

BEFORE THE METRO COUNCIL

FOR THE PURPOSE OF REFERRING TO THE)	RESOLUTION NO. 12-4398
VOTERS OF THE METRO AREA A LOCAL)	
OPTION LEVY FOR THE PURPOSE OF)	Introduced by Councilor Barbara Roberts
PRESERVING WATER QUALITY, FISH AND)	
WILDLIFE HABITAT AND MAINTAINING)	
METRO’S PARKS AND NATURAL AREAS)	
FOR THE PUBLIC)	

WHEREAS, in May 1995 voters in the Metro region approved a \$135.6 million Open Spaces, Parks and Streams Bond Measure with a stated goal of acquiring land in 14 of the 57 regional natural areas identified in the 1992 Greenspaces Master Plan and six of the 34 regional trails and greenways identified in the Greenspaces Master Plan; and

WHEREAS, on May 12, 2005, the Metro Council adopted Resolution No. 05-3574A “Establishing a Regional Habitat Protection, Restoration and Greenspaces Initiative Called Nature In Neighborhoods,” enacting a regional conservation policy that promotes fish and wildlife habitat protection using a variety of means; and

WHEREAS, in November 2006 voters in the Metro region approved a \$227.4 million Natural Areas, Parks and Streams Bond Measure with a stated goal of acquiring land in 27 target areas identified in the Greenspaces Master Plan; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to the two bond measures, land acquisitions exceeded goals and currently total 12,400 acres. In addition, Metro has acquired other parks and natural areas from voluntary transfers from local governments. The grand total of parks, trails and natural areas currently under Metro’s care and stewardship is more than 16,000 acres, including more than 75 miles of stream and river frontage; and

WHEREAS, on April 10, 2012 the Metro Council directed the Chief Operating Officer to establish a Natural Areas Funding Advisory Panel to consider a new funding source for ongoing care and maintenance of Metro’s parks and natural areas, considering the public’s previous investments in land acquisition, level of funding, timing and a long-term solution; and

WHEREAS, the Natural Areas Funding Advisory Panel returned its report to the Metro Council on August 16, 2012, recommending that the Metro Council refer a five-year levy to voters to restore natural areas, maintain and operate parks, engage the community and improve opportunities for people to safely use and enjoy more of the lands Metro has protected for the public and future generations long term; and

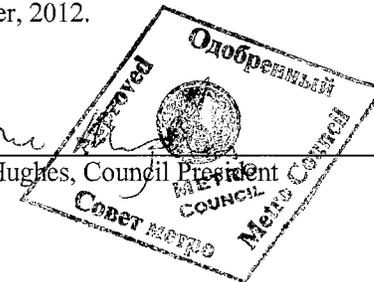
WHEREAS, the Metro Council is authorized under the laws of the State of Oregon and the Metro Charter to impose local option levies to fund natural area protection; and

WHEREAS, the Metro Council finds and determines that it is in the public interest to refer a five-year local option measure to the voters of the Metro region for the purpose of preserving water quality, fish and wildlife habitat and maintaining Metro’s parks and natural areas for the public, with a rate of 9.6 cents per \$1,000 of taxable assessed value for an estimated total outlay of \$10 million per year; now, therefore

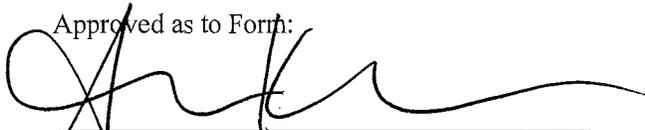
BE IT RESOLVED by the Metro Council that:

1. The Metro Council hereby refers to the qualified voters of the Metro region a five-year local option levy of 9.6 cents per \$1,000 of taxable assessed value with an estimated total outlay of \$10 million per year for the purposes of maintaining and improving water quality, protection of fish and wildlife habitat, preserving regional parks, natural areas and stream frontages, and through continued management, restoration and enhancement of parks and natural areas; and
2. The Metro Council hereby further defines the purpose, allowed uses and outcomes for funds collected via a five-year local option levy according to the Levy Framework, attached as Exhibit A; and
3. The Metro Council hereby certifies the Ballot Title attached as Exhibit B for placement of the Local Option Levy on the ballot for the May 2013 General Election; and
4. The Metro Council authorizes and directs the Metro Chief Operating Officer to refer this Resolution, including the Ballot Title, to the County Elections Officers, the Secretary of State, and the Tax Supervising and Conservation Commission in a timely manner as required by law; and
5. The Metro Council authorizes and directs the Metro Chief Operating Officer to continue to seek long-term funding for natural areas protection.
6. The Metro Council hereby directs program staff to produce an annual report and work plan to be approved by the Chief Operating Officer and presented to the Metro Council at the end of each fiscal year, such report detailing program expenditures by area as well as major accomplishments and made available on the Metro website and featured in other public outreach channels.

ADOPTED by the Metro Council this 18 day of December, 2012.


Tom Hughes, Council President
The seal is a diamond-shaped stamp with a globe in the center. The text 'Approved' is written vertically on the left side, and 'Одобренный' is written vertically on the right side. At the bottom, the words 'COUNCIL' and 'Metro Council' are written horizontally. The Russian word 'Совет' (Sovet) is written vertically on the left side of the bottom edge, and 'МЕТРО' (METRO) is written vertically on the right side of the bottom edge.

Approved as to Form:


Alison Kean Campbell, Metro Attorney

LEVY FRAMEWORK

TAKING CARE OF NATURAL AREAS FOR WILDLIFE, WATER QUALITY, PEOPLE

During the last 20 years, a vast constellation of public land has quietly taken shape across the Portland metropolitan area. Starting with the closure of the St. Johns Landfill and transfer of Multnomah County's parks and cemeteries, Metro has evolved into a major landowner and manager. Twice, the region's voters have directed Metro to acquire additional natural areas for the benefit of the public to protect water quality, wildlife habitat and opportunities for people to connect with nature. Metro's portfolio has grown to nearly 16,000 acres, and that number may reach 17,000 by the time the proceeds of the most recent bond measure have been fully invested.

Top priority was given to buying sensitive habitat before it was developed or rose dramatically in price. As a result of Metro's bond programs, the region's publicly owned natural areas and parkland have grown by some 40 percent to a grand total of roughly 44,000 acres – enough to cover the entire cities of Beaverton, Hillsboro and Gresham. Today, Metro has the great responsibility of caring for more than a third of all those lands.

This flourishing network of natural areas and outdoor recreation demonstrates Metro's broader mission: making a great place. As Metro invests in livable communities, connections with nature are as critical as vibrant communities, economic prosperity and safe and reliable transportation. As this portfolio of land grows, the Metro Council has been considering important questions: What is the condition of these properties? Which land offers the best opportunities for restoring valuable habitat? Which natural areas could be opened for the public to use and enjoy? Is now the time for additional investments? The Metro Council sought the answers to these questions from the public and our partners, which have laid the groundwork for decisions about Metro's role as a major landowner and steward of these precious lands.

A treasure chest of opportunities

For good reason, Metro has concentrated for nearly two decades on land acquisition. Public sentiment centered squarely on securing land before it was lost to development, and voters approved two measures in a relatively short period to ensure that these lands were protected for the future. Investments have focused on "target areas" designed to protect streams and rivers, rare habitat, trail corridors and iconic landscapes. Although voter-approved funds have allowed Metro to assemble a growing number of natural areas and trail corridors and tackle basic, initial restoration work, no new funding has been secured for long-term stewardship. If natural areas are not actively managed and restored, they degrade significantly over time. Invasive plants can take over; erosion can damage water quality; threatened wildlife can disappear. Putting off key restoration work can make the same project more expensive – or even impossible – in the future. Without more resources, the future of the region's natural areas and parkland is in question. Metro's limited general fund dollars are not sufficient to protect the public's initial investment in its growing portfolio of land, let alone support restoration that can maximize the benefits for fish, water quality and people.

Many of Metro's natural area acquisitions also offer opportunities for people to enjoy the land they've helped protect and connect with nature. Since 2006, Metro has used the money approved by voters to open three new nature parks: Mount Talbert Nature Park near Happy Valley, Cooper Mountain Nature Park near Beaverton and Graham Oaks Nature Park in Wilsonville. Each has proven popular, and each has raised the bar for providing beautiful outdoor destinations. Opening these sites has also increased Metro's operating costs. And, as more people discover these places, maintenance and restoration costs

will continue to increase. As the region strives to create a world-class network of natural areas, parks and trails and expected population growth creates more demand, the need for more of these places is heightened – particularly in areas and communities that today are underserved. Inviting people to experience nature goes hand in hand with caring for the land and making the most of the public’s investment.

Funding for parks and natural areas not sustainable on status quo track

In addition to the natural areas acquired with voter-approved bonds, Metro has responsibility for a number of developed park sites that serve some of the most diverse populations of people in the region. More than 1.3 million people visit these places each year to enjoy hiking, bird watching, canoeing, golfing, camping, boating, fishing, picnicking, weddings and special events. Some Metro properties are more than 50 years old. As restrooms, maintenance buildings, picnic and play areas in these parks reach the end of their useful life, they need to be replaced. Without additional capital investments, the cost of maintaining these aging facilities will continue to increase. Without additional funding, basic services will need to be reduced.

Just over two decades ago, Metro didn’t own a single park or natural area. Today the agency is the largest owner of parks and natural areas in the Portland metropolitan region. Money approved by voters for land acquisition in 1995 and 2006 cannot be legally used for operating expenses. Once acquired, these lands require ongoing maintenance. To understand the magnitude of this need, in November 2011 staff completed a report for the Metro Council, titled “*Metro’s Portfolio of Natural Areas, Parks and Trails: Opportunities and Challenges*” (the Portfolio report). This report summarizes Metro’s evolution as a landowner and park operator, and gives an overview of the current condition of property, along with the regional context and relationships that affect the portfolio. The report highlights the need for ongoing operations funding to fulfill the Council’s commitment to meet the public’s expectation that Metro steward these lands and protect their value and benefit to the region. Metro has gone more than 20 years without new operating revenues while its land portfolio has grown from zero to 16,000 acres and counting. Resources are being used wisely, but caring for this much land without new funding is not sustainable over time.

Advisory panel recommends 5-year levy to Metro Council

In July 2012 an independent advisory panel of 15 business, conservation and community leaders from around the region considered Metro's work to acquire, restore and operate regional parks and natural areas, and the associated challenges of taking care of them. The panel recommended that the Metro Council refer to voters a five-year local option levy focused on the following key themes:

Taking care of public assets

The investment supports regional parks and takes care of these assets as a legacy for future generations. Taking care of what we have needs to be a high priority.

Restoring fish and wildlife habitat

Restoration work needs to continue on properties that have been acquired and improved, and extend to as much of the portfolio as possible. Funding should focus on habitat restoration work that protects resources and reduces future funding needs.

Addressing equity for underserved communities

Levy funding provides an opportunity to help meet the needs of underserved communities. Be intentional in designing the levy projects and programs to address barriers that prevent underserved communities from using and benefitting from Metro’s natural areas.

Improving natural areas for people

With a five-year levy, capital-intensive projects with significant new ongoing costs should be minimized. However, investments that provide opportunities for people to enjoy more of these special places while minimizing safety hazards and impacts to habitat should be a higher priority.

The panel’s recommendation for a five-year local option levy offers an incremental approach to fulfill the Metro Council’s commitment to meet the public expectation of good land stewardship and fully realize the potential of the bond program. The panel noted that, although a local option levy does not create a long-term solution, it will provide an important and timely first step while taking into account the reality of the region’s struggling economy, the challenges of our current tax structure and the cost of waiting. Funding from the levy is dedicated exclusively to natural areas, parks and trails and not to other programs or services, based on the panel’s recommendation. The panel understands that Metro will face budget challenges in the next five years but asked that cuts in natural areas, parks and trail program areas are not disproportionate just because new levy funding is available. This is based on keeping faith with the voters.

In an effort to understand and reflect the broader public’s priorities for funding, Metro reached out to stakeholders and sought input through opinion research and community engagement. Activities included holding meetings, giving presentations and having conversations with many of The Intertwine Alliance’s public and nonprofit partners, local government elected officials and staff, park directors, community-based organizations, organizations representing minority groups and communities of color, conservation education providers and others. These organizations and individuals were contacted and asked to help define the purpose and need for a local option levy for Metro’s parks and natural areas. Direct mail, advertising, social media, online surveys and other outreach efforts have been used to engage the broader public.

Wildlife AND people – the framework for investing

Based on the panel’s guidance and the input gathered from stakeholders and the public, staff has developed a framework for projects and programs that would be eligible for levy funding, focusing on two fundamental principles:

Fundamental principles	Program areas	Spending allocations over course of levy
1. Restoring natural areas for wildlife, fish and water quality.	Natural areas	40-50%
2. Improving parks and natural areas for people.	Regional parks operations	20-30%
	Improving natural areas for people	5-15%
	Conservation education/volunteer engagement	5-15%
	Nature in Neighborhood community grants	5-15%

A Natural Areas Local Option Levy of 9.6 cents per \$1,000 of assessed value will generate approximately \$10 million per year. Priority projects are outlined in Attachments 1-4 for further refinement in a detailed annual work plan – with the vision of an integrated approach. For example, planned restoration activities will also include opportunities to engage community volunteers and offer workforce development and mentoring for youth and conservation education programs for people of all ages and backgrounds. In this way we can marry environmental with economic and social aspirations.

Site improvements will highlight habitat restoration, provide cultural and natural history interpretation and improve experiences for a wide range of visitors. Because a five-year operating levy is limited in scale and scope, careful consideration has been given to ensure that projects can be completed within an appropriate timeframe and either reduce long-term operating costs or at least not increase them substantially. Funds would be divided among the various program elements in the percentages set forth in the chart above. All of the areas across Metro's 16,000-acre land portfolio would receive some level of increased maintenance and investment, should the levy be passed by the voters.

Through levy-funded work, Metro can also increase and improve opportunities for underserved communities, specifically low-income and communities of color. By engaging all of our region's residents we can create conditions that foster the future stewards of our public lands. Levy-funded activities will engage diverse communities in becoming active stewards of the region's natural areas and better connect people with nature throughout the region, while also delivering better results for the ecological health and water quality of our region. Intentional goals contained in this program include:

- Continued engagement with diverse communities for all of the program areas, using input to shape efforts moving forward.
- Meeting or exceeding Metro's goals for MWESB contracting; annual review as part of the program reporting, with areas for potential improvement identified.
- Specific outreach and involvement in college/career development pipelines through youth programs.
- Mentoring and volunteering opportunities.

More specifics about each program area follow.

RESTORING NATURAL AREAS FOR WILDLIFE, FISH, WATER QUALITY

Project selection

Natural areas restoration and maintenance projects are generally selected based on core ecological principles well accepted by restoration and conservation professionals and the best scientific information available. This includes The Intertwine Alliance's recently published *Regional Conservation Strategy for the Greater Portland-Vancouver Metropolitan Area*, which documents and offers guidance for the region's highest value habitat areas. Additionally, Metro will seek opportunities to leverage outside resources for restoring these lands – both financial and in partnerships. Potential partners include watershed councils, local governments and nonprofit organizations. Metro will seek diverse partners in planning and implementing restoration projects and strive to expand opportunities for MWESB-certified contractors to perform work on Metro lands.

In general, three types of restoration projects and activities are envisioned:

1. **Large scale, intensive restoration projects** to create significant improvements in the quality and function of the highest priority sites and habitats. These typically involve actions such as reconnecting floodplains to rivers, constructing or removing structures that direct hydrology and planting or thinning tree stands to develop healthy native plant communities.

2. **Smaller restoration projects** that improve ecological function. These projects are similar to larger restoration projects in purpose but smaller in scope and scale. Projects typically include vegetation management such as treating noxious and invasive weeds and planting native trees and shrubs. May also include activities such as replacing or removing failing culverts and modifying roads to prevent erosion from reaching streams and water sources.
3. **Natural area maintenance** focusing primarily on vegetation management and weed suppression. Maintenance will occur on virtually all of Metro's natural areas.

Criteria for priority setting

Projects to be funded are assessed according to the following criteria. Although they reflect a general priority order, all criteria will not apply to every project.

- **Water quality:** Clearly contributes to the protection of watershed health and water quality.
- **Habitat value:** Supports species or habitats identified in federal, state or regional conservation strategies or recovery plans.
- **Restoration potential:** Provides significant opportunity for successful ecological improvement within the time constraints of the levy.
- **Location:** In a regionally important location, including potential for enhancing connectivity between existing stream and wildlife corridors, parks, trails and natural areas.
- **Leverage:** Potential to engage diverse partners, increase funding, reduce long-term costs and create larger, more sustainable projects.
- **Community engagement:** Engages diverse communities through volunteer, workforce development and mentoring or other activities; provides historical, cultural and/or natural history education and interpretation opportunities.

Project refinement

The restoration and stewardship projects identified for investment with levy funds described in Attachment 1 will meet these criteria, including the ability to be substantially completed within the timeframe of the levy, a reduction in long-term operating and maintenance costs and significant ecological improvement. In addition, projects are prioritized based on existing species-specific plans, the Oregon State Conservation Strategy and the Regional Conservation Strategy for the Greater Portland-Vancouver Region. They are described and further prioritized based on Metro's conservation and maintenance plan for each site. Invasive weeds identified as Early Detection and Rapid Response targets by state and regional organizations offer great return on investment by avoiding habitat degradation and higher future control costs. While refining the project priority list and approach, Metro will assess additional factors, including opportunities for collaboration with diverse partners, community engagement and ability to leverage outside resources.

See Attachment 1 for Restoring Natural Areas initial project list.

IMPROVING PARKS AND NATURAL AREAS FOR PEOPLE

The advisory panel, stakeholders and the public agree that levy funds should be used to maintain existing parks and expand opportunities for all people to enjoy Metro's parks and natural areas, learn about and connect with nature. This is achieved through better park maintenance, conservation education, volunteer opportunities and improvements to natural areas for people.

Regional parks operations

Project selection

Metro's parks offer important access to nature for the region's citizens and support regionally important natural habitats. More than 1.3 million visitors enjoy Metro's developed parks each year for walking, hiking, bird watching, canoeing, camping, boating, fishing, picnicking and weddings, in addition to family and community events. As facilities such as restrooms and picnic shelters age, they reach the end of their useful life and need to be replaced. Funding from this levy will be used to make capital improvements, including upgrades to all of Metro's developed parks, with two exceptions: Metro's 14 historic pioneer cemeteries, and the golf courses and support facilities at Glendoveer Golf Course.

Projects are identified based on visitor safety, facility age and condition. Projects designated for funding include those identified in Metro's existing capital improvement program and the renewal and replacement plan. These were supplemented by information from field staff, safety records and park user feedback.

Criteria for priority setting

Projects to be funded are assessed according to the following criteria. Although they reflect a general priority order, all criteria will not apply to every project.

- Improve sustainability features that increase resource efficiency and facility longevity.
- Replace or upgrade facilities or amenities that have reached the end of their life expectancy.
- Reduce maintenance costs.
- Improve safety and security.
- Support continued high quality customer service.
- Respond to regulatory requirements such as Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance.

Project refinement

Projects outlined in Attachment 2 reflect completed plans and previous public input and have been generally studied in terms of scope and costs. However, permits have not been secured and public input on projects in some locations may affect scope or alter priorities. Adjustments to this initial list may be made based on changing conditions and public input. Grants, partnerships, use of volunteers and other opportunities to leverage levy funds will be explored and factored in as appropriate during project development. Levy projects will be organized to leverage MWESB and sheltered-market contractor utilization.

See Attachment 2 for Regional Parks Operations project list.

Improving natural areas for people

Project selection

As the region strives to create a world-class network of natural areas, parks and trails, the need is heightened to improve some of these places so people can use them – particularly in areas and communities that today are underserved – and goes hand in hand with caring for them and making the most of the public's investment.

Levy funds provide an opportunity to develop low-impact, low-cost access to Metro's natural areas, focusing on providing hiking and walking opportunities for visitors. This will enable residents of the

region to experience the range of habitat types represented at these natural areas, learn more about them and become better stewards of these important regional resources. Improvements for visitors will be closely coordinated with conservation education, volunteer engagement and restoration projects to ensure that community needs are integrated into project design and development. Careful consideration will be given to the limitations of a five-year levy and the desire to avoid increasing long-term maintenance costs. In addition, safety and security are ongoing challenges for protecting the natural resources at these locations. Modest investments that direct public use of select natural areas will create significant gains in water quality and ecological health.

Criteria for priority setting

Projects to be funded are assessed according to the following criteria. Although they reflect a general priority order, all criteria will not apply to every project.

- **Habitat protection:** The project reduces or eliminates visitors' negative impact on sensitive habitats.
- **Safety:** The project addresses a safety concern with current or future site access.
- **Light touch:** The project includes basic improvements such as trails and signage. The project is not capital intensive and avoids a significant increase to ongoing operating costs.
- **Enhanced stewardship:** The project provides access for volunteer and environmental education groups that will promote learning and stewardship.
- **Outdoor experience:** The project improves access to a natural area with a high quality outdoor experience. Activities beyond hiking and walking, such as boating and fishing, might be accommodated.
- **Equity:** The project improves opportunities to connect with nature in areas with a high concentration of low-income people and people of color who currently have poor access.

Project refinement

Final project selection and sequencing will need to be determined. Project lists may be modified with the help of stakeholders and the public. Metro's Chief Operating Officer will review and approve staff recommendations for projects that are designed to improve and expand opportunities for the public to use and enjoy Metro's natural areas.

See Attachment 3 for Improving Natural Areas initial project list.

Conservation education and volunteer engagement

Volunteer engagement

Stewardship of public land requires involving people in caring for the natural areas that have been protected on their behalf and for future generations. Today, volunteers donate more than 20,000 hours of service per year to Metro's parks and natural areas across the region. More than 2,500 people volunteer at Metro sites every year, often participating through their business or nonprofit group. Currently, demand for volunteer opportunities exceeds staff capacity to support their work. Volunteers supplement the work of agency staff members, increasing the quality and quantity of Metro's work.

Volunteers will play a key role across levy-enhanced programs. Volunteer coordination will be expanded to support opportunities for meaningful community engagement across all programs funded by the levy. For example, levy funds will support recruitment and coordination of regular work parties in restoration and maintenance projects, including some organized by nonprofit partners. Levy proceeds will also support specialty and volunteer opportunities such as site stewards, wildlife monitoring and trail counting. Outreach to volunteers will be intentional in efforts to include diverse populations and communities.

Conservation education

The primary goal of levy-supported conservation education activities is to increase stewardship and volunteerism at the region's natural areas and increase the role of natural areas as places of learning, exploration and engagement for people of all ages and backgrounds.

There are two main components to the levy's conservation education programs. The first is enhancement of interpretive opportunities in Metro's parks and natural areas. The second is conservation education for youth, including the potential for skill-building programs focused on underserved communities.

Interpretive opportunities for all visitors

Visitors to Metro's parks and natural areas should have the opportunity to learn about the site's natural and cultural history, natural resources, restoration activities and regional significance. Levy proceeds will increase the diversity and amount of public programming, as well as interpretive signage.

Education and skill-building for youth

Community stakeholders identified college/career development pipelines for youth as a high priority. In response, conservation education's youth programming will focus on developing partnerships and programs that provide conservation-related mentorship and skill-building opportunities. Working with these stakeholders and others in the community, Metro will establish partnerships to create paid, multi-year opportunities for teens to develop high-level, diverse skills that prepare them for conservation-related college study and professional careers. One key goal is improvement in academic, social and career outcomes. Success can be seen in the longer term through program graduates returning as paid staff, either at Metro or in other similar organizations.

Criteria for priority setting

Conservation education programs and projects to be funded are assessed according to the following criteria. Although they reflect a general priority order, all criteria will not apply to every project.

- Develop conservation-related knowledge, skills and motivation in youth.
- Use Metro's parks and natural areas as places for learning, exploration and engagement.
- Involve both conservation education and conservation action – the service learning model.
- Emphasize the role of mentors and expose participants to professionals in natural resources, science, conservation education and community development.
- Engage diverse and underserved communities.
- Partner with community organizations to provide personal and professional skills development.
- Engage participants over several years – a pipeline to college- and career-readiness.

Program refinement

Metro's volunteer and conservation education programs can build on past experiences with partnerships that contain elements of the education and skill-building for youth programming outlined above. In addition, there are valuable models for youth conservation corps to draw upon locally and nationally, including the Oregon Zoo's own award-winning Zoo Animal Presenters (ZAP) program. Conservation education staff will engage internal and external stakeholders in a discussion to determine the most effective programming to achieve desired outcomes.

Volunteer and conservation education program planning will be integrated into planning for restoration, park maintenance and natural area investments, considering current and anticipated visitor traffic, site attributes, geographic location and equity outcomes. Evaluation is a challenging, yet critical component of this type of conservation education work and will be considered as programs are refined.

Nature in Neighborhoods community grants

Program development

The advisory panel and stakeholders recommended that Metro continue providing opportunities to connect people with nature by funding Nature in Neighborhoods restoration and enhancement grants. These grants have been a critical source of funding to support community partnerships that achieve regional goals of improving water quality and fish and wildlife habitat. The grant program also supports Metro's commitment to addressing barriers that prevent underserved communities from using and enjoying the benefits of Metro's natural areas.

See Attachment 4 for Nature in Neighborhoods community grants funding objectives, eligibility, application review and selection details.

LEVY PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

The Natural Areas Local Option Levy performance will be measured over the life of the levy. To ensure accountability for the funds, program staff will produce an annual work plan to be approved by the Chief Operating Officer. At the end of each fiscal year, a report to the Metro Council will detail program expenditures by area as well as major accomplishments. The work plan and annual report will be presented at a Metro Council meeting, made available on the Metro website and featured in other public outreach channels.

The following outcomes will be addressed each year, as well as a list of projects completed and total expenditures to date:

1. Restoring natural areas for wildlife, fish and water quality.

- Increase management and invasive species control for improved water quality and for wildlife habitat values on 10,000 to 12,000 acres.
- Complete targeted major restoration projects on 2,000 acres.
- Continue strong utilization of MWESB contractors that meets or exceeds performance standards identified in Metro's Diversity Action Plan.

2. Site improvements and community engagement programs that expand opportunities for all people to enjoy Metro's parks and natural areas, learn about and connect with nature.

- Improve quality and service for more than 1.3 million people visiting Metro's developed parks through identified improved or replaced park amenities.
- Increase opportunities to experience nature at priority locations.
- Increase community engagement at Metro's parks and natural areas through expanded education and volunteer programs, community partnerships and a community-based grant program.
- Increase opportunities for communities of color and children from low income families to experience the region's parks and natural areas.
- Continue strong utilization of MWESB contractors that meets or exceeds performance standards identified in Metro's Diversity Action Plan.

Eligible expenses

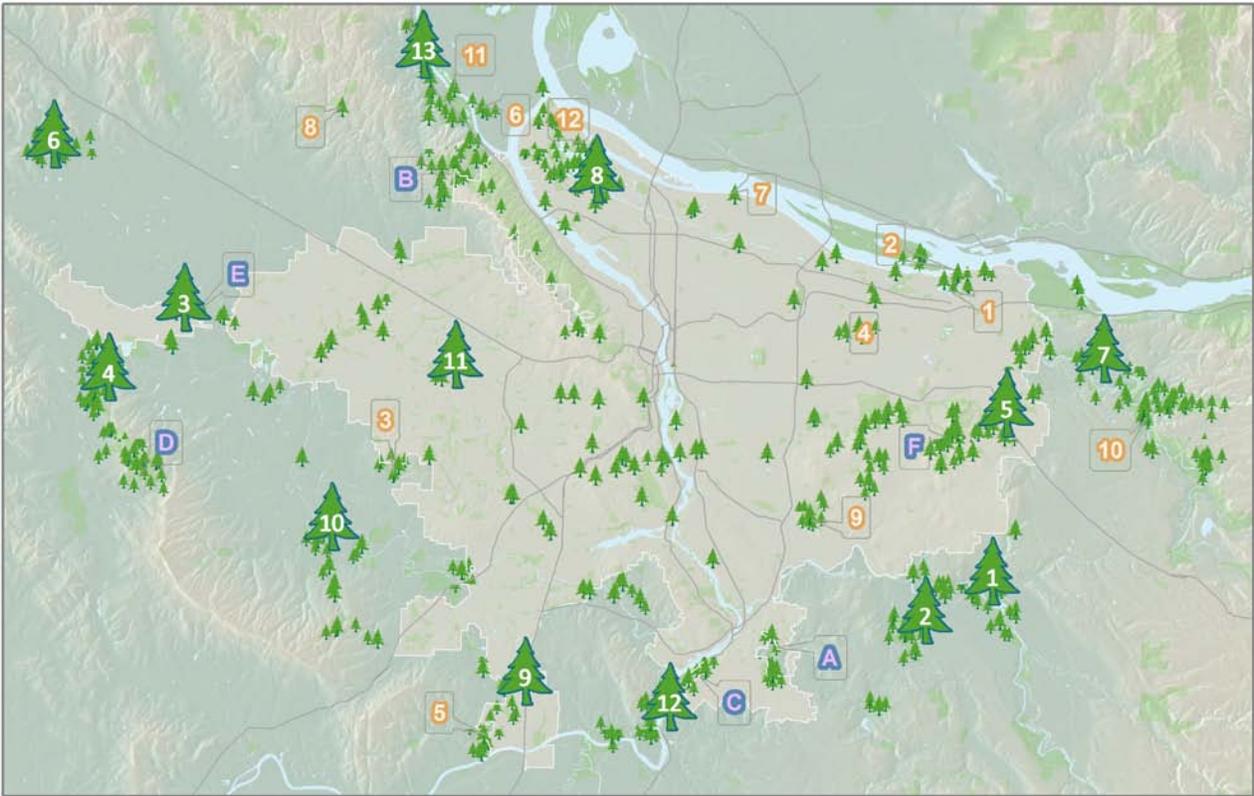
Revenues from the levy will fund program administration, restoration and maintenance of natural areas and parks, capital improvements in parks, and engagement of the community through grant, volunteer and educational programs.

Eligible locations

Natural areas restoration and maintenance, park facility improvements and natural area improvements for people projects may be funded only for the following sites:

- Properties owned and managed by Metro.
- Properties managed by Metro, regardless of ownership.
- Properties for which Metro holds a conservation easement or another agreement when failure to take action would adversely impact Metro property.
- Properties owned by Metro, but managed by a partner through contract or Intergovernmental Agreement.
- Properties where Nature in Neighborhood community grants are awarded.

DISTRIBUTION OF LEVY PROJECTS MAP



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The unnumbered small trees identify Metro-owned properties that will receive weed control and other small-scale restoration as warranted. Each tree represents a specific property, with clusters of trees indicating larger properties, in 40-acre increments (for example, an 80-acre site has two trees; a 200-acre site has five).
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The numbered larger trees indicate the sites of large-scale, intensive restoration projects. See Attachment 1 for the initial project list.
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The numbers indicate locations for regional park projects. See Attachment 2 for detailed project descriptions.
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The letters show a handful of the locations where people’s experience with nature will be improved. NOTE: This is an initial list. It will expand to include additional sites as they are determined. See Attachment 3 for the initial project list.

This map shows the projects that can be mapped. Conservation education, volunteer engagement and Nature in Neighborhoods community grants will occur at an abundance of sites throughout the region, Metro-owned and not. Exact locations are undetermined at this time.

Attachment 1

RESTORING NATURAL AREAS INITIAL PROJECT LIST

The projects and sites below are indicative of major restoration projects on Metro's natural areas (see  on map, page 11).

Map	Target area/site	Acres	Focal habitat(s)/species	Key project elements
1	Clackamas River/ North Logan Natural Area	40	Forest	Control invasive species, replant failed forest planting for habitat and reduced maintenance.
2	Clear Creek/Clear Creek Canyon middle bench	20	Prairie, wetland	Restore natural water flow, improve water quality by closing ditches; treat invasives.
3	Dairy/McKay creeks – Dairy/McKay confluence	100	Floodplain, prairie, wetland	Enhance floodplain connectivity; restore prairie and wetlands for habitat and water quality.
4	Gales Creek/Penstemon Prairie	120	Prairie, wetland, horned lark	Continue restoration of floodplain prairie and wetland habitats .
5	Johnson Creek (various)	50	Riverine, riparian/ salmon	Improve floodplain connectivity, restore native vegetation for fish and water quality.
6	Killin Wetlands	250	Wetland, riparian	Control invasive species; wetland and riparian planting to improve habitat and water quality.
7	Sandy River (various)	N/A	Riverine/salmon	Construct two side channels to enhance fish habitat and water quality.
8	Smith and Bybee Wetlands	100	Floodplain, prairie, wetland	Restore prairie and wetland habitat, increase floodplain forest cover, control invasive species.
9	Tonquin Geologic Area/ Coffee Lake Creek	120	Wetland	Replace invasive monoculture with native shrubs for habitat and water quality.
10	Tualatin River/Gotter Prairie	350	Prairie, oak, floodplain	Continue habitat improvement and restoration of newly acquired property.
11	Westside Trail corridor	30	Pollinator	Demonstration project as part of Westside Trail and habitat corridor.
12	Willamette Narrows (multiple sites)	500	Prairie, oak	Treat invasives and plant native wildflowers to solidify habitat gains made from oak release.
13	Willamette River Greenway/ Multnomah Channel	100	Wetland, floodplain, salmon	Improve connection of floodplain to river to improve water quality and salmon habitat.

Attachment 2

REGIONAL PARKS PROJECT LIST

The projects and sites below are indicative of improvements to upgrade Metro's regional parks (see  on map, page 11).

Blue Lake Regional Park | Map location 1

Projects at Blue Lake Park include property fencing, entry drive/booth renovation, park communications system, boat concession renovation, native landscaping upgrades, sports and pathway renovations, traffic and parking improvements, utility and drainage improvements, playground, swim beach and restroom renovations, office and maintenance building renovation and addition of permanent shelters.

Chinook Landing Marine Park | Map location 2

At this boat ramp the projects include pathway replacement, ADA improvements, bank stabilization, native landscaping upgrades, playground and picnic area improvements, signage replacement, boat ramp area dredging, parking improvements, boat wash station and fish cleaning station development.

Cooper Mountain Nature Park | Map location 3

Overflow parking will be developed.

Glendoveer Fitness Trail | Map location 4

Project includes drainage, surfacing and other needed improvements to the soft surface trail surrounding the Glendoveer Golf Course.

Graham Oaks Nature Park | Map location 5

Recycling and garbage collection improvements will be made.

Howell Territorial Park | Map location 6

The projects at Howell Territorial Park include a master plan update, signage, shelter construction, parking and access renovation and utility replacement.

M. James Gleason Memorial Boat Ramp | Map location 7

Beach, entrance booth/gate and ramp improvements are the projects for the Gleason Boat Ramp.

Mason Hill Park | Map location 8

Projects include site furnishings, restroom building, parking improvements, ADA improvements and signage.

Mount Talbert Nature Park | Map location 9

Pathway renovations will be made at Mount Talbert Nature Park.

Oxbow Regional Park | Map location 10

Projects include maintenance area reconfiguration, office/residence renovation, restroom construction, septic improvements, communication upgrades, fire road repairs, site furnishings, ADA improvements, specialized trail equipment, cabins and additional group camp construction, play area renovations, equestrian area improvements and utility renovations.

Sauvie Island Boat Ramp | Map location 11

The Sauvie Island Boat Ramp dock will be replaced, banks stabilized and the restrooms renovated. A new security gate will be installed.

Smith and Bybee Wetlands Natural Area | Map location 12

Signage and security improvements will be made along with ramp and pathway renovations.

Attachment 3

IMPROVING NATURAL AREAS FOR PEOPLE INITIAL PROJECT LIST

The projects and sites described below represent the initial list of improvements for the benefit of people visiting Metro's natural areas (see  on map, page 11).



Abernethy and Newell Creeks | Map location A

This project addresses both safety and preservation issues, replacing transient camps with positive use. Project anticipates a trailhead, parking and trail work. The site has been regularly accessed for many years by local residents who enjoy walking through the natural area. However, there are issues with transient individuals using the site for camping and other unpermitted uses.

Agency Creek/McCarthy Creek | Map location B

Various parcels near to but outside of Forest Park are currently or could be used by walkers or cyclists to access nature close to Portland. Access to the site is challenging and there may be opportunities to enhance use. Over the past decade the demand for single track mountain biking trails has increased. This project would explore the potential to provide quality cycling and hiking experiences for formal single track cycling and walking trails, and as appropriate, construct the facilities.

Canemah Bluff North | Map location C

Projects include construction of a viewpoint wall for safety at a bluff cliff, signage and trail improvements. Projects address current use of the site, closing trails for habitat preservation and opening new segments for a good walking experience.

Chehalem Ridge Natural Area | Map location D

Although the natural area is currently closed to the public, this project would take advantage of the opportunities at Chehalem Ridge for low-cost, low-maintenance access. In discussion with partners, early access projects would be identified and put in place potentially including signage and trails.

Council Creek | Map location E

This property provides habitat to amphibians, turtles and other wildlife. It is also an area where youth and adults create demand trails to access nature and the creek, and build tree houses, forts and rope swings. An analysis of the potential that this property may or may not have for formalized access and what uses the property can sustain while protecting the natural resources is necessary. The desired outcome of the plan would be a sustainable, formal trail with orientation and directional signage that would direct access to parts of the property that can sustain it and discourage access in sensitive habitats.

East Buttes | Map location F

A network of informal trails currently exist on Gabbert Hill and Towle Butte in the City of Gresham, north of Butler Road. These trails are used by residents in a number of adjacent neighborhoods. A trailhead or multiple trailheads with orientation and directional signage that lead to a formalized soft surface trail system through Gabbert Hill and Towle Butte will be developed to allow for maintainable and safe access to nature while protecting sensitive habitat in these natural areas.

Attachment 4

NATURE IN NEIGHBORHOODS COMMUNITY GRANTS PROGRAM

Grant program purpose

The Nature in Neighborhoods grant program supports and creates partnerships in local communities that improve water quality, fish and wildlife habitat and connect people with nature.

Grant program goals (grant proposals can address only one or many of these to be successful)

- Connect people to their watershed and/or teach people about watershed health.
- Preserve and restore fish and wildlife habitat in local communities.
- Support larger conservation initiatives such as the Regional Conservation Strategy or climate change adaptation.
- Support nature education and programs for school-aged children.
- Improve the ability of underserved communities – particularly low-income and communities of color – to learn about, help restore, experience and connect with nature and the region’s natural areas.
- Implement the Regional Trails Plan.

Requirements and eligibility information

Individuals, citizen groups, businesses, neighborhoods, nonprofits, schools and school groups, government agencies, faith groups and service groups with nonprofit or other tax-exempt status may apply. Metro is not eligible to apply for grant funds.

Grants must serve Metro-area residents. Projects must occur on publicly-owned or permanently protected lands within the metropolitan-area urban growth boundary or Metro’s jurisdictional boundary, unless the project is on Metro-owned property or demonstrates a significant public benefit through increased community stewardship of sensitive habitats of regional importance and/or provides significant public benefit through a regional approach to increasing habitat in urban areas. Projects cannot take the place of required mitigation or penalty payments or result in direct profit or proprietary resources. Grants may be awarded to projects on Metro-owned property only if Metro is not receiving grant funding.

All grant proposals require a minimum of three partners and a 1:1 dollar match of outside funding for every dollar awarded by Metro. The match should come from other funds and/or in-kind contribution(s) of materials, services or volunteer assistance. Match must be secured at time of final application. Funding from other grants managed through Metro cannot be applied towards match. Overhead costs are reimbursable up to 10 percent of the total grant award and as match up to 10 percent of total project cost. Overhead costs must be detailed and justified.

Grant evaluation criteria

- Applicants may address only one or many of the grant program goals to be successful.
- Proposals must meet all program requirements: e.g. three partnerships, 1:1 match, location.
- Proposal scope and timeline is detailed; partner roles and responsibilities are clear.
- Proposals have clear deliverables and measurable outcomes.

Grant application review and awards

The Metro Council will make all grant awards. A team of Metro staff and other professionals with backgrounds in restoration, conservation education, grant management, finance, volunteer coordination, project planning and community partnerships will review applications and make funding recommendations. Proposals will be evaluated based on the information submitted, responsiveness to program goals, stated criteria, and the review committee’s professional and collective judgment.

BALLOT TITLE

Caption

Local option levy: improve natural areas, water quality for fish

Question

Shall Metro improve natural areas, water quality for fish: five-year operating levy, \$.096 per \$1,000 assessed value, beginning 2013?

This measure may cause property taxes to increase more than three percent.

Summary

Twice in two decades, Metro voters approved measures to acquire thousands of acres of natural areas throughout the tri-county region. Past measures could not include money for maintenance and restoration.

This levy creates a dedicated fund to improve water quality for salmon and native fish, remove invasive weeds that threaten the health of these natural areas, restore wetlands and provide opportunities for people from around the region to experience nature close to home.

Cost

The estimated cost for the typical household is \$20 per year for five years.

Result of a “yes” vote

- Improve water quality in local rivers and streams for salmon and other native fish including the Clackamas, Sandy, Tualatin rivers; Fanno, Johnson creeks.
- Restore wildlife habitat and remove weeds that choke plants wildlife need for food and shelter.
- Restore wetlands and floodplains to control flooding, provide habitat for birds and amphibians.
- Construct or replace capital projects in parks, such as restrooms, picnic shelters, playgrounds.
- Provide nature education programs in natural areas to visitors and school-aged children.

The proposed rate (at \$.096/\$1,000) will raise approximately \$10.2 million in 2013-14, \$10.4 million in 2014-15, \$10.6 million in 2015-16, \$ 10.9 million in 2016-17 and \$11.2 million in 2017-18. The estimated tax cost for this measure is an ESTIMATE ONLY based on the best information available from the county assessors at the time of estimate.

STAFF REPORT

IN CONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTION NO. 12-4398 FOR THE PURPOSE OF REFERRING TO THE VOTERS OF THE METRO AREA A LOCAL OPTION LEVY FOR THE PURPOSE OF PRESERVING WATER QUALITY, FISH AND WILDLIFE HABITAT AND MAINTAINING METRO'S PARKS AND NATURAL AREAS FOR THE PUBLIC

December 18, 2012

Prepared by: Jim Desmond (503-797-1914)
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BACKGROUND

This region is admired across the nation for its innovative approach to planning for the future. Our enviable quality of life can be attributed in no small measure to our stubborn belief in the importance of thinking ahead. One example of this foresight was the Metro Council's adoption of the 2040 Growth Concept, a long-range plan designed with the participation of thousands of Oregonians in the 1990s. This innovative blueprint for the future, intended to guide growth and development over 50 years, is based on a set of shared values that continue to resonate throughout the region: thriving neighborhoods and communities, abundant economic opportunity, clean air and water, protecting streams and rivers, preserving farms and forestland, access to nature, and a sense of place. These are the reasons people love to live here. At the heart of the 2040 Growth Concept was the vision, laid out in the Metropolitan Greenspaces Master Plan, of an interconnected system of parks, trails and natural areas for fish, wildlife and people.

Current status and challenge

The Portland metropolitan area is well on its way toward realizing this vision of preserving water quality, protecting the region's most important natural resources and allowing people to explore them. Over the course of two voter-approved bond measures, Metro has strategically acquired more than 12,000 acres, adding to the 4,000+ acres of regional parks Metro has been asked to manage by local governments. Metro has committed the resources necessary to care for these lands and begun the work of restoring habitats, improving water quality and enhancing people's opportunities to enjoy and explore nature. Given that Metro's portfolio of land continues to grow, while the general fund resources needed to support it are decreasing, the existing financial model is not sustainable. The region has no stable, near- or long-term funding source to restore, maintain and invite people to enjoy the places that voters and local governments have protected for the public.

Without active stewardship, wildlife habitat in our natural areas will decline. A recent City Club report identifies invasive weeds as a primary threat to the health of Forest Park. In Metro's natural areas, similar threats from invasive weeds threaten the health of native species and water quality. Left unattended, this trend will mean a more daunting task and higher costs in the future. Similarly, park facilities that provide people with walking, boating, picnicking and other opportunities to enjoy nature require sufficient funding and reinvestment. Additional, dedicated funding is needed to protect our region's assets in both the near and long term, maximize their value to the public and enhance the ecological benefits of the public's park and natural area investments.

It was clear from the time the Metro Council referred the first bond measure in 1995 that acquisition was the imperative. It was noted then that funding for long-term maintenance must be identified and planned

for, but the Metro Council and the region's voters prioritized land acquisition. With the first bond measure, Metro exceeded promises to voters, acquiring more than 8,000 acres of natural areas. Already Metro has achieved its goal of protecting about 4,000 acres through the 2006 bond measure. Metro's success in acquiring these natural areas brings urgency to the discussion of their long-term care.

For several years the Metro Council has discussed a regional solution to long-term funding needs with local park providers, elected officials and partners in the Intertwine Alliance. In 2010 the Metro Council directed staff to produce a report on Metro's portfolio of parks and natural areas. The Council used the portfolio report to better understand the scope of Metro's responsibilities as well as the challenges and opportunities they present today and in the future.

During the past year, Metro has examined a wide range of funding sources that potentially could provide either a long-term or short-term solution to the ongoing management of Metro's regional parks and natural areas. Consideration was given to a service district, solid waste excise tax, a niche tax, utility fee and local option levy. Of these alternatives, a five-year local option levy emerged as the most feasible to pursue in the near-term. In February 2012 the Metro Council directed staff to test voter interest in such a measure.

Public engagement and process

The effort to determine whether the Metro Council should move forward with seeking voter approval of a local option levy has included extensive public and stakeholder engagement. This began with public opinion research conducted by Davis, Hibbitts & Midghall, Inc. (DHM Research) in March 2012 and continued with the use of Metro's online engagement tool, Opt In, in May 2012. A total of 3,492 people participated in the Opt In survey, and their opinions were consistent with the results of the statistically valid research. The input gathered from Opt In members provided additional information about the relative importance of Metro's natural area restoration efforts and programs to residents throughout the region, confirming priorities and the benefits of additional funding.

Outreach to key stakeholders also began early in 2012. Metro Council members, the Metro Council President and Metro staff shared the idea of a local option levy with elected officials, park directors, the Intertwine Alliance members and others. Early engagement gave the project team insight into the concerns a funding proposal might raise.

With public support and voter interest established, Metro Chief Operating Officer Martha Bennett convened an independent advisory panel made up of 15 representatives from the public and private sectors in July 2012. The Natural Areas Advisory Panel provided an opportunity to test support for a funding proposal with an independent group of community leaders representing different personal and professional perspectives and expertise.

Natural Areas Advisory Panel

The advisory panel included business, conservation and community leaders Josh Alpert, Marcelo Bonta, Tom Brian, Craig Dirksen, Stacey Dycus, Donita Fry, John Griffiths, Lori Luchak, Fred Miller (chair), Mike Miller, Wilda Parks, David Pollock, Jazzmin Reece, Stephanie Routh and Pam Wiley. The panel met in June and July 2012 and addressed these key questions:

1. What are the key results related to preservation and maintenance of parks and natural areas and access to nature that Metro should fund?
2. What level of funding is necessary to meet these objectives?

3. Is now the right time for a funding measure?
4. What is the long-term funding solution for natural areas?

The advisory panel's recommendations form the core of the proposed measure as described in this resolution, and an excerpted summary is below.

...The panel met three times and discussed the work to date in acquiring and restoring land and providing regional parks. We looked at the funding challenges facing Metro. We reviewed the spring 2012 voter opinion survey, which gauged public support for protection of natural areas in general as well as a specific scenario for a five-year levy.

Based on these meetings, we have reached consensus that a long-term solution is needed to ensure ongoing maintenance and operations of these regional assets. Given the challenges in finding a long-term solution, we recommend that the Metro Council refer a five-year levy to voters to restore natural areas, maintain and operate parks, engage the community and improve access so people can safely use more of Metro's properties.

...As you further define the projects to be funded, be as specific as possible and use geographic equity as a guiding principle.

Further, we support using the following criteria to evaluate potential investments:

Resource protection

Funding protects natural resources, helping ensure a healthy future for people, fish, and wildlife. Ensuring water quality in regional streams, restoring and protecting wildlife habitat, and removing weeds that threaten the health of natural areas are high priorities with voters. Restoration work needs to continue on properties that have been acquired and improved, and extend to as much of the portfolio as possible. Funding should focus on habitat restoration work that protects resources and reduces future funding needs.

Taking care of assets

The investment supports regional parks and takes care of these assets as a legacy for future generations. As indicated in the opinion survey, seven in 10 voters rated preserving the quality of the region's natural areas as a high or medium priority. In the related Opt-In survey in May 2012, the top priority for investment went to general maintenance to keep parks safe and enjoyable for visitors. Taking care of what we have needs to be a high priority.

Equity

Levy funding is an opportunity for underserved communities to benefit. Be intentional in designing the levy projects to address barriers that affect historically disadvantaged communities in the use and benefits of Metro's natural areas.

- *Provide access to natural areas that are near underserved communities. Access relates to physical facilities as well as consideration of cultural barriers and barriers that prevent people from enjoying the resources.*
- *Be inclusive by way of contracting and jobs, environmental education and stewardship opportunities, partnerships and collaboration in public decisions.*

Access and public safety

The opinion survey highlighted the importance of public use. Access to parks and natural areas close to home and across the region are both important, supporting the interconnected network of The Intertwine. With a five-year levy, capital-intensive projects with significant, new ongoing costs should be minimized. However, investments that improve access and remove safety hazards should be a higher priority.

The panel went on to recommend limiting levy expenditures to natural areas, parks and trail purposes in order to keep faith with the voters.

The Metro Council directed staff to conduct broader and more formal public engagement activities starting in September 2012, including one-on-one meetings and presentations to targeted groups and general outreach to the public. More than 100 elected officials, local governments, nonprofits, community-based organizations, business leaders and individuals were contacted and provided opportunities to offer advice and input. Organizations were urged to alert their members to weigh in on the levy proposal through an online survey on Metro's website or by communicating directly with the Metro Council. The levy proposal was highlighted and promoted through Metro's websites, online advertising, direct mail, social media tools and more. Online advertising generated more than 3 million impressions. Metro's website launched a page about the project (www.oregonmetro.gov/nature) Sept. 12, 2012, offering details of the levy funding proposal, decision-making process and timeline.

Starting Sept. 12 and ending Nov. 19, 2012, Metro hosted an online survey via Opt In about the local option levy proposal. More than 5,000 people completed the survey, including more than 1,500 people from outside the regular panel. Overall, the online survey results showed 68 percent support for the levy. Successful engagement about the purpose and need for a Metro levy is evidenced by strong participation in the survey, by the diversity of people and organizations contacted that provided input and advice to Metro.

Davis, Hibbitts & Midghall, Inc. (DHM Research) conducted a second telephone survey of likely voters in the Metro service territory in November 2012 to re-assess support for a five-year local option operating levy for Metro's natural areas. This research again confirmed support for the measure once the amount and purpose of the levy was described.

ANALYSIS/INFORMATION

1. Known Opposition

The Metro Council has received several comments online from citizens opposing any type of tax increase at this time.

Nineteen of the region's mayors have submitted a letter to the Metro Council expressing concern that Metro's five-year local option levy will contribute to compression in cities within Washington, Clackamas and Multnomah counties. The mayors' letter explained that some Metro area cities are more impacted by compression than others and, as a result, the financial burden for the levy would not fall evenly on households and communities across the region. Some cities have concerns that this will reduce their future ability to raise local revenue for other important local services.

2. Legal Antecedents

State law:

Oregon Revised Statutes Chapter 250 (“Initiative and Referendum”) and ORS Chapter 280, (“Financing of Local Public Projects and Improvements”): ORS 250.035 (“Form of ballot titles for state and local measures”); ORS 250.038 (“Form of ballot title for measure authorizing imposition or renewal of local option taxes or establishing permanent rate limitation”); ORS 280.060 (“Levy of local option taxes outside constitutional limitation; duration of levy; approval of levy as approval of bonds”); ORS 280.064 (“Period for use of revenues raised by local option tax”); ORS 280.070 (“Manner of holding elections for local option tax or permanent rate limit; additional statement in ballot title”); ORS 280.075 (“Ballot statements for local option tax measures”); and ORS 280.080 (“Contents of order, resolution or ordinance calling election”).

Metro Council Legislative History:

Metro Council Resolution No. 92-1637, “For the Purpose of Considering the Adoption of the Metropolitan Greenspaces Master Plan,” adopted July 23, 1992.

Metro Council Resolution No. 94-2049B, “For the Purpose of Modifying the Submission to the Voters of a General Obligation Bond Indebtedness to Proceed with the Acquisition of Land for a Regional System of Greenspaces.”

Metro Council Resolution No. 04-3506A, “For the Purpose of Revising Metro’s Preliminary Goal 5 Allow, Limit, or Prohibit Decision; and Directing the Chief Operating Officer to Develop a Fish and Wildlife Habitat Protection and Restoration Program That Relies on a Balanced Regulatory and Incentive Based Approach,” adopted December 9, 2004.

Metro Council Resolution No. 05-3574A, “For the Purpose of Establishing a Regional Habitat Protection, Restoration and Greenspaces Initiative Called Nature In Neighborhoods,” adopted May 12, 2005.

Metro Council Resolution No. 05-3612, “For the Purpose of Stating An Intent to Submit to the Voters the Question of the Establishment of a Funding Measure to Support Natural Area Protection and Establishing a Blue Ribbon Committee; and Setting Forth the Official Intent of Metro to Reimburse Certain Expenditures Out of the Proceeds of Obligations to be Issued in Connection with the Regional Parks and Greenspaces Program,” adopted September 29, 2005.

3. Anticipated Effects

The effect of this resolution would be the referral to voters of a local option levy measure in the May 21, 2013 General Election.

4. Budget Impacts

The referral of this measure to the voters will require Metro to pay for election expenses, estimated at approximately \$167,000. This amount can change based on the number of issues on the ballot, and the number of region-wide items on the ballot. The FY 2012-13 Adopted Budget includes \$75,000 for election expenses; however, additional appropriation will likely be needed to fully fund the election expenses.

Due to the timing of the May election and the Metro budget process, budget authority for program expenses prior to voter approval of the measure may be included in the FY 13-14 adopted budget. The

Metro Council will have the legal authority to establish appropriation authority related to the successful passage of the measure, once the election has been certified. It is anticipated that, upon passage of the measure, staff will work with the Metro Council on the development of the levy program and the necessary budgetary appropriation to be approved by Ordinance at a later date.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Staff recommends adoption of Resolution No. 12-4398.