

BEFORE THE METRO COUNCIL

FOR THE PURPOSE OF AUTHORIZING METRO TO )	RESOLUTION NO. 14-4509
APPLY FOR A LAND AND WATER )	
CONSERVATION FUND GRANT FROM THE )	Introduced by Chief Operating Officer Martha
OREGON PARKS AND RECREATION )	Bennett in concurrence with Council
DEPARTMENT FOR DEVELOPMENT AT OXBOW )	President Tom Hughes
REGIONAL PARK AND RECOGNIZING THE )	
AUTHORITY OF THE SUSTAINABILITY CENTER )	
DIRECTOR TO SIGN THE APPLICATION )	

WHEREAS, the Oregon State Parks and Recreation Department is accepting applications for the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund Grant Program; and

WHEREAS, Metro’s Sustainability Center desires to participate in this grant program to the greatest extent possible as a means of providing needed play area facility improvements at Oxbow Regional Park in unincorporated Multnomah County; and

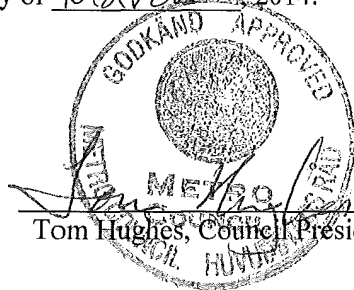
WHEREAS, grant funds would be used to implement nature based play opportunities throughout the 1,100 acre regional park, and improvements would include sand and water play areas, “base camps” to orient young explorers, and defined off-trail exploration areas; and

WHEREAS, Metro Parks & Environmental Services has available local Operating Levy matching funds to fulfill its share of obligation related to this grant application should the grant funds be awarded; and

WHEREAS, Metro Parks & Environmental Services has estimated that annual maintenance costs will be \$12,000 and will dedicate adequate funding for on-going operations and maintenance of this park and recreation facility should the grant funds be awarded; now therefore

BE IT RESOLVED that the Metro Council authorizes Metro Sustainability Center to apply for a Land and Water Conservation Fund Grant from the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department for implementation of the nature based play area opportunities improvements at Oxbow Regional Park, recognizes the authority of the department director to sign the application, and approves the addition of the Oxbow Regional Park facility improvements project to the 2013 Operating Levy Funds.

ADOPTED by the Metro Council this 20 day of March 2014.



Tom Hughes, Council President

Approved as to Form:



Allison R. Kean, Metro Attorney

## **STAFF REPORT**

IN CONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTION NO. 14-4509, FOR THE PURPOSE OF AUTHORIZING METRO TO APPLY FOR A LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND GRANT FROM THE OREGON PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT FOR DEVELOPMENT AT OXBOW REGIONAL PARK AND RECOGNIZING THE AUTHORITY OF THE SUSTAINABILITY CENTER DIRECTOR TO SIGN THE APPLICATION

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Date: March 20, 2014

Prepared by: Mark Davison, 503-797-1854

### **BACKGROUND**

The Land and Water Conservation Fund (the "LWCF") State Assistance program was established by the LWCF Act of 1965 (Section 6, Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965, as amended; Public Law 88-578; 16 U.S.C 4601-4 et seq.) to stimulate a nationwide action program to assist in preserving, developing, and assuring to all citizens of the United States of present and future generations such quality and quantity of outdoor recreation resources as may be available and are necessary and desirable for individual active participation. The LWCF State Assistance Program provides matching grants to States, and through the States to local governments, for the acquisition and development of public outdoor recreation areas and facilities.

The Oregon Parks and Recreation Department is responsible for the distribution of LWCF monies to state agencies and local governments. This money is distributed for public purposes of financing protection, repair, and creation of parks and outdoor recreation areas. Projects eligible for funding assistance are acquisition, development, and rehabilitation projects consistent with the outdoor recreation goals contained in the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan. The adopted administrative rules for the distribution of funds require approval by resolution from the elected officials of the governing bodies for all applicants.

In May 2013, the region's voters approved a five year local option levy (the "levy") to care for natural areas and regional parks. The levy included funding to improve play experiences at Oxbow Regional Park, and Metro strives to connect children and families to the outdoors. This project will design and build innovative landscape based outdoor play opportunities at Oxbow Regional Park allowing for enhanced outdoor experiences. The experiences resulting from construction of the nature based play areas will benefit children's physical, emotional and social growth and appreciation of natural places. The scope of the project includes construction of two nature based play areas, trail wayfinding and destination monuments which will promote natural area exploration and encourage visitors to experience the different landscape types within this 1,100-acre regional park.

Developing the nature play area concept involved a collaborative design process including Oxbow's lead rangers, naturalists, play professionals, landscape architects and the public. As part of this effort the public reviewed concepts for the design at the Salmon Homecoming. At this event and other smaller events the design ideas received unanimous positive feedback. Following the public outreach, the concepts were finalized and will be further developed for completion of permitting and construction documents. With the additional funding from the LWCF grant, Metro will be able to fully build out the nature play area design concepts along with associated interpretive nature trails, wayfinding signage, and educational elements that encourage further exploration of nature.

Metro has direct experience with supporting and developing these types of innovative play areas. Metro recently created a nature based play area at Blue Lake Regional Park using natural materials such as logs, boulders and loose parts salvaged from Metro's natural areas. This play area allows for collaborative, creative and imaginative play.

Upon adoption of this Resolution, Metro's Sustainability Center and Parks & Environmental Services Department will work collaboratively in applying for funds through the Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund State Assistance program. These funds will assist with implementation of nature based play area facility improvements for Oxbow Regional Park.

#### **ANALYSIS/INFORMATION**

**1. Known Opposition**

None.

**2. Legal Antecedents**

Resolution No. 06-3672B, "For the Purpose of Submitting to the Voters of the Metro Area a General Obligation Bond Indebtedness in the Amount of \$227.4 Million to Fund Natural Area Acquisition and Water Quality Protection," adopted March 9, 2006.

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," adopted December 18, 2012.

Metro Code Section 2.20.030 regarding powers of the Chief Operating Officer and various delegations of signature authority to department directors.

**3. Anticipated Effects**

If Metro is awarded this grant, the funds will be used to design, permit and construct two nature based play areas and nature based play opportunities.

**4. Budget Impacts**

The proposed Parks and Environmental Services FY 2013-14 budget includes funding to develop conceptual designs for the play areas. The FY 2015-16 proposed budget includes sufficient appropriation to build out and complete this capital improvement project. External sources of fund for this project include \$100,000 from this grant application to the State.

#### **RECOMMENDED ACTION**

Staff recommends adoption of Resolution 14-4509.