

BEFORE THE METRO COUNCIL

FOR THE PURPOSE OF APPROVING A ) RESOLUTION NO. 18-4872  
REALLOCATION OF THE 2016 )  
NATURE IN NEIGHBORHOODS ) Introduced by Chief Operating Officer Martha  
REGIONAL TRAILS GRANTS ) Bennett in concurrence with Council President  
 ) Tom Hughes

WHEREAS, in 2005, the Metro Council established an initiative designed to protect and restore our region’s significant fish and wildlife habitat and connect people with nature as provided in Resolution No. 05-3574A, “Establishing a Regional Habitat Protection, Restoration and Greenspaces Initiative called Nature in Neighborhoods,” adopted May 12, 2005;

WHEREAS, the Metro Council established the Nature in Neighborhoods grant program in 2005 to provide local communities support to fulfill this regional initiative (Resolution No. 05-3580A);

WHEREAS, in May 2013, voters in the Metro region approved a 5-year local option levy for Metro’s parks and natural areas including new and expanded funding for what were referred to in the levy as Nature in Neighborhoods community grants;

WHEREAS, the Metro Council reiterated the community grant program’s purpose, eligibility and funding criteria via Resolution No. 12-4398 referring the 5-year local option levy to the voters, and called for the creation of a committee to review grant applications and make award recommendations to the Metro Council;

WHEREAS, Metro has solicited and received applications for 2016 Nature in Neighborhoods community grants, now known as “Regional Trails” grants, and the grant review committee has identified the proposals which best meet the grant criteria and the goals of the Nature in Neighborhoods grant program;

WHEREAS, the Metro Council adopted Resolution No. 15-4612 approving \$500,000 in the FY 2015-16 Budget and Appropriation Schedule for 2015 Nature in Neighborhoods Regional Trails grants;

WHEREAS, the Metro Council adopted Resolution No. 16-4680 approving the 2016 Nature in Neighborhoods Regional Trails grants;

WHEREAS, Wood Village declined the 2016 Nature in Neighborhoods Regional Trails grant award of \$67,390, and the grant review committee subsequently identified Oregon State Parks’ Tryon Creek State Park Boones Ferry trails project as the proposal which best meets the grant criteria and the goals of the Nature in Neighborhoods grant program; now therefore

BE IT RESOLVED that the Metro Council hereby approves the award of the 2016 Nature in Neighborhoods Regional Trails grant to Oregon State Parks for the Tryon Creek State Park Boones Ferry trails project for \$67,390.

ADOPTED by the Metro Council this 15 day of March, 2018.

for Shirley Craddock  
Tom Hughes, Council President



Approved as to Form:

Alison R. Kean

Alison R. Kean, Metro Attorney

## **STAFF REPORT**

### **IN CONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTION 18-4872, FOR THE PURPOSE OF APPROVING A REALLOCATION OF THE 2016 NATURE IN NEIGHBORHOODS REGIONAL TRAILS GRANTS**

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Date: February 23, 2018

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## **BACKGROUND**

For nearly two decades, the Metro Council has provided funding for grants to community groups, non-profits, local governments and other organizations, which grants are designed to improve water quality and wildlife habitat and give people of all ages opportunities to learn about and connect with nature.

In May 2013, voters approved Measure 26-152 (the “Natural Areas Levy”), providing new funding for Metro’s parks and natural areas and providing increased funding for Nature in Neighborhoods community grants.

## **Grant Evaluation Criteria**

Using the framework provided by Metro Council in Resolution No. 12-4398, Metro’s grant program staff developed an outreach plan, application materials and evaluation criteria for regional trails grants. Staff worked to align this new funding with other state, regional and community initiatives so that these grants can achieve multiple benefits. Nature in Neighborhoods regional trails grants implement the Regional Trails Plan; support and create partnerships in local communities that improve water quality, fish and wildlife habitat; and improve the ability of all communities to learn about and connect with nature. The regional trails grant criteria focused on the following goals and categories:

- Increasing access to nature for Regional Trail users: These grants support projects that increase or enhance access to nature for Regional Trail users by planning, building or improving Regional Trails that connect people to parks and/or natural areas.
- Increasing nature as part of our Regional Trails system: These grants emphasize improving the trail users’ experience of nature or enriching people’s experience of nature when using Regional Trails.
- Community engagement: For both project categories, proposals must show how the grant meets Metro’s goals for community engagement and improve the ability of all communities, including underserved communities (e.g. low-income, communities of color) to learn about, help restore, experience and connect with nature and the region’s natural areas through Regional Trails.

Metro received 18 pre-applications, which total \$1,225,130 in requests for \$500,000 in available funding.

Metro's Nature in Neighborhoods grant program follows a two-step process. The review committee evaluated pre-applications based on the information submitted by applicants, the stated evaluation criteria, and the review committee's professional and collective judgment. The purpose of the pre-application review is to determine the best proposals to invite for full applications.

Of the initial 18 pre-applications submitted, the review committee recommended inviting 13 to submit full applications. Those invited had one month to prepare a full application. The same committee reviewed the final proposals using the same evaluation criteria and recommended 9 for funding, including a grant to Wood Village.

In 2017 Wood Village declined the 2016 Nature in Neighborhoods Regional Trails grant award of \$67,390. Staff identified that the next highest-ranked application by the review committee was Oregon State Parks' Tryon Creek State Park Boones Ferry trails project.

### **Nature in Neighborhoods Regional Trails Grant Review Committee**

Participation on the grant review committee is by application, open and advertised to all community members. The Parks and Nature Director selected the 2016 review committee from a pool of applicants, including Metro staff members with experience in active transportation and trails planning. The committee included local experts in trail planning and design, trail construction management, environmental planning and habitat restoration, outreach related to recreational trails or active transportation, grant management, volunteer coordination, and/or community partnerships. Committee members declared any direct conflict of interest in the proposals and did not score or participate directly in the discussion or ranking of application where there was a conflict. Perceived conflicts were also noted and recorded in meeting minutes.

### **2016 Nature in Neighborhoods Regional Trails Grant Review Committee**

Lake McTighe, Metro, Planning

Daniel Newberry, Johnson Creek Watershed Council

Mike Rose, Alta Planning and Design

Robert Spurlock, Metro, Parks and Nature

Holly Van Houten, community member

Jill Van Winkle, IMBA Trail Solutions

Amber Wierck, Clean Water Services

## **ANALYSIS/INFORMATION**

### **1. Known Opposition**

None.

### **2. Legal Antecedents**

Resolution No. 16-4680, For the Purpose of Approving 2016 Nature In Neighborhood Regional Trails Grants.

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.

Resolution No. 05-3574A, Establishing a Regional Habitat Protection, Restoration and Greenspaces Initiative called Nature in Neighborhoods.

### **3. Anticipated Effects**

This Resolution approves the reallocation of the 2016 Nature in Neighborhoods regional trails grants and begins the individual contract award process for Oregon State Parks' Tryon Creek State Park Boones Ferry trails project with an anticipated project start date on or after March 15, 2018. Projects may be up to two years in length.

### **4. Budget Impacts**

This Resolution authorizes award of a contract in an amount previously identified by the Metro Council in the budget for this purpose. The adopted FY 2017-18 budget includes the necessary appropriation authority for reimbursement of this grant reallocation.

## **RECOMMENDED ACTION**

The Chief Operating Officer recommends adoption of Resolution No. 18-4872.