



**METRO COUNCIL WORK SESSION**  
**MEETING SUMMARY**  
August 16, 2012  
Metro Council Chamber

**Councilors Present:** Council President Tom Hughes and Councilors Shirley Craddick, Carlotta Collette, Carl Hosticka, Kathryn Harrington, Rex Burkholder, and Barbara Roberts

**Councilors Excused:** None

Council President Tom Hughes convened the Metro Council work session at 2:14 p.m.

**1. PARKS AND NATURAL AREAS FUNDING CITIZEN PANEL RECOMMENDATION**

Martha Bennett and Mary Anne Cassin of Metro presented to the Council regarding the agency's parks and natural areas. In 1995 and 2006 voters approved bond measures to acquire and conserve the region's natural assets. As a result, Metro is currently responsible for managing more than 16,000 acres of land in the region.

In November 2011, the *Natural Areas, Parks, and Trails Portfolio Report* was presented to the Council. The report described the many challenges Metro may face in maintaining these natural areas in the future. Consequently, the Chief Operating Officer appointed the Parks and Natural Areas Funding Citizen Panel to study and provide recommendations on possible solutions to address the challenges facing the agency. The Citizen Panel has completed their work and captured their recommendations in a letter addressed to Chief Operating Officer Bennett (document included as part of the meeting record).

The panel concluded that a long-term plan that emphasized maintenance, accessibility and equity would best serve Metro's parks and natural areas. To fund such a plan, the Citizen Panel recommended Metro refer an operating levy in 2013 to the region's voters to ensure Metro's parks and natural areas are maintained for years to come. However, in order to send this measure to the ballot, Metro must further scope public support. Staff recommended the Council consider a budget amendment to conduct a regional public involvement effort to assess the public's interest in maintaining Metro's natural areas and parks.

The Metro Council discussed the following:

- The Council thanked the Citizen Panel for their work. Several Councilors sat in on Citizen Panel discussions and were impressed by the thoroughness of the committee's deliberations.
- The issue of equity was examined extensively during the Citizen Panel meetings and was at the forefront of the Council's discussion. The Council wanted to ensure that Metro's parks and natural areas would be accessible to all underserved populations including currently and historically underserved groups, the elderly, and the disabled.

- The Council learned through external stakeholders that the signage in Metro's parks and natural areas is inadequate. Consequently, Council recommended additional prohibitive and navigational signage as well as new historical signage be installed at Metro's natural areas and parks. For example, Council recommended that signage should be added if significant portions of Metro's parks or natural areas were once used by native populations. Signage should help visitors navigate the parks and inform visitors about the natural and cultural history of the land.
- The Council requested specific details regarding how the \$146,000 called for in the budget amendment would be used for public outreach. Staff clarified that the majority of the dollars would be allocated to stakeholder outreach, The Intertwine and OptIn.
- The Council was concerned that outreach efforts would be competing for the public's attention with political campaigns for fall 2012 elections. Councilors were concerned that the public may be overwhelmed by political discourse and therefore unreceptive to Metro's outreach.

The Council advised staff that outreach should only be directed toward receptive audiences until later this fall, after which outreach can be toward the general public. Staff agreed to proceed with preparing a budget amendment to cover focused outreach this fall and then general outreach in the months following.

## **2. ADJUORN**

Seeing no further business, Council President Hughes adjourned the Council work session at 3:08 p.m.

Prepared by,



Adam Gardner  
Council Office Policy Assistant

**ATTACHMENTS TO THE PUBLIC RECORD FOR THE MEETING OF AUGUST 16, 2012**

<b>ITEM</b>	<b>DOCUMENT TYPE</b>	<b>DOC DATE</b>	<b>DOCUMENT DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>DOCUMENT No.</b>
<b>1.0</b>	Handout	7/30/2012	Parks and Natural Areas Funding Citizen Panel Recommendation Letter and Supplements	081612cw-01