

10/29/2024

DEI Committee, City of Wilsonville
29799 SW Town Center Loop E Wilsonville, OR 97070
Karla Brashear – Chair

Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development
Community Green Infrastructure Grant program
Laura Buhl, AICP – CGI Program Administrator

Dear Laura,

I am writing as Chair and representative of the City of Wilsonville's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Committee to express my strong support for the Wilsonville Living Classroom Project (WLCP), an exciting initiative that will enhance environmental resiliency while providing a new educational space within our existing network of public parks. This project is not only vital for our local ecosystems but also plays a crucial role in fostering a deep connection between our community and the natural world.

Beyond the actual habitat restoration work and the classroom space construction as proposed, the DEI Committee sees the WLCP as a unique opportunity to lift up environmental justice communities in town, as represented by the student body within the West Linn Wilsonville School District (WLWSD), their instructors, and their families. This project has the potential to facilitate collaboration with these environmental justice communities to help build programming for the Living Classroom, as well as curriculum that will help meet state science standards while offering new, place-based learning opportunities. It is clear that the WLCP will fairly compensate individuals who dedicate time to building new curriculum or programming. This economic incentive will be crucial for the WLWSD instructors and community representatives that go above and beyond to help implement the WLCP for the benefit of all Wilsonville residents.

I am particularly impressed by the project's commitment to inclusivity, ensuring that diverse groups have access to the WLCP's interpretive elements, programming, and environmental benefits. By providing educational resources through interpretation and curriculum, and opportunities to increase knowledge of and connection to the land, the WLCP will serve as a model for community engagement through land stewardship that other regions can emulate. The Committee is enthusiastic about connecting WLCP managers to representatives of local culturally specific community groups to help realize the vision for this project. The Committee was pleased to hear that the interpretive elements of the site will be developed through collaboration and partnership with these groups, and that curriculum could be explored through these potential collaborations as well.

The WLCP's marriage of habitat restoration and education will encourage participants, especially young people, to get their hands dirty and understand the importance of natural history, biodiversity, conservation, and sustainable practices. The Committee hopes this project will empower students to become stewards of their environment, promoting a sense of shared responsibility and advocacy for the land that connects us all. In conclusion, I wholeheartedly support the Wilsonville Living Classroom Project and encourage others to do the same. This project represents an essential investment in our community's residents and natural resources with an eye towards changing climatic conditions across the state.

Thank you for considering the Wilsonville DEI Committee's support for this initiative.

Sincerely,

Karla Brashear
Chair, City of Wilsonville DEI Committee
[contact here](#)