

Camp ELSO youth at Oxbow Regional Park. summer 2018

## Metro Parks and Nature *Community Partnerships Program*

*Would you like to build your community's capacity and connect with nature in the greater Portland region? Join us at Metro Parks and Nature!*

### **Who are community partnership funds for?**

Organizations and groups led by and for people of color.

### **What are community partnership funds for?**

Funds support activities at Metro parks and natural areas that advance the 2013 parks and natural areas levy goal of *increasing opportunities for communities of color to experience nature at Metro parks and natural areas*. Metro staff is available to provide support as requested.

### **How much funding is available?**

\$250,000 is available per year in four distinct program areas.

### **Where can I learn about Metro parks and natural areas?**

Explore more about Metro's parks and natural areas at [oregonmetro.gov/parks](https://oregonmetro.gov/parks).

### **Apply for a sponsorship!**

**Through August 21**

[oregonmetro.gov/parkspartnerships](https://oregonmetro.gov/parkspartnerships)

### **For more information**

Contact program manager

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[sheilagh.diez@oregonmetro.gov](mailto:sheilagh.diez@oregonmetro.gov)

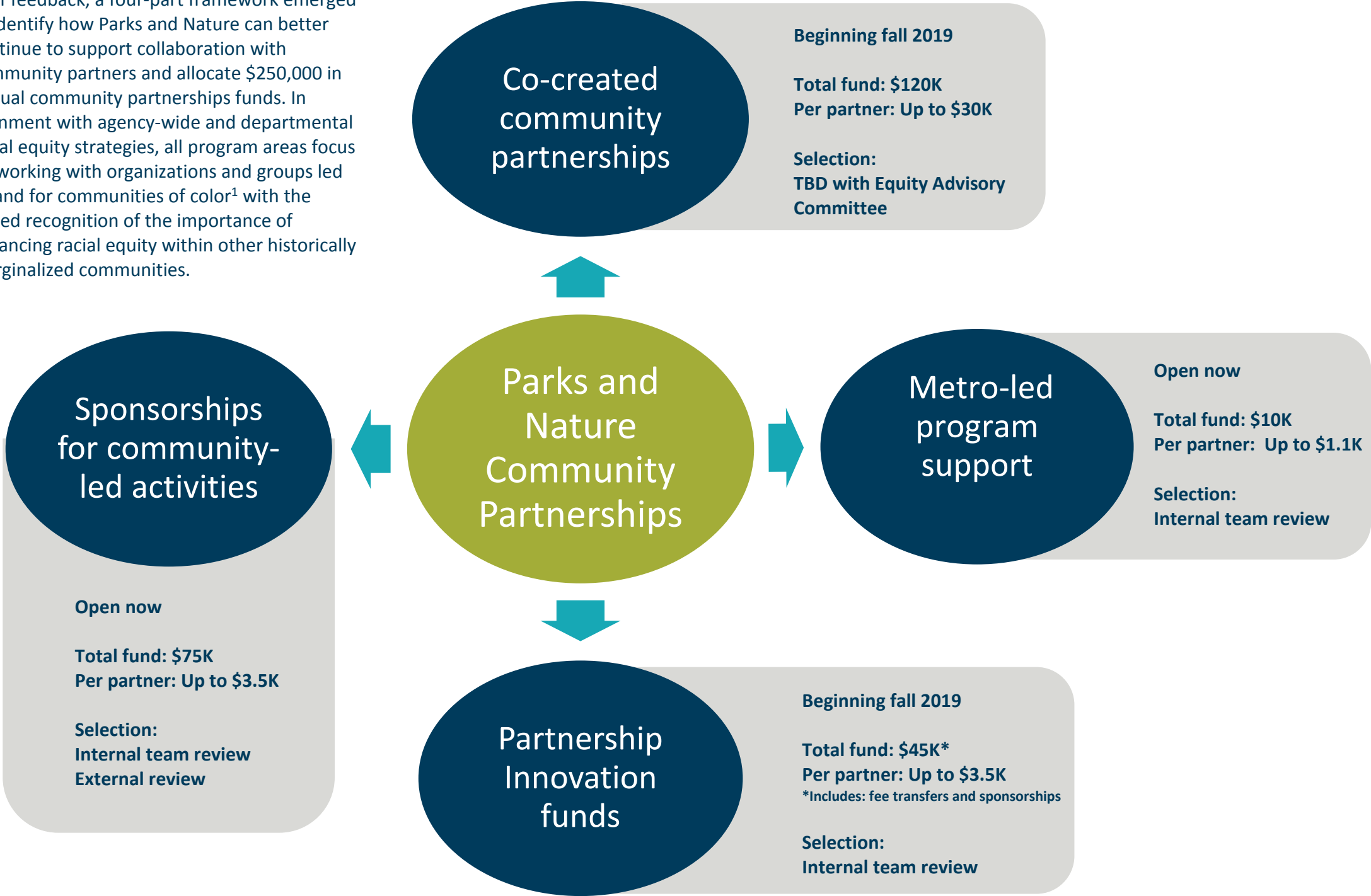
### **Mission**

Parks and Nature protects water quality, fish and wildlife habitat, and creates opportunities to enjoy nature close to home through a connected system of parks, trails and natural areas.



# 2019 Parks and Nature Community Partnerships

After reviewing community partner input and staff feedback, a four-part framework emerged to identify how Parks and Nature can better continue to support collaboration with community partners and allocate \$250,000 in annual community partnerships funds. In alignment with agency-wide and departmental racial equity strategies, all program areas focus on working with organizations and groups led by and for communities of color<sup>1</sup> with the added recognition of the importance of advancing racial equity within other historically marginalized communities.



<sup>1</sup> Metro shares the Coalition for Communities of Color recognition of the following communities of color: African, African American, Asian and Pacific Islander, Latinx, Middle Eastern and North African, Native American and Slavic. Metro includes groups that serve a multi-cultural community comprised primarily of members of the groups listed above.



# Parks and Nature Community Partnerships

*Creating opportunities for communities of color to connect with nature*

*With the support and input of multiple partners, Metro has developed a Parks and Nature Community Partnership framework that elevates community interests while advancing the goals of the Parks and Nature Racial Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan*

## Origin

In 2013, Metro's Parks and Nature department initiated Partners in Nature, a community partnerships program focused on collaborating with culturally-specific community-based organizations to advance the 2013 parks and natural areas levy goal of *increasing opportunities for communities of color to experience nature at Metro parks and natural areas.*

## Pilot phase

The first phase of the program, between late fall 2013 and summer 2015, consisted of five pilot partnerships. Metro staff reached out directly to potential partners in an effort to begin innovation quickly and build a shared understanding of how to create authentic partnerships.

## Broader engagement phase

During fall 2015, Parks and Nature held a focused call for letters of interest across the Metro region, asking for culturally-specific organizations serving communities of color to share ideas for partnering with Metro to connect people with nature. During this broader engagement phase there was a desire to reach out to a wider array of groups, including those unfamiliar to the Parks and Nature department. Out of 23 received letters, Metro initiated partnerships with 16 organizations.

## Program review

With the passage of the levy renewal in 2016, there is now an opportunity to revise the approach based on what has been learned during the first two phases. From fall 2018 through spring 2019, Parks and

Nature staff conducted an assessment of the first five years of the community partnerships program. Steps included:

- Review of community feedback and partnership meeting notes
- One-on-one meetings with current and past partners
- An agency-wide partnerships forum
- Review of Parks and Nature's Racial Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan
- Meeting with Parks and Nature leadership about department priorities
- Meetings with internal teams to identify capacity and share feedback
- Sharing final draft framework with community leaders for confirmation

