



# BOND OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

Portland Parks & Recreation

# ANNUAL REPORT

2019-2020

Portland voters passed the Parks Replacement Bond in 2014 calling for a five-person oversight committee to review expenditures and provide annual reports. The 2019-2020 Bond Oversight Committee consists of Jonath Colon, Janice Mason, Ken Richardson, Zari Santner, and Karen Loper Tracy.

The Committee continues to receive quarterly updates in person, and virtually since March 2020, from Portland Parks & Recreation (PP&R). Additionally, information is received via emails and on the Parks Replacement Bond website. As established in our first report, the committee receives information in three major categories:

- Adherence to Bond language;
- Fiscal accountability; and
- Transparency.

We are pleased to submit the committee’s annual report for the 2019-2020 fiscal year. This is the fifth year that the Bond Oversight Committee has the privilege of submitting its report to the City Council, and it is fair to say that it has been a year like no other. The Committee would like to acknowledge the challenges faced by the Bond Program caused by major, emotionally taxing leadership changes in PP&R, in addition to the health and economic impacts of the COVID pandemic on the City, in general, and on PP&R and its Bond Team, specifically. It is a testament to the competency and professionalism of the Bond Program staff, and its leadership, that the 5th-year work has continued to make progress as scheduled, in light of those challenges. The Bond updates and information have continued to be coordinated and well communicated to the Committee by the Bond Team.

Sincerely, Bond Oversight Committee  
Jonath Colón, Karen Loper Tracy, Zari Santner, Ken Richardson, Janice Mason.

PENINSULA POOL PARTY  
JULY 2019



**BOND OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE**  
*From front to back row, left to right:*  
Zari Santner, Janice Mason,  
Jonath Colón, Karen Loper Tracy,  
and Ken Richardson

# OBJECTIVE 1—ADHERE TO THE LANGUAGE OF THE BOND



**Definition:** Deliverables are based on the promises contained in the language of the voter’s pamphlet.

## BONDS TO FIX PLAYGROUNDS, TRAILS; IMPROVE PARK FACILITIES, SAFETY, ACCESSIBILITY.

**QUESTION:** Shall Portland fix, improve park facilities by issuing bonds estimated to maintain current tax rate; require audits and public oversight? If the bonds are approved, they will be payable from taxes on property or property ownership that are not subject to the limits of sections 11 and 11b, Article XI of the Oregon Constitution.

**SUMMARY:** Measure would authorize \$68,000,000 in general obligation bonds for Portland Parks & Recreation facilities. Because previous bonds are scheduled to be repaid, City’s parks bond tax rate is not expected to increase from current rate of \$0.0877 per \$1,000 of assessed value.

**Fifth Year Status:** 46 of the total 52 Bond projects are completed. Of the remaining six projects, three are slated to be completed shortly, and the last three will commence construction this Fall. More than \$49 million dollars has been spent by the end of the Bond’s fifth year.

### Year FIVE Project Updates as of June 30, 2020

- Fix or improve 10 to 20 play areas that were closed, at risk of closure, or deficient  
**STATUS:** Nine playground improvement projects are completed, one is in construction, and one more is going to construction in fall 2020.

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- Fix or improve trails and bridges in parks and natural areas  
**STATUS:** All six trail and bridges projects are completed.

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- Fix or improve swimming pools including Matt Dishman, Peninsula, and Grant  
**STATUS:** All four pool projects are completed.

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- Fix or improve restrooms, roofs, structures, and equipment  
**STATUS:** 23 of 24 projects including restroom additions and other facility improvements are complete. The remaining project is underway.

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- Fix or improve Pioneer Courthouse Square’s failing structures, leaks and cracks  
**STATUS:** Project is complete and opened to the public.

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- Fix or remove barriers to accessibility for people with disabilities  
**STATUS:** Projects at Washington Park, Mt. Tabor Park, and the Multnomah Arts Center Cottages are complete. The project at East Portland Community Center is underway. Barrier removals were also completed as a part of many other Bond projects.

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- Improve Park maintenance facilities to address worker safety and efficiencies  
**STATUS:** Staff facilities at Mt Tabor Yard and Delta Park are underway.

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- Funds are for repairs and other capital costs, not operation. A five-member oversight committee will review Bond expenditures and provide annual reports. Bonds may be issued in multiple series; audits required.  
**STATUS:** This criterion has been and continues to be met. The Bond Oversight Committee receives regular updates for review and is confident that costs are appropriately spent. Three bond issuances were made, and an audit of the Bond Program performance was completed in 2019.

## OBJECTIVE 2—MAINTAIN FISCAL ACCOUNTABILITY



**Definition:** Maintain fiscal accountability as a core driver. Bond dollars are clearly and separately tracked. Ensure integrity and accuracy of financial statements.

PP&R remains fiscally accountable of Bond dollars with a separate tracking system accessible to all staff, and administrative overhead is lower than 10% total budget goal. Budgets are on target in all categories except pools and maintenance yards. PP&R is confident the Bond contingency fund will cover the cost overruns in those categories and is exploring use of interest earnings to deliver all projects.

The City encourages hiring Disadvantaged Business Enterprises, Minority-owned, Women-owned, Emerging Small Businesses, and Service-Disabled Veteran Business Enterprises (D/M/W/ESP/SDVBE) with a goal of 20% utilization.

- 41% of the value of all Bond project construction contracts have been awarded to D/M/W/ESB/SDVBE firms, with the following breakdown:
  - 18% DBE(M) + M
  - 18% DBE(W) + W
  - 5% ESB
  - 0% SDVBE
- 31% of the value of all professional services awarded to Bond projects were D/M/W/ESB/SDVBE firms, with the following breakdown:
  - 10% DBE(M) + M
  - 10% DBE(W) +W
  - 12% ESB
  - 0% SDVBE



GLENHAVEN PARK PLAY DATE, OCTOBER 2019



MARSHALL PARK BRIDGE CONSTRUCTION



VERDELL BURDINE RUTHERFORD PARK PUBLIC ART

## OBJECTIVE 3—BE TRANSPARENT WITH THE COMMUNITY



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



NEW BRIDGE AT FOLEY-BALMER NATURAL AREA



VERDELL BURDINE RUTHERFORD PARK PLAYGROUND



CONSTRUCTION OF THE NEW BRIDGE ALONG SPRINGWATER CORRIDOR

The Oversight Committee is interested in PP&R's outreach efforts for the Bond Program's success. Outreach and participation by diverse members of the community will help build trust in this \$68 million program. The Oversight Committee values community input and believes that greater involvement will assure Bond funds are distributed equitably citywide.

In response to the Oversight Committee's recommendation to gauge the public's perceptions of the Bond Program's openness and transparency, PP&R completed an online survey. The survey results were generally positive and indicate the Bond Program is on-track with regards to transparency. In response to community feedback, PP&R has increased social media posts to reach a wider audience.

In the Fifth year, there is much to celebrate with 46 out of 52 total projects completed. However, the social and physical distancing required by the pandemic has necessitated the closure of playgrounds and pools, including all the newly renovated playgrounds and pools completed by the Bond program. We are hopeful that the completion of the Bond Program in its sixth year will coincide with the removal of all pandemic-related restrictions, and the renewal of the public's enjoyment of their parks, playgrounds, and facilities repaired and renovated by the generosity of Portland voters who passed Measure 26-159.

The Bond Oversight Committee (BOC) is pleased that PP&R followed its suggestion to set aside adequate Program contingency funds - a decision which has proven prudent in light of cost overruns for the pools and the Maintenance Yard.

We recommend a final performance audit be conducted after all the Bond projects reach final completion and a report of its findings be submitted to the BOC and the City Council.

For more information on the Parks Replacement Bond, please visit [parksreplacementbond.org](https://parksreplacementbond.org). If you have feedback or would like to contact the Bond Oversight Committee, please email Elizabeth Specht at [elizabeth.specht@portlandoregon.gov](mailto:elizabeth.specht@portlandoregon.gov) or call 503-823-5561.