

BEFORE THE METRO COUNCIL

FOR THE PURPOSE OF DIRECTING THAT) RESOLUTION NO. 20-5149
WILLAMETTE COVE BE INCLUDED IN THE)
LIST OF METRO PARKS AND NATURAL) Introduced by Council President Lynn
AREAS ELIGIBLE FOR 2019 BOND FUNDING) Peterson
AND DEVELOPMENT OF A PLAN FOR)
PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT)

WHEREAS, in July, 1992, Metro completed the Metropolitan Greenspaces Master Plan which identified a desired system of natural areas interconnected with greenways and trails and designated Willamette Cove as a greenspace of regional significance; and

WHEREAS, in 1995 Metro Area voters approved an Open Spaces, Parks and Streams Bond Measure (“1995 Open Spaces Bond Measure”) with a stated goal of acquiring land in 14 regional natural areas and six of the regional trails and greenways identified in the Greenspaces Master Plan; and

WHEREAS, in 1996, by Resolution No. 96-2266, Metro authorized the purchase of Willamette Cove with 1995 Open Spaces Bond Measure funding; and

WHEREAS, in 1996, by Resolutions No. 96-2340 and 96-2350, Metro approved a refinement plan and adoption of target area boundaries and objectives for Willamette Cove Target Area used to guide implementation of the 1995 Open Spaces Bond Measure, acknowledging community support for natural resource restoration and passive recreation at the site; and

WHEREAS, since its purchase, Willamette Cove has been the subject of an Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) remedial action for hazardous waste clean-up on the Willamette Cove uplands (ECVC-NWR-00-26), extending from top of riverbank landward, east and away from the Willamette River; and

WHEREAS, Oregon DEQ intends to issue a remedial action clean-up remedy, following which Metro can begin engaging the community to establish objectives for passive recreation, equitable access, and natural area protection at the site; and

WHEREAS, the Willamette River provides a critical migratory corridor and rearing habitat for salmon and steelhead; and

WHEREAS, Willamette Cove has the potential to provide important fish and wildlife habitat; and

WHEREAS, the Willamette River holds great importance to several tribes as a natural and cultural resource; and

WHEREAS, Metro has heard from a diverse array of advocates, including the Portland Harbor Community Coalition, Portland African American Leadership Forum, American Indian Movement-Portland Chapter, Audubon Society of Portland, Portland Harbor Community Advisory Group, neighborhood representatives, Willamette Riverkeeper, and University of Portland, that there is community support for public access, natural resource restoration, and passive recreation at Willamette Cove, and desire to begin a broad community engagement process; and

WHEREAS, in 2019, by Resolution No. 19-4988, voters in the Metro area approved a Parks and Nature Bond Measure (“2019 Bond Measure”) with a stated goal to fund natural area and water quality protection and to connect people to nature close to home; and

WHEREAS, the 2019 Bond Measure includes six program investment areas and program criteria to guide project prioritization and selection; and

WHEREAS, the 2019 Bond Measure “Taking Care of Metro Parks” investment area intends to use bond funds to provide safe, welcoming places to connect with nature, and includes a list of Metro parks and natural areas that are eligible for bond funding; and

WHEREAS, Willamette Cove is not included in the list of Metro parks and natural areas eligible for 2019 Bond Measure funding; however, Resolution No. 19-4988 provides that Metro Council may identify new locations that are eligible for capital investments using bond funding provided they meet the program requirements described in the 2019 Bond Measure; and

WHEREAS, Metro Council has determined that Willamette Cove meets the program requirements described in the 2019 Bond Measure and should be included in the list of Metro parks and natural areas that may be eligible for bond funds; and

WHEREAS, the 2019 Bond Measure was crafted to ensure that people of color are part of the decision-making and benefit from public investments in parks and nature, in accordance with Metro’s Strategic Plan to Advance Racial Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion; and

WHEREAS, the 2019 Bond Measure centered racial equity, community engagement, and climate resiliency as necessary criteria for all bond projects; and

WHEREAS, Metro recognizes that Willamette Cove represents a unique and important opportunity to restore ecological health and reconnect the community to the Willamette River; and

WHEREAS, to further the goal and objective for which Willamette Cove was acquired, now therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED:

1. Metro Council authorizes and directs Metro Chief Operating Officer to include Willamette Cove as a Metro parks and nature destination listed in Exhibit E to Resolution No. 19-4988 eligible for 2019 Bond Measure funds; and
2. Metro Council affirms its support of and commitment to explore trail development, habitat restoration, and a broad range of passive recreational activities at Willamette Cove consistent with its use as a natural area, for example but not limited to, walking, hiking, bicycling, beach access, wildlife viewing, picnicking, and cultural interpretation; and
3. Metro staff shall prepare a plan for meaningful public engagement to identify community priorities for future passive recreational opportunities and trail development consistent with protection and restoration of natural resources at Willamette Cove, and submit this plan to Metro Council within four months of the date DEQ issues its record of decision on remedial action.

ADOPTED by the Metro Council this ____ day of _____, 2020.

Lynn Peterson, Council President

Approved as to Form:

Carrie MacLaren, Metro Attorney