



Oregon Zoo
Together for Wildlife



PORTLAND PARKS & RECREATION
Healthy Parks, Healthy Portland



**PORTLAND
JAPANESE
GARDEN**

Hoyt Arboretum Friends
Bringing people and trees together



**WORLD
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CENTER**



Explore Washington Park

August 25, 2025

Dear Members of the Joint Committee on Transportation:

Located in the heart of Portland, Washington Park is an Oregon jewel, attracting 3.5 million visitors each year to its 400+ acres. Home to the Oregon Zoo, Portland Japanese Garden, Hoyt Arboretum, World Forestry Center, the International Rose Test Garden, and more, Washington Park is the Portland region's most visited destination, drawing both local families and visitors from across the nation and the world. Nearly 60% of tourists report that the park influences their decision to visit Portland, highlighting the park and its partners' significant role in driving tourism and supporting the local economy.

Transit is essential to Washington Park visitors and to the success of the cultural institutions in the park. The number of visitors is expected to increase by a third in the next decade, but this growth can only be achieved with increased transit ridership due to limited parking supply and the fact that many people, including tourists, visit without a vehicle.

The park is accessible by TriMet's Red and Blue MAX lines and several bus lines. TriMet also connects to the Washington Park Free Shuttle, which allows people to explore the park without having to drive. Last year, 22% of summer visitors came without a vehicle, a number that is growing as post-pandemic transit ridership continues to climb. Thirty percent of Washington Park visitors surveyed indicate they are likely to use the MAX light rail for future visits.

We appreciate that the current proposal includes additional revenue for public transit, and we hope an urgent discussion of funding for this invaluable community resource continues. If TriMet is forced to implement the dramatic service cuts currently planned, thousands of visitors each year will lose a reliable way to reach Washington Park, jeopardizing the financial health of our cultural institutions. To keep Washington Park accessible to everyone, we need to continue providing people with reliable and affordable transportation options to get here.



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The current funding proposal is a step in the right direction, for which we are grateful. We urge you to continue the work to ensure strong, sustainable funding for public transit agencies. The future accessibility and vitality of Washington Park—and the economic, cultural, and community benefits it provides—depend on it.

Please feel free to reach out if you have any questions.

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