



**Five Year Strategic Plan
2020-2024**

Adopted February 19, 2020

I. Oregon Parks Forever Summary

In 2020, Oregon State Parks Foundation¹ is beginning its 25th year in operation. As we head into the next 25 years, we have decided to broaden our mission to include more public land agencies in Oregon; and change our name to **Oregon Parks Forever**. This action was taken to make our signature projects like Ticket2Ride, Hike/Bike Pods, and Track Trails available more broadly; and, to focus attention and stewardship on the problem of deferred maintenance brought on by chronic underfunding of parks across the state, through a program tentatively called “Oregon Cares for Parks.”

This Five Year Strategic Plan (the "Plan") shall guide Oregon Parks Forever’s (OPF) commitment over the next five years to enhance the unique physical, cultural and natural resources that are Oregon parks² and create opportunities to maximize the educational and recreational values of such resources for the benefit of all Oregonians and all others who visit this beautiful state.

In order to attain these broader objectives, OPF will work to achieve the following three goals:

1. Connect all Oregonians to their parks;
2. Raise Funds for Key Projects; and
3. Grow OPF's Organizational Capacity.

To connect Oregonians to their Parks, OPF will work closely with Federal, State, Local and Tribal public land agencies in Oregon, – collectively “Agency Partners”, to explore and implement ways to provide greater access to and use of our state’s parks.

Primary areas of emphasis will include opportunities to:

- Protect the facilities, amenities and trails already built (especially in areas of high day-use), for the benefit of current and future generations of Oregonians and out of state visitors.
- Increase park participation among students in the K-12 and collegiate levels, and in underserved communities and populations.
- Promote and provide opportunities for healthy activity

¹ This is the second name change for this organization. *Oregon State Parks Foundation* was previously known as *Oregon State Parks Trust*

² As used in this document, the term “park” shall mean an area of natural, semi-natural or planted space set aside for human enjoyment and recreation or for the protection of wildlife or natural habitats. Parks may consist of grassy areas, rocks, soil and trees, but may also contain buildings and other artifacts such as monuments, fountains or playground structures. Many parks have trails for walking, biking and other activities.

OPF will continue to raise funds for capital projects within parks that are important to park users. To achieve this goal, OPF will work closely with Agency Partners, other non-profit organizations, and local leaders.

To grow OPF's organizational capacity, OPF is committed to increasing revenues and building its organizational capabilities.

II. History

For twenty-five years, since 1995, OPF³ has raised funds to preserve and enhance Oregon's state parks. These funds supported many vital projects such as building a new Experience Center at Cottonwood Canyon State Park, restoring Vista House at Crown Point, preserving and enhancing the Kam Wah Chung Heritage Site, helping to maintain Oregon's lighthouses, purchasing important property at Iwetemlaykin State Heritage Site and Smith Rock State Park; and providing important program funding for enhancing projects such as "Let's Go" and "Ticket2Ride."

OPF's successes have increased understanding about Oregon's state parks system. Hundreds of thousands of Oregonians & visitors have visited the parks, and OPF helped ensure that Oregon's treasures are preserved for generations to come.

OPF did not achieve these successes alone. OPF has historically worked with its closest partner, the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department ("OPRD"), to add value to existing state sponsored programs, projects, and activities. In 2013, the Oregon legislature strengthened OPF's partnership with OPRD by passing Senate Bill 196. The Oregon legislature recognized the important role non-profit organizations play in enhancing the state park system. Today this role continues to evolve, providing OPF access to technical and other OPRD resources, and providing OPRD the ability to rely on OPF to pursue a wide variety of related opportunities benefiting the public that otherwise exist beyond the expertise and operational capacity of OPRD.

III. Mission, Vision, and Values

Oregon Parks Forever's work is driven by the passion that Oregonians hold for Oregon's parks, and the significant contribution such resources provide our economy, communities, state, and individual health and well-being. Oregon's parks are a vital part of our state's heritage. They are a significant draw for new employers and employees, and a very large source of tourism income for the state. OPF is committed to helping ensure that this legacy continues for generations to come.

Our Mission is:

To enhance and preserve special places and experiences in Oregon's parks, now and for generations to come, and to encourage and promote an outdoor lifestyle.

Our Vision is:

To ensure that every Oregonian and visitor, now and in the future, has the opportunity to have a meaningful experience in Oregon's world-class parks

Our Values are:

- *We maintain the highest professional standards and hold ourselves accountable to our members, donors and the general public.*
- *We value diversity and are committed to equity and inclusion.*
- *We value and recognize the contribution of volunteers.*
- *We strive for excellence through continuous improvement.*
- *We value our partners and foster a spirit of cooperation with our Agency Partners, Friends Groups, and participating non-profits.*

Building on our mission, vision and values, we face our organization's future with optimism, secure in the knowledge that Oregonians are passionate about parks and willing to encourage and support our work.

V. Strategic Goals

OPF will work to achieve the following goals during the next five years:

A. Connect All Oregonians to their Parks

Why? Parks have a strong role to play as a gateway to a healthy lifestyle. The parks serve as an important asset that links recreation and public health.

In addition to encouraging healthy lifestyles in Oregon, we want to help nurture the future stewards of our public lands. By providing Oregon's youth with opportunities to learn recreation skills and gain an understanding of the environment in outdoor settings, OPF will build future support, establish personal connections with nature and public lands and improve Oregonians' health and well-being.

Many Oregon children and families, especially those with lower incomes and people of color, often do not have easy access to experience the richness and heritage of Oregon's parks. As a result, these underrepresented populations often forgo the health, social and other benefits of outdoor recreation.

How? OPF will work closely with Agency Partners to explore and implement ways to provide greater access to and use of our parks. Emphasis will be given to opportunities to work with Agency Partners, other non-profits and schools to increase park participation among K-12 and collegiate levels, and in underserved communities and populations.

To this end, OPF will raise funds for and facilitate the following "signature" programs:

- **Ticket2Ride** – a program that funds single-day field trips to Agency Partner parks for 3rd-5th grade classes from Title One Schools.
- **Track Trails** – a program that places nature scavenger hunt kiosks and brochures on existing trails in Agency Partner parks, which encourage kids to get outdoors, get active, and learn about nature, while earning prizes for their participation.
- **Hike/Bike Pods** – a program that enhances hike-bike campsites in Agency Partner parks with structures that offer lockers with electricity, bike repair stands, air and water sources and communal gathering spaces.
- **Cottonwood Crossing Summer Institute** – a program that enables high school students to have a one-week outdoor education experience at Cottonwood Canyon State Park.

B. Raise Funds for Key Projects in Agency Partner Parks

Why? Many projects that enhance park experiences are only possible if there is a demonstrated public interest and willingness in the community to work in partnership to bring them to fruition. While OPF anticipates Agency Partners bringing considerable resources to many of these projects, the necessary resources often require support from grants, donors, and other interested partners. OPF is uniquely positioned to lead or assist in meeting the need by developing strong partnerships with donors, communities, local governments and granting organizations. By filling this gap, the public and park users realize the benefits already discussed and are a critical boost to our park systems as they face growing costs in times of chronic underfunding.

How? OPF will act as convener, fundraiser and promoter of stewardship projects to restore important facilities, amenities and trails that have suffered from explosive day-use demand, and deferred maintenance.

OPF will raise funds for a limited number of additional capital projects determined in partnership with our Agency Partners, and subject to the screening criteria determined by the Board and shown in Appendix 1.

To achieve these goals, OPF will work closely with Agency Partners, other non-profit organizations and local leaders. OPF will continue to develop financial support for the projects it pursues by appealing to foundations, individuals, businesses and others.

C. Grow OPF's Capacity

Why? In order to achieve our goals, OPF will need to increase financial contributions and build organizational capacity.

How?

- Grow our Membership program to fund operating expenses and supplement funding for our “Signature Projects.”
 - New Member acquisition:
 - Broaden our appeal and awareness by rebranding and expanding our mission.
 - Seek additional sources for lists of potential members.
 - Use new technologies such as Geofencing, GPS, Text to Donate and Bluetooth to identify and reach visitors in parks.
 - Retain existing Members:
 - Implement a multi-step contact strategy for retaining existing members.

- Upgrade existing Members:
 - Beginning with a 25th year celebration initiative, develop ways to upgrade existing members to higher donor levels.
- Grow our Sustainer Member percentage by emphasizing and promoting the value and importance of a monthly giving.
- Regrow our Founder's Circle program.
- Build win-win partnerships with Corporate Partners to generate donations to OPF and volunteers to support our initiatives.
- Build organizational capacity:
 - Seek capacity building grant(s) for administrative and fundraising support.
 - Make greater use of volunteers for administrative tasks.
- Develop a \$10MM endowment fund capable of funding our annual operating expenses.

V. Framework for OPF's Work

OPF's approach will vary by project. Depending on the project, OPF will lead, participate or support.

- OPF will choose a limited number of key projects to **lead**. Examples might include fundraising for a specific capital project or program. Undertakings such as these will require the full commitment of the board and staff.
- OPF will **participate** in activities or projects where OPF can be a significant and visible partner. Our prominence in the partnership will bring visibility to OPF's mission and benefits Oregon's parks. For example, OPF might be one of many partners in a regional effort that results in a desired outcome for an Agency Partner and furthers OPF's vision and awareness in the community.
- OPF may choose to **encourage and support** projects, activities, or sponsors that promote our Plan but do not justify or require OPF's active participation. These activities will require minimal obligation of OPF resources. Examples may include the endorsement of an event or project being led by another organization that has general benefit to a particular park the community, but less direct benefit to OPF's vision.