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37683

Resolution

Declare support for Portland Diamond Project efforts to bring Major League Baseball to Portland and construct a new stadium in the South Waterfront neighborhood at Zidell Yards

Adopted

WHEREAS, Portland has a long and storied history with professional baseball beginning as far back as 1884 with the formation of the Willamettes of East Portland and including teams such as the Webfooters, Giants, Beavers, Roses, Mavericks, and Rockies among others; and

WHEREAS, the State of Oregon recognizes the benefits Major League Baseball would bring to the City, region, and state and passed a funding provision to help make that a reality in 2003 that is still in statute; and

WHEREAS, Portland has not been home to professional baseball since the Portland Beavers played their final game at PGE Park (now Providence Park) on September 6, 2010; and

WHEREAS, professional baseball brings a wide range of social, cultural, and economic benefits to its home communities; and

WHEREAS, Major League Baseball leadership has indicated a desire to add two expansion teams to the league within the next few years; and

WHEREAS, Portland is being considered for a future Major League Baseball expansion franchise, as it is one of the largest unserved markets in the country and is strategically located on the west coast; and

WHEREAS, Portland is passionately supportive of its professional sports teams including the Trail Blazers of the National Basketball Association, Timbers of Major League Soccer, and Thorns of the National Women’s Soccer League; and

WHEREAS, the recent announcement of Portland’s award of a Women’s National Basketball Association franchise that will begin play at the Moda Center in 2026 is a testament to Portland’s strength as a sports town; and

WHEREAS, Major League Baseball is the highest level of baseball league in the world; and

Introduced by

[Mayor Ted Wheeler](#)

Contact

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Requested Agenda Type

Time Certain

Date and Time Information

Requested Council Date

October 30, 2024

Requested Start Time

4:15 pm

Time Requested

45 minutes

WHEREAS, with no Major League Baseball, National Hockey League, or National Football League franchise, Portland has even more capacity for top-level professional sports franchises; and

WHEREAS, the future strength of Portland's Central City depends in large part on robust sports, entertainment, travel, and tourism offerings to ensure it remains an attractive area for investment and development; and

WHEREAS, the City has worked closely with the Portland Diamond Project as they have tirelessly sought to position Portland as an attractive option for a Major League Baseball franchise; and

WHEREAS, with the participation of public and private partners, the City and Prosper Portland have made many investments in the South Waterfront Central District and on the Schnitzer Campus, including transportation infrastructure, development assistance, and a signature riverfront greenway that have effectively transformed portions of the area from an industrial brownfield to a thriving mixed-use urban neighborhood; and

WHEREAS, the Portland Diamond Project has recently secured the opportunity to develop the 30.85-acre Zidell Yards, located in the center of South Waterfront, which is one of the last remaining large urban redevelopment opportunities in the Central City; and

WHEREAS, with its vibrant urban riverfront location, views of multiple cascade peaks, and excellent pedestrian, bicycle, and transit access, a Major League Baseball stadium built on the Zidell Yards site would instantly become one of the most scenic stadiums in the league; and

WHEREAS, Zidell Yards is located within the North Macadam Tax Increment Finance District and areas to the north and south of Zidell Yards have benefited from public investments made in the Tram, Streetcar, Light Rail, and Willamette River Greenway; and

WHEREAS, Portland's investments have successfully supported job and campus growth for both OHSU and PSU in South Waterfront; and

WHEREAS, Portland's investments in the North Macadam Tax Increment Finance District have catalyzed growth and expansion of housing, commercial, and mixed-use development; and

WHEREAS, Prosper Portland acknowledges that the most successful stadiums are paired with high-quality real estate development and transportation infrastructure to create thriving entertainment anchored districts; and

WHEREAS, the North Macadam Tax Increment Finance District will reach maximum indebtedness in June 2025; and

WHEREAS, it is in the City's best interest to continue to support the Portland Diamond Project in its effort to bring Major League Baseball to Portland including its current effort to secure the Zidell Yards site in the South Waterfront District.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that City Council directs the City Administrator to lead staff across the appropriate service areas to establish a working group that ensures the Portland is well positioned to be awarded a Major League Baseball team; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that City staff are directed to work with the Portland Diamond Project and ZRZ Realty to support Portland Diamond Project's acquisition of Zidell Yards as the site for a world class baseball park and ensure potential development is aligned with City planning and development goals; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that City staff are directed to evaluate City-owned assets and properties for opportunities that could be included as part of a competitive baseball franchise package that would increase the attractiveness of Portland's proposal; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that if Portland is selected by Major League Baseball as a home for a franchise, the City will take all necessary steps per Senate Bill 5 (2003) to work with the league, ownership, and other levels of government, including the State of Oregon, to bring the dream to fruition; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City of Portland fully supports the Portland Diamond Project's proposal and will continue to advocate to bring Major League Baseball to a new stadium at Portland's Zidell Yards.

Impact Statement

Purpose of Proposed Legislation and Background Information

This resolution expresses the City of Portland's support for the efforts led by the Portland Diamond Project to bring Major League Baseball to the City. Specifically, it directs City staff to work with the Portland Diamond Project team to advance their vision to attract a franchise and develop a new ballpark at Zidell Yards in the South Waterfront District.

Financial and Budgetary Impacts

This resolution has no direct impact on current City budgets beyond assigning existing staff to help support the ongoing effort, nor does it commit the City financially to any specific project. If the effort is successful, and a Major League Baseball franchise is awarded to Portland, there will be significantly more work to do including detailed financial and budgetary analysis.

Economic and Real Estate Development Impacts

There are no economic or real estate impacts from this resolution as it only declares City support for the Portland Diamond Project and directs staff to participate in efforts to advance the project. If the effort is successful, and a Major League Baseball franchise is awarded to Portland, there will be

significantly more work to do including detailed economic and real estate development impact analysis.

If Portland does attract a Major League Baseball franchise and a new stadium is built in South Waterfront, the local economic and real estate development impacts would be profound.

Community Impacts and Community Involvement

The Portland Diamond Project is a grass roots organization dedicated to the mission of bringing Major League Baseball to the City. They've spent years engaging with community and business leaders to advance their cause and thousands of Portlanders have joined their mailing lists and indicated support for the project.

The City to date, has not formally conducted community outreach on the prospect of Major League Baseball or conducted any analysis on potential community impacts. If the project moves forward, more engagement and analysis will be required prior to making binding commitments or decisions.

100% Renewable Goal

This resolution does not have an affect on the 100% renewable goal.

Financial and Budget Analysis

No fiscal impact.

Document History

Item 949 Time Certain in [October 30-31, 2024 Council Agenda](https://www.portland.gov/council/agenda/2024/10/30)
(<https://www.portland.gov/council/agenda/2024/10/30>)

City Council

Adopted

Aye (5):

Mingus Mapps, Carmen Rubio, Dan Ryan, Rene Gonzalez, Ted Wheeler