



News Release

Tualatin Hills Park & Recreation District

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THPRD Board Directs New Budget Include Support for Affordable Housing

January 9, 2019: The Tualatin Hills Park & Recreation District Board of Directors had a discussion at their January meeting about the district's upcoming legislative priorities. Among topics discussed was the park district's role in being a helpful partner on affordable housing development.

"This is an important issue and our Board gave us clear direction that they want us to build a budget for next year that includes support for affordable housing development," said Doug Menke, THPRD general manager.

While it was acknowledged housing is not a topic that typically fits within the park district's mission, the majority of board members stated it is a critical time to support affordable housing development, particularly in light of the recent passage of the Metro affordable housing bond.

THPRD Board President Ali Kavarian introduced the topic. "I want to see Washington County government agencies come together to create a coordinated approach for development fee waivers for affordable housing," said Kavarian. "By establishing a fund we will be taking giant leap forward to say we are ready to lead by example and be a creative partner on this issue."

Board members have called upon district staff to participate in county-wide coordinated discussions that are expected to begin this year. In the meantime, the Board directed staff to develop the next fiscal year budget with funding that benefits affordable housing development.

"The challenge is we can't waive fees outright, we legally have to cover the full cost of the fee elsewhere in our budget," said Menke. "This means we need to be sure we have the funding available to cover waivers and still fulfill our obligations to develop park sites for the public as expected. But this is clearly a priority with the majority of our board members and we will be ready to answer the challenge. We will also continue to explore other ways to partner."

The board is expected to get an update on options as the 2019-2020 budget process unfolds. The partnership opportunities would be available to support affordable housing development as early as July 2019.