



MAYOR'S OFFICE

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March 6, 2015

To: Joint Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee on Natural Resources:
The Honorable Richard Devlin, Co-Chair The Honorable Jodi Hack
The Honorable Dan Rayfield, Co-Chair The Honorable Julie Parrish
The Honorable Brian Clem The Honorable Michael Dembrow
The Honorable David Gomberg The Honorable Bill Hansell

Re: SB5528, Parks and Recreation Department Budget – Comments

As Mayor of The City of Salem I have seen the results of the long and close relationship between the City and the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department. This relationship dates back to 1968 with a project then called Minto Island and has continued with more than 50 grants over almost 50 years. The Oregon Parks and Recreation Department has aided the City of Salem in creating and improving our parks---the parks that make the City of Salem, indeed the entire State of Oregon, unique and beautiful. Those projects include not only the original Minto Island (1968) but also River Edge Park (1968), Cascade Gateway Park Bridge (1973), Orchard Heights Park (Phases 1,2,4,5 1974-1978), Wallace Marine Bank Stabilization, Boat Dock and Sports Complex (1977, 1975, 1986), Acquisition of Woodmansee Park (1978), Expansion of Bush Park (1979), Improvements to Woodmansee Park (2002 and 2005), Union Street Railroad Bridge (2006), Historic Deepwood House repair (2011), Crooked House Playground and Bush Park (2013), and the Minto Island Pedestrian and Bicycle Bridge (2013); and this is but a small percentage of the projects that the City of Salem and the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department have created together.

The funding for these projects has provided positive employment for Oregonians and has built parks that brought visitors and new residents to our beautiful State. The funding totals nearly \$4 million and comes from eight different heritage and recreation grant programs. The lottery-backed Local Government Grants is the single largest source of grant funds for the City, accounting for \$2.2 million in grants. They are an important source of capital improvement funding for our city parks. This grant funding provided the City of Salem an opportunity to leverage its own limited funding resources towards completion of vital neighborhood and community parks and facilities. Small local Government grants provide funding for construction of individual amenities such as playgrounds, sports courts and shelters. Large grants provide funding to assist cities in developing a full array of amenities and facilities on undeveloped park land. The Local Government Grants program is a funding vehicle that allows local and state government to work as partners in improving not only the beauty but also the livability of our communities.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY / AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER

Women, minorities, and disabled are encouraged to apply • ADA Accommodations will be provided upon request

Our parks, and the recreation and natural resources they provide, are important to the quality of life and livability of the City of Salem and our great State of Oregon. Our parks, open spaces, streams and the Willamette River are essential habitats for birds, fish and plant life. They serve as living laboratories for students and adults. The parks provide recreational activities and outdoor enjoyment so vital to building healthy communities. They are, however, also important economic engines and will be more so as facilities are added to our existing sites. Indeed, the newest partnership project between the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department and the City of Salem brings us full circle to our original 1968 Minto Island with the creation of The Peter Courtney Bridge to Minto Island. That bridge and the island's trail system will be magnets for residents and visitors for decades to come. All of these have been made possible or enhanced by the funds that came to the City of Salem through the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department in our nearly fifty years of partnership. Together we have acquired, built and maintained the parks that make the City of Salem and State of Oregon truly beautiful---truly unique---truly Oregon.

Sincerely,


Anna M. Peterson
Mayor