

Metro | Agenda

Meeting: Metro Council Work Session
Date: Tuesday, March 3, 2015
Time: 2:00 p.m.
Place: Metro Regional Center, Council Chamber

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

- | | | |
|----------------|---|---|
| 2:00 PM | 1. CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER COMMUNICATION | |
| 2:10 PM | 2. METRO PARKS AND NATURAL AREAS SYSTEM PLAN | Kathleen Brennan-Hunter, Metro
Justin Patterson, Metro |
| 3:10 PM | 3. METRO ATTORNEY COMMUNICATIONS | Alison Kean, Metro |
| 3:25 PM | 4. COUNCIL LIAISON UPDATES AND COUNCIL COMMUNICATION | |

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Agenda Item No. 2.0

METRO PARKS AND NATURAL AREAS SYSTEM PLAN

Metro Council Work Session
Tuesday, March 3, 2015
Metro Regional Center, Council Chamber

METRO COUNCIL

Work Session Worksheet

PRESENTATION DATE: March 3, 2015

LENGTH: 60 minutes

PRESENTATION TITLE: Metro Parks and Natural Areas System Plan

DEPARTMENT: Sustainability Center

PRESENTER(S): Kathleen Brennan-Hunter (x1948); Justin Patterson (x1886); Mark Davison (x1854); Mike Faha, Greenworks (503-222-5612)

WORK SESSION PURPOSE & DESIRED OUTCOMES

- **Purpose:** To update the Metro Council on the Parks and Natural Areas System Plan process and review and receive input on significant policy questions that will be addressed during the project.
- **Outcome:** An enhanced understanding of the status of the system plan process and insights into Council opinions about policy questions that will guide the planning effort.

TOPIC BACKGROUND & FRAMING THE WORK SESSION DISCUSSION

Why are we here?

Based on previous direction and support from the Metro Council and engagement with Metro staff, stakeholders and partners, Metro staff is moving forward to develop a Parks and Natural Areas System Plan to provide a comprehensive structure for managing its portfolio of parks, natural areas and nature programs. This plan will lay the groundwork for a world-class regional park system – a major drawing card for residents and businesses. This planning effort will describe where we come from and who we are, where Metro parks and natural areas are heading, what the region needs for the future and how the region can work together to build this vision. The system plan will bolster public trust, increasing support for long-term investments in Metro parks and natural areas, better define how we work with our partners, and help Metro fulfill its mission of making a great place.

Where are we now?

Since last meeting with the Council, staff used input from the first phase of the project to do the following:

- Further refined a set of values based on Council input that articulates how parks and natural areas are important to the citizens of our region.
- Developed a list of potential policy questions for the Council to review and expand upon that will help guide the system planning efforts.
- Prepared a draft set of strategies representing Metro's existing programs and projects for achieving the values.
- Developed a detailed plan for engaging Metro staff and Councilors, as well as Metro's stakeholders and partners across the region in this next phase of the project.
- Selected a consulting team to assist Metro with the system planning process.

What will we be doing next?

During the next nine months, the project team will prepare the Parks and Natural Areas System Plan and have it ready for Metro Council adoption by October 2015. This cohesive vision will define the system's values and strategies, drawing on information and input from the first phase of the project. During this second phase, additional community and partner engagement will affirm the values and discuss the strategies to guide Metro's efforts for the next 20 years. The final document will begin with the values and their associated policy that will guide the overall vision for the system. In this section each value will include a summary of the supporting strategies to lay out Metro's direction. Following chapters will each cover a value with more detailed versions of the strategies and supporting actions planned to achieve the values. Information for the strategies will include needed information and analysis, staff responsibilities, key partnerships, program and project goals as well as an overview of the scope, timelines and outcomes expected to achieve success.

Staff will meet regularly with its Council Liaison (Councilor Collette) on this project and expects to conduct two more work sessions with the Metro Council during the course of the process to provide further updates and obtain guidance needed to ensure the system plan is consistent with Council policy direction.

QUESTIONS FOR COUNCIL CONSIDERATION

System planning team members will provide the Council with an overview of the system plan process and schedule for this phase of work and review a draft set of key policy questions that will be addressed during the process. The team would like the following feedback from the Council:

- Do the current set of values reflect the feedback received from the Council in November 2014?
- Are the draft policy questions we have identified the right ones to address as we prepare the system plan? Are there any changes the Council would like to see to the questions or are there any other questions we need to ask?
- Does the Council have any preliminary guidance on answering the policy questions we are posing?

PACKET MATERIALS

- Would legislation be required for Council action ☐ Yes ☒ No
- If yes, is draft legislation attached? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☒ N/A
- What other materials are you presenting today? ☒ N/A

Materials following this page were distributed at the meeting.

Introduction

Nature in this region provides clean air, food and water for all living things, while giving us places to learn, play, relax and explore. Spending time in nature strengthens our bonds with friends, family and community, while teaching us about ourselves. We have come together as a region to invest in the future of our nature parks, trails and natural areas. The values below define how we intend to continue managing those lands, invest in great places to explore nature and, most importantly, protect our nature across the region.

NATURE

Oregon is renowned for clean water, fresh air and healthy wildlife habitat – assets that draw people here, and keep them here. Oregonians can depend on Metro to safeguard those qualities across the region, from the Chehalem Mountains on the west to the Sandy River on the east. Using science to protect nature for current and future generations is at the heart of Metro's role.

CONNECTIONS WITH NATURE

People depend on nature for peace, quiet and renewal. Metro provides opportunities to immerse yourself in nature – and give back – by learning, volunteering and connecting to the outdoors.

OUTDOOR RECREATION

Nature supports healthy, active outdoor lifestyles. Whether you're picnicking at Blue Lake Regional Park, strolling through a forest listening for birds, fishing for steelhead on the Sandy River or jogging on the Fanno Creek regional trail, you will find a destination that meets you where you are.

VIBRANT COMMUNITIES

Having nature nearby makes our communities happier and healthier. By protecting regional parks, trails and natural areas, we create a big backyard for people living in urban areas. Nature supports strong, resilient communities where people want to live and attracts businesses to the region, encouraging investments in the local economy.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL

Diverse communities should feel safe and welcome at parks, trails and natural areas. Working together, Metro and our partners create opportunities for all our residents to work at, play in and care for these special places – ensuring that everyone gains from the benefits of nature.

STEWARDSHIP

Metro is committed to responsibly caring for the nature and places entrusted to us in a changing climate. We use a transparent and accountable approach to planning, managing and protecting the public's investments.

PARKS AND NATURAL AREAS SYSTEM PLAN

DRAFT POLICY QUESTIONS

February 2015

Version 1: 20141220 – Metro Management input

Version 2: 20150110 – Steering Committee input

This document summarizes the major policy questions that will provide direction for the system plan. We are asking the big questions on major topics (potential strategies) as we continue our system planning effort. The questions will help us understand if we are likely to ignite support and enthusiasm, controversy and opposition, or have a strong element of both. As we go through this process new questions will emerge that we have not anticipated. Our goal is to make sure we stay focused and cover the topics that will help us produce a sound and relevant system plan.

WHAT ARE THE BIG POLICY QUESTIONS?

Three major themes have emerged that summarize big picture policy questions for the system:

What can we provide (from the public's perspective in terms of support and experience)?

- How do we make our parks, trails and natural areas *relevant and valued* by the people of the region?
- What are our core services that will serve nature and public access?
- How do we define our role and the associated portfolio to the region's advantage? (parks, natural areas, historic cemeteries, regional trails, river access, neighborhood grants)
- How do we start to define success with our equity efforts?

What is our future role (from our perspective as a provider/operator)?

- How do we turn a collection of special places into a system?
- What type of operator will we be? Can we refine our role as an operator covering nature parks, river access and natural areas; regional trails and regional conservation convener; historic cemetery operator; and local grant program provider? Do we need a new definition or do we need to rethink our role as provider and operator? Are there any new roles emerging that we need to cover?

How do we fund this system short term and long term?

- How can we make sure the system plan does a good job setting the stage for a funding discussion?
- How do we ensure the system plan continues to further the objectives of the two open space bond measures?

Policy questions that relate to specific values have emerged as described below:

NATURE

- What are the most important natural areas left to conserve and protect in the region? Do we have this clearly defined? What are our criteria for defining these areas? Will the Regional Conservation Strategy provide the policy to guide us?
- Can we better define ecological services? Are we protecting nature for its own sake because of an intrinsic value? How do we define that intrinsic value?
- How do we prepare for climate change? What do we define as goals that can lead to projects, which can also be measured?
- There is little doubt that nature and open space is a vital part of sustainable urbanism. There are practically no cities that exist without planning for nature parks and natural areas. The question we have is; what is the right balance between density and green space that will ensure we continue to advance the growth of natural areas and add to the quality of life in the metropolitan area?

OUTDOOR RECREATION

- How can we focus on delivering a quality experience at our sites that best serves the region? What types of activities best fit our nature parks and natural areas? What types of facilities support those activities?
- What nature parks and natural areas are we planning to open for access over the next 10 years? Can we analyze the system to understand where we are serving the community and where there are gaps?
- What is our best role with respect to regional trails?

CONNECTIONS WITH NATURE

- Can we identify the best ways that will best connect people with nature through outreach efforts covering conservation education, providing volunteer opportunities, and teaching outdoor skills?
- Are there ways to develop structures that support people who would like a career in parks and natural areas training and education opportunities?
- In an age when youth are spending more time indoors how do provide opportunities for them to connect with nature?

VIBRANT COMMUNITIES

- How do we work with our partner park providers over the long term to complement their programs and our shared constituents?
- How do we work with local providers to ensure we serve the public to maximize benefits as partner providers? What are our service areas and where do they overlap? Can we improve our local share and grant programs to meet local partner needs? When do we say no to a service, and can we work with our partners to see if it is a service they can provide?

OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL

- How do we best serve the whole community in an inclusive system?
- We are entering a new era of inclusion for all; how do we start to define outcomes with our equity efforts?

STEWARDSHIP

- How do we balance priorities with short-term and limited funding, developing sound fiscal practices and recognizing finite staff resources?
- How do we grow and improve the visitor experience opportunities at our sites while maintaining a sustainable financial model?

PARKS AND NATURAL AREAS SYSTEM PLAN

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

February 2015

January-October 2015

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Overall community engagement goals and objectives include the following:

- Orient and scale public engagement efforts to the project and to the questions that the general public and other stakeholder groups can influence.
- Generate, track and assess public and stakeholder support for Metro's current and future role in meeting regional natural area and recreational needs; don't just get input on the system plan, but build champions for the system.
- Be integrated with the Parks and Natural Areas System Plan technical work products and other milestones.
- Provide opportunities for stakeholders to make choices at meaningful opportunities during the planning process.
- Integrate engagement that is equitable and meets the needs and services of communities of color and other groups who are historically underrepresented by Metro parks and natural areas programs.
- Address the lifecycle of the planning effort, through implementation of the System Plan.
- Be open and flexible, incorporating lessons learned from previous outreach efforts and from midpoint check-ins, resulting in refinements and improvements along the way, if needed.
- Align with Metro's key guiding principles and values, as well as related Metro messages regarding parks, trails and natural areas and agency-wide branding strategy.
- Assure voters that they can trust Metro's leadership and stewardship of parks and natural areas and that taxpayer dollars are being invested in ways that benefit the region and improve the quality of life for all residents.

KEY STAKEHOLDERS AND AUDIENCES

Following is a summary of the audiences that should be involved in and informed by the planning process:

- **General public** are customers and the families and community members that Metro serves and who are not directly affiliated with specific organizations in terms of our interactions with them. Some examples include families who picnic at Blue Lake Regional Park, anglers who put in at M. James Gleason Memorial Boat Ramp, families who live near Graham Oaks Nature Park, regardless of whether they've used the park or not, and people who walk the trails at Cooper Mountain Nature Park with or without a naturalist guide.
- **Neighborhood associations** are the neighborhood/citizen participation organizations set up to enable participation in public projects.

- **Partners** refers to those affiliated with organizations who have interacted with us in a formal or informal way at any time in the past. Some examples include the Urban Greenspaces Institute, The Audubon Society of Portland, Self Enhancement, Inc., the Center for Intercultural Organizing, Columbia Land Trust, Tualatin Riverkeepers, Center for Diversity and the Environment, Johnson Creek Watershed Council and Northwest Trails Alliance. These organizations represent perspectives and opinions that influence and inform our work in a variety of ways and they deliver important services throughout the region.
- **Local jurisdictions** are the 26 cities, three counties and several park districts that operate within the same geography that we do.
- **State agencies** are the representatives from any of the several who work in the same areas and topics.
- **Metro Parks and Natural Areas staff** (including conservation education and central services who support the work) and the **Metro Council** are key participants.
- **Underserved communities** are groups in the region whose demographic, geographic or economic characteristics have impeded or prevented their access to Metro's parks and nature system.

OBJECTIVES FOR DIFFERENT STAKEHOLDER GROUPS

Outreach objectives and outcomes will differ for different audiences and include the following:

- The **Metro Council** are the stewards of the portfolio, and are the key decision makers on policy for parks, trails and natural areas. They should have opportunities to participate with other audiences, have time for discussion at work session and other venues including MPAC, etc. Ultimately they need to feel that all the engagement is robust enough to inform good policy and provide them the basis for sound decision making.
- **Metro staff** should feel very familiar with and deeply vested in the values, strategies and actions described in the system plan. They should receive timely feedback after participating in workshops or other engagement opportunities about how their input is being used. Working on development of the plan should build camaraderie and we should look for every chance to work across department and program boundaries so we build a stronger team through this effort. Staff across other areas of Metro should begin to view parks and natural areas as relevant to their work and as a core part of the agency's mission. Meetings and coordination with the Metro management team will guide these efforts.
- **Partners** should feel knowledgeable about and engaged in the process, confident that they've had the opportunity to weigh in and be heard, understand how we've used their ideas, and believe that they continue to be important to Metro now and into the future. They should receive regular communication about the project from us, even during time when we are not actively seeking their input.
- **Local jurisdiction staff** should feel informed and that they've had an opportunity to influence and provide feedback on the system plan's values and strategies. Elected officials should have had some opportunity to learn about the process and engage at a level they choose. City

managers should be contacted directly for the second round of discussions as promised this fall, and a plan for informational presentations to MPAC also needs to be included.

- **General public** should be aware of the project and ultimately support Metro's role in building a world-class parks and nature system through implementation of the system plan. That support should translate into support for funding and resources needed to do so. Community engagement for the system plan should leverage place-based engagement opportunities associated with other Metro programs and planning efforts that can support this project.
- **Neighborhood associations**, particularly those with Metro stewarded parks and natural areas nearby, should have the opportunity to weigh in on the same questions as the general public.
- **State agencies** should be aware of the project and those that have significant overlap with key staff should recognize that we are engaged in this process and that their ongoing collaboration is important to us.
- **Underserved communities** should be aware of the project and be provided meaningful opportunities to help inform the future of Metro's world-class parks and nature system, with a particular focus on making it more accessible to all residents in the region.

INTERNAL METRO COORDINATION GOALS AND ACTIVITIES

The engagement strategy should interface with parks and natural areas programs and other Metro departments, staff and decision makers in the following ways:

- Advance the long term Parks, Natural Areas and Trails Strategic Communication Plan.
- Meet monthly with the management team and work with them to solicit input from their staff.
- Working with Metro's natural areas engagement coordinator, connect to Metro's broader partner engagement network (e.g., the beat system) and leverage the opportunity to emphasize and reinforce sustained relationship development across the region.
- Coordinate across programs and departments involved, ensuring a roll-up of information to be distributed more widely.
- Provide updates for Metro staff to share in the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Roundtable and monthly meetings of the Communications department's Community Relations Division, and provide questions for feedback or room for comment.
- Ensure that events, materials, presentations and other time-sensitive materials are developed and prepared in advance with enough lead time for review by the appropriate team.
- Share updates and opportunities for guidance with the steering committee at key junctures in the planning and community engagement process, as supported by staff and guided by project managers.
- Meet regularly with the Metro Council liaison and periodically brief the full Council on our progress.
- Coordinate and work with other departments and program areas that conduct community engagement efforts in order to leverage opportunities and eliminate duplication.

KEY MESSAGES

During the system planning process, a variety of key messages should be conveyed to help further the objectives previously described:

- Over the past 20 years we've put together the makings of a world-class parks and nature system right in our big backyard. How do we want to experience it and shape the next 20 years?
- Our region's people highly value the natural areas that make this area special. Nature makes people here happier, healthier and wealthier. Metro's stewardship of this land helps keep our air and water clean; improves our mental, physical and spiritual health; and helps attract businesses to the region.
- Connecting to nature is extremely important and valuable to everybody in our region; the Parks and Natural Areas System Plan will help determine how to most effectively and equitably provide connections to nature for the full spectrum of people and groups.
- Caring for regional parks and natural areas should be economically, environmentally and socially sustainable. Metro is committed to taking good care of the nature that voters have protected and providing an exceptional experience for visitors.
- Connections and collaboration will be key to creating and maintaining a world-class system of natural areas, trails and recreational opportunities. Through the system plan, Metro and its partners will help determine the most appropriate role for Metro to play in leading, coordinating, supporting and supplementing the efforts of local jurisdictions and other organizations.
- The system plan will consider all the things that go into our system including stewardship of the land, managing the facilities we own, fiscal responsibilities, convening a regional trail network, sharing grant programs across the region, providing programs that educate the public and ensuring we have the right policies to guide these efforts and understand how the system works.
- The system plan will help ensure the highest and best use of taxpayer dollars. It is a way that we can honor voters' trust in Metro's ability to lead the region in creating and maintaining a world-class system that benefits everyone – regardless of who you are or where you live in the region.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT TOOLS AND STRATEGIES

Following is a suggested list of engagement strategies to inform key stakeholder groups about the project and engage them in reviewing and discussing priority parks, natural areas and recreational values and strategies from their perspectives. Depending on the group, discussion topics could include:

- Which values or strategies are most important?
- What is the most appropriate role for Metro in leading the effort to meet regional needs while supporting and complementing local jurisdictions' park and recreation programs and services?
- What geographic areas and Metro-owned properties are particularly important opportunities for reaching underserved populations?

- How can Metro, local jurisdictions and its partners work together to strengthen public support for preservation of natural resources and values on a regional basis?
- What is the most effective and/or desirable way to engage specific stakeholder groups?
- What specific actions are needed to implement individual strategies? How can Metro's partners help implement specific strategies and action plans that help achieve the values that are most important to them?
- What activities and features will best meet the needs of people who live near Metro's parks and natural areas?

TOOL	AUDIENCE(S)	ACTIVITIES
Individual stakeholder interviews and meetings	Metro councilors, county administrators and chairs, city managers, park and recreation provider staff or decision makers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow-up round of meetings with city managers • First round meetings with county administrators • First round meetings with county chairs • Initial individual briefings with Metro councilors; additional briefings, as desired or needed
Informal, regular stakeholder group meetings	Selected partners and/or high-profile natural resource experts and leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular informal meetings to discuss key planning goals and issues and build support
Metro website and quarterly magazine (<i>Our Big Backyard</i>)	General public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drive signups for Metro "nature news" through all project outreach • Announce community engagement activities • Project overview, news and updates • Draft deliverables • Two-way links to related planning efforts, departments • Comment opportunities and other interactive engagement such as surveys, online mapping tool and story collection
Social media	All community members/tech savvy/younger residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activity announcements • Milestones/key outcomes • Coordinated, paid online and social media "campaign" to broaden the reach beyond our current online audience – organized through broader parks and nature marketing work, integrating system plan messages
Online open houses	All community members/tech savvy/younger residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review, comment on and identify priority values, locations or strategies for public access • Coordinate with and connect back to Opt-In
Equity advisors	Communities of color and underserved populations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand appropriate outreach messages and tools • Leverage organizational communication networks • Consider RFPs with certain CBOs and non-profits for them to partner with Metro in engaging their constituents • Identify geographic and programmatic priorities for access to nature, educational programs, etc.
Media communication	Media organizations, general public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate with Metro staff and broad Metro communication strategy • Announce key milestones or innovative approaches • Emphasize collaboration and connections • Editorial board strategy • Conduct media tours with stakeholders

TOOL	AUDIENCE(S)	ACTIVITIES
Community group meetings	Neighborhood associations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend and present information at neighborhood group meeting, focusing on those with Metro stewarded parks and natural areas nearby or in areas that may be deficient in regional parks and/or natural areas • Focus on strategies associated with nearby Metro facilities or properties
Community events	Partners and general public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide system plan information and solicit feedback at local events where Metro already has a presence • Leverage communications by other programs to broaden the scope of our outreach
Group stakeholder meetings or workshops	Local jurisdictions: city/park district staff Partners Metro staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Series of scheduled, open meetings for park providers • Group meetings or focus groups for partners • Workshops with Metro staff to review strategies, develop action plans
Direct e-mail communications	Partners Local jurisdictions State agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide regular updates via project contact list on draft deliverables and outcomes • Provide opportunity to comment • Identify designated Metro staff contact • Incorporate links to website • Coordinate with other departments and program areas to “borrow” their email listservs or insert a message/engagement opportunity in their existing publications • Utilize the Opt-In survey panel at key junctures in the process

OVERALL ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

METRO STAFF

- Assist in developing overall engagement strategy and key messages.
- Prepare informational materials based on content jointly developed with consulting team.
- Maintain contact lists for interested parties, local jurisdictions, state agencies and partners and distribute information via email.
- Maintain web page for the system plan; upload content jointly developed with consulting team.
- Manage distribution of content related to the system plan via Nature News.
- Schedule and make other logistical arrangements for individual and group stakeholder meetings.
- Identify neighborhood associations which help steward Metro facilities; contact and arrange for neighborhood meeting presentations.
- Attend meetings with equity advisors, Metro Councilors and others.
- Coordinate and work with other departments and program areas that conduct community engagement efforts in order to leverage opportunities and eliminate duplication.
- Track interactions with stakeholders, community groups and general public.
- Work with consulting team to summarize outreach results.

CONSULTING TEAM

- Develop overall engagement strategy and key messages and work with Metro staff to refine as needed.
- Prepare draft content for informational materials; work with Metro staff to refine and review layout and production.
- Prepare draft content for project web page, including periodic updates for selected information.
- Attend and assist in facilitating meetings with selected individual partners and other stakeholders.
- Attend and assist in facilitating group stakeholder meetings.
- Work with Metro staff to summarize outreach results.
- Identify implications/outcomes of outreach efforts on system plan elements.
- Lead the assessment and evaluation of system plan engagement efforts.