



FISCAL YEAR
2021-22

PARKS LEVY OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT

The Parks Levy Oversight Committee (PLOC) appreciates the critical parks and recreation services that have benefitted Portlanders this year, made possible by voter-approved funding from the Parks Local Option Levy (Parks Levy). We are pleased to present our review of the 2021-22 Parks Levy Annual Report and Portland Parks & Recreation (PP&R) Parks Levy actions in FY 2021-22.

In November 2020, Portland voters passed the Parks Levy to maintain parks, improve access and safety, provide equitable recreation programs, and proactively care for natural areas and Portland's urban forest. The ballot language stated that a community oversight committee would be appointed to review Parks Levy expenditures and to report annually to City Council.

The PLOC was created on July 1, 2021. We are a committee of five community members, selected from an open public applicant pool and appointed by the PP&R Director. We convene quarterly to review progress on the Parks Levy, receive updates from PP&R staff, and participate in topical presentations and discussions.

As established in our charter, we produce our own annual report reviewing adherence to Parks Levy language, fiscal accountability, and transparency. We are pleased to submit the first Parks Levy Oversight Committee Annual Report.

Sincerely,
Parks Levy Oversight Committee

FY 2021-22 Members

The Parks Levy Oversight Committee (PLOC) is composed of five members, selected from an open public applicant pool, appointed by the PP&R Director. The PLOC reviews program implementation, advises on transparency and communication strategies, and will counsel on an independent audit process.



Alescia Blakely is a Resident & Community Services Program Manager at Home Forward. She advocates for marginalized communities through building stronger connections to community health, workforce development, domestic violence and education systems. Alescia has over 28 years of social work experience working in both private and public sectors and is passionate about the benefits of parks and community centers.



Judy BlueHorse Skelton (Nez Perce/Cherokee) is an Assistant Professor in the Indigenous Nations Studies Department at Portland State University. She has worked with federal, state, and local Native organizations and tribes for 25+ years on uses of native plants for food, medicine, ceremony, and healthy lifeways. Judy previously served on the Portland Parks Board and feels parks are essential to community well-being and climate resiliency.



Maria Velez currently works for Latino Network as the Director of SUN Community Schools, managing nine SUN sites that offer a myriad of extended day services and programs. She is proud to work among and for local Latinx communities. Maria believes that parks in Portland can be magical places and that connection to nature should be accessible to all.



Paul Agrimis currently sits on the Portland Parks Board, serving as Chair from 2020 to 2022. He is a Principal with GreenWorks and has over 20 years of experience working on public infrastructure and natural resource restoration projects. Paul enjoys recreating outdoors and considers it a privilege to advise on policies and budgets, and to help PP&R move to a sustainable future.



Silas Sanderson is a Professional Civil Engineer with Schnabel Engineering, where he works on environmental restoration, risk assessments of flood reduction structures, and seismic assessments of infrastructure. He loves the outdoors and is passionate about empowering Portland's communities to realize their vision for their parks.

Adherence to the Ballot Language

Definition: Actions are based on and build upon the promises contained in the language of the voters' pamphlet.

PP&R used the fifteen commitments from the voters' pamphlet Parks Levy ballot language to track progress—including key actions, financials, and performance measures—on promises made to voters. In doing so, the PLOC finds that PP&R has set up the systems to adhere to the ballot language, with actions and allocation of Parks Levy funds in FY 2021-22 being based on and building upon the promises made in the voters' pamphlet.

In the 2021-22 Parks Levy Annual Report, each of the fifteen voter commitments had specific information on how PP&R was adhering to that ballot language. This information included PP&R actions and programs in FY 2021-22 that helped meet the commitments, service area financials that aligned with each commitment, and performance measures that spoke to progress made for each commitment in the fiscal year. By using the fifteen voter commitments to organize the 2021-22 Parks Levy Annual Report, PP&R is illustrating its use of Parks Levy funds in ways that clearly adhere to the ballot language—and making program decisions and actions that are in alignment.

In addition to ensuring each specific voter commitment is met, it is important that PP&R honor the spirit of the Parks Levy and



continue growing its community partnerships. The PLOC encourages PP&R to expand the use of the Equity and Anti-Racism Lens and prioritize collecting community feedback on Parks Levy-funded initiatives to ensure that the work being done meets the needs and desires of the community. As PP&R grows and improves its programs and processes to deliver critical park and recreation services, PP&R can use the Parks Levy to authentically build relationships and partnerships with the community that will benefit the parks and recreation system in the long term.

Parks Levy-related actions taken and decisions made in FY 2021-22 adhere to the ballot language, and PP&R has been clear and intentional about communicating that adherence.

Recommendation: Use the Equity and Anti-Racism Lens, existing community engagement, and feedback cycles—such as the Heathy Parks, Healthy Portland, Listening & Learning structure—to hear from the community how PP&R can build on Parks Levy voter commitments to best serve the community.

Fiscal Accountability

Definition: Maintain fiscal accountability as a core driver. Parks Levy dollars are tracked and auditable. Ensure integrity and accuracy of financial statements.

PP&R has taken care to be fiscally accountable in tracking and communicating about Parks Levy dollars in a transparent, auditable, and effective way. For FY 2021-22, PP&R staff presented a variety of finance items to the PLOC, maintaining fiscal accountability:

- FY 2021-22 Fall Budget Monitoring Process (BMP) allocation of Parks Levy funds in alignment with voter commitments and use of the Decision Support Tool
- Summary of the Leveraged Funding Model, how it will be implemented, effects on Parks Levy spending and balance, and updates on Leveraged Funding Model report to City Council
- Financial actuals for FY 2021-22 at year end and an interim update of estimated Parks Levy spending through the third quarter
- Parks Levy spending by service area and workgroup for FY 2021-22 as part of the 2021-22 Parks Levy Annual Report
- Overview of Parks Levy funding in the FY 2022-23 Requested Budget and new budget proposals supported by the Parks Levy

The PLOC is supportive of PP&R's Leveraged Funding Model to maximize utilization of Parks Levy funding and deliver on promises made to voters. Specifically, the Parks Levy was intended to provide incremental service levels over that of a baseline funding level with the General

Fund. The Leveraged Funding Model ensures that the General Fund is utilized first. That way, the maximum amount of Parks Levy funds are preserved, allowing PP&R to provide the incremental services Portlanders voted for over the life of the Parks Levy.

The PLOC understands the Leveraged Funding Model to be auditable and that a summary of Parks Levy reimbursement by service is available following the end of the fiscal year. The PLOC reviewed FY 2021-22 Parks Levy expenditures, categorized by service area (Functional Area) and work group (Fund Center), as part of the 2021-22 Parks Levy Annual Report. The PLOC appreciates that PP&R can track Parks Levy expenditures at a variety of levels, from alignment with Parks Levy ballot commitments to granular line-item expenses. This ensures that Parks Levy dollars are tracked, auditable, and spent responsibly.

PP&R has proactively communicated Parks Levy decision points, financial statements, and budget implications with the PLOC in FY 2021-22. Further, by sharing Parks Levy financial information with the public on the PP&R website via PLOC meeting notes and the 2021-22 Parks Levy Annual Report, PP&R remains fiscally accountable to Portland voters who approved the Parks Levy.

Recommendation: Continue the use of the Leveraged Funding Model in the implementation of Parks Levy funding.

Transparency

Definition: Act in a way that clearly promotes equity, participation, accountability, and engenders trust.

The PLOC recognizes that, by sharing Parks Levy information with the PLOC, PP&R is also sharing information with the public through meeting notes, website content, and opportunities for public attendance at PLOC meetings. PP&R has fulfilled its' commitments in the PLOC Charter and Bylaws to provide materials to the PLOC in a timely manner in advance of and following committee meetings.

PP&R has been responsive to the PLOC's interests, creating time in meeting agendas for topical presentations. In FY 2021-22, PP&R shared information with the PLOC on reducing cost as a barrier (financial assistance pilot models—Pay What You Can and Access Discount) and the Equity and Anti-Racism Lens. Additionally, PP&R has been proactive about following up with the PLOC on program-specific questions, allowing the PLOC to learn more about program decisions and the impact of Parks Levy funding.

The PLOC is excited about PP&R's expanded Listening & Learning process as part of the Healthy Parks, Healthy Portland planning and decision-making strategy. As members of the public and participants of engagement processes through community organizations, PLOC members have heard from fellow community members that PP&R has expanded engagement opportunities, information sharing,



and opportunities for feedback. The PLOC is grateful to the expanded support of the Parks Levy that has allowed meaningful and deeper engagement with Portlanders.

As noted in previous sections of this report, PP&R has been intentionally clear and transparent in sharing where and how Parks Levy funds are used, particularly in supporting the fifteen voter commitments.

Recommendation: Continue to share PLOC meeting materials with the general public and meaningfully engage community partners and individuals through the Listening & Learning process.



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Traducción e Interpretación

Biên Dịch và Thông Dịch

□笔译服务

Устный и письменный перевод

Turjumaad iyo Fasiraad

Письмовий і усний переклад

Traducere și interpretariat

Chiaku me Awewen Kapas

अनुवादन तथा व्याख्या

For more information about the Parks Levy Oversight Committee, visit portland.gov/parks/ploc.