

BEFORE THE METRO COUNCIL

FOR THE PURPOSE OF SUBMITTING TO)
THE VOTERS A GENERAL OBLIGATION)
BOND INDEBTEDNESS IN THE AMOUNT)
OF \$28.8 MILLION FOR THE OREGON)
EXHIBIT AND NEW ENTRANCE AT THE)
METRO WASHINGTON PARK ZOO)

RESOLUTION NO. 2303

Introduced by Mike Burton,
Executive Officer

WHEREAS, Metro Washington Park Zoo's long-range plan, adopted by the Metro Council in 1992, provides for gradual improvement of the zoo over 25 years including enhanced exhibits and programs which include a greater emphasis on Northwest species and habitat; and

WHEREAS, In 1995, the Metro Council has reaffirmed the desirability to proceed with capital improvements at the Metro Washington Park Zoo; and

WHEREAS, Metro has engaged the involvement of the community in this project, including citizen groups and technical advisors; and

WHEREAS, The project is regarded as one of significance;

Now therefore, BE IT RESOLVED:

1. That the Metro Council hereby submits to the qualified voters of the District the question of issuing General Obligation bonds in the maximum principal amount of \$28.8 million for a series of Oregon exhibits and new entrance for the zoo as generally described in Exhibit "B." The bonds shall mature over a period of not more than 30 years.

2. That the measure shall be placed on the ballot for a special election to be held in September, 1996 or the earliest legally available election date thereafter.

3. That the District shall cause this Resolution and the Ballot Title attached as Exhibit "A" to be submitted to the Elections Officer, the Tax Supervising and Conservation Commission, and the Secretary of State in a timely manner as required by law.

4. That the Executive Officer, pursuant to Oregon Law and Metro Code Chapter 9.02, shall transmit this measure, ballot title, and explanatory statement and arguments for or against, if any, to the County Elections Officer for inclusion in any county voters' pamphlets published for the election on this measure.

ADOPTED by the Metro Council this 28th day of March, 1996.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Jon Kvistad", written over a horizontal line.

Jon Kvistad, Presiding Officer

EXHIBIT "A"

"Caption: BONDS TO IMPROVE ZOO, PROTECT OREGON ANIMAL SPECIES, PROVIDE EDUCATION"

"Question: Shall zoo create natural habitat Oregon animal exhibit; improve animal care, educational opportunities with \$28.8 million in general obligation bonds? If bonds are approved, they will be payable from taxes on property ownership that are not subject to the limits of section 11b, Article XI of the Oregon Constitution."

"Explanation: Approved bonds will allow zoo to:

- Create new natural habitat exhibit of Oregon animals such as cougars, bears, wolverines, eagles, heron, salmon and otters.
- Protect Oregon's threatened animal species.
- Provide new resources for teachers, children--including new petting zoo and classrooms.
- Save \$4 million in maintenance costs and generate new tourism revenues for zoo operations.

Bond cost estimate is less than 4 cents per \$1000 assessed value per year. \$100,000 home pays \$3.87 per year. Bonds mature in 30 years."

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March 18, 1996

EXHIBIT "B"

METRO WASHINGTON PARK ZOO CONSTRUCTION BOND MEASURE

The purpose of this measure is to obtain voter approval for a new wildlife exhibit called the Oregon exhibit and a new entrance at the Metro Washington Park Zoo through the issuance of general obligation bonds in the amount of \$28.8 million.

The new exhibit and entry are part of the zoo's long-range plan. The plan, adopted in 1992, calls for gradual improvement of the zoo over a 25 year period. Besides calling for physical changes, including construction of new exhibits and a new entry, the plan identifies other ways to improve the zoo for animals and visitors. Many local experts, in fields ranging from wildlife biology and education to tourism and finance, assisted with the plan. The Oregon project fulfills one focus in the long-range plan which is to put an emphasis on what we have in our region and to help citizens know and understand more about our natural environment, including Oregon's threatened animal species, so they can help make decisions on relevant issues.

New Exhibit

Initial plans for the Oregon exhibit include the following natural habitats and features:

- The trail begins in an alpine area with mountain goats, marmots and other animals from the rocky slopes.
- A tree house looks out into aviaries with a variety of forest birds.
- The trail continues through the hollow trunk of a giant fallen log, spanning a ravine. Inside the log are mountain beavers, snakes, salamanders and several kinds of insects. Visitors discover the significance of "nurse logs."

- Just past the log are cougars, wolverines and bobcats living in their natural forest environment.
- A canopy walk allows magnificent vistas of the zoo's forest and the surrounding open spaces and natural areas.
- A mountain stream is home to native trout and salmon, which can be viewed from above and below water.
- An underground forest of fungi leads to views of river otters swimming underwater and a wetland with marsh plants, fish, Great Blue Heron, and bald eagle.
- A clearing in the forest is home to American black bears.
- At the edge of the forest, a family farm provides opportunities for visitors to pet farm animals, opossum and other friendly creatures. Near the farm, a herd of elk graze in a spacious meadow.
- The path continues along a series of tide pools where sea stars, sea anemone and other creatures that endure the pounding action of simulated waves live.
- A herd of sea lions and harbor seals sunbathes on rocky cliffs.
- A colony of frolicking sea otters swims in a kelp forest. Visitors have both above and underwater views.

The project will become an educational resource for teachers and students in the region.

When funds become available each element will be further refined and enhanced. Some of the elements described above may be replaced or altered.

New Entry

The new entry will be centrally located in the parking lot, only 200 feet from a new light rail station. It includes a restaurant and gift shop containing educational souvenirs. These facilities will help generate revenue to support the zoo. The entrance is scheduled to be completed by fall of 1998, when light rail services begin. Relocation of the entrance will yield two benefits: 1) Zoo property can be used more effectively on a long-term basis; and 2) the convenience of the light rail station at the zoo's entrance will encourage people to use an environmentally sound transportation alternative.

Other Improvements

The project includes completion of the main pathway linking the Africa Rain Forest exhibit with Penguin Plaza. This will allow visitors a short cut to return to the main part of the zoo. New classrooms for educational use will be added. As new homes are created for many species, some of the oldest parts of the zoo will be removed. This will save over \$4 million in future maintenance costs.

Community Involvement in the Project

The zoo recognized the importance of involving outside experts as well as zoo visitors in the focus and messages of the new exhibit and entry. Participation included the following federal, state, and private partners: 1,000 Friends, Bonneville Power Administration, Bureau of Land Management, Defenders of Wildlife, Nature Conservancy, Oregon Department of Agriculture, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, Oregon Department of Forestry, Oregon Department of Water Resources, Oregon Forest Resource Institute, Oregon Trout, Pacific Northwest Research Station - United States Department of Agriculture, Portland Audubon Society, United States Fish

and Wildlife Service, United States Forest Service and a Citizen Advisory Committee composed of members of the community, Friends of the Zoo and zoo volunteers.

Costs and Funding for the Project

The project will cost approximately \$30.5 million. The zoo is asking taxpayers to fund \$28.8 million through a general obligation bond. Interest earnings on the bond proceeds during construction will fund the balance of the project and bond issuance costs. The cost for the typical home is \$3.87 per year.

Other allowable expenditures from the bond issue include project costs, bond issuing costs, and reimbursable bond preparation expenses relating to the design, planning, and construction of the Oregon exhibit and new entrance. The preference is to issue bonds which mature in 20 years; however, to maintain the flexibility to respond to the market existing at the time bonds are issued, the maturity period may be up to 30 years. The lowest cost to taxpayers will be the basis for the final determination of the bond maturity period. Calculations will take into account the cost of interest and principle repayment.

STAFF REPORT

CONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTION NO. 2303
FOR THE PURPOSE OF SUBMITTING TO THE VOTERS
A GENERAL OBLIGATION BOND INDEBTEDNESS IN THE AMOUNT
\$28.8 MILLION FOR THE OREGON EXHIBIT AND
NEW ENTRANCE AT THE METRO WASHINGTON PARK ZOO

Date: March 18, 1996

Presented by: Y. Sherry Sheng

FACTUAL BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

In 1992, the Metro Council adopted the zoo's master plan which provides for gradual improvement of the zoo over 25 years. The plan calls for enhanced exhibits and programs and a greater emphasis on native species and habitats.

Since 1992, the Council has directed zoo staff to further plan and define a capital project. With the guidance of the Executive Officer, this work has culminated in a proposed Oregon exhibit featuring native wildlife in their natural habitats and general zoo improvements. The cost of the project is estimated at \$30.5 million and \$.5 million for bond issuance costs. Funding will be from bonds (\$28.8 million) and interest earned on those bonds during construction. The maximum annual cost to a typical home would be \$3.87 per year. As the region grows, the tax rate will decrease.

The project includes Oregon forest and aquatic animal species, displayed in innovative contexts and accessible by imaginative means such as a canopy walk, walk-through nurse log, tree house and tide pool. The exhibit will be a valuable educational resource for children and teachers and will help newcomers learn about our native wildlife. A farm with pettable animals will be especially popular with children. The exhibit will be attractive to tourists, helping to bring their dollars to the region. The project eliminates some of the oldest structures in the zoo, saving more than \$4 million in maintenance costs. A new lion exhibit and the completion of the zoo's main pathway, linking the Africa Rain Forest exhibit to Penguin Plaza, are included.

The project includes a new entrance, which will facilitate the use of the new light rail system. A new restaurant and gift shop will provide improved services to visitors as well as generate revenue to support the zoo. In this way, the project will be a positive force in attracting local and out-of-town visitors and maintaining the zoo's long-term viability.

The proposed project corresponds to Metro's overall goal of regional livability. Through education and understanding of our native wildlife, we can protect Oregon's natural heritage.