson, Councilor Lewis, Councilor Gonzalez, Councilor Nolan, Councilor Rosenthal, Councilor Hwang, and Councilor Simpson

- 3.2 Resolution No. 24-5389 For the Purpose of Amending the Natural Areas Work Plan to Fund Real Property Purchases by Public Partner through the Bond Acquisition Programs of the 2019 Parks and Nature Bond Measure

Presenter(s): Jon Blasher (he/him), Parks & Nature Director, Metro

Shannon Leary (she/her), Real Estate Manager, Metro

Attachments: [Resolution No. 24-5389](#)
[Exhibit A](#)
[Staff Report](#)

Council President Peterson called on Jon Blasher (he/him), Parks & Nature Director, Metro and Shannon Leary (she/her), Real Estate Manager, Metro to present to Council.

Presentation Summary:

Jon Blasher discussed Metro's efforts to safeguard special places across the region through land acquisition funded by the 2019 Parks and Nature Bond, honoring a commitment made to voters to bolster decades of parks and nature initiatives while protecting clean water, restoring fish and wildlife habitat, and offering opportunities for people to connect with nature nearby. Specifically, the discussion revolves around a follow-up to a previous conversation in February regarding the distinctiveness of the 2019 Parks and Nature Bond and the potential for collaboration with regional partners via an amendment to the existing natural areas work plan. The proposal seeks to grant the COO more flexibility in partner transactions, ensuring adherence to bond measure guidelines while providing clear parameters and oversight. The amendment includes provisions for staff to still present potential partnership opportunities to the council for review, maintaining council's overarching authority in the process. The adoption of the proposed partnership acquisition parameters aims to enhance Metro's capacity to execute real estate transactions Council President Peterson called on Jon Blasher (he/him), Parks & Nature Director, Metro and Shannon Leary (she/her), Real Estate Manager, Metro to present to Council.

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Council Discussion:

Councilor Hwang inquired about the potential savings for Metro over time, seeking to understand the scale of such savings.

Jon Blasher noted that since Metro would not be the lead agency in negotiations, the confidentiality of real estate negotiation conversations would not be protected under

executive session privileges. This lack of protection could impact both local jurisdictions and Metro's negotiation abilities. However, transparency is maintained with all transactions being disclosed afterward to ensure public accountability. Regarding ongoing maintenance and operations, the council member acknowledges the complexity of estimating savings, as it depends on factors such as property size, location, and purpose. Savings could vary significantly, ranging from hundreds of staff hours, particularly for small parcels distant from existing parks to other considerations such as travel time for regular visits. They also consider mechanisms to ensure that a local jurisdiction would maintain the property to Metro's standards.

Councilor Rosenthal wanted to know more about any mechanisms in place to ensure partners adhere to agreed-upon uses, given potential discrepancies in the definition of “parks”.

Jon Blasher elaborated those partnerships is defined as collaboration with local governments or public entities committed to preserving natural habitats, wildlife, and promoting public connection with nature, particularly focusing on local entities.

Councilor Lewis expressed thanks to the Parks and Nature department on their work done in regard to the Council's questions and concerns from previous work sessions.

Seeing no further discussion on the topic, Council President Peterson moved on to the next agenda item.

adopted

Aye: 7 - Council President Peterson, Councilor Lewis, Councilor Gonzalez, Councilor Nolan, Councilor Rosenthal, Councilor Hwang, and Councilor Simpson

3.3 Resolution No. 24-5390 For the Purpose of Adopting the East Council Creek Nature Park Master Plan

Presenter(s): Jon Blasher (he/him), Parks & Nature Director, Metro
Olena Turula, Principal Planner, Metro

Attachments: [Resolution No. 24-5390](#)
[Exhibit A](#)
[Staff Report](#)

Council President Peterson called on Jon Blasher (he/him), Parks & Nature Director, Metro and Linda Bartolini Venegas (she/her), Large Scale Community Visions Program Coordinator, Metro, to present to council.

Presentation Summary:

Jon Blasher (he/him), director of Parks and Nature, presented the formalized access to Metro's East Council Creek natural area in Corenelius. Emphasizing Metro Parks and Nature's mission to protect clean water, restore fish and wildlife habitat, and connect people with nature close to home, Blasher highlighted the network of parks, trails, and natural areas spanning over 18,000 acres within the region. Collaborative efforts with cities, counties, and other park providers were underscored, demonstrating Metro's unique role in bridging the gap between state and federal parks and local parks provided by cities and park districts. As East Council Creek aligns more with the urban side of Metro's portfolio of natural areas, being situated within the urban growth boundary. Blasher passes the presentation to Elna Terula (she/her) project manager, who delved into the planning process and specifics of the East Council Creek master plan.

Fully supportive of the master plan, he anticipates the possibilities in the next steps and appreciates the collaborative efforts showcased in the map highlighting various projects. He concluded with gratitude for the opportunity to share his remarks and affirmed the value of the work accomplished.

Councilor Rosenthal noted the ecological significance and his passion for complete corridor protections, prompting consideration of opportunities to connect and safeguard areas adjacent to Council Creek that are currently vulnerable to development or transformation due to gaps in protection along the creek corridor.

Councilor Lewis raised a question concerning plans and investments for tribal engagement in the upcoming phases, noting her surprise at the omission of explicit details in the document presented earlier that morning. Eelena Terula (she/her) clarified that the document outlines the intention to engage with tribes before advancing to the next stages of project development, such as design and engineering, ensuring thorough consideration of historic and cultural resources and seeking tribal support and potential partnership opportunities moving forward.

adopted

Aye: 7 - Council President Peterson, Councilor Lewis, Councilor Gonzalez, Councilor Nolan, Councilor Rosenthal, Councilor Hwang, and Councilor Simpson

- 3.4 Resolution No. 24-5391: For the Purpose of approving revised program criteria to the Parks and Nature Bond-Large-Scale Community Visions Program

Presenter(s): Jon Blasher (he/him), Parks & Nature Director, Metro
Linda Bartolini Venegas (she/her), Large Scale Community Visions Program Coordinator, Metro

Attachments: [Resolution No. 24-5391](#)
[Exhibit A to Resolution No. 24-5391](#)
[Staff Report](#)

Council President Peterson called on Jon Blasher (he/him), Parks & Nature Director, Metro and Linda Bartolini Venegas (she/her), Large Scale Community Visions Program

Coordinator, Metro, to present to council.

Presentation Summary:

Jon Blasher (he/him), Director of Metro Parks and Nature Department outlined adjustments to the program criteria aimed at enhancing opportunities for park providers and community partners to apply for funding for transformative nature projects. The Large-Scale Community Visions program, part of the 2019 Parks and Nature Bond, allocates \$30 million for capital projects addressing nature uplift and various community needs. Following the successful pilot round, which awarded grants to three projects, council directed staff to identify projects with broader regional distribution. Feedback from stakeholders and partners informed updates to the program criteria, balancing risk mitigation with the vision of catalytic funding for innovative projects. The resolution, if approved, would enable staff to create the NOFA and begin soliciting projects for the next round, with ongoing opportunities for council input throughout the process. The presentation highlighted continued engagement with stakeholders to assess program effectiveness and ensure alignment with the bond's goals, emphasizing flexibility and innovation to address diverse community needs across different regions. Jon Blasher passed the presentation to Linda Venegas to discuss the program updates.

Linda Bartolini Venegas (she/her), Large-Scale Community Visions program provided an overview of the updates to the program criteria, focusing on four main aspects: the overall project match, the contiguous component requirement, the public partner piece, and the application cycle. Council feedback from the January work session led to adjustments, including reducing the overall project match from one to five to one to two, eliminating the specific contiguous

component requirement, and requiring identification of a committed public partner at the time of application. Additionally, the application cycle shifted from annual to ongoing to allow for greater flexibility and alignment with the program's evolving nature. If the resolution is adopted, broad outreach and communications will commence in March, followed by in-person and virtual open houses in April. Letters of interest will be accepted from April 15 onwards, with ongoing outreach to ensure awareness of funding opportunities. These updates aim to streamline the application process and increase accessibility for potential applicants. Linda passed it back to John.

John Blasher updated the status of the project applicants to the council once the solicitation opens, with council continuing to select awarded projects for large scale community visions. The first award process could potentially occur as soon as later spring of this year, depending on the pace of submissions.

Council Discussion:

Councilor Lewis expressed her support for the package, acknowledging previous discussions. She emphasized the importance of clarifying that despite changing the match requirement from one to five to one to two, their intention remains to provide the initial, catalytic funding to kickstart future investments. He stressed that they are not implying that project applicants must already have their matching funds secured.

Councilor Gonzalez reiterated his support for the package, acknowledging numerous discussions surrounding the large-scale community visions program. Recognizing the program's novelty and the desire to maximize its impact, he highlighted the adjustment of the match requirement from

one to five to one to two, considering resource constraints and other macro factors. He echoed Councilor Lewis's emphasis on the program's catalytic nature, aiming to facilitate ambitious and large-scale projects. He posed a question regarding Metro's or the council's role in fostering potential projects outside the urban core, suggesting ideas such as summits and discussions with potential investment partners to ensure projects throughout the entire region are supported and brought to fruition.

Councilor Rosenthal expressed support for the package, highlighting the importance of extending continuity issues from contiguous to non-contiguous parcels, particularly in the context of watersheds and street corridors, which could potentially spark innovative ideas and projects across various geographies and jurisdictions.

Councilor Hwang supported the structural changes to the program but emphasized the need for clarity on what constitutes a complex community vision, ensuing alignment with racial equity goals, accessibility, and consultation with tribal partners. He seeks clarification on the refinement of evaluation criteria to better understand the expectations for applications based on lessons learned from the pilot round.

Jon Blasher restated that they aim to maintain an iterative process, ensuring transparency by clearly outlining concrete requirements from the bond or program-specific criteria and sharing scoring methodologies. They plan to engage with council members regularly to define what constitutes a large-scale community vision and refine scoring criteria based on feedback.

Councilor Simpson raised a question regarding the handling projects outside the ongoing grant cycles.

Jon Blasher clarified that application would be accepted as

they come, with flexibility for council to determine award cycle.

Seeing no further discussion on the topic, Council President Peterson moved on to the next agenda item.

adopted

Aye: 7 - Council President Peterson, Councilor Lewis, Councilor Gonzalez, Councilor Nolan, Councilor Rosenthal, Councilor Hwang, and Councilor Simpson

4. Chief Operating Officer Communication

Marissa Madrigal provided an update on the following events or items:

- Budget season will kick off in the month of April. Reports will be provided to council in the following weeks.
- Establish early consensus on topics to facilitate more thorough development upfront rather than after budget adoption.

5. Councilor Communication

Councilors provided updates on the following meetings and events:

- Councilor Simpson mentioned having a fun interaction with Park Rose High School students during the Elevate Immunity Enhancement Grant process. Impressed by the students' understanding of their responsibilities as 16 to 17-year-olds, he expressed pride in their work and emphasized the significance of uplifting the City of Roses, which provides funds for the program.
- Councilor Rosenthal attended the Merck lunch and the Merck commission meeting, where two significant points were discussed. Firstly, the Expo Futures committee presented a robust plan for moving forward, evaluating various options for transition and economic viability. Secondly, all venues reported

deficit budgets due to increased costs, primarily driven by labor, safety, deferred capital expenditures, supply costs, and a slow recovery of the transient lodging tax in Portland, despite the business performing better than expected in terms of bookings. There's a likelihood of them seeking assistance from Metro, though details are yet to be determined.

- Councilor Gonzalez highlighted the upcoming policy conference at Hidden Creek Community Center next Thursday, urging attendance. The conference promises insightful conversations on infrastructure, transportation, and housing, fostering dialogues among public, community, and business leaders. He is set to participate in a transportation investment panel alongside Representative McLean and Ryan Windsheimer, anticipating a fruitful discussion.

- President Peterson reported on the I-5 Bridge Executive Committee convened recently, unveiling online images and videos for public viewing to provide a sense of the project's direction, albeit lacking detailed architectural features. The next phase involves selecting the bridge type, whether it's a two-deck or single-deck structure, without delving deeply into landscaping until further clarity is obtained. Interested individuals can explore the project online, offering insights into potential cycling routes and facilitating better understanding. With \$1.5 billion secured out of the \$7.5 billion needed, the project is well-funded, with final funding expected from the USDOT. While some aspects, like the community benefits agreement, require further deliberation, the project is making significant strides toward realization.

6. Adjourn

There being no further business, Council President Peterson adjourned the Metro Council Meeting at 12:46 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Anushka Kargathara

Anushka Kargathara, Legislative Assistant