



July 10, 2025 Climate, Resilience, and Land Use Committee Agenda

City Hall, Council Chambers, 2nd Floor – 1221 SW Fourth Avenue, Portland, OR 97204

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Thursday, July 10, 2025 9:30 am

Session Status: Adjourned

Committee in Attendance:

Councilor Sameer Kanal

Councilor Dan Ryan

Councilor Steve Novick, Co-Chair

Councilor Novick presided.

Officers in attendance: Rebecca Dobert, Acting Council Clerk

Committee recessed at 9:59 a.m. and reconvened at 10:09 a.m.

Committee adjourned at 11:22 a.m.

Regular Agenda

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[Presentation on Parks Levy referral](#) (Presentation)

Document number: 2025-277

Introduced by: Councilor Angelita Morillo; Councilor Steve Novick

Time requested: 30 minutes

Council action: Placed on File

2

[Public Hearing on Parks Levy referral](#) (Public Hearing)

Document number: 2025-278

Introduced by: Councilor Angelita Morillo; Councilor Steve Novick

Time requested: 90 minutes

Portland City Council, Climate, Resilience, and Land Use Committee
July 10, 2025 - 9:30 a.m.
Speaker List

Name	Title	Document Number
Steve Novick	Councilor, Committee Chair	
Rebecca Dobert	Deputy Council Clerk	
Sameer Kanal	Councilor	
Dan Ryan	Councilor	
Christopher Herr	Council Policy Analyst	
Pegeen Hanrahan	Associate Director of Conservation Finance, Trust for Public Land	2025-277
Will Klein	Director of Parks Research, Trust for Public Land	2025-277
Sonia Schmanski	Acting Director Portland Parks & Recreation	2025-277
Claire Flynn	Claire.Flynn@portlandoregon.gov	2025-277
Ashley Murray	(Testimony)	2025-278
Elizabeth Milner	(Testimony)	2025-278
Jerika Ferguson	(Testimony)	2025-278
Linda Robinson	(Testimony)	2025-278
Ryan Heidt	(Testimony)	2025-278
Alescia Blakely	(Testimony)	2025-278
Pat Frobos	(Testimony)	2025-278
Jonathan Perez Lucio-Mancilla	(Testimony)	2025-278
Seph Jarosh	(Testimony)	2025-278
James O'Laughlen	(Testimony)	2025-278
Georgena Moran	(Testimony)	2025-278
Eva Valadrian	(Testimony)	2025-278
Jamie Doscher	(Testimony)	2025-278
Leigh Rappaport	(Testimony)	2025-278
Lin Felton	(Testimony)	2025-278

Portland City Council, Climate, Resilience, and Land Use Committee
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Testimony List

Name	Document Number
Ashley Murray	2025-278
Elizabeth Milner	2025-278
Jerika Ferguson	2025-278
Linda Robinson	2025-278
Ryan Heidt	2025-278
Alescia Blakely	2025-278
Pat Frobes	2025-278
Jonathan Perez Lucio-Mancilla	2025-278
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Jamie Doscher	2025-278
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Lin Felton	2025-278

Portland City Council Committee Meeting Closed Caption File

July 10, 2025 – 9:30 a.m.

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Speaker: Good morning. I called the meeting of the climate resilience and land use committee to order. It is Thursday, July 10th at 9:30 a.m. Rebecca, will you please call the roll?

Speaker: Canal here.

Speaker: Ryan, here.

Speaker: Morillo. Avalos.

Speaker: Novick here. As you note, we are short handed today. Councilor avalos and morillo are on a mission to chicago. I believe that they're bring back some of the ivy from wrigley field. To act as a talisman to help us in our efforts to land a major league baseball team. Christopher, you please read the statement of conduct.

Speaker: Welcome to the meeting of the climate resilience and land use committee. To testify before this committee in person or virtually, you must sign up in advance in the committee agenda at. Agenda. Climate resilience and land use committee, or by calling 311. Information on engaging with the committee can be found at this link. Registration for virtual testimony closes one hour prior to the meeting. In person. Testifiers must sign up before the agenda item is heard. If public testimony will be taken on an item, individuals may testify for three minutes unless the chair states otherwise, your microphone will be muted. When your time is over. The chair preserves order disruptive conduct such as shouting, refusing to

conclude your testimony when your time is up, or interrupting others testimony or committee deliberations will not be allowed. If you cause a disruption, a warning will be given. Further disruption will result in ejection from the meeting. Anyone who fails to leave once ejected is subject to arrest for trespass. Additionally, the committee may take a short recess and reconvene virtually. Your testimony should address the matter being considered. When testifying, state your name for the record. If you are a lobbyist, identify the organization you represent and virtual testifier should unmute themselves when the clerk calls your name. Thank you.

Speaker: Thank you christopher. We have two rather closely related items on our agenda. Today we're going to hear a presentation on the perspective parks levy referral. And then we're going to hear public testimony on the perspective parks levy referral. Rebecca, will you please read the first item.

Speaker: Presentation on parks levy referral.

Speaker: Thank you. I think we're going to start with some words from pegeen hanrahan of the trust for public land on sort of where our park system sits within a national context, as andrea, are you are you ready to give us a few minutes?

Speaker: Yes, I am. Can you hear me? Okay, mr. Chair?

Speaker: Yes.

Speaker: Fantastic. And I will be brief. I really just wanted to hopefully share what our positive words for city of Portland and I have hopefully present with me my colleague will klein, who works on our parks system. I work primarily on voter authorized funding systems for city parks, but also for land conservation measures. I work predominantly at the county level, but with many big cities as well. And as you know, Portland is one of America's great cities on many metrics, and that certainly applies to your parks. I kind of wanted to put in context with respect to your park levy that across the country in good times and in bad and, you know,

challenging times and fabulous times. These measures do tend to pass. Trust for public land has worked on 681 successful ballot measures, including a few prior measures in the city of Portland. And overall, our win rate is 84%, so the chances of passage are very high. People care very deeply about their parks. And as I said, you all have a terrific park system. About 89% of Portland residents have a ten minute walk access to a park, which is tremendous. And one of the things I think you should be very proud of is that it's pretty even across age, race, income level and so on, you have very strong park equity. One of the things that I know has come up in some of the discussions around your park levy is your park score ranking. You are currently out of the 100 largest cities in the United States. Portland is ranked number nine. That ranking is based on a number of factors, including the kinds of metrics that I've already mentioned, and also things along the lines of fee and budget and investment and all of those things. And so clearly, your parks levy is critically important. What's most important, however, is meeting the needs of Portland's community and the values that your citizens have. And we know how important your parks are to the quality of life in your city. I will just share, and it's possible that Sarah or Sonia will have a little bit more of this information, but Portland is definitely not out of line with other major cities that share your characteristics. In fact, your park expenditures per capita at about \$274 per capita, are substantially less than Seattle at 418 and San Francisco's at 561 there. Minneapolis is at 324. There are some that are lower, of course, Denver is at 229. But in terms of cities that share your unique values and needs and demands, you have a lot of visitors. For example, this is not at all unusual, which is true too, for other metrics that you have in terms of fees, in terms of percentage of parks, of as land area and so on. Fundamentally, we are here to support the city of Portland. Your parks levy is critically important to management of your very substantial park

system. And we think you are poised for success. It is really important that we have seen a number of incredible partners. I mean, you really have an embarrassment of riches from your parks foundation and parks alliance to the chamber, to the communities of color advocates. I mean, it's really across the board. Everybody is mostly concerned about making sure that this levy continues, that it's equitable and that it's at a level that is affordable for citizens of Portland and residents of Portland. So I will stop there. And I see perhaps councilor Ryan, do you have a question, mr. Chair?

Speaker: I'll ask councilor Ryan.

Speaker: Thank you, chair, and thank you for your national perspective. It's really helpful. And it was I did have a question about a metric that maybe you have information on. Maybe you don't. Maybe you could look back to us. When I compare my experiences of living in new york city and Seattle, it seemed as though cities had more robust friends networks that were providing a lot of private partnership support to the system. And I think we have organically that system is there. We have years and years of history with some, such as friends of horse park arboretum. We have those systems that have separate nonprofits, but I think our operational model has been lacking in the last decade in embracing that as a bigger part and more robust part of our operational plan. And I've been concerned about that in my time on council. And so I want to know if you have metrics that look at that specifically and where we stand nationally in terms of that metrics.

Speaker: Thank you for the question, councilor Ryan. And I'm going to see if my colleague will klein is able to speak to that. Will is that something that you're familiar with?

Speaker: Yeah. Hi. My name is will klein. I lead the parks core project for trust for public land. The closest we have to tracking that is we track spending by private

nonprofits on the park system as well. Volunteer hours, volunteer hours. Portland. If you translate that to kind of expenditures, it's about 7% of the overall spending. As for volunteer hours, which is well above average, but in terms of financial contributions from nonprofits, it's about 1%, which is well below average of 5 to 7%. And some of the cities you mentioned can be upwards of 20 to 30% of the park. Investment is from private nonprofits and partners like that.

Speaker: Thank you. Your name is will.

Speaker: Yes.

Speaker: Hi. So that was really helpful. So we have a big disparity then in terms of the financial portion. We're at 1%. And you said other cities average around 5 to 7. And then some in the top ten that you mentioned are at a much higher rate like 20 to 30. And that makes sense based on my experience when I lived in, especially in new york. So I appreciate that. And I just wanted my colleagues to I didn't know I'd get to ask this question. I didn't even know you were going to be here. But that's been something that's been noodling with me for a long time about if we go back to voters, how do we go back to voters with more of a commitment to make that a bigger part of our operational model? If we have to do some transformational choices right now, if we're going to see our voters and our our our tax burdened voters at this time to want to invest in parks, I think they need to see us thinking out of the box. And I don't think we have to think too far out of the box. Since you just allowed me to hear that we're well below the national average in terms of revenue that comes in from this source. And so I'd like to get more details on that. So maybe you could send them via sonia and she can get those to us. I appreciate you answering that question, will. And thank you.

Speaker: Thank you very much, councilor, for that question. And it's great that we had will here to give us an answer. So as. Miss hanrahan, will, is that did you have more to say or do you want to wrap up?

Speaker: No. Councilor I think we're happy to answer any questions if you have them, and just know that we will continue to stand beside you. We actually have a new employee in my division at trust for public lands starting in August, who is a Portland resident, so we're super excited about that. I'm sure that he will work hand in glove with all of the advocates for the parks levy, so we'll stay on as long as we're able if other questions come up. But we really just wish you well.

Speaker: Thank you so much, sonia. Take it away.

Speaker: Thank you. I'm sonia szymanski. I'm here today as a couple of things, including acting director of Portland parks and recreation, and so grateful for peggy. And will they always deliver? I, I didn't know you even tracked those metrics. And it's really helpful to hear and like councilor Ryan, it tracks with what I see, which is there are places where really strong and places where we could be really strong. So thank you for that. I'm here to give you about as much as they did by way of context, where we are, how we got here with this particular conversation. And then I know the bulk of your time is to hear from community and stakeholders. So we'll go quickly to that. Thank you nicola. We can go to our actually stay here for a moment. So this is I think, the third formal conversation council has had recently about a potential parks levy. You convened two times in June, early and late, for conversation about whether and how to proceed with the parks levy referral. And we're back here getting closer to our referral deadline to continue the conversation. Share guidance we heard from you, follow up on some threads of conversation that opened there, and then make sure you have what you need to keep moving forward. Nikola, next slide. Thank you. I feel it coming. Yep. At the June 24th work

session, which was a few weeks ago. Feels like yesterday. Feels like much longer ago than that. You gave us guidance that you were comfortable in the neighborhood of a dollar \$40.50 rate. We heard different versions of that from everybody who attended that work session. That tracks most closely with a scenario we showed you with the not well branded title restore maintain. This slide shows you what that gets you. It gets you a \$1.37 worth of rate to preserve for the five years of the levy. Everything in the 2526 budget. That includes things that were added back by the mayor or by you on a one time basis, and it adds an increment of funding for partnerships. Councilor Ryan, I've heard you talk about this many times, and the orientation you bring to it is where I would expect those funds would be prioritized. And I think we're going to talk more about that. I look forward to it. There's an kind of alternative option within that scenario, which also adds \$0.10 worth of levy rate, which is \$6 million a year plus minus specifically for capital maintenance. That is not a huge amount of money, but it does allow you to do some things that are really impactful at a neighborhood level. For example, we did some kind of widget project costing for playground repair, restroom repair. Playground is a couple million, restroom is maybe half a million. So it would get you a few of those things each year if you did that. Next slide nicola. We have talked a little bit about staffing levels over time at the bureau in different ways. It's a long story. It's a long and winding road with lots of decision points represented along the way. I just want to highlight a couple here. The first one actually predates the graph. It happened in 2015 when council made a policy decision to bring into permanent regular fte status 150 ish positions that had been casual and seasonal, seasonal, that in my memory, we called it rec arb. At the time that was the recreation arbitration, and that was a strong partnership between that council and labor partners. So that increased the size of the bureau to where it picks up in 2018.

There. Then you see helpful down arrow to show you that over the next couple of years, budget pressures and then the pandemic resulted in a decline in overall staffing level. And then you see the levy there as the gray dashed line, after which staffing really picked up. That shows up largely in what's called land stewardship, which is basic daily care and maintenance of parks. That also added people to a group called assets and development, largely focused on not the daily care but kind of medium scale repair and care for assets and park spaces. It includes positions in urban forestry focused on tree planting and care a little bit, and regulation, and then in the central core to support all of that work happening behind my face on the screen. That's a good lesson for me, is a key that tells you what the blue and the orange mean. Blue is overall staffing level there at the top. The orange line shows you what it looks like when you don't count pcef funded positions. And if you don't count pcef funded positions, which are primarily, maybe mostly exclusively in urban forestry, we are just about where we were in 2018, in terms of overall staffing. Next slide. Something else you can't see on the screen. Another lesson. The slides are numbered. We have nine. This is four. So we're about halfway through. This shows you this is a little bit where we are now. This is what is happening with staffing levels in the parks bureau. In this current fiscal year that just started. The bureau is getting smaller in some places and a little bigger in others, but net it's about -40 you. There was a lot of action around basic maintenance. It nets to down just a couple positions without a service level impact necessarily. The big changes were in urban forestry. And on the administrative side, we're down about 20 overall in the central services. Core support services for the delivery work. So it's a much leaner organization in the core. And of course, you know, it's also significantly smaller in urban forestry. That did two things. It moved central function of that division over to the permitting and development bureau. And it also one of the things it did was

it freed up a couple of million dollars to go back into maintenance at the bureau. So that results in a smaller bureau this year, mostly in the core. Next slide. I have two slides here that show you in more detail than you need to track or try to remember kind of what happened through the budget process. This picks up after we proposed a budget in January, and it shows you changes that the mayor made to the city administrator's recommended budget. And I just want to emphasize kind of the thematic things that happened at each of these junctures. The mayor was very focused on restoring programming and did that through additional cuts and through assumptions of increased revenue. Both of those things netted to about \$5 million coming back. Really importantly, based on what you heard from community at your budget hearings and directly sun schools and citywide sports program, which is where golden ball lives. It was wonderful for those things to come back. And there was some conversation about a small neighborhood community center potentially closing. That did not happen. There's a lot here, but those are the key points. Nicola. Next slide. And then this shows from the mayor's proposed in early May to the adopted in late June what you all did by way of amendment. This is simplified. Although I don't know it's not reductive. It's just simplified. You chose to restore quite a lot more money to the parks bureau, mostly for maintenance and a little bit to community center hours. And that is such an interesting and important conversation to have. When are we open? Who is using those spaces at different times, and who are we really serving in those operational choices? So I was grateful for that. The a fair amount of what came back, maybe two thirds is one time. And I'll remind you that the dollars 37 rate would restore for the five years of the levy, at least those things on a permanent basis. And you probably remember well, the golf conversation. So I won't pause there. Next slide. This shows what pegeen told you. This is tpl data. I have two slides. And then we're we're done with this national

context. As she mentioned, this is one of the ways tpl looks at and thinks about comparing park systems. We are a dense jurisdiction in the company of places like those you see here, and the way they measure it is staff per 10,000 residents. We're about in the middle, and I think we have a couple somewhat anomalous things that are housed in our parks bureau. And if you took them out, we'd be a little bit lower. So here we are in the middle of the pack. Nicola, does that mean that we lost her?

Speaker: Just disappeared. Yeah.

Speaker: We lost zoom entirely i.

Speaker: I can tell you the next slide and then I'm done. Or we can wait. What do you prefer?

Speaker: Let's see. Can we?

Speaker: I think we need.

Speaker: All right. I'm told that we need a five minute recess to try to straighten out the technical, technical issue.

Speaker: We're having a zoom and wide issue.

Speaker: Right? So it's not it's not just this presentation. We this is something we need to fix. All right? We're in recess until 1004.

Speaker: You keep it interesting, christopher.

Speaker: If I missed anything, what's really important to come back to before I wrap up? Okay? Okay.

Speaker: Okay.

Speaker: Okay.

Speaker: Yeah, i. I didn't realize you. Said that. Yeah. I don't want to.

Speaker: Create slides that actually appear very.

Speaker: We just. Have to have you here. I just yeah. Good good, good. Work. Yeah. Thank you. Councilor.

Speaker: Yes. Thank you. Yes, yes I that.

Speaker: Was amazing. I.

Speaker: I think so too. What's the date? I'm sorry I'm saying.

Speaker: Honestly, I was out of. Oh, I ask myself. What I would like to. 1970s for now. So to give us.

Speaker: Hi there pegeen, I'm not sure if you can hear me. This is diego barriga from the council clerk office. Would you be able to promote me as the host for the zoom meeting?

Speaker: Sure. How in the world did I end up as host?

Speaker: I think some of our staff got kicked off. And you just got lucky in the roulette backup.

Speaker: Isn't that exciting? Okay. Let's see. I use teams more than. More than. Zoom these days. Are you able to walk me through how to make you host?

Speaker: You know what? I think our clerk just got back in line, and it looks like they're hosts now.

Speaker: Oh, great. Okay. Yeah, I saw a little message pop up that said I was host, and I thought, surely that's wrong.

Speaker: No problem. Thanks for your help.

Speaker: Sure, sure.

Speaker: Okay, good. Yeah. I just have to ask.

Speaker: The mics are live. Be aware.

Speaker: Yeah.

Speaker: Climate resilience and land use committee. Reconvenes in the. Full digital capability. Sonia, I think you had one slide left.

Speaker: Yeah, one point and one slide. Thank you. Sonia szymanski, acting director of Portland parks and recreation. The point I want to make is when I should

have made before and I didn't, which is that before the chapter of the budget process story that I told you, there were some really important changes made to preserve summer programming for this year. So we called it a buyback. Things that would otherwise have been cut were restored on a one time basis for this summer, and that included summer free for all summer camps, youth conservation crew, environmental education programs that are really valuable and really valued. And it's important for you to know that those are back and those are included in the \$1.37 rate. The last slide I want to show you is the next one. Nicola, thanks for hanging in, Nicola. Also from maybe not from tpl, but a survey of what comparable and different ways locally and kind of broadly regionally in the country of what other how other park systems are funded. It is. It is not atypical that we are largely levy funded. You can see here as a proportion of the budget which is levy funded. We're somewhere in the middle of a pretty big pack. It is imperfect, and it does put you in a five year cycle that can be very difficult to manage and budget too. But we are not the certainly not the only ones. And there are jurisdictions who are just on rolling five or more year levies for very long periods of time. There are others that are in a district structure, including with some supplemental levies. So there are lots of ways to do this. And again, not to take away from the challenges of being largely levy funded, but it is evidenced here that there are other jurisdictions who do this. So the very last slide that I have is just to remind you of what I said at the beginning, which is this is where the conversation is now, because we're looking at a July 16th council hearing. We did file documents a couple days ago to this effect, and we are still in a window where those can be updated to reflect your direction before you formally take them up next week.

Speaker: Thank you so much, colleagues. Do we have any questions? Councilor Ryan?

Speaker: Thank you. Thank you sonia. Good to see you on zoom. I have a question about the one fte that focuses on. Do you have the slide where you have the buybacks and can you put that slide up?

Speaker: Nicola do you have that I think you mean in the do you mean the scenario slide that talks about partnership.

Speaker: No, it's the one where there was one fte added for I think doing enterprise work to doing like maybe stores or my point is I'm trying to get at how much we're spending to bring in earned and philanthropic revenue. But this one I think would be in the earned category. So the accounting, procurement, can I see it. For the one fte that says accounting procurement. And then my screen is blocked. There it is accounting procurement and stores. What does that mean.

Speaker: It does not mean what you just said. Seeking and procuring private revenue. It means something much more technical and internal, not less important, but different from what you just said. The dollar 37 scenario that we showed you contemplates adding a person and adding money to begin a program that is more strategically concentratedly focused on partnership work, in particular the piece of it that you just referenced seeking, developing, nurturing over the long term public private partnerships, public other institutional partnerships, public philanthropic. That's a slice where we don't have the capacity we used to, and that's where we are the 1% instead of the 5 to 7 average.

Speaker: Yeah, and a much higher average. When we looked at our top ten, according to the data that we'll be getting from the national folks, and it will be important to receive soon so we can continue this dialog. I appreciate colleagues. I just want to say that this hearing, this meeting could have been in this committee or in the arts and economy economic development committee, because on that side, we kind of look more at the wreck, the wreck side of parks where we have a lot

of through lines to economic development, where we have a lot of partnerships that we do with travel. Portland. I mean, clearly our park system is one of our draws for tourism. It should be at least, and it's definitely one of the reasons people want to build their families and businesses here. So just know that I'm wearing the arts and economic development hat in this meeting as much as the name of this committee, which I always forget, the name climate, I call it. All right. Thank you.

Speaker: Councilor Kanal.

Speaker: Well, if you.

Speaker: Go off our url, it's climate and resilient. Anyway, we got to get that to curl or something please, in the url at some point. I don't even know who I'm asking that of, but yeah, the I had a clarifying question. So what is the impact of the \$331,000 cut to community center hours in the administrator's recommended the mayor's proposal is a slide five being restored to 230 4k only in slide six. So there is a \$97,000 difference there.

Speaker: I will confirm I think I understand it nets to equivalent service levels. I, I will find out what the number means. I don't think it means anything material for hours of operation or service levels.

Speaker: Right. That's that was my understanding as well during the budget. And then similarly, if you go back to. The 20 fte that were reduced, community relations. I don't think those staff were particularly focused on the private sector philanthropic side in any way. But in terms of connection with the friends of type of groups, was that part of their function, and was any of that restored.

Speaker: That will not be affected by those changes. We have people who are really particularly focused on that and are on a trajectory to be more focused and strategic about that, including for the lots and lots of people who are engaging with friends groups day to day, but who aren't partnerships per se. We want to have a

more consistent understanding of the value of those partnerships, so that the experience of those people is more standard and similar and valuable. So I that service level will not be affected.

Speaker: Okay. What will be affected by losing 20 people or I know not all of them were community relations, but I'm specifically focused on that subset.

Speaker: I will find the number within that group. I think it's a couple or a few, and i'll get more information about impact. What I understand is there won't be significant impact to community partners who are working with the bureau. I'll put a put a finer point on it for you later today.

Speaker: Sure. And I'm I'm interested not just in the impact on the community partner side, but in general. What was the work that those folks understood that. Yeah. And I think it's no secret, broadly speaking, here, that I was opposed to the enterprise efficiencies applying to community engagement work citywide. I said that during the budget process, it's nothing to do with the parks, but I think I am concerned about how it impacts here. Colleagues, I agree with councilor Ryan's point. I do think that this has been an underutilized part of our park system. It's came up occasionally at the parks board conversations when I was a member of that board last year. I also agree with councilor Clark during the budget process, when she brought up the importance of volunteerism, including in parks where we're doing a good job. But, you know, I don't want to ease up there. I'm going to sort of awkward position in a little bit, because I actually recommended looking at the slide that has the options on it. I was during our work session, very much leaning towards the lower end of the potential levy options, primarily because of the maintenance aspect of it. I am concerned not about the idea of doing maintenance through levies. I'm concerned that there will not be enough to meet the. Sense of what the levy will do when we use terms like major maintenance

being funded through the levy, I am concerned about giving a false impression that we will be able to make a meaningful dent in a \$600 million plus parks maintenance backlog, with \$6 million a year for five years. And so this is maybe less about numbers than it is about words and how we describe it in those attachments to the document that we're going to see next week, which are the actual ballot title and the explanatory statement. I am concerned that we are going to tell people and when they vote for it, they will anticipate receiving more than the funding actually allows for. And so I given that we will likely at some point be having a conversation around a bond in the future that might include parks, I don't think it will be exclusively focused there. And I don't mean to preview anything that's not, as far as I'm aware, is not really in the works at this moment, but I do. I do think that that might be a better, a better place to go for that. I think that if we're able to describe maintenance in a way that is more accurate to what we are funding with \$6 million a year, because major maintenance is, I believe, \$10,001 or more. And there are there's a very big difference between a project that could be 2 or \$3 million and a project that could be \$12,000. There's a difference between a single park, restroom, roof and whatever the solution ends up being if one is found to columbia pool. And so I think if we're able to convey and I think this is really about our categorization system and naming of things of major at \$10,001, which is clearly not accurate. So that that's my concern right now around it. Again, it's not specifically about the dollar amount, but it's about how we're describing it and what impression we're conveying to the public. I don't want to sell anyone a false bill of goods, and I don't know if that's something. I want to give you the opportunity without the without any pressure to add anything to that conversation. If you'd like. Councilor, one thing I can tell you is that the draft resolution language we have, which I don't know, it calls out the fact that we recognize that we have major issues, that this is not going

to resolve, and indicates that we plan to ask the legislature to authorize the use of sdcs for major maintenance, and recognizes that at some point, we're going to be talking about a bond. So I don't know whether the you know, I don't know I don't know if that's reflected in the draft ballot title, but it is in the resolution.

Speaker: You're correct on both fronts. The resolution is significantly longer than I think all three of the attachments put together, and has room for a lot of that nuance. I as a voter, I was not going back to the resolutions that referred items to the ballot, but I did read the entirety of the title and the statement and all those things. So I want to make sure that the thing that you actually get in the mail is, and that you're voting based on, is the thing that has the most accuracy in the event that there is maybe not a contradiction, but just more detail in one place, more nuance in one place.

Speaker: We've got so few words to work with and like the captioning question, but I mean, we do have the summary, which is something like 165 words when you take a look at that, I think.

Speaker: Yeah, I think the word major is what. Yeah. Hung me up. And maybe there's more to that that can be helpful I don't know.

Speaker: Thank you.

Speaker: All right. Seeing. No, none of my two colleagues back in the queue. Thank you very much. Sonia and rebecca, could you please read the next item?

Speaker: Item two public hearing on parks levy referral.

Speaker: Could you read the names of the first three people signed up?

Speaker: First testifiers we have are ashley murray, elizabeth milner, and jerrica ferguson.

Speaker: Good evening, council members. My name is ashley murray, executive director of the sellwood community house. And I'm here today not just to advocate

for a parks levy, but to invite us into a new narrative for Portland parks and recreation. What is the higher amount really mean to you? What does it stand for beyond the dollar? And if you're thinking the higher amount might not pass and are considering a lower rate, even if that means fewer services, I urge you to view partnerships as a way to close the gap. What if we could still deliver that highest vision at the lower price tag? I believe we can. When I say partnerships, I don't mean volunteers stepping in to run camps or community centers. Volunteers are incredible and they deserve better support. But today I'm talking about professional, mission driven organizations partnering with the city to deliver essential services in a real partnership. The city brings funds, space and institutional alignment. The partner brings creativity, earned revenue, deep trust and on the ground capacity. Together, we co-create, deliver and build something that lasts. Two examples the sellwood community house. We inherited a \$5.2 million maintenance backlog asset. Using strategy and creativity. We addressed it for just 1.9 million with not a single city dollar. The shack is. Sellwood park sat dormant for years. We reopened it for \$45,000, renovating it in just 60 days. It now runs six days a week, hosts 125 free community events just this summer. So far, free programs for all ages from 10 a.m. To 7 p.m. This is what partnership makes possible. More access, more efficiency, more joy with less financial strain. And this levy, I believe it can completely transform Portland, not just as a city that loves parks, but as a city where parks and recreation drives the national renaissance. Portland becomes the best city in America to raise a family. Not my marketing, but my lived experience and real outcomes. Sellwood community house is currently disrupting the narrative. We're rejecting the idea that the backlog is too big. Services have to go away and there's nothing we can do. We're showing what's possible and we're asking the city to invest in partnerships through this levy. Last

month, I attended the strong towns national gathering in providence, rhode island, in a breakout on park maintenance backlog. The presenter said, you do not want your city on this next slide. Then it clicked. Portland parks and recreation was one of the three case studies which she was to speak about. I did not leave the room defeated. I left ready to work because I don't carry a camp mindset. I start with, yes, in five years I want p and r to be on her final slide. The success story, the underdog city that figured it out. Let's build a better story together through a bold, visionary parks levy that prioritizes partnerships to far exceed today's program level and dramatically accelerate how we address our maintenance backlog. Thank you.

Speaker: Good morning, council members. My name is elizabeth milner, development and engagement director at the community house. I'm here today to urge you to put forth a levy that leads with a bold vision to reimagine recreation in Portland and to be creative and think critically about the dollar amount and partnerships that will get us there. Parks are more than green spaces. They're connectors, equalizers, and the heart of a community. For decades, Portland kids shared a simple, powerful experience summers in their neighborhood parks. That collective memory helped define what it meant to grow up here. Today, despite a much larger population, we are operating operating a fraction of the recreation programs we once did. In 1970, Portland ran 22 community centers and 60 staffed summer park programs, plus citywide sports, dance, music, and art. Five years after passing the last levy, we are once again looking at diminishing programing when we should be looking at expanding and exponentially our own skidmore fountain reads. Good citizens are the riches of a city. That's not just a metaphor, it's good policy. Our local economy, schools, and even the economic health of the state depend on our ability to attract and retain families. Keep in mind that simple actions can have big impacts. Here's a great example. At the reactivated

shaq and sellwood park, we host free music in the park every Friday. There's no stage, no big sound system, but more than 100 people gather each week. We offer free dance classes, storytimes, game nights, and so much more. Led by a combination of community partners and volunteers serving people from more than 22 zip codes. We offset our costs by selling coffee and cold treats, which allows us to hire, hire and mentor dozens of local teens. This could be happening in every neighborhood in Portland in a way that supports and honors each neighborhood's unique culture and needs. These experiences aren't just nice to have, they are real, tangible impacts on public health, safety, stress, affordability, and community connection. So here's a suggestion for this levy lead with vision. People need to understand what exactly their lived experiences will look like. If this levy passes or fails. Make that vision what we actually want and need, not what we think we can do based on what we've done in the past. Be bold enough to start fresh. What are the necessary basic levels of services? Reexamine assumptions, including the cost of our maintenance backlog and the cost to offer citywide programs. Lead with your desired outcomes for the city and create the funding and partnership plan that will get us there. Is the number of full time staff, a good metric of how our city can best serve the public and empower collaboration. Partner with nonprofits, community groups and local businesses, remove barriers to collaboration and open the door to creativity, community led activation and creative commerce ideas that can support the public good. I'm here to tell you that we can do so much more for Portlanders, and I know this because we are doing it at the sellwood community house. If you lead with imagination and act with courage on this levy, this could be the most dynamic, engaging and supportive city for families in the country. Thank you.

Speaker: You can go ahead. Jericho.

Speaker: Hi, my name is derek ferguson. I'm the interim executive director for Portland community football club, and I'm here in support of the parks levy. We serve more than 300 low income and historically underserved youth in northeast Portland around the neighborhood. And mcdaniel high school. We utilize soccer as a tool to provide wraparound services to our youth players and their family members. This park levy is necessary and in my belief, an essential service for all Portlanders. Without players, team, and services, our youth would not have the ability to have safe, centralized and accessible places to play, learn and develop. The players team supports prioritizing collaboration, shared opportunities, expanding partnerships, and increases equitable opportunities for our youth and families. By renewing this levy, it continues the commitment we have for Portlanders. The parks team cares and is an a reflection and representation of the city of Portland. Our council members that you care. Ppr is a frontward facing agency who works day to day with youth, family, adults and nonprofit partners. Their work within the levy, including after school programing, builds resilience, resourcefulness and strengthens our Portland youth and families. We have a belief that recreation is not a privilege. It's vital for the strength of the community. It is necessary for youth development and is a tool for the city to actually provide direct care services. Other u.s. Cities and countries are investing in youth programing, which has a large return on investment in baltimore, mayor scott is being applauded for bringing crime rates down significantly by investing in 42 summer youth programs, 29 literacy programs, and extending their recreation centers to 11 p.m. Opening summer programing and public schools in iceland. They reduce teen drinking and drug use by utilizing public funds to increase organized sports, music, art, dance, and youth activities to give children, primarily low income families, a place to feel a part of their community. This park levy does this and more. It invests

in the health of our parks, the health of our youth and invest in our city's commitment. At pcfc, we work with families who are already struggling with continued high living prices, and this parks levy is a lifeline for them, their children and neighbors. It creates safety and belonging. At pcfc, we provide free programming and part of this levy by not renewing it will only hurt already hurting families. The gaps continue to grow between those that have and those that do not. This levy helps our most disenfranchized youth get an equitable leg up access and feel a sense of belonging. I thank the council for their time and support for this parks levy.

Speaker: Next, we have Ryan Sotomayor, Linda Robinson and Ryan Hite. You can start at the table, I think. Linda.

Speaker: Oh, you want me to be first? Okay. My name is Linda Robinson. I'm a longtime parks advocate for East Portland. I became an advocate when we were annexed to the city about 40 years ago. I came to talk mostly about the community partnerships. I was one of the recipients of our organization, Friends of Gateway Green, was one of the recipients of one of the grants and that program. I was particularly impressed by the quarterly meetings that we had where park staff were open to suggestions. They went out of their way to, to help people get past barriers for so long. The first response that one generally gets has gotten has been, oh, I don't think we can do that when a nonprofit approaches the city. But in this case, they had a lot of good open communication. They spent some time and actually created some things that would get past some of those barriers. For nonprofits. The nonprofit that I belong to doesn't serve a particular underserved group. It really we focus on an area. But what? But our main focus, our main goal is to make sure that the young people and the other residents who live around Gateway Green are able to use it, that they know about it to provide programming that that they that they would like and that they will come to. And so this was really

important for us to make connections with these organizations that serve these various minority groups that live in east Portland. So that's that's really we need to keep some sort of community partnership. I really like the idea of making networking possible or making it happen more often, or making it available for people to collaborate. We've we've made some good connections with a number of youth organizations in east Portland through the community partnership program. I'm also really want to put a, you know, a word in for the summer free for all. It has been a great benefit for residents of east Portland and really needs to continue a lot of those events we tried when we were earlier, before they had the free for all, where the community had to raise the money to pay for the movie or pay for the music that was provided in the parks. We had a very hard time raising the money because we don't have that many businesses. So thank you.

Speaker: You have another 23 seconds if you want it.

Speaker: I have more time.

Speaker: Yes.

Speaker: Oh, okay.

Speaker: The bell says you have 30s.

Speaker: Okay. So the other thing I really want to I really you know, we don't have a lot of major maintenance backlog in east Portland because most of our things are newer. But I do support including some major, some major maintenance monies in this levy to so we can at least make a little bit of a dent in that in that backlog. But I agree with others who said that, you know, let's strengthen that partnership with the nonprofit community, with the businesses in the community. There are a lot of things we've wanted to do over the years and often been told, well, we can't do that rather than, well, let's see, maybe we can work something out. And so that's my main point today.

Speaker: Thank you.

Speaker: Thank you. Councilors. My name is Ryan Height. I was born in Portland and I currently live and work in district four. I am a horticulturist in Washington Park. A dream come true for me. I'm also a proud union steward for my work unit, and it is in that capacity that I come before you today. I'm here to urge you in the strongest terms, to pass a full levy onto the November ballot. I do so with the caveat that this is an unsustainable and cynical way to fund parks and rec. No other bureau has to ask voters to approve their budgets or fee increases, not PBOT or the water bureau, and certainly not the police. The fact that we are even here debating this is a failure by the parks leadership to find a sustainable funding model. In the five years since the first levy was passed. And yet, if this doesn't pass, management has said that the front line workers are the ones who are proposed to be cut. I want to give you an idea of what a frontline maintenance workers job is like. When I first started working for parks and rec, I was a park technician in downtown. I would start every morning at 6 a.m. By rushing down to Couch Park to pick up needles, broken bottles, and human excrement from the playground and park. Before school started at the Metropolitan Learning Center next door. Then it was off to Waterfront Park to spend four hours stick picking every inch of the park from Hawthorne Bridge to the Steel Bridge, cleaning up cigarette butts, pink donut boxes, old clothes and blankets, discarded food, drug paraphernalia and worse, filling my truck to the brim with trash every single day. And dozens of parks throughout the city do this every day. These jobs are absolutely necessary to keep our parks clean, beautiful, and accessible to the public. Speaking personally, the levy funding has been a huge help for my work unit. We were able to hire another horticulturist to share the load of caring for acres of ornamental beds. The parks department also hired volunteer coordinators, and we've gained hundreds of hours of volunteer

help as a result of that. The new citywide utility worker crew has been very helpful in getting large maintenance projects done, from leaf cleanup to invasives removal to mulching and irrigation repairs in our parks, specifically for districts one and four, the swing shift crew has added extra trash runs in our most visited parks. At the end of the day, and especially during festival season, that has been an incredible help. While my recommendation is to fully fund parks and rec with a \$1.80 levy, I also understand the political and financial realities of the moment, and all I ask is that if you cannot pass a full levy, then please remember to take a fine tooth comb to the budget and work as hard as you can to save frontline maintenance workers jobs, and instead look to the bloated middle management and the upper management who got us into this mess to begin with. Thank you.

Speaker: Next we have ureta aroche, alicia blakely, and jackie rivera.

Speaker: Jackie and yuridia are not here.

Speaker: Okay.

Speaker: Hello, madam president, City Council. For the record, my name is alicia blakely. I am the program manager with the community services department of home forward and residents of district two. I'm here today to testify in strong support of extending the park levy and to share how park levy supports the well-being of our residents and the broader Portland community. Home forward is the public housing authority for Multnomah County. We are the largest affordable housing provider in the city, city, county and state. Many of our residents rely on Portland parks and recreation programs for supportive services and programs, connection to community resources, job opportunities, free lunches and activities, and accessible recreation. I would like to highlight some of the key programs that made possible by the parks levy that our residents rely on. The first is the access discount program, which offers up to 90% off costs and makes it possible for our

residents to freely participate in various programs. For example, the free summer lunch free for all events, which includes free lunch and play, occurs in around home forward properties. I've heard from residents how important this low cost and free options are, and how access, discount and free programing opens up new opportunities. Another example is a program tailored to specific demographic communities and the teen force, adaptive recreation and lifelong recreation. These programs provide teens, older adults, and residents living with disabilities opportunities to engage with peers, build community, and experience new activities. And finally, thanks to the parks levy community partnership program, home forward was able to expand our coaching program. This is a new program, a work experience initiative combined with leadership development and community engagement for low income, multicultural youth ages 12 to 17 that occurs within the summer. These opportunities, among other, build community support, economic and educational success and are invaluable to improving home for residents health and well-being. I encourage you to extend this critical funding source that makes recreation truly accessible for all Portlanders. Thank you.

Speaker: Next, we have jacqueline rivera, jonathan nicholas, and pat fobes.

Speaker: Thank.

Speaker: You.

Speaker: Good morning. I'm pat fobes from the Portland parks alliance. The alliance is made up of individuals and organizations from every part of the city. We are not advocates for any particular park. We are advocates for Portland's crown jewels. Our system of parks, public gardens, trails and natural areas, including our newest parks. You all know the basic facts. Deferred capital maintenance backlog of 600 million and growing 1 in 5 assets at risk of failure, and 10 to 15 years funding model that results in periodic existential crises on a regular basis. And

unfortunately, a 40 year pattern of kicking the can down the road, hoping that somehow the situation will change. We believe that the new form of government with all of you new leaders, represents a once in a generation opportunity to break with the 40 year old pattern of hoping for a solution and instead begin to solve the problem. We've urged you to take a critical first step towards a solution by allocating 10% of levy funds to reduce the deferred maintenance backlog, we recognize that 10% of the levy will not solve the capital maintenance problem, but a first step is never a total solution. It can be a meaningful beginning. Here's what it can do. And we agree with councilor kanal about specificity and importance of being very clear what the voters are getting. This is what it can do. Offer the voters something more than a higher tax for the same level of service they got in 2020. Address some of the issues Portlanders care most about open and functioning restrooms, safe playgrounds, and playground equipment. Operating splash pads during the summer months, and importantly, allocating 10% of the levy is a statement that we will not let 20% of Portland's crown jewels fail in the next ten years, we will plant a flag and take a first step. We will start getting some things done that are visible and people can see. We understand that long term bonds are a traditional source of revenue for addressing capital expenditures, and in a perfect world, are more are a more efficient solution than levy revenue. We also recognize that a potential change in sdcs would help, but I think we all know we're not, in a perfect world, a bond large enough to significantly reduce the deferred maintenance backlog is years away. Changes in sdcs that's an uncertain outcome. In the meantime, while we wait for perfect solution, neighborhood lose community pools, playgrounds and sports fields and lampposts fall on people, resulting in expensive legal settlement and an expensive repair plan. The levy allocation we're asking for won't address everything, but it can deliver to the taxpayers tangible,

visible improvements. And just very quickly, we appreciate offers to solve this problem outside the levy, including with resolution, revocable resolutions, directing the use of general funds in the parks bureau. These. Unfortunately, these offers have been sincerely and honestly made for the last 40 years and have consistently been broken. Thank you. We hope we're wrong. But right now, those offers are not just words. Let's get something done.

Speaker: Thank you.

Speaker: Next we have jonathan perez, lucio mansilla, seth jarosz, and james o'laughlin. Jonathan, you can begin.

Speaker: Hello, council members, my name is jonathan perez. I am an alumni relations teenager team and the conservation programs I participated from 2014 to 2024, and I am a resident of district two. I am here today to talk about the parks levy that was passed back in 2020, and why a levy needs to be added to the November ballot. The parks levy helped to fund various environmental education programs, specialize in connecting youth to natural spaces around waikiki, in particular focused on stewardship training youth to maintain our city's trails, gardens, and natural spaces. More importantly, these youth dedicate. Been impacted by these programs, made possible thanks to the levy. Many of the youth that I had the honor of working alongside have continued to pursue careers in the environmental field, citing ycc as the spark that ignited their newfound passion. For this, I urge you to recommend the parks levy be added to the ballot in November. If voters pass it, it will once again benefit thousands of youth by providing them the opportunity to learn, gain new skills and develop as young leaders. It will also help protect and preserve our natural spaces and healthier communities and parks. Thank you.

Speaker: Is it me? Yeah.

Speaker: Good morning councilors. My name is sophia and I am a former teenager, team and youth conservation crew participant and a resident of district three. I worked for the youth conservation crew for two years, from the summer of 2023 until the summer of 2025, and I would have worked this year if I could have. I was also in the teenager teen program for the 2021 season. While my participation was relatively brief, my experiences changed the way I view our city's natural areas. Ycc has five crews tree crew, trail crew, community gardens crew and two city nature crews. Last year I was on trail crew for the first time. Over the seven weeks we worked, we went to parks all over the city and maintained and built new trails. Our first project was at mount tabor, a park that I go to very often. We replaced a rotting wooden pathway and elevated a sunken and uneven trail. We also helped repair damage done by the ice storm a few years back. Doing this work, funded by the parks levy, not only ensured that mount tabor was safer for visitors, but also allowed me to have a direct impact on one of my favorite natural areas and taught me technical skills I wouldn't have learned otherwise. This and all other maintenance performed by ycc, is part of the Portland parks backlog. In other words, it would not get done if it wasn't for ycc and the parks levy that provides funding. Ycc also gave me a strong foundation for a future in sustainability work and environmental policy. By connecting me to professionals in various fields, ycc included career exploration opportunities and I got to meet and talk with arborists, heavy machinery operators and water bureau employees, just to name a few. The program also offers professional development workshops, and I learned many technical and networking skills needed as a young professional. This program and others like it create employment opportunities, educate youth about sustainability and the importance and function of natural areas and care for Portland's over 250 parks. However, these programs also create a diverse community of young people

who care about the environment and know the worth and necessity of protecting it. As someone who cares deeply about this issue and protested in front of this very building multiple times for sustainable practices in this city, Portland's environmental education and work programs, let me be a part of that in a very tangible way. I encourage you to continue to support the parks levy and keep our natural spaces healthy, safe and accessible. Thank you.

Speaker: Thank you sir.

Speaker: Good morning. Councilor Kanal Councilor Novick Councilor Ryan. My name is James O'Loughlin. I'm a field representative for laborers for 83. Our union represents parks workers, public works workers, workers throughout the city. I'm here today to encourage you to pass a robust parks levy, not just because I'm the father of two children that use our parks every day in district two, but because in the course of our conversations leading up to this levy, we have really encountered a wide variety of stakeholders that have a lot of different motivations and the diverse backgrounds that I earnestly believe we can coalesce behind a strong compromise levy that sees that our families, our workers, our green spaces, and the city's financial interests are all served. As Ryan spoke to the work that is actually performed by our parks and recreation workers, is hard. It's essential to maintain these spaces so they can be enjoyed by the community we have. But it's also been fraught with inconsistent funding over the past decade, from cuts to combined general funds that are often harvested for other purposes, to the challenges we've all faced with high cost of living and COVID, it has been the seesaw of funding that we have an opportunity to stabilize moving forward, and that kind of stability pays huge dividends in running a high efficiency organization. Instead of having to train incoming workers who do not have the knowledge base that our folks do, and retaining people, knowing that they'll be able to build a career and a life working for

the communities that they love to serve our organization, because of our deep commitment to the plight of working people, can often be viewed as a bit stubborn or militant. And I'm here to assure you that we are very interested in partnership in this space. We want a very robust levy that is going to economically and just on the front level service of the parks and recreation communities serve this community. But we recognize there are a lot of different components that go into that. I really want to stress for this council that the most important thing we see is that council speaks with one voice. If we are able to hash out our differences where we can, and come to the voters with a robust package that we can all support, I think that will really illustrate that this important, essential community service is going to get the support voters want.

Speaker: I just need to interrupt to say that because of a microphone issue, jonathan perez's testimony wasn't picked up other than in the room. So I just wanted to know if jonathan wants to reiterate his testimony so that people out there in the world will pick it up.

Speaker: Yeah, I don't mind. To speak twice.

Speaker: Good on you, sir.

Speaker: So hello, council members, my name is jonathan perez lucio mansilla, and I'm an alumni of Portland parks and recreation's teenager team and youth conservation programs I participated in from 2014 to 2024, and I am a resident of district two. I am here today to talk about the parks levy that was passed back in 2020, and why a new levy needs to be added to the November ballot. The parks levy helped to fund various environmental education programs that specialize in connecting youth to the natural spaces around them. Waikiki, in particular, focused on stewardship, training youth to maintain our city's trails, gardens, and natural spaces. More importantly, these youth dedicate seven weeks of their summer to

tackle the bureau's backlog of work. If the parks levy is reintroduced and passed again, programs like ycc and tnt can continue to fulfill their goal of connecting youth to nature and developing a new generation of stewards. In my ten years of participation, I had the pleasure of being a volunteer with the teenager team, a crew member with ycc, and finally a crew leader with both ycc and tnc. The youth conservation crew consists of five different crews. The ivy league, trails crew, tree crew, city nature east, and the community gardens crew. As a crew leader, I was able to co-lead four of the five crews in some capacity, where I learned how to identify native versus invasive plants and how to properly build a new trail that is safe and sustainable. I learned how to best communicate a work plan in an efficient manner and solve problems on the spot, and how to lead a team through a variety of projects. A skill I still use today as an engineer. Today I am a stormwater management engineer with a company called contact. While being an engineer was always a dream of mine, it was only after my time with pan that I began to show interest in the environmental field. Specifically, it was after my first year of crew leading the ivy league, seeing the physical impact that my crew made on various parks across the city, removing invasive plants, getting my hands in the soil, knowing that each vine that I ripped out will prevent a tree from collapsing, or free up space for our native plant species to thrive once again. It was then that I knew that I wanted to stick around this field, and so I did. On a personal level, my time with ycc didn't just provide me the opportunity to gain new skills, new technical skills and knowledge. It also gave me the chance to grow as a leader in the field of conservation. In addition, it helped me save up money for my college education. I am just one of the many individuals that has been impacted by these programs, made possible thanks to the parks levy. Many of the youth that I had the honor of working alongside have continued to pursue careers in the environmental field,

citing ycc as the spark that ignited their newfound passion. For this, I urge you to recommend that the parks levy be added to the ballot in November. If voters pass it, it will once again benefit thousands of youth by providing them with opportunities to learn, gain skills and develop as young leaders. It will also connect and protect and preserve our natural spaces and healthier communities and parks. Thank you, thank you.

Speaker: Next we have georgina moran, eva, adrian and jamie dutcher. Georgina's online. You can go ahead.

Speaker: Thank you. Councilor novick Ryan and other council members, thanks for the opportunity to speak to you today. My name is georgina moran. I'm from Portland, Oregon, district two. I'm a board member of the intertwine alliance, a coalition of trails advocates and trails planners throughout the Portland Vancouver region. Mission is to preserve and nurture healthy regional system of parks and trails and natural areas areas in the region. I'm also the founder and director of access, recreation and access for all, llc, a disability led organizations whose mission is accessible outdoor information for people of all abilities to determine if a park or trail meets their needs and desired level of adventure. So i'll be speaking to you today as an access advocate with a mobility disability. My focus is on access and inclusion through intentional land stewardship and maintenance, and parks are for everyone. Park parks are Portland's most inclusive public spaces, places where people of all abilities can gather, move, recharge the only. This only happens within our parks, when our parks are accessible and well cared for. Maintenance is equity. When maintenance falls behind, so does access. That could mean broken pathways and accessible restrooms. Blocked trails, playgrounds out of reach for children with disabilities. Stewardship is about dignity and inclusion. Ensure parks are barrier free. Investing in care and maintenance keeps parks open and welcoming to all. It

protects pathways and playgrounds, maintains safe access to natural areas and preserves tree canopy for everyone to enjoy. So this levy meets the needs and safety and inclusion of people in all districts. The levy is a commitment to equity and access. Without it, barriers grow based on income, ability and geography, so let's keep our parks accessible and welcoming by passing this levy, we can protect access to support our community and ensure everyone can experience Portland's natural beauty, including me. I'm a, you know, an avid park user, so thank you very much for supporting this levy.

Speaker: Good morning councilors. My name is Ava Valandrian. I am the vice president of the board of directors for the Intertwine Alliance, which is who I'm representing here today. The Intertwine Alliance, as Georgina had just stated, is a coalition of 70 organizations that span the Portland metro region, and we work to ensure that nature thrives, and every resident of the region benefits from access to nature. Our coalition partners with parks and rec districts and government agencies, NGOs, private businesses working together in an ongoing campaign for nature, which is why this levy is so important to us today. We fully support the levy because it is Portland city parks and natural areas that make Portland so special and livable. And most importantly, they provide a way to connect with nature right in our neighborhoods, which is often that first access point. They clean our air and water and provide wildlife and wildlife habitat. When parks go unfunded, the impacts are real. Invasive species spread, trails erode, tree canopy thins, and water quality declines. Deferred maintenance today means bigger problems tomorrow, and then stewardship of our parks directly protects Portland's tree canopy, which is our best natural defense against rising temperatures, storm water, and poor air quality. Well maintained parks mean healthier trees and cooler neighborhoods and more resilient communities. The levy ensures that Portlanders play an active role in

caring for the land itself that we share, supporting that stewardship. From neighborhood volunteers to youth environmental education, this levy is our tool for protecting our parks, trails and natural spaces across Portland. It is about keeping these places healthy and accessible for everyone today and into the future. Thank you.

Speaker: Good morning everyone.

Speaker: My name is jamie doescher and I'm the president of laborers local 483. Today I want to read a letter that I sent to council recently. I write today to express both gratitude and appreciation for the leadership that you have demonstrated over the course of the city's budget process. The long hours, listening sessions and the challenging decisions have been noticed and appreciated by laborers. Local 43 members, staff and officers. As president of laborers local 483 and as an aquatics coordinator over east Portland community center, I recognize the difficult work that determines the city budget and how complex and robust it is. While none of us get all the things that we want, we acknowledge that the budget has complete or has both been a collaborative effort and a constant struggle. Now that the budget is complete, I'm writing today about the upcoming decision on the referral for parks levy to the ballot. Now more than ever, we need a parks levy to preserve jobs and services at the highest level possible, while being sensitive to the strategic realities of the moment. We understand that there are many factors at work and that it needs us all to listen to concerns from across the communities of Portland when it comes to a levy rate. But adequate funding is necessary if Portland parks and recreation is going to thrive at providing critical city services. Our hope is that common ground can be found with the mayor's office, City Councilors, labor partners and stakeholders across Portland's communities. Without sufficient levy funding, reductions in the Portland parks and recreation workforce and service will

exacerbate many of the crises and challenges facing the city now, including housing and food instability, quality, entry level jobs, lack of access to affordable child care, climate change, weather instability, particularly on the east side of Portland and east county Portland parks provide critical air quality support with existing and expanding tree canopies, and provide green spaces for community members to relax, rest and recreate the maintenance of Portland parks and technology.

Community service or community centers is a matter of public safety. In extreme heat or cold weather events almost every day of the year, community centers provide programming, warmth or cooling that saves lives. In order to maintain and properly manage the assets of Portland parks and recreation, which is extensive and covers more ground in real estate than any other bureau. We need the labor provided by workers in Portland parks and recreation. We urge you to collaborate with your colleagues and to keep an eye on the jewel that is Portland parks Portland parks and recreation system, which provides life saving, life altering and life affirming services. If there are any ways in which we can aid the conversation around this critical issue, please let us know. 43 was the front facing campaign campaign support for the successful passage of the parks levy in 2020, the Oregon southern idaho district council of laborers supported the 2020 campaign financially and helped mobilize to ensure a winning campaign. The laborers are committed to amplifying the message of the parks levy to ensure that it is successful in passing at the highest rate possible, to support the continuation of these vital services and programming. In closing, I want to remind everyone and emphasize this is not a parks issue. This is not a recreation issue. It is parks and recreation and the levy is going to fund a sustainable parks and recreation system. Thank you.

Speaker: We have lee rapoport and lynn felton.

Speaker: Yes.

Speaker: Good morning City Councilors. My name is lee rapoport. And I've lived in northeast Portland inner northeast Portland since 1995. Now district two I'm a program manager for the natural resource workforce development program with a nonprofit that's been serving Portland since 1967. I'm here today to speak in strong support of Portland parks and recreation and the parks and the parks levy. For the past 18 years, I've had the privilege of helping opportunity young people explore career paths in the natural resource field, many of many of whom come from communities that historically haven't had easy access to nature or career opportunities in environmental work. Thanks to our ongoing partnership with Portland parks and recreation and funding from the parks levy, these young people are paid to do meaningful hands on restoration work in places like johnson creek and the columbia slough watersheds. These experiences are not just about removing invasives and planting trees. Our programs are about investing in the lives of the young people of our city and as a result, investing in the present and the future of Portland. For example, when our young when our high school students work with elementary school students in east Portland teaching them how to restore natural habitats, frequently something clicks for them. They begin to see themselves as leaders in their jobs, in their classrooms, and in their communities. Many of them return to participate in more programs because they feel seen and valued, and contributing to their communities becomes important to them. One of our students recently told me that before the program, they never imagined themselves working outdoors. Now they're planning a career in natural resources. And in fact, I have two of our former participants work for the city, one in parks and recreation and the and another as a police officer. Without the dynamic and caring Portland parks and recreation staff that that work with us year after year and the parks levy, it would be difficult to continue aspects of our natural resource program

that changed the lives of our students. The levy gives us the resources to pay youth for their time while helping ensure our cities, natural spaces, our natural spaces are cared for. The partnership between pike and parks and recreation is helping shape not just the next generation of environmental stewards, but the next generation period. I urge you to continue supporting this vital work and the funding that makes it possible. Thank you.

Speaker: Well, good morning, chair novick and councilors. My name is lynn felton. I am a district one resident and a participant in the park alliance. I'm here to advocate that 10% of the proposed levy amount go towards addressing the estimated 600 million plus in deferred capital maintenance backlog. Sure, as councilor canal noted, that will be a drop in the bucket in addressing that backlog, but it will be progress. A little story in district one a new park opened in October 2017. Loowit view it's a beautiful park. The misting station stopped working two years in. It now gurgles next Wednesday when it's about 100 degrees out here. Think of the difference between gurgle and mist. That's deferred capital maintenance and the last one town hall meeting. Councilors heard a father say, my son tumbled down the playground hill because his foot got caught in the deteriorating turf. Thankfully, the kid was fine. That's deferred capital maintenance. Irving park city pays out near \$1 million in settlements because of light posts. That's deferred capital maintenance. Now, to simplify, really simplify. If Portland parks is a car, we've been driving with the check engine light on and we're still pretending that check engine light isn't there, but it is. You're all politicians and you know the reality of a bond in this economic atmosphere. Right? The moment to start addressing the backlog is now. And this levy provides us with the opportunity to at least start. Portlanders, as you all know, love their parks. You are asking them to show that love in dollars and cents, but it's fair for them to ask, oh, what about that check

engine light, right? And they're not getting an answer. With this levy, we have the opportunity to show Portlanders some value for their money. This council has an opportunity to show problem identified problem being worked on progress. And that is something Portlanders love to see. So I encourage you with this levy, to please include 10% of the monies to go towards deferred capital maintenance. Thank you.

Speaker: That concludes testimony.

Speaker: Thank you everyone for testifying. Thanks to sonia and thanks to the trust for public land. Our next meeting is Thursday, July 24th. We'll have pcef committee appointments. Councilor kanal. Sorry.

Speaker: Sorry. I just wanted to say thanks to everybody for testifying. And I love the metaphors here. I've been in the position of driving a car with a check engine light on longer than I'd like for a really long time in my years. I just wanted to mention one thing I forgot to earlier, and which I believe it's jerica online mentioned, which is I really hope that everybody looks at baltimore as an example of what can be done in the public safety space through programing and recreation. The reason that I fought so hard for community center hours during this is not only the programing, all the all the obvious reasons that are very direct make sense, but the public safety aspect is really important too. I would love to see and I want to. We were instructed that we should float any potential changes we wanted to make during this work session so that it's not a surprise and we're not sitting on the dais next week because as many of you know, we have six days in which to come together as a council. Once again, we're trying to do a lot of coming together as 12 people and not nearly enough time as we do the budget, but because we were told to float that here, I will. I would love to see a pilot program where we're extending community center hours, ideally at one community center per district. You know,

they went to 11 p.m. I don't know that it needs to go to that exact time, but in baltimore they went to 11. But to see those extended hours, to see the public safety benefits of having charles jordan community center be open on Sundays, to see all these different things that should be done it. It's when we were trying to when we were looking at how much it cost and how much it cut. These are actually really small amounts of money to extend or shorten hours by one hour a day or and in the context of the budget, it was hard to find \$300,000 in the context of a levy. I think this would it wouldn't be a drop in the bucket, but it wouldn't be a existential change to it. And so I just wanted to mention that. And for those who are trying to, baltimore is not the only one. I think it's just the starkest example of where you've seen declines, in particular in the summer months in violence among young people, not just teenagers, but into young adulthood as well, by giving people a third place to go to, that's free. I we you should not have to pay to exist in society broadly, but in particular, young people should have a place to go. And in the evening you can extend community center hours for at 5 a.m. That's going to serve one part of the population who does swim classes or whatever in the, in the, in the early morning. But in the evenings and on the weekends is where you're actually going to see I think the bigger. Effect of a small amount of money to extend the hours in terms of the public safety side of it. So I just wanted to flag that we're we don't know exactly how much that's going to be costing, but we are going to be trying to get that number so we can see. But I'm guessing based on our budget related research, that we're talking in the hundreds of thousands, not in the millions to do a small pilot project within this levy. So i'll leave it there. Thank you.

Speaker: Thank you. Councilor. Councilor. Ryan.

Speaker: Yes, chair? Is this our opportunity to just make a couple comments before we move on? Of course. Okay. Thank you. And thank you, councilor canal,

for those words. I'll just add some support on what was said by councilor dull and that in addition to public safety, it's also a student achievement concern. So parents know and teachers know that keeping our kids busy and evenings, weekends and summers is key to seeing their social and economic mobility increase as they move towards student achievement and through their education journeys. So it's a big part of that. I just wanted to also thank everybody for the testimony. It was really awesome to hear. I also want to thank acting director or interim director sonia shyman sky for the slideshow, and also having the national participants in this call. It was very well done. I just I think some of you know, amongst the 12 of us, I've really been struggling to get a number that goes anything north of 140 for already tax burdened residents. But and we need to address our shortfall, I think we need to address our shortfall in more creative ways, as I would agree, and I think you'd know this from some of my statements earlier in other meetings, is I liked I really enjoyed the testimony from the people from, for example, sellwood community house. It was just the right type of example of what we need to do more of. I know I had an amendment that passed to look at that for the Portland tennis center. I just think we have a lot of opportunity to go bold here, and I hope that we continue to push for that. I will be pushing for that because we just need to be more creative. If we if we pass this on to the voters without a signal that we're doing some transformational change, some system change to the enterprise, as the city administrator calls it, then I think we could build some trust. It has to feel different than it was in 2020. And I had an 18 month experience overseeing parts, I think. I think councilor novick knows, sometimes you just get some really bad luck when you have an assignment, meaning some really big things happen. So there were so many shoes that kept falling during those 18 months, and my job was to be responsive and work with the bureau to respond. And I want to acknowledge how

hard working the people that work at parks, especially those on the ground, the people that were working after the winter storm, the people that were doing all they could when we had other big issues like the light poles. I did change that policy or the practice to make sure that we didn't wait until all of them were taken down, but we actually put the lights up one park at a time, if you will, and I just in that experience, I did witness in those 18 months, there were times where the culture at the management level has to move from a control system, and although they bring in, although we bring in volunteers, I think we need to continue to work on what it looks like to truly partner like we're seeing with the sellwood community house. And if we don't have really clear, concrete statements in this, in this levy that signals that we are bold about our transformation and improvement so that we can be more like the industries from the standards that we're hearing about from other top ten parks bureaus across the country. Then I think we're missing the moment in time. I think this is the moment in time for us to go bold in that area. So I wanted to make sure I spent time on that. There's been talk about what we do with the north Portland aquatic center. So I wanted to bring my voice to that. First of all, the pool situation in north Portland back to the 18 months of horror started before I had the assignment with columbia pool. And I think this also gets to some of the language from 2020 that suggested that the levy was going to fix that and it didn't, and then not keeping that promise, and then the deferred maintenance that took the pier park pool out, which I think is opening this week or next week, thank goodness. And the north Portland residents have been so pool deficient. And there was a promise that we would have a new pool called the north Portland aquatic center. I know i, I had the opportunity to put a lot of system development revenue into that. We located it exactly where the committee that was focused on equity wanted it in terms of getting to swimming literacy, the schools to pools program. It's the

location that all of the pe teachers, for example, in the roosevelt area, said the elementary schools that have the best access to. So I am very attached to seeing that through, and I hope that we can not toss that out as well. So my point is, i'll be working with my colleagues to make sure that we really push hard on being bold about the opportunity to really bring community and partners in to this new, improved park system. And I want to thank again all the people for testifying today. Your voices were needed and wanted, I appreciate it.

Speaker: Thank you. Councilman, I just want to add to that that I think all of us are committed to expanding partnerships and getting to the point where, more significantly, more than 1% of our of parks revenue is, is revenue. Supporting the parks is from private partners. We can't make assumptions in doing the levy about how much progress we will make in that. So we can't say, well, we only need \$1.27 levy because we expect public private partnerships to help us share x percent of parks costs. However, what I hope is that over the next few years, we will expand those partnerships that will take some pressure off taxpayer dollars to pay for certain programs. And that could mean, for example, that we're able to spend a share of the saved money on the capital maintenance projects. So I just wanted to make that point that all of us agree that we need to expand our use of partnerships, but I don't think that we can assume a certain level of partnership in sending out a levy amount. Thanks again to everybody. Oh, councilor Ryan, is that a legacy hand or do you want to add something? Okay.

Speaker: No it's not. It's it is a hand up okay. I appreciate this dialog. And I know we're going to have more dialog about this next week, but I would encourage us to consider what those targets and leverage points are like. Who set if we lock in something for five years without really clear targets about expectations on how we move from 1% to a much higher percent in this levy, then I would trust, like I think a

voter would, that we're moving towards that direction. If we don't have those targets in there, I don't think we have the right type of accountability with the public that we're actually signaling that we're moving towards that. That's my concern.

Speaker: And that's a good conversation for us to have over the next week. Thank you. Councilor. Our next meeting is Thursday, July 24th. We'll have pcef committee appointments alongside an update on the urban forest plan. So with eight minutes to spare, I now adjourn the meeting of the climate resilience and land use committee.