

BEFORE THE METRO COUNCIL

FOR THE PURPOSE OF AUTHORIZING THE)
EXECUTIVE OFFICER TO PURCHASE)
PROPERTY IN THE WILLAMETTE NARROWS)
SECTION OF THE WILLAMETTE RIVER)
GREENWAY TARGET AREA)

RESOLUTION NO. 99- 2874

Introduced by Mike Burton
Executive Officer

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

WHEREAS, at the election held on May 16, 1995, the Metro area voters approved the Open Spaces, Parks and Streams Bond Measure (Ballot Measure 26-26) which authorized Metro to issue \$135.6 million in general obligation bonds to finance land acquisition and capital improvements; and

WHEREAS, the Willamette Narrows Section of the Willamette River Greenway target area was designated as a greenspace of regional significance in the Greenspaces Master Plan and identified as a regional target area in the Open Space, Parks and Streams Bond Measure; and

WHEREAS, on April 11, 1996, the Metro Council adopted a refinement plan for the Willamette Narrows Section of the Willamette River Greenway target area ("Refinement Plan") which authorized the purchases of sites in the target area, illustrated in a confidential tax-lot-specific map identifying priority properties for acquisition; and

WHEREAS, the refinement plan map for the Willamette Narrows Section of the Willamette River Greenway target area currently ends at the confluence of the Tualatin River and the Willamette River; and

WHEREAS, an objective of the refinement plan for the Willamette Narrows Section of the Willamette River Greenway refinement plan includes support of statewide land use Goal 15, which stated purpose aims to protect, conserve, enhance and maintain the natural, scenic, historical, agricultural, economic and recreational qualities of lands along the Willamette River as the Willamette River Greenway; and

WHEREAS, Tier I objectives of the refinement plan include acquisition of large blocks for contiguous wooded area for habitat value, including remaining areas of oak on the south facing slopes, and Tier II objectives include working with West Linn to coordinate plans for linkages to areas outside the Willamette Narrows target area; and

WHEREAS, the acquisition of the Burnside Park property would serve the Willamette Narrows Section of the Willamette River Greenway target area objectives of supporting statewide land use Goal 15 and the Tier I and Tier II objectives of the refinement plan; and

WHEREAS, the City of West Linn has urged Metro to acquire the 1.8 – acre Burnside Park addition property.

BE IT RESOLVED,

That the Metro Council authorizes the Executive Officer to purchase the Willamette Narrows Property described in Exhibit A.

ADOPTED by Metro Council this _____ day of _____, 1999.

Rod Monroe, Presiding Officer

Approved as to Form:

Daniel B. Cooper, General Counsel

Exhibit A
Resolution No. 97-????

Staff Report

CONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTION NO. 99- FOR THE PURPOSE OF AMENDING THE WILLAMATTE NARROWS SECTION OF THE WILLAMETTE RIVER GREENWAY TARGET AREA REFINEMENT PLAN

Date: November 22, 1999

Presented by:

**Charles Ciecko
Jim Desmond**

PROPOSED ACTION

Resolution No. 99- requests amendment of the Willamette Narrows Section of the Willamette River Greenway target area refinement plan.

BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

In May of 1995, voters in the region passed a bond measure enabling Metro to purchase open space properties with \$135.6 million worth of bond funds. The bond measure identified fourteen regional target areas and six regional trails and greenways for property acquisition, including the Willamette Narrows Section of the Willamette River Greenway.

The overall goal of the refinement plan for the Willamette Narrows Section of the Willamette River Greenway includes creation of a regional natural area which supports statewide land use Goal 15 and protection of undeveloped riparian areas for wildlife, biological, botanical, educational, and water quality values. The overall goal of land use Goal 15 is to protect, conserve, enhance and maintain the natural, scenic, historical, agricultural, economic and recreational qualities of lands along the Willamette River as the Willamette River Greenway. The Tier I objectives of the refinement plan include acquisition of large blocks for contiguous wooded area for habitat value, including remaining areas of oak on the south facing slopes. Tier II objectives include working with West Linn to coordinate plans for linkages to areas outside the Willamette Narrows target area.

At the time of Refinement, the Willamette Narrows target area was defined as the area along the Willamette River from the mouth of the Tualatin River south to the Canby Ferry Crossing, and including Peach Cove. However, the City of West Linn has requested that the Willamette Narrows target area be amended to include a site that was originally identified as West Linn's local share project.

The site in question is a 1.8 – acre parcel located along the west bank of the Willamette River approximately 1 ¾ miles north of the mouth of the Tualatin River and adjacent to the southern boundary of West Linn's Burnside Park. This site is generally referred to as the "Burnside Park addition". Until recently, this project was not considered feasible, as

the property owner (Mrs. Maddax) was living on site in her single family residence and desired to retain ownership of the property.

Consequently, while acknowledging the continuing importance of acquiring the “Burnside Park” project, the West Linn City Council identified and approved a replacement local share project, referred to as the “Lazy River/Robinwood Neighborhood Community Park Acquisition”. This property consists of 11.54 acres of undeveloped land, open space and wetlands. The City Council held a public hearing and voted to approve this change in its local share project at its August 9, 1999 meeting (attached is a copy of the governing body’s resolution making this change). The City has now moved forward to acquire this parcel by leveraging Open Spaces Local Share money with money from a Local Improvement District set up in the Robinwood neighborhood for this purpose.

The owner of the “Burnside Park” property (Mrs. Maddax) has recently passed away and has willed the property to the City of West Linn. However, during her lifetime, the property taxes on the property were deferred during her lifetime through the State of Oregon’s senior tax deferral program. In order to bring this property into public ownership, it will be necessary to reimburse the State of Oregon’s Department of Revenue for the property taxes. The City of West Linn has requested that the Willamette Narrows target area be amended to include the “Burnside Park” property so that Regional Bond Funds can be used to acquire this important parcel.

The “Burnside Park” property is located along the west side of the Willamette River, directly adjacent to West Linn’s 16.8 – acre Burnside Park. There is a mixed coniferous and deciduous tree canopy of fir, maple, and beech located on the site. The property has approximately 328 feet of low-bank frontage on the Willamette River and provides excellent views of Goat Island Park, a 16.6 – acre Willamette River island located directly across from the property. Goat Island is owned and managed by the Oregon Department of State Lands and supports a blue heron rookery. City of West Linn Zoning designates the “Burnside Park” property as R-10, a residential zone allowing development based upon minimum lot sizes of 10,000 square feet. Existing single family residential subdivisions are located to the east, south, and south west of the property.

FINDINGS

Acquisition of this property is recommended based on the following:

- Acquisition will protect undeveloped riparian areas for wildlife, biological, botanical, educational, and water quality values.
- The site will expand West Linn’s Burnside park from 16.8 – acres to 18.6 – acres. Wildlife, biological, botanical, and water quality values will be enhanced by this expansion.
- The proximity of the site to Goat Island and the heron rookery provides scenic and educational opportunities for the public and provides a buffer for this natural resource.

- The site provides a rare opportunity for increasing public ownership along the Willamette River within the Urban Growth Boundary.
- The site offers safe, low bank access to the Willamette River.
- If the parcel in question is not acquired, it will probably be developed with residential housing units. Such development would clearly be detrimental to wildlife on Goat Island.

BUDGET IMPACT

Bond funds would supply acquisition money. Land banking costs are expected to be minimal.