

RESOLUTION No.

Refer a measure to City voters for the November 4, 2014 General Election authorizing the issuance of general obligation bonds in the amount of \$68,000,000 to provide funding to fix playgrounds and trails, and improve park facilities, safety, and accessibility (Resolution)

WHEREAS, Portland's parks, public places, natural areas, and recreational opportunities give life and beauty to our city, are essential assets, connect people to place, self, and others; and

WHEREAS, Portland's residents treasure and care for this legacy, building on the past to provide for future generations; and

WHEREAS, the City of Portland's park system includes 11,546 acres, 209 developed parks, 129 playgrounds, 14 community and art centers, 13 community pools, and more, together serving Portlanders in every corner of the city; and

WHEREAS, our park structures and facilities have finite life spans, and require ongoing investment to remain safe and accessible; and

WHEREAS, the City's Portland Parks & Recreation (PP&R) has identified more than \$365 million in necessary replacements and major maintenance projects that need to be completed over the next 10 years; and

WHEREAS, PP&R's projected annual major maintenance budget is approximately \$1.5 million, which is insufficient to complete all major maintenance projects; and

WHEREAS, while PP&R leverages funding dollars by seeking grants, public-private and interbureau partnerships, and volunteerism to care for the major maintenance needs in its system, funding is still insufficient to complete all major maintenance projects; and

WHEREAS, over the last century, Portlanders have created and maintained our park system through a series of capital investments, including bond measures and levies; and

WHEREAS, Portland's last parks bond—passed in 1994—will be repaid in 2015, which creates an opportunity to address critical park needs without increasing tax rates; and

WHEREAS, by continuing to fund parks at the current rate required by the 1994 bond, we can raise up to \$68 million in funding to address the most critical needs of our parks system through the Parks Replacement Bond measure; and

WHEREAS, the proposed new measure is estimated to not increase property tax rates from what they are today; and

WHEREAS, if approved, the average Parks Replacement Bond tax rate is estimated to be \$.0877 per \$1,000 of assessed value, which is the same as the current assessed rate for the expiring parks bonds; and

WHEREAS, if the Parks Replacement Bond is not approved by voters, the annual property tax could decrease by about \$13 for a home at median assessed value of \$152,890; and

WHEREAS, projects already identified for bond funding are urgent needs as determined by the Parks bureau and prioritized with criteria including immediate safety concerns or urgent repairs where urgency is defined as the highest risk of failure and the highest impact if failure occurs, projects that reduce bigger costs later on, responsible repairs for general deferred maintenance needs, investments in energy efficiency, increased accessibility for all, and restoring services that are currently closed or adding modest service in deficient areas; and

WHEREAS, additional bond-funded projects will be chosen through a public process in 2015-16, involving PP&R staff, the Parks Budget Advisory Committee, and community stakeholders who will consider the most urgent maintenance needs just prior to a second bond issuance, to responsibly allocate and prioritize the second round of bond funding; and

WHEREAS, current projects identified fall into seven focus areas, including playgrounds, trails and bridges, pools, protecting workers, Pioneer Courthouse Square, accessibility, and restrooms and other urgent repairs; and

WHEREAS, more than 55,000 Portland households are served by PP&R playgrounds or play structures that are rated in poor or very poor condition, and need to be renovated or replaced; and

WHEREAS, the Parks Replacement Bond would invest at least \$5M to renovate, replace, and build 10 to 20 play structures that are closed, at risk of closure or deficient; and

WHEREAS, Portland is home to more than 155 miles of completed regional trails laced together, connecting people to each other and to the natural beauty of our city, and several of our city's most popular trails are partially or fully closed—or at risk of closure—due to needed repair; and

WHEREAS, the 2014 Parks Replacement Bond would fund at least \$5M in repairs to trails and bridges, preserving access to natural areas and open spaces like Forest Park; and

WHEREAS, Portland's swimming pools are some of the park system's most popular attractions, with more than 1.1 million visits in 2013, and many of the pools and their mechanical equipment systems are well beyond their expected life spans; and

WHEREAS, at least \$5M in Parks Replacement Bond resources would repair several community swimming pools to prevent emergency closures, stop water leaks, and extend the life of these facilities; and

WHEREAS, PP&R staff in the Maintenance, Central Services, and Urban Forestry teams maintain 11,546 acres of recreation and green space across 209 parks, including 8,000 acres of open and natural spaces; and

WHEREAS, up to \$10M in Parks Replacement Bond resources would fund repairs, replacements and improvements needed to bring Mt. Tabor Yard Maintenance Facility and Urban Forestry workplaces up to fire-life-safety and efficiency standards; and

WHEREAS, Pioneer Courthouse Square receives nearly 10 million visits each year, and after 30 years of continuous service, Pioneer Courthouse Square is showing its age and needs repair; and

WHEREAS, the Parks Replacement Bond would invest up to \$10M to replace Pioneer Courthouse Square's waterproof membrane under the famous bricks, repair cracks in bricks and mortar, repair structural columns, renovate the restrooms so they are safe and accessible and make other needed improvements at Pioneer Courthouse Square; and

WHEREAS, a preliminary citywide assessment has already identified more than 20,000 ADA barriers to access in Portland's parks, including missing handrails, inaccessible paths, outdated wheelchair lifts, and steep slopes, all of which prevent people with disabilities or mobility challenges from fully enjoying our parks; and

WHEREAS, while significantly more funding is needed to correct all barriers, the Parks Replacement Bond would invest up to \$5M to remove many, making our parks and playgrounds more accessible to everyone; and

WHEREAS, many of our park system's community assets are in need of major maintenance and urgent repairs, including leaking roofs, outdated plumbing, electrical systems that need replacement, plus restrooms in several parks that need significant repairs, replacement or are deficient; and

WHEREAS, the Parks Replacement Bond would address at least \$5M of the most urgent repairs to ensure our parks and community centers stay open and safe; and

WHEREAS, as outlined in Exhibits A, B, C and D, an oversight committee will be appointed to review Parks Replacement Bond expenditures and will report annually to the Council and the bond will provide for performance audits to ensure that projects funded by the bonds are consistent with voter intent; and

WHEREAS, the projects anticipated to be completed using funding from the Parks Replacement Bond are summarized in the Bond Project List At-a-Glance, attached to this Resolution as Exhibit E, and in the Bond Project Summary, attached to this Resolution as Exhibit F;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Council submits an Act, attached hereto as Exhibit B, entitled: "A Measure authorizing the City Council of the City of Portland to issue general obligation bonds in the amount of \$68,000,000 for capital costs for parks, to be repaid from property taxes levied outside constitutional limitations." Exhibit B is hereby submitted to the legal voters of the City of Portland, Oregon for their adoption or rejection at the General Election in the City of Portland, Multnomah County, Clackamas County, and Washington County to be held on November 4, 2014. Each voter who votes upon said proposed measure shall vote "yes" or "no" in the space indicated for such vote on the City ballot at said election; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Council submits the ballot title, question and summary for the November 4, 2014 General Election ballot, as shown in the attached Exhibit C; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Council directs the Auditor to publish the ballot title as shows in Exhibit C in accordance with City Code; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Council direct the Auditor to submit the explanatory statement attached as Exhibit D to Multnomah, Clackamas, and Washington County elections offices for publication in each county's voters' pamphlet; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Auditor is directed to forward to Multnomah, Clackamas, and Washington County elections offices all material necessary to place this measure on the November 4, 2014 General Election ballot.

Adopted by the Council:

Commissioner Amanda Fritz  
Prepared by: Amy Ruiz, Jennifer Yocom,  
Harry Auerbach  
Date Prepared: July 16, 2014

**LaVonne Griffin-Valade**  
Auditor of the City of Portland  
By \_\_\_\_\_ Deputy