

Metro

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Metro

Minutes

Tuesday, September 5, 2023

11:00 AM

**Oregon Zoo, Conservation Hall, <https://zoom.us/j/615079992>
Webinar ID: 615 079 992 or 888-475-4499 (toll free);**

Council work session

Call to Order and Roll Call

Council President Peterson called the Work Session to order at 10:30 a.m.

Present: 7 - Council President Lynn Peterson, Councilor Christine Lewis, Councilor Juan Carlos Gonzalez, Councilor Mary Nolan, Councilor Duncan Hwang, Councilor Gerritt Rosenthal, and Councilor Ashton Simpson

Work Session Topics:

11:00 Oregon Zoo Campus Planning Update

Presenter(s): Heidi Rahn, Oregon Zoo Director
Kristin Solomon, Senior Capital Project Manager

Attachments: [Staff Report](#)

Council President Peterson introduced Heidi Rahn, Oregon Zoo Director and Kristin Solomon, Senior Capital Project Manager to present on the topic.

Staff pulled up the *Oregon Zoo Campus Planning Powerpoint* to present to Council.

Rahn noted the campus plan timeline and the themes of the campus plan. She explained how staff engaged the community. Rahn explained the work to be done in the proposed project zones and the community feedback. These proposed projects zones were the Entry Plaza, the Great Northwest, the Coastal Shores, the South Hub, the African Zone, and the Expansion Site.

Rahn discussed the Zoo's philosophy, goals, and strategies for sustainability. She mentioned the phasing and implementation of the plan, which included an example. Rahn noted that the plan will be finalized by Spring 2024.

Council Discussion

Councilor Hwang asked if they have an accessibility

consultant. He also asked about addressing climate change.

Solomon noted that they do not have an accessibility consultant. She added that they can bring in accessibility consultants when they have a project design.

Rahn mentioned that they are incorporating a 2019 accessibility report on the Zoo into the design plan.

Councilor Nolan asked what additional languages they use for guests. They noted that all the signs are in English.

Krista Swan, Oregon Zoo Marketing Director, Metro mentioned that they translate into Chinese, Vietnamese, Arabic, Russian and Spanish.

Swan noted that they will be adding QR codes to the signs, which is expected to be done next year.

Solomon gave examples of different buildings that visitors can go into during extreme weather. Solomon mentioned that there are ongoing conversations about resilience.

President Peterson added that employee experience is a part of resiliency.

Solomon believed that employee experience was not a part of the design.

Rahn added that the new facilities designs will provide better space and activation sites for employees.

Solomon explained the challenge of the protecting the Giraffes from extreme weather, but also providing guest experience.

President Peterson noted that there are staff that work outside with the public. She asked if there are including space for staff to keep cool or warm in the design.

Solomon stated yes and noted the issue of mixed staff and animal space in the Zoo's Northwest area.

President Peterson clarified that she meant the staff that work outside with the public.

Councilor Simpson asked about the staff engagement process for the designs of the spaces.

Solomon mentioned that they use feedback from open houses.

Rahn added that there were open house workshops for staff to give their feedback. She mentioned that they will also rely on staff feedback on the designs.

Councilor Simpson asked if staff will be moved to other places when the project work begins.

Rahn noted that in the past, they have move staff around or reassigned them. She also mentioned the feedback they received from USDA about design of the new spaces.

Councilor Lewis suggested talking to the City of Portland about acquiring the site next to the Zoo and possibly using the site for staff and storage use. She asked how wildlife education is being incorporated into the improvements.

Rahn noted that wildlife education would be more of an immersive experience, such as in the animal ambassador

facility and conservation programming. She added that when there is specific design, there will be education plan.

Councilor Lewis recommended that they publicly talk about their conservation efforts.

Rahn summarized Councilor Lewis's recommendations.

Councilor Gonzalez mentioned his experience going on the Zoo tour. He suggested they communicate about why they chose certain species. He asked how the decision to add, close, or improve exhibits is made in the plan.

Rahn mentioned that they are doubling down on their conservation programs. She added that they are engaging with their government and other conservation partners about their needs, so that the Zoo can accommodate future conservation efforts.

Councilor Gonzalez noted that education at the Zoo can help create conservation advocates.

Rahn noted that the design will help people be more comfortable, so they can engage in conservation learning.

Councilor Rosenthal asked how the parking lot is a limitation to getting people to the Zoo and what they can do. He also asked how seismic resilience is being accounted for.

Rahn explained that Explore Washington Park manages the parking lot, but the parking lot is owned by the City of Portland. She mentioned that parking is the Zoo's biggest constraint to growth. Rahn mentioned that there will be an assessment done that will give them recommendations about parking.

Solomon noted that they need to continuously track the soil movement. For the new work, the buildings will have geo-tech and devices in the ground to monitor what the soil is doing.

Councilor Simpson asked how drainage is being accounted for. He mentioned that the creek that floods into the Northwest exhibit.

Solomon explained that they have several solutions to deal with drainage. She mentioned that the creek that overflows will be addressed.

Councilor Nolan suggested using the plan to make the Zoo net zero in greenhouse gas emissions. They suggested staff finding ways to encourage people to take transit instead of expanding the parking lot.

Rahn noted some challenges with transit, including that TriMet ridership has declined. She discussed several challenges with the parking lot and mentioned that they are looking to add sustainable investments within the existing infrastructure.

Councilor Nolan mentioned racial equity and asked how they are making sure their guests are proportional to the population.

Rahn discussed community engagement efforts and mentioned that they distributed tickets to their community partners. She added they receive feedback from the Zoo internship and the Community Advisory Council.

President Peterson asked how they are involving educators

and the different ways that people learn.

Melanie Sorensen, Director of Education & Conservation, Oregon Zoo explained their engagement efforts with educators and discussed the feedback they had received.

President Peterson suggested they engage with the different learning styles of children. She also added that they should be more opportunities for research.

Sorensen noted that experiential learning must engage all the senses. Sorensen added that their focus is building relationships with schools and students.

Councilor Lewis suggested that they do more engagement with tribal governments on the species that are important to them.

Staff discussed their partnership work with condor and lamprey conservation. Staff noted the importance of partnering with Tribes, especially in the Northwest zone.

Councilor Hwang mentioned the Construction Careers Pathways program. He asked how they have done in the last round of construction and how they will include the program in the plan. He also asked to be updated.

Rahn explained that in the past they met their goals for that time. She mentioned the challenge of workforce availability and that there were not enough people of color being trained.

Solomon added that they will use the Construction Careers policy, but it is still early in the process.

Councilor Rosenthal asked if there are Northwest species that they want to bring to the Zoo. He mentioned the Mountain Beaver as an example.

Rahn mentioned that they are not bring new animals, but they want to focus on the animals they have now and to highlight certain animals more.

President Peterson asked Kristin Dennis, Chief of Staff, Metro to speak.

Dennis noted that they have received questions about the Zoo train and mentioned focuses and.

Council Discussion

Councilor Rosenthal asked if the Zoo train would be a minor contributor for transporting people to the Zoo. He noted that others mentioned getting people to the zoo without cars and parking.

Rahn added that there would still be parking at either end of the train. She also clarified that this was the train within the perimeter of the Zoo.

President Peterson explained this is an ongoing issue that needs to be discussed.

Councilor Nolan added that the question is “if”.

Dennis mentioned that longer discussions are needed.

12:00 Chief Operating Officer Communication

Marissa Madrigal provided an update on the following events or items:

- Madrigal discussed several upcoming Council work sessions related to Waste Prevention and Environmental Services.

12:05 Councilor Communication

Councilors provided updates on the following meetings and events:

- **Councilor Gonzalez** mentioned the annual TV Highway Clean-Up.
- **Councilor Simpson** mentioned the 25th Anniversary of the Martin Luther King Jr. Statue at the Oregon Convention Center event.
- **Councilor Lewis** mentioned that the Clackamas County Coordinating Committee release a list of their values regarding tolling and an ODOT project.

Council Discussion

President Peterson asked if a separate Metro letter is needed.

Councilor Lewis suggested that Metro publicly express their values.

President Peterson mentioned that it should be a part of the record with the OTC and the legislative committee.

Councilor Lewis mentioned that the timeline is from Clackamas County, and they are not in a hurry.

Councilor Simpson explained that he was supportive of some of the values in the letter.

- **Councilor Rosenthal** mentioned the TV Highway Clean-Up, the City of Tualatin's Tolling letter, and a bridge he saw on his trip to Poland.

Council Discussion

President Peterson asked Councilor Rosenthal to send the information on the bridge to the team.

- **Councilor Simpson** thanked his Policy Advisor for her work.
- **Councilor Rosenthal** thanked his Policy Advisor for his work.

Adjourn

There being no further business, Council President Peterson adjourned the Metro Work Session at 12:13 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jemeshia Taylor".

Jemeshia Taylor, Legislative Assistant

ATTACHMENTS TO THE PUBLIC RECORD FOR THE MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 5, 2023

ITEM	DOCUMENT TYPE	DOC DATE	DOCUMENT DESCRIPTION	DOCUMENT No.
1.0	Powerpoint	09/05/2023	Oregon Zoo Campus Planning Presentation	090523c-01