

## METROPOLITAN EXPOSITION RECREATION COMMISSION

### Resolution No. 15-22

For the purpose of approving the recommendations by the General Manager of Visitor Venues, as recommended by the First Opportunity Target Area (FOTA) Task Force, to adjust the geographic boundaries and income eligibility thresholds for Metro's FOTA hiring program.

**WHEREAS**, In 2013, the Commission directed staff to engage independent consultants to review and update the First Opportunity Target Area (FOTA) program and, as the result of a request for proposal (RFP), Cogan Owens Greene (formerly known as Cogan Owens Cogan) was selected to conduct the review and provide recommendations, and;

**WHEREAS**, after conducting thorough program review, historical, legislative and best practices research and stakeholder engagement, a set of FOTA policy and program recommendations were presented to and accepted by the Commission and Metro Council in a joint work session on February 13, 2015, and;

**WHEREAS**, one of such recommendation was for staff to convene a community task force to review and provide to the General Manager of Visitor Venues recommended updates to the FOTA boundaries and income eligibility thresholds, and;

**WHEREAS**, the FOTA Task Force was appointed in June 2015, met six times and, after assessing regional demographic and economic data, in addition to Metro employee recruitment and hiring information, developed recommendations to update the geographic boundaries and income eligibility thresholds for consideration by the General Manager of Visitor Venues, and;

**WHEREAS**, the current boundaries and income thresholds have not been updated since the program's inception in 1989 and the recommended updates will enhance the effectiveness of the FOTA hiring program.

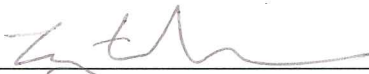
**BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED**, that the Metropolitan Exposition Recreation Commission approves the following updates to the FOTA program geographic boundaries and income eligibility thresholds:

1. MERC shall increase the income eligibility threshold for the FOTA program from \$40,000 for a family of four to \$47,000 for a household of up to two;
2. MERC shall increase, for households of two and greater, the annual income eligibility threshold to \$65,000;
3. MERC shall update the income thresholds on an annual basis based upon the University of Washington (UW) Self-Sufficiency Index;
4. MERC hereby expands the geographic boundaries for the FOTA program north and east to include households that formerly lived within the original boundaries that have moved due to gentrification and other socio-economic factors, as well as traditionally underserved populations and communities in accordance with the map attached as Exhibit A; and

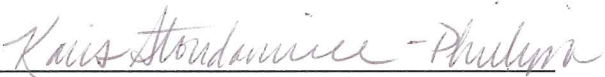
5. MERC shall evaluate and, if necessary, adjust the geographic boundaries every five years.

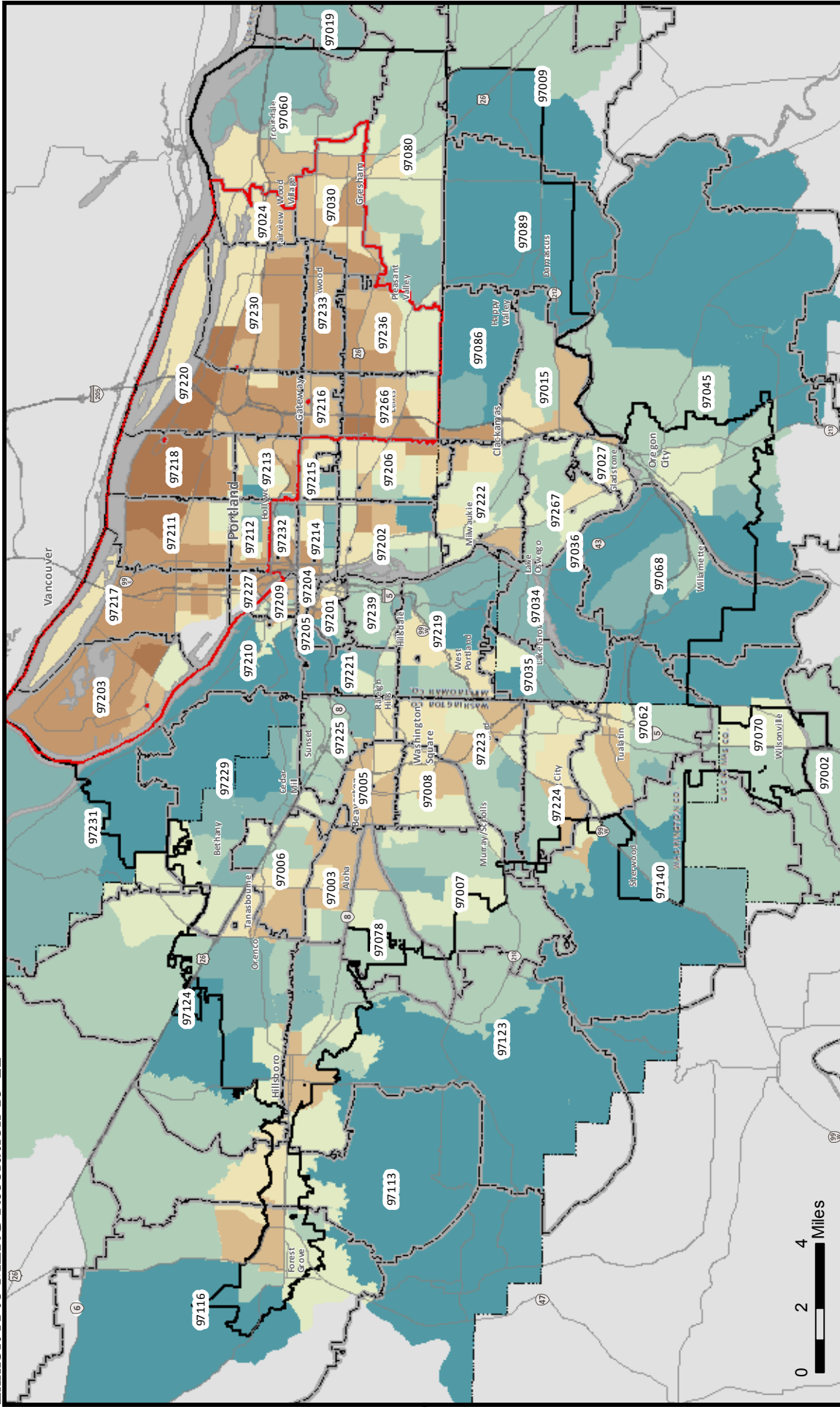
Passed by the Commission on December 2, 2015

Approved as to form:  
Alison R. Kean, Metro Attorney

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Chair

By:   
\_\_\_\_\_  
Nathan A. S. Sykes, Deputy Metro Attorney

  
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Secretary/Treasurer

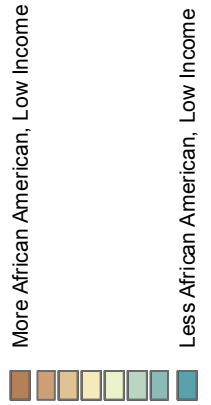


# African American Population, Census 2010 and Low Income, ACS 2009-2013

"Low Income" defined as annual household income of less than \$50,000

June, 2015

Source: 2010 Census, 2009-2013 ACS, Metro RLIS Census Tracts



Database Center  
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## MERC Staff Report

**Agenda Item/Issue:** For the purpose of approving the recommendations by the General Manager of Visitor Venues, as recommended by the First Opportunity Target Area (FOTA) Task Force, to adjust the geographic boundaries and income eligibility thresholds for Metro's FOTA hiring program.

**Resolution No.:** 15-22

**Presented By:** Scott Robinson

**Date:** December 2, 2015

### **Background and Analysis:**

In 2013, MERC commissioned a review and update of the First Opportunity Target Area (FOTA) program. Created in 1989 by the Oregon Legislature, FOTA was designed to provide "first opportunity for available jobs to economically disadvantaged residents living in economically distressed neighborhoods in the immediate vicinity of the Convention Center site."

The initial purpose of FOTA was to offer early employment opportunities at the Oregon Convention Center for people who were in danger of being adversely impacted or displaced by construction of the facility. Over the years the program was expanded to include the Portland Expo Center and Portland's Centers for the Arts.

Unchanged since its inception, the original income thresholds were \$24,000 for an individual and \$40,000 for a household of four, and the geographic boundaries were set as follows:

- I-84 as the south boundary
- Willamette River as the west boundary
- N/NE Columbia Boulevard as the north boundary
- NE 42<sup>nd</sup> Avenue as the east boundary

In 2013, local consultant firm Cogan Owens Greene was selected to evaluate the FOTA program's overall effectiveness, research best practices, engage stakeholders, solicit community feedback and provide recommendations for program improvement. A final report detailing findings and recommendations was presented to and accepted by the MERC Commission and Metro Council on January 13, 2015.

Among many findings, the study concluded that, although FOTA was required by the 1989 legislature as a condition of state lottery support for the Oregon Convention Center's construction, subsequent program changes do not require approval by the Oregon Legislature. In addition, demographic research and data proved that over the past 25 years, low income residents and many people from communities of color for whom the program was intended to benefit have moved outside of the FOTA boundaries to other areas of the city and region. To address these findings, the consultant team recommended that Metro appoint a community-based task force to review and recommend new boundaries and income eligibility requirements for the FOTA program. Other administrative improvements and policy recommendations were presented by Cogan Owens Greene, many of which are currently underway.

In May 2015, the following community members were recruited to serve on the FOTA Task Force:

- Rukaiyah Adams, chief investment officer, Meyer Memorial Trust
- Hon. Margaret Carter, former state senator and community activist
- Elisa Dozono, MERC Commissioner and partner at Miller Nash law firm
- John Gardner, director of business services, Worksystems, Inc.
- Nkenge Harmon-Johnson, President and CEO, Urban League of Portland
- Ray Leary, MERC Commissioner and community and business leader
- Karis Stoudamire-Phillips, MERC Commissioner
- Jeana Woolley, community and business leader

In June, the FOTA Task Force began the first of six meetings and accepted the following charge: Provide recommendations to Metro's General Manager of Visitor Venues to update the geographic boundaries income eligibility thresholds of the FOTA program.

**Process:**

The Task Force met on June 10 and 23, July 7 and 21, August 24 and October 19, 2015. Comprehensive information was presented to the Task Force, including demographic maps and data supplied by Metro's Data Resource Center, various methodologies for evaluating and identifying low income households, and hiring and recruitment processes and data supplied by the Metro Human Resources Department. The Task Force also received presentations on Metro's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion initiatives and efforts to address social equity in contracting by Metro's Procurement Division.

The Task Force met its obligations with the culmination of the 4<sup>th</sup> meeting but requested two subsequent, "extra credit" meetings out of concern that only completing the tasks assigned would not produce significant improvements to the FOTA program's outcomes. Meeting #5 was held to further explore Metro's employee outreach, recruitment and retention efforts and the Procurement Division's MWESB and social equity practices. The sixth meeting focused on the workforce equity and minority contracting targets associated with the Oregon Convention Center hotel project.

**Recommendations:**

The FOTA Task Force presented the following recommendations to the General Manager of Visitor Venues:

1. Increase the income eligibility threshold for the FOTA program from \$40,000 for a family of four to \$47,000 for a household of up to two;
2. For households of two and greater, raise the annual income threshold to \$65,000;
3. Update the income thresholds on an annual basis based upon the University of Washington (UW) Self-Sufficiency Index;
4. Expand the geographic boundaries north and east to include households that formerly lived within the original boundaries that have moved due to gentrification and other socio-economic factors, as well as traditionally underserved populations and communities (page 52 of the attached FOTA Task Force Report and Recommendations); and
5. Evaluate and adjust the geographic boundaries every five years.

**Fiscal Impact:** Minimal fiscal impacts, if any, are anticipated. Some administrative procedures will change in Metro's Human Resources Department and the Data Resource Center will be charged with generating demographic and economic updates in order to update the geographic boundary.

**Attachments to Resolution and/or Staff Report:** A map of the proposed new FOTA boundaries is attached.

**Recommendation:** Staff recommends that the Metropolitan Exposition-Recreation Commission adopts the General Manager's recommendation to update the geographic boundaries and income eligibility thresholds as outlined in Resolution 15-22 and described above and attached.