

1. Parks Commission 11 3 2016 Agenda And Materials

Documents:

[AGENDA 11.3.16.PDF](#)
[MEETING MINUTES 9 1 16.PDF](#)
[10-25-2016 MEMO TO PARKS COMMISSION.PDF](#)
[PARKS COMMISSION CIP MEMO.PDF](#)
[FRIENDS AND COMMUNITY PARTNERS HANDBOOK V9.PDF](#)
[ANNUAL REPORT 2016.PDF](#)



Gregory A. Mitchell
Director, Economic Development Department

Commission Members: Carol Hutchins, Craig Lapine, Cynthia Loebenstein, Diane Davison, Chair, Dory Waxman, Jaime Parker, Meri Lowry, Michael Mertaugh, Nathan Robbins, Steve Morgenstein, Travis Wagner and Councilor Belinda Ray

Parks Commission

Agenda

November 3, 2016

5 PM

**City Hall ~ 389 Congress Street ~ Room 24
(Basement)**

Please note allotted times for each agenda item

- I. Citizen Comment Period (5 min)
- II. Agenda Items
 - A. Acceptance of Meeting Minutes- September 1, 2016 (3 min)
 - B. New Business (10 min)
 - Peppermint Park - Lori Paulette
 - C. Communications/Updates (5 min)
 - Ethan –
 - Amethyst Lot
 - Sheridan St – Developer Status
 - FY18 CIP review
 - D. Unfinished Committee Business (60 min)
 - Green Space Gathering - Chair – Diane/for Dory
Brief debrief
 - Park Initiatives -Chair - Steve
 - Friends & Community Partners Handbook
 - Discuss input from FCP
 - Adoption of 2016 FCP handbook
 - Finance Committee – TPL finance report Chair - Michael
 - Annual Report/Inventory Committee Chair – Travis
 - Adoption of 2016 Annual Report
 - E. Commissioner requests for Agenda Items (2 min)
 - View protection for Portland's green spaces

The Mission of the Portland Parks Commission is to advocate for the enhancement and stewardship of our parks and open spaces. Review and propose projects that impact parks and open spaces and recommend action.

Foster collaboration among park users and the City.

Promotes public access and enjoyment.

Advocate for public and private funding for parks and open spaces.

Enjoy Portland for Life

Parks Commission
Meeting Minutes
September 1, 2016

Attendees: Cynthia Loebenstein, Michael Mertaugh, Diane Davison, Ethan Hipple, Sally DeLuca, Steve Morganstern, Craig Lapine, Dory Waxman, Jaime Parker, Meri Lowry, Nathan Robbins, Laurie Mondor.

Citizen Comment: None

Minutes: A motion to accept the minutes was made by Michael; all in favor.

Communications/Updates: Michael questioned what pickleball was which Ethan gave brief description and said it was a very popular activity. Diane questioned Ethan if the mowing schedule had been altered due to the drought conditions. He responded yes they are stretching out mowing. Cynthia questioned about the Baxter Woods project which Ethan stated was on hold for now. They are reviewing the deed and are confirming about cutting trees even if they are invasive. Sally said we are looking at this with our legal staff. Dory mentioned that it is wonderful to see Capisic Pond being taken care of. Ethan stated that the turtles were brought to Evergreen Pond. Rob Mattes, Recreation Director, stated that he is branching out a little bit. Before and After program going off fairly smooth. The recreational book should be out in mail. He is excited about reintroducing festivals. He is currently working on a haunted house for this Halloween, haunting City Hall. He is looking to get recreation back into more community based programs and festivals. Looking to create a tale of something from Portland's past to incorporate into this. A date has not been set as of yet.

155 Sheridan Street – Diane and Ethan have spoken with Tom. At this point we will just wait to see what the plans are. Meri stated that her view is that PC and LB do not have a role in this unless it is one of our properties or in this case where it interferes with one of our properties. Parks Commission is becoming part of the pre-application process and we are being notified. This is how this property was put on our radar. Nothing has been submitted to the city yet on this. Michael questioned if PC could initiate another take on the view protection through an ordinance. PC could purpose an ordinance change and this would be a good catalyst for this. Meri stated that she believes in development around parks and that this is vital. Diane asked if someone would have time to pursue how to do an ordinance. Jaime stated that the first step is to look at what is in place in ordinance right now, explore the tools we have already. Meri's personal opinion "where is appropriate for the Parks Commission for a developer to get approval from the City" limited role of PC. Section 18-2, Diane read this for everyone. Order is that the city shall retain. There is a master plan for Fort Sumner. There is also language in the subdivision in the code where it states it has to protect scenic views. Diane TBC list and definitely keep everyone in the loop.

GSG – electronic letter did go out. Dory has food vendor people that are looking to provide for this event. Lincoln Park will be honored. Everything else is pretty much what we have discussed. Jaime asked if there will be another facilitated discussion or just more informal circulation/discussions. Rick Knowland is going to be the keynote speaker, according to Dory. We are trying to get as many friends groups and parks groups so that they can be connected as a whole, Dory said. Jaime is wondering if it might make sense to give each two minutes; each neighborhood organization and friends groups. Nathan said that the general idea was to get people talking. Jaime if they have two minutes to give highlights this might get more discussions going. Nathan, yes that sounds great. They should be encouraged to highlight something they have coming up so this might help people partner up. Cynthia stated we should do updates first then people can mill around after so that if something sparked their interest so they can then discuss. Diane, wondering if it would be helpful to give groups that want to present, a window, what are you currently working on and what obstacles that people in this room can help you with. This way they can contain, gives similarities and what differences are. We are going to adopt the friends and community partners that night. Steve what are you doing to publicize this? General public would be good to get. Cynthia maybe a mail chimp? Ethan Hipple said it will go out in his newsletter which goes to around 7,000 people. Nathan stated that he is unsure how to “drum it up” so if anyone has ideas he welcomes them. It was agreed we will all share and get the word out. Food will be provided at this event. Steve asked if the Park Ranger has been asked to speak and was answered that we will ask her to be there. Cynthia heard at a meeting that the City is making map. Craig mentioned that he thought Tuck had it. Cynthia thought it was be great for it to be there. We are asking Tuck to come to GSG with this. Speakers will be, Diane and the City Manager has confirmed. Dory meeting with him next week. Diane questioned about set up and planning on our part. Dory will email specifics. Cynthia suggested that you might want to warn people how long they have to speak. Lincoln Park: Frank and Sharon are being recognized by greater Portland Landmarks.

Park Initiatives: Steve said he has no markups. These have been designed and we have tweaked. There are a few different types for historic and non-historic parks. Icons on bottom to highlight what the park offers. Have not done anything with regulatory signs. Going to work with Deb Andrews to make sure everything in historic parks fits. Working with legal as well. Next we will finish tweaking and going on to the regulatory signs. Steve question what materials are going to be the longest lasting and not super expensive. We are looking for durable and to give us at least 10 years. Ethan stated that they are also making smaller template too for smaller parks as well. Diane asked if we are sharing at GSG. Steve yes it would be nice if we have mockups. Jaime stated that he liked the idea of historic approved and something maybe less historic for other parks. We would like to keep the cost down but if city ever had a dept that could make signs it would be great. He mentioned that he is not a fan of icons and Portland trails have gotten away from this as arbitrary. Steve stated that we are staying away from dogs. Main questions are dogs, ski, walk, etc. Cynthia stated that people do not always know what is allowed so it would be nice to have them. Jaime said it adds to the cost to add all of these icons. Steve said we are willing to look at this and take off any that do not seem necessary. Cynthia also mentioned that icons are great for people do not speak English.

Diane questioned regarding a no smoking icon. Ethan stated that these are not regulatory signs. These will be simple, regulatory signs.

Friends and Community Partners handbook – Diane would like talk about this at the GSG. Diane asked if there are any other changes or are we are good? She then asked if this should go out with one of the reminders? It was agreed to unveil this at the GSG. Sally did say we can make changes over the years as needed. Meri said that she sees this as an invitation to partner. Nathan says this is the way he is receiving this. Diane said it is a guide.

Finance Committee: Michael stated they are looking for supplementary finance and points out where they have been used capital improvement. Michael stated that there is nothing in the PC ordinance about making recommendations. Should we be making recommendation on discretionary fund? Do we feel appropriate to recommend continuation of the discretionary budget that we got once as we were able to put that to good use. Meri stated that there was a specific reason why that money was given to us and that was two years ago. Dory stated that putting a number in there is not a good idea but we do want to be considered for some discretionary money. Cynthia and Meri questioned where the money comes from and were answered that it is in the park budget. Michael was going to mention that Land Bank and public art committee have dedicated budges and we do not and this is potentially a problem. A “slush fund” to help out at last minute on a few things that were urgent and needed to be done would be good. PC does have responsibilities that have cost to them. A small amount annually for activities that arise of an urgent nature has been useful in the past. This did come from the city manager at that time, two years ago. Cynthia wants to say she agrees with Michael, it would be nice to have a budget for our work. Jaime agrees as well. It was discussed that the annual report was a good opportunity to say what our priorities are and request some funding/discretionary funds to do something useful. Sally stated that when we received money previously it was not used for what was said in the past; Parks and Recreation Dept was the solution. We put the things that the money in the past was used for in that budget. The city manager sees that as a one-time deal. In the next budget process Sally and Ethan are looking ahead for the things we need and are talking about this. She is nervous about commission asking for funding when she and Ethan are looking at this for the budget. Michael stated that we will wait and see and keep an eye on this. If city manager does not approve budget, then commission to move forward. Sally stated that was perfectly appropriate to put what commission is recommending in the report. She stated that the Commission asking for the money could make look like competing or double dipping. Sally stated that her and Ethan’s job is to listen to what the commission wants. Michael will redraft the report. Meri then asked if we have more to discuss about annual report? She stated that she is disappointed with no forward movement on this. She has a general concern that there is confusion happening. There should be a list of LB and parks holdings. The memo that was sent out was meant to insight discussion. She found the list amazing. It mentions 32 parks in the ordinance. Then there are 32 parks in registry. Then there are 30 more parks that call themselves parks. There are open spaces that are not identified as parks or Land Bank. Open space vision published had confusion itself between Land Bank proprieties as parks. Meri states that she is looking forward to

meeting with Ethan Hipple and Doug Roncarati and whoever else is interested. She will send out an email to schedule this. Jaime stated that he would be interested in this too. Ethan stated once we have established inventory this would require update of ordinance. Meri does not believe that this would happen. She believes that we would not be likely to go to city council and get them on the LB registry too. Meri believes the way it works is you can only develop a LB registered property if there is a consensus among 7 city councilors and parks 6 city councilors. It was agreed that this is correct on the voting. Diane stated yes but for our inventory this is needed.

Meri wants to mention at last meeting, Lori Paulette came with an easement issue on a on LB property. Meri is concerned about process. The process should be PC before LB and LB had approved this already.

Michael had a finance question regarding criteria and when PC gets to see the CIP list. Sally said October/November. Michael stated if it is October the finance committee will have a meeting before Nov to discuss criteria.

New business: Advance work done by USM for LB. Last week published top of the line local and state section a rough out of USM goals, dreams and master plan. Bedford Park disappeared and Bedford St gone. Bedford park is a park, November discussion. Second park also going to be impacted by this plan? Revisit this for November. This was brought up a year ago. We did give favorable last year. We did not discuss master plan for USM, so yes worth taking a look out. Ethan will reach out to planning.

Other comments, none.

Dory moved to adjourn, Steven seconded and all in favor



Economic Development Department
Gregory A. Mitchell, Director

MEMORANDUM

TO: Parks Commission
FROM: Lori Paulette, Senior Executive Assistant
CC: Greg Mitchell, Economic Development Director
DATE: October 25, 2016
RE: Sliver of Land at Peppermint Park/Possible Disposition

Summary of Issue

There is renewed and recent interest from an abutter to acquire a small parcel of land (9' x 54.29', for a total square footage of 488.61) which is part of Peppermint Park. Attachment A shows in yellow the sliver from Peppermint Park. Attachment B are recent pictures taken by Ethan Hipple from Parks and Recreation looking from inside the Park towards Montgomery Street showing that access is fenced off from the remainder of the Park. This fencing was done in 2010 as part of the Park Renovations and at the request of the Police Department and neighborhood association.

Department Survey Results from August 2016 to determine if excess to the City's needs:

Councilor Ray: Supports the sale of this strip of land to an abutter.

Parking/John Peverada: No interest in property.

Parks and Recreation: Supports the sale of this strip of land to an abutter.

Current Disposition Process:

Because this is a City-owned property, and in the Land Bank, this would need review by the Parks Commission, which is advisory to the Land Bank Commission (LBC); the LBC would then review and make a recommendation to the City Manager/City Council; this would then be brought to the City Council to authorize the disposition process.

If these bodies agree to move forward with disposition, staff would then send out the bid document to the abutters. The property would need to be sold to an abutter (because it is an undersized lot) if there is support to move forward.

Corporation Counsel has reviewed the deed to the City for this property, and indicated that it can be sold.

Parks Commission (PC) Recommendation to the Land Bank Commission (LBC)

This is being submitted to the PC for an advisory recommendation to the LBC on whether to move forward with this disposition.

Nº21

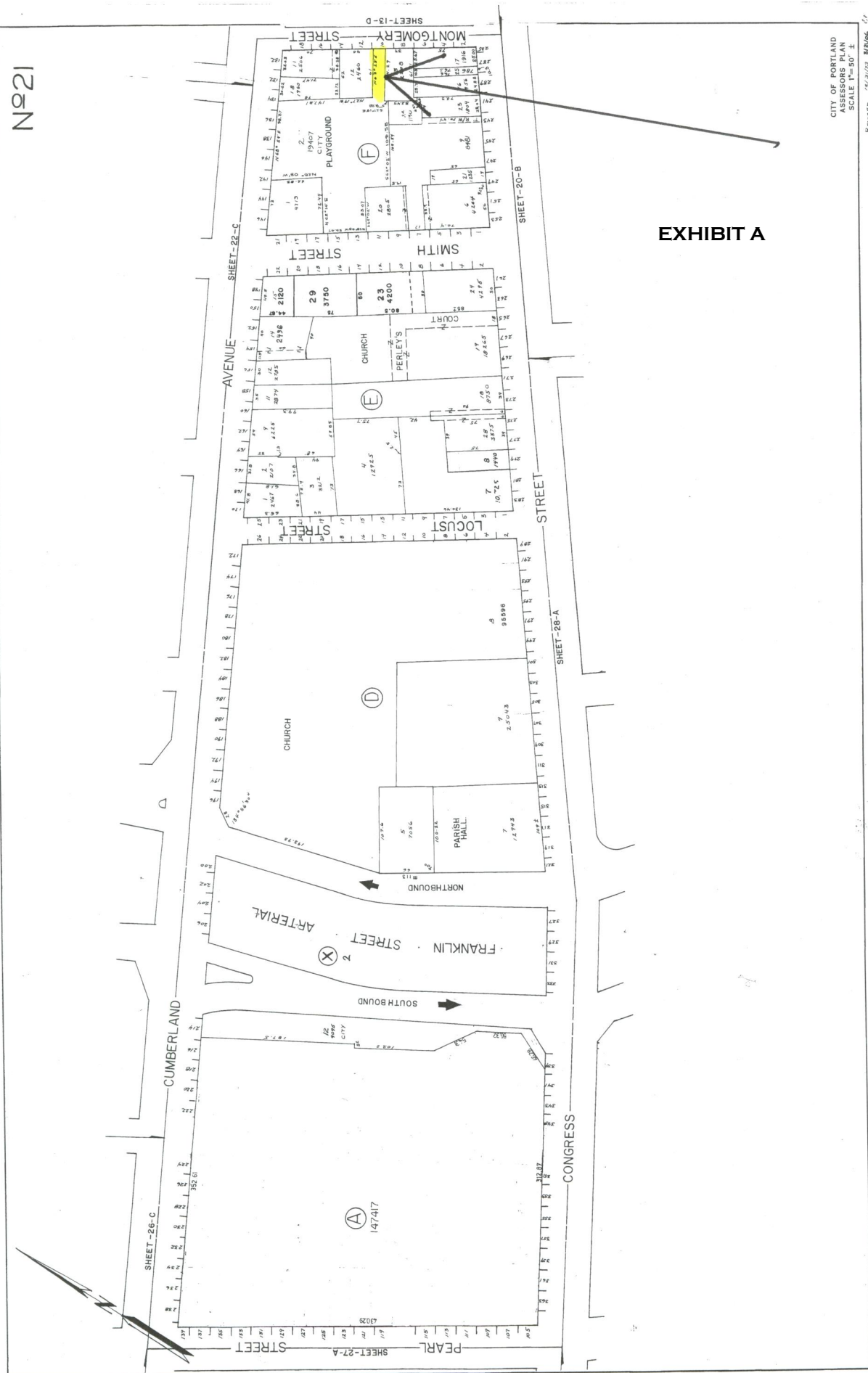


EXHIBIT A

CITY OF PORTLAND
ASSESSORS PLAN
SCALE 1"=50' ±
Revised 11/3/03 MAM/66

DISTRICT 100-3 05-27









Sally L. DeLuca
Director
Department of Parks, Recreation & Facilities

Ethan Hipple
Director
Parks Division

To: Park Commission
From: Ethan Hipple, Parks Director
Subject: CIP 2018 Submission
Date: October 28, 2016

Below is the Parks Division prioritized list of Capital Improvement Projects for FY 2018.

Capital Projects in Existing Parks

1. Lincoln Park Fence Restoration: **\$300,000**
2. Lyman Moore School Field Upgrades and Drainage: **\$450,000**
3. Tennis and Basketball Court Resurfacing at Deering Oaks Park and Deering High School: **\$100,000**
4. Lyseth School Playground: **\$250,000**
5. Evergreen Cemetery Stone Wall Reconstruction: **\$30,000**
6. Harborview Park Community Garden: **\$25,000**
7. Island Playgrounds Replacement: Peaks, Great Diamond, Cliff: **\$180,200**
8. Park Signage Fabrication and Installation: **\$25,000**
9. Payson Softball Lighting Replacement: **\$250,000**
10. Riverton School Softball Drainage and Erosion Issues: **\$65,000**
11. Evergreen Cemetery Expansion: Columbarium Phase II and III: **\$52,000**
12. Fitzpatrick Stadium Scoreboard and Road Drainage: **\$88,000**
13. Valley Street Basketball Court Reconstruction: **\$65,000**
14. Payson Park Parking and Curb Engineering: **\$30,000**

Additions to Park System

1. Amethyst Lot: In design phase, cost unknown



Friends and Community Partners Handbook

October 2016

City of Portland, Maine
Office of the City Manager
389 Congress Street
Portland, Maine 04101

FRIENDS AND COMMUNITY PARTNER HANDBOOK

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INTRODUCTION

The success of Portland Parks, Recreation & Facilities (PPR&F) PPR&F depends on collaborative support, advocacy, assistance, and enthusiasm through dedicated public stewardship efforts. Each year, dedicated Portlanders help the city's parks, natural areas, trails, playgrounds, athletic and recreational facilities/programs flourish through individual volunteerism or through work with a host of organized PPR&F "Friends and Community Partners" (FCP).

Recognized FCP demonstrate a level of commitment and service that is transformative for parks and open space. With a commitment to protect public interest and the "commonwealth," these groups donate hundreds of hours of skilled and unskilled labor, as well as raise funds, which strengthen Portland's park and recreation system. Partnerships formed between municipalities and local constituency groups are beneficial for parks & open spaces. These relationships are essential for site management and successful fundraising support through grant writing activities.

The intent of this handbook is to highlight where mutual benefit exists for PPR&F and its FCP in order to promote collaboration between them. There is no intent to add to the complexity and "bureaucracy" or to constrain the legal autonomy of any group; rather to define practices; clarify values, obligations, and expectations; as well as commit to a spirit and method of collaboration and accountability. In this document, the words "partner" and "partnership" are used, not in their legal sense, but to reflect a shared commitment to collaboration for the mutual benefit of PPR&F and the friends/community partner groups. Nothing contained in this PPR&F's Friends & Community Partner handbook is intended to create, or shall in any event or under any circumstance be construed as creating, a legal partnership or a joint venture between PPR&F and any individual or organization. Guidance in this handbook was developed using input from the Parks Commission, PPR&F management, PPR&F staff liaisons, friends and allied partner groups, and the public at-large.

As of February, 2016 approximately TBA Friends/Community Partner associations were listed on the City of Portland website. A list of those organizations can be found in the Appendix.

The Parks Commission was established by the City of Portland in 1983. The Park Commission's mission is to advocate for the enhancement and stewardship of our parks and open spaces. Review and propose projects that impact parks/open spaces and recommend action with respect to same; foster collaboration among park users and the City; promote public access and enjoyment and advocate for public and private funding for parks and open spaces.

Associations with Friends and Community Partners have been instrumental in achieving goals focused on improvement, beautification, preservation, redevelopment, social activities and other objectives, reflecting an ongoing commitment to improving the quality of life within their Portland's parks, open spaces and trails.

GOALS AND ACTIVITIES

Best Practices to Promote Collaboration between PPR&F and its FCP

Projects in Portland parks are accomplished in several ways:

- PPR&F initiates and implements project independently of FCP.
- PPR&F initiates project and implements in collaboration with FCP.
- FCP initiates project and implements in collaboration with PPR&F.

Once PPR&F determines that a partnership is the best way to accomplish a project or an important objective PPR&F staff generally will follow one of these strategies for implementation:

- (a) negotiate an agreement based on a proposal from an existing FCP group; or
- (b) seek an existing FCP group and propose an arrangement; or

(c) assist in the creation of a new FCP group/partner.

Once that relationship is established, PPR&F will seek to:

- Align Shared Vision and Mission. Develop a shared vision of work to be accomplished-reflecting both the broad body of work (mission) and each project or initiative to be undertaken.
- Practice Fairness and Transparency. Provide a consistent, fair, and open review process for all initiatives.
- Ensure Good Communication. The success of every partnership is dependent upon the structure, frequency, and quality of communication between the partners.
- Maintain an Environment of Trust. Trust, coupled with accountability, is an essential ingredient for successful partnerships and enables collaboration and contribution.
- Honor Commitments. Partnerships require a shared commitment to each other's success.
- Network and Build Relationships. Successful partnership efforts establish formal systems to identify people who can add value and support.
- Honor Diversity and Inclusivity. Diverse group leadership, membership, and service recipients provide value and continuous improvement to any partnership.
- Ensure Cultural Sensitivity. Cultural sensitivity and proficiency ensures partners have the skills to provide a park and recreation system that is relevant to people of all ages, genders, ethnicities, sexual orientation and cultures.
- Negotiate a Formal Agreement. F&CP may be required to enter into a formal written Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) agreement with PPR&F that describes work plans, assigns responsibilities, and identifies mutual interests, risks and expectations. This agreement will also outline management and disbursement of funds raised for the specific project and the bidding and hiring process with contractors who will provide improvements.
 - Project funds raised by FCP are always gifted to the City. The City then procures the services required to accomplish the project, with the FCP having continued collaboration and input in the process.
- Roles, responsibilities and accountability must be clearly defined and identified for each party to the MOU agreement to enable ongoing oversight and communication protocols must be established.

Spectrum of Functions for Friend & Community Partners

In addition to the Best Practices listed above, FCP may also provide the following functions in its partnership with PPR&F:

- Advisory: Provide advice to PPR&F staff on a particular aspect or element of the PPR&F system following official endorsement by the Parks Commission and the Portland City Council.
- Advocacy: Advocacy may be expressed through:
 - a) Public testimony during formal City hearings
 - b) Discussions and written correspondence with key decision makers and key stakeholders
 - c) Sponsorship
 - d) Raising cash or in-kind contributions and/or
 - e) Volunteering time
- In specific instances with prior approval from PPR&F, FCP and PPR&F may share responsibilities for Service Provision: Joint programming and shared results between PPR&F and its partner.

Examples

Current existing examples of FCPs which successfully partner with PPR&F include Portland Trails, Cultivating Community and Friends of the Eastern Promenade. FCPs are usually formalized entities (non-profit, private or public) with responsibilities for enhancing or improving PPR&F program operations or services. FCPs generally provide limited financial investment beyond collection of fees or in-kind provision of goods and services compared to PPR&F's financial

investment.

Memorandum of Understanding: A legally binding Agreement (MOU) is required in all cases where a service or improvement is made to City property by an FCP group. Sample MOU included in appendix.

Agreement forms: Formal City approved and/or endorsed agreements in most cases require PPR&F park permit, license agreement, concession agreement, PPR&F friends agreement, management agreement or memorandum of understanding, or City Council approval,

In some instances a more robust role for the FCP might be contemplated, leading to independent program operation of a park site by the FCP. As an example, in 2015 the Friends of Congress Square Park had a shared mission with PPR&F and demonstrated a capability to invest significant financial and technical resources to almost independently operate Congress Square Park. While any such partner must manage the site to PPR&F approved policies, rules, and standards, the day-to-day operations & programming may be completed without significant PPR&F involvement. Some site or building maintenance functions may remain with PPR&F. In this instance also, a legally binding agreement is required.

In other instances the FCP may participate in financing, building, operating and maintaining a park or open space facility. In this case it must be established to PPR&F's satisfaction that the FCP has established shared goals and mission with PPR&F and the capability to finance, build, operate, and maintain a facility to the mutual benefit of the partner, PPR&F, and the community. The FCP will abide by PPR&F policies, rules, and standards via a formal long-term agreement with limited involvement by PPR&F. Capital improvements made by the Partner may be transferred to PPR&F at the conclusion of the agreement. A legally binding Agreement will be required.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR GETTING ORGANIZED

The information in this section identifies some fundamental organizational components, which should be considered when officially organizing a Friends & Community Partner group.

Early efforts to involve neighbors, residents & stakeholders in FCP successfully provides a cross-section of interests, talents, resources and good public relations for the F&CP and its park/open space and can serve as a source of enthusiastic and energetic members and volunteers.

Organizational Meeting

While the idea for forming an FCP group often begins with discussions among a small group of neighbors, it's important to expand the group to the park's neighboring community members at the earliest time possible. As many residents as possible should be involved in the organizational process.

Identifying a clear idea of what the group hopes to accomplish is also a helpful way to bring organization to the meeting and avoid an open agenda that may limit its effectiveness. One way to accomplish this to consider is to call the first FCP meeting after the core group has identified general ideas for the group, but before those ideas are seen as the only approach possible. A potential pitfall to avoid here is that the core group has developed a complete blueprint for the organization, other residents may feel limited in their ability to contribute.

It is common for organizers to appoint someone to serve as temporary chairperson and for someone to keep minutes summarizing each meeting in order to highlight group discussion and record decisions. You may also choose to collect attendees names, addresses, phone numbers, email addresses, and areas of interest and expertise at the meeting. Other general considerations for meetings include creating an agenda, and having a detailed map of the proposed boundaries of the FCP group that could be on displayed at meetings. (Maps may be available from City of Portland for some areas).

All meeting minutes/summaries should be maintained as part of a permanent record and kept in an official book along with other important documents such as the charter, by-laws, and financial statements. A separate location of computer files is also helpful in the event the book is lost or misplaced.

Ad Hoc Committees

Park/Open Space Boundaries

An early step should be to define the area the FCP group proposes to represent. The City of Portland can provide information on the boundaries of surrounding registered FCP. Overlapping FCP groups may result in potential conflicts and should generally be avoided.

Goals And Objectives

Goals and objectives for your FCP group should be based on an assessment of present conditions, likely changes, and identifiable needs of your park/open space. The City of Portland has a number of documents such as the Portland's Comprehensive Plan, Peninsula Traffic Study, or A New Vision for Bayside that might be researched further to aid in establishing appropriate goals and objectives. Typically, a systematic identification of park/open space issues, subsequent goal statements, and a simple ranking of priorities is often an excellent starting point for an initial program.

Create a Mission Statement

The mission statement may identify a problem or a goal and, while they don't go into a lot of detail, they start to hint - very broadly - at how your organization might fix these problems or reach these goals. Some general guiding principles about mission statements are that they are concise, outcome oriented and inclusive.

Concise mission statements generally get their point across in one sentence. Outcome-oriented mission statement explains the fundamental results your organization is working to achieve. While mission statements do make statements about your group's key goals, it's very important that they do so very broadly and in an inclusive way. Good mission statements are not limiting in the strategies or sectors of the community that may become involved in the project.

By-Laws

Incorporation as a non-profit entity enables receipt of funds from charitable foundations, corporations and individuals.

By-laws govern the conduct of the FCP groups. They are adopted by the members and can only be changed by the organization. By-laws include a description of the organization's purpose, membership rights and qualifications, election and voting procedures, titles of officers and board members, terms and responsibilities, and rules for amending the by-laws. Some organizations may want to make all the decisions at membership meetings while other organizations may delegate more responsibilities to their board and officers.

Articles Of Incorporation & Tax Status

A Friends & Community Partner group is not required to incorporate, but may wish to do so in order to be eligible for other programs and potential grant sources. To incorporate, an FCP group must develop Articles of Incorporation, which are to be filed with the Secretary of State. Link included in attachments

State and federal tax regulations for nonprofit organizations should be reviewed during the organizational process. The committee reviewing tax regulations should work closely with the committee preparing the Articles of Incorporation. Please refer to Attachment III.

STAYING ACTIVE

Standing Committees

If your FCP group is to function on a continuing basis, standing committees can be helpful to work on specific interests and make recommendations to the membership. Committees may be formed to cover projects or programs including fund-raising, City of Portland meetings and public hearing schedules, and social events, among others. Organizations should maintain broad representation on such committees to create greater participation by neighborhood residents in the planning and decision-making process.

The most important aspect of any FCP is the ability to maintain an active and engaged organization. The Group must continue to involve members & residents in all activities and issues in order to operate effectively. This may include fund-raising, park/open space events, ongoing communications, special projects, and community involvement.

Ad Hoc Committees

Many organizational decisions need to be made by the FCP group and some decisions require research. Many groups find it most efficient to form ad hoc committees, which then develop recommendations to be presented to the general membership for review and adoption. Suggested areas for ad hoc committees are:

- Organizational structure (officers, policies, procedures, board of directors, by-laws, articles of incorporation and tax status).
- Park, Open Space or Trails boundaries.
- Friends/Community Partner goals and objectives.
- Standing committees such as Executive and Finance/Budget committees, etc.

This list is a sample listing; however, other committees may be appropriate for particular groups.

Fundraising and Finances

Fundraising is one of the most important elements in maintaining an active organization. FCP should develop budgets to identify the resources and costs necessary to sustain a successful operation. Groups generate funds in a variety of ways including dues and special events such as open space tours. In some cases, donations can be requested for special projects (more information on this is included in the “Specific Projects” heading below). Dues assessed each member vary among neighborhood associations and should be enough to at least cover such items as newsletters, flyers, postage, stationery and other basic functions.

Fundraising activities are limited only by the creativity, interest, and commitment of the FCP and it’s members. You may want to contact other successful associations to learn about what they have done. Maine Association of Nonprofits (insert link?) is a wealth of information for organizations at any level of capacity.

Friends & Community Partner Events

Many FCP groups have special events or programs such as open houses, cleanup campaigns, annual picnics or holiday events, which serve to enhance and promote the Park/open space. Such events stimulate pride, raise funds, educate and draw interest in the organizations mission. Scheduling these events during different times of the year (e.g. spring cleanup, July 4th festival, and open-house tours in the fall) provides for continuing interactions among neighborhood residents. Such events should be carefully planned to involve as many residents/members as possible. Committees should oversee the programs, review the costs, and coordinate various assignments.

Ongoing Communications

Good communication is critical for an effective organization in which members stay involved and committed. Newsletters and regular meetings are proven ways to maintain a high level of interest and participation. A yearly survey of park/open space interests and any current issues is also a good way to encourage communication and engender interest and participation. Many associations distribute their newsletters via email to members, stakeholders and community leaders to encourage a continuing dialogue. Communication among members/residents through newsletters, regular meetings, or special events is extremely important and should never be underestimated.

Using the Internet to set up group email lists and/or an association website can be an especially useful tool in all of these efforts. The time and expense of a website should be well worth the effort given the savings in printing and distribution of materials versus traditional methods.

Keep your friends/community partner contact information current with the City Manager's Office (756-8288).

Specific Projects

Park/Community Partner groups can advocate for, fundraise, and collaborate with the PPR&F on specific projects for their parks/open spaces. Projects encourage all residents to become more involved. Some frequent or typical projects include flower planting, tree maintenance, sidewalk shoveling programs, adopt a park and graffiti removal, to mention a few examples. Projects related to park/open space safety are excellent ways to get everyone involved.

IMAGE (or included in Appendix)

City Of Portland Meetings (Notification to the City of Portland)

Your FCP group will receive notice of proposed changes or development proposals, which directly affect the associated park/open space. However, there are many other government actions, which may affect your park/open space directly or indirectly. By appointing someone to monitor the City of Portland meeting schedule, you can stay abreast of the decisions being made and have input into those decisions. Please see the city website homepage for a complete weekly schedule and agendas of all City of Portland public meetings.

Portland City Council meetings are generally held on the first and third Mondays of each month at 5 PM in Council Chambers at Portland City Hall. Please refer to the City of Portland website for updated information regarding meeting schedules for City Council workshops; Planning Board, Historic Preservation Board or any other appropriate city committees. The Parks Commission meets on the first Thursday of each month.

Annual responsibilities of FCP shall be provided to the Parks Commission for our Annual Report in conjunction with City's fiscal calendar; July 1 – June 30 of the previous year. Examples of what this information shall include are:

- In-kind contributions

- Total volunteer hours

- Programming report, including:

 - Total number and category of events

 - Average attendance

- Percentage of Master Plan improvements achieved (if applicable)

CONCLUSION

FCP have contributed immeasurably to the quality of life in the City of Portland by:

- Providing a forum for individual voices to be heard;
- Helping to determine community priorities and influence community decisions;
- Advocating and collaborating on projects which have improved the appearance of the community and stimulated pride in parks/open spaces and the community as a whole;
- Providing an opportunity for residents to learn new skills and serve as a training ground for new community leaders; and
- Contributing to the vibrancy of our City, well-being of residents and to a spirit of cooperation and community among neighbors.

The ultimate goal of a FCP is two-fold: (1) to achieve immediate objectives for the enhancement and conservation of their park/open spaces and (2) to build an organization that will endure and grow stronger over time. Everything your FCP group does together, from cleaning the park, to raising funds for special projects to speaking out at public hearings, strengthens your organization and reinforces the quality of life for the city as a whole. In this sense, parks/open spaces are the building blocks of the city.

If we can help you, please call on us. We wish you much success in all your endeavors!

APPENDIX

ATTACHMENT I

The following is a sample of bylaws from Friends of the Eastern Promenade,

BY-LAWS

OF

FRIENDS OF THE EASTERN PROMENADE

ARTICLE I - NAME, DEFINITIONS AND PURPOSES

1.1 Name. The name of the Corporation is Friends of the Eastern Promenade.

1.2 Purposes. The Corporation is organized exclusively for charitable and educational purposes within the meaning of section 501(c)(3) of the United States Internal Revenue Code. In particular, the Corporation's purposes are to preserve the significant historic public landscape, protect the environmental integrity, and enhance recreation use of the Eastern Promenade in Portland, Maine.

ARTICLE II - MEMBERS

2.1 Membership Eligibility. Membership is open to any individual over 18 years of age, or any entity, that supports the purposes of the Corporation. There shall be no separate membership classes.

2.2 Membership Dues/Donations. Members must pay annual dues as determined by the Board of Directors.

2.3 Voting Rights of Members. Each Member in good standing shall have the right to vote for the Directors of the Corporation and on any other matters submitted by the Board of Directors to the Membership, as further set forth in these Bylaws. Each Member shall have one vote; provided, however, that no more than two Members from a given household shall have the right to vote.

2.4 Membership Meetings.

a. Regular meetings. Regular meetings of the Members may be held at such time and place as the Board of Directors may determine.

b. Special Meetings. Special meetings of the Members may be called at any time by the President, by the Board of Directors, or by petition in writing signed by not fewer than twenty-five (25) Members of the Corporation entitled to vote and filed with the Secretary. Ten (10) days' written notice as to the time, place, and subject matter of the Special Meeting must be given to all voting members. At such Special Meetings no business shall be transacted which is not specified in the notice of the meeting.

c. Annual Meetings. An Annual Meeting of members of the Corporation shall be held in every calendar year, under the direction of the Board of Directors, for the purpose of electing Board members, hearing reports and conducting such other business as may properly come before the Corporation.

d. Quorum. At any meeting of the Members, ten (10) Members shall constitute a quorum. Any meeting may be adjourned by a majority of the votes cast upon the question, whether or not a quorum is present, and the meeting may be held as adjourned without further notice. When a quorum is present at any meeting, a majority of the votes properly cast by members shall decide any question.

ARTICLE III - DIRECTORS

3.1 Powers. The business and affairs of the Corporation, its supervision, control and direction, shall be conducted and managed by its Board of Directors, which shall exercise all of the powers of the Corporation. Subject to the terms and conditions of the Articles of Incorporation, and these By-laws, as amended from time to time, it is intended that the directors as referred to herein have the same rights, powers, obligations and functions as are ascribed to and imposed upon directors for non-profit corporations under applicable law. Except as otherwise specifically set forth herein, the Board of Directors may by general resolution delegate to committees and officers of the Corporation such powers as it sees fit.

3.2 Election and Composition of Board. Until the first annual meeting of the membership the incorporators shall serve as

the Board of Directors. At the first annual meeting of the members of the Corporation, and at each annual meeting thereafter, the directors then in office, having due regard to the corporate mission, the city-wide and regional significance of the historic Eastern Promenade, and its constituency, shall present a slate of nominees for election by the membership to hold office until the election and qualification of their respective successors. The Board of Directors shall be maintained by such staggered elections as may be necessary to elect approximately one third of the Board every year. The number of directors shall be not less than five nor more than twenty-one (exclusive of honorary directors).

3.3 Absences; Resignation; Removal; Vacancies. A director shall make every effort to attend the regular and special meetings of the Board, and if unable to attend a meeting shall notify the president in advance. Any director who misses more than three (3) meetings annually without being excused by the president shall be notified by the president of such failure to attend and will thereafter be subject to possible removal by the Board for non-attendance. Any director may resign at any time by giving written or electronic mail notice to the President or the Board of Directors and may be removed at any time in accordance with applicable law. Any vacancy in the Board of Directors occurring during the year, including any vacancy created by an increase of the number of directors, may be filled for the unexpired portion of the term by the directors then serving, although less than a quorum, by an affirmative vote of the majority thereof, and any director so elected shall hold office until the election and qualification of a successor.

3.4 Honorary Directors. The Corporation may have an unlimited number of honorary directors who shall be entitled to notice of and the right to attend all meetings of the Board, but who shall not have the right to vote. An honorary director shall be appointed by the Board of Directors at its discretion, with the honorary director's term of appointment to be determined by the Board.

3.5 Annual Meeting. As soon as practicable after each annual meeting of the membership, the newly elected directors shall meet for the purpose of electing officers and the transaction of other business, and if a quorum of the directors be then present, no prior notice of such meeting shall be required to be given.

3.6 Regular Meetings. The Board of Directors shall establish a schedule for regular meetings of the Board.

3.7 Special Meetings. Special meetings of the Board of Directors may be called by the President or the Secretary and must be called by either of them on the written, or digital request of one-fifth (1/5) of the members of the Board.

3.8 Notice of Meetings. Notice of all directors' meetings, except as herein otherwise provided, shall be given either by mailing the same at least three (3) days before the meeting, or by digital means at least one (1) day before the meeting, to the usual business, residence, or digital address of the director as indicated in the Corporate records. At any meeting at which every director shall be present, even though without notice, any business may be transacted.

3.9 Quorum; Voting. At all meetings of the Board of Directors a majority of the directors shall be necessary and sufficient to constitute a quorum for the transaction of business and the act of a majority of the directors present at any meeting at which there is a quorum shall be the act of the Board of Directors. If at any meeting there is less than a quorum present, a majority of those present may adjourn the meeting from time to time without further notice to any absent director.

3.10 Informal Action by Directors. Any action required or permitted to be taken at any meeting of the Board of Directors, or of any committee thereof, may be taken without meeting, if a written consent to such action is signed by, or digital consent is received from, all members of the Board or of such committee, as the case may be, and such consent is filed with the minutes of the proceedings of the Board or committee.

3.11 Telephone Meetings. Members of the Board of Directors, or a committee of the Board, may participate in a meeting by means of a conference telephone, or similar communications equipment, if all persons participating in the meeting can hear each other at the same time. Participation in a meeting by these means constitutes presence in person at the meeting.

ARTICLE IV - OFFICERS

4.1 Executive Officers. The Executive Officers of the Corporation shall be a President and a Vice President, who shall be selected from among the Board of Directors, a Secretary, a Treasurer, and such other officers with such powers and duties not inconsistent with these By-laws as may be appointed and determined by the Board of Directors. Any two offices may be held by the same person, provided that the President shall not also be a Vice-President.

4.2 Resignation, Removal; Vacancies. Any officer may resign at any time by giving written or electronic mail notice to the President, or the Board of Directors, and may be removed from office by the vote of the directors at any time, in accordance with applicable law. In case any office of the Corporation becomes vacant by death, resignation, retirement,

disqualification, or any other cause, the Board of Directors, by majority action, may select an officer to fill such vacancy.

4.3 President. The President shall preside at all meetings of the Board of Directors. The President shall have and exercise general charge and supervision of the affairs of the Corporation and shall do and perform such other duties as are customary to the office and as may be assigned to that office by the Board of Directors.

4.4 Vice President. At the request of the President, or in the event of absence or disability, the Vice President shall perform the duties and possess and exercise the powers of the President and shall perform such other duties as the Board of Directors may determine.

4.5 Secretary. The secretary shall keep the minutes of all meetings of the Board of Directors in books provided for that purpose. The Secretary shall attend to the giving and serving of all notices of the Corporation; the Secretary shall have charge of the minutes and such other records as the Board of Directors may direct, may attest to the accuracy of such books and records and shall perform such other duties as are customary to that office and as may from time to time be directed by the President or the Board of Directors.

4.6 Treasurer. The Treasurer shall have the custody of all funds, property and securities of the Corporation, subject to such regulations as may be imposed by the Board of Directors. When necessary or proper, the Treasurer shall endorse on behalf of the Corporation for collection, checks, notes, and other obligations, and shall deposit the same to the credit of the Corporation at such bank or banks or depository as the Board of Directors may designate. The Treasurer shall, in general, perform all duties incident to the office of Treasurer, including a general supervision and control of the accounts of the Corporation, subject to the control of the Board of Directors.

4.7 Other Officers. The Board of Directors may elect or appoint any such other officers and assistant officers as they may deem necessary, who shall have such authority and perform such duties as from time to time may be prescribed by the President or by the Board of Directors.

ARTICLE V - COMMITTEES

5.1 Committees. The Board of Directors may also appoint from their number, or from among such other persons as the Board may see fit, such committees as the Board may determine, which shall in each case have such powers and duties as shall from time to time be prescribed by the Board. Provided, however, that every such committee have as a member at least one director from the Board. The President shall be a voting member ex officio of each committee appointed by the Board of Directors.

5.2 Executive Committee. There shall be an Executive Committee composed of the officers of the corporation and the committee chairs, which shall have such powers and duties as shall from time to time be prescribed by the Board.

5.3 Rules. Records of Proceedings. Each Committee may prescribe rules and procedures for the call and conduct of its meetings. Each Committee shall keep regular minutes of its proceedings and shall report the same to the Board of Directors and the President.

5.4 Standing Committees. The Board may establish such standing committees as it deems necessary or advisable. Each Standing Committee will submit to the Board an annual action plan with a budget. The Board is responsible for reviewing, approving and prioritizing the action plan of each committee.

ARTICLE VI - CORPORATE ASSETS AND EARNINGS

6.1 No part of the net earnings of the Corporation shall inure to the benefit of any member, director or Officer of the Corporation, or any private individual, excepting solely such reasonable compensation that the Corporation shall pay for services actually rendered to the corporation, or allowed by the corporation as a reasonable allowance for authorized expenditures incurred on behalf of the Corporation, and no member, director or Officer of the Corporation, or any private individual, shall be entitled to share in the distribution of any of the corporate assets on dissolution of the corporation (except that a member, director or Officer may receive property of the Corporation in exchange for fair market value compensation to the Corporation).

6.2. This corporation shall exist in perpetuity, but in the event of dissolution of the Corporation or the termination of its activities, the assets of the Corporation remaining after the payment of all its liabilities shall be distributed exclusively to one or more organizations organized and operated exclusively for such purposes as shall then qualify as an exempt organization or organizations under Section 501©(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended and as a charitable, religious, eleemosynary, benevolent or educational corporation within the meaning of Title 13-B, of the Maine Revised Statutes as amended, or shall be distributed to the federal government, or to a state or local government, for a public purpose.

6.3 Notwithstanding any other provision of these Articles, the Corporation shall not carry on any other activities not permitted to be carried on by a corporation exempt from federal income tax under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as now enacted or hereafter amended.

ARTICLE VII - MISCELLANEOUS

7.1 Corporate Seal. The Board of Directors may provide a suitable seal, containing the name of the Corporation, which seal shall be in the charge of the Secretary.

7.2 Fiscal Year. The fiscal year of the Corporation shall be the calendar year.

7.3 Records and Reports. The Corporation shall keep correct and complete records of account and of its transactions and minutes of the proceedings of its Board of Directors and of any committee. The President or the Secretary of the Corporation shall prepare or cause to be prepared annually a full and correct statement of the affairs of the Corporation, including a balance sheet and a financial statement of operations for the preceding fiscal year, which shall be submitted at the annual meetings of the Board of Directors and filed within twenty days thereafter at the principal office of the Corporation.

ARTICLE VIII - INDEMNIFICATION

8.1 Indemnification. The Corporation shall, to the full extent of its power to do so provided by law, including without limitation Section 714 of Title 13-B of the Maine Revised Statutes Annotated, indemnify any and all present and former members, officers, trustees, employees, committee members and agents of the Corporation against expenses, including attorneys' fees, judgments, fines and amounts paid in settlement actually and reasonably incurred by them in connection with any action, suit or proceeding in which they, or any of them, are made parties, or a party, by reason of their being members, or agents of the Corporation; except in relation to matters as to which any such person shall be finally adjudicated in any such action, suit or proceeding not to have acted in good faith in the reasonable belief that his or her action was in the best interest of the Corporation, or, with respect to any criminal action or proceeding, where such person is finally adjudged to have had reasonable cause to believe that his or her conduct was unlawful. Such indemnification shall be made in accordance with the procedures set forth in Maine Revised Statutes Annotated, Title 13-B, Section 714, subsection 3, as the same may be amended from time to time. Such indemnification shall not be deemed exclusive of any other rights to which those indemnified may be entitled under any other by-law, agreement, or otherwise.

ARTICLE IX AMENDMENTS

9.1 BY-LAWS. The Board of Directors shall have power to make, alter, amend, and repeal the By-laws of the Corporation by vote of a majority of all of the directors present at any regular or special meeting.

9.2 Articles of Incorporation. The members shall have power to amend the Articles of Incorporation of the Corporation by vote of a majority of the members present at any regular or special meeting; provided, the Board of Directors shall adopt a resolution setting forth the proposed amendment and direct that it be submitted to a vote at a subsequent membership meeting. Written or digital notice setting forth the proposed amendment or a summary of the changes shall be given to each member entitled to vote thereon at least ten (10) days but not more than fifty (50) days prior to the date of the said membership meeting, said notice to be sent to the business, residence, or digital address indicated in the Corporate records.

ATTACHMENT II

Sample Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
BETWEEN
CITY OF PORTLAND
AND
FRIENDS OF THE EASTERN PROMENADE

WHEREAS, the City of Portland (Portland) is a municipality under the laws of the State of Maine with a principal location at 389 Congress Street, Portland, Maine 04101 (“Portland”); and

WHEREAS, the Friends of the Eastern Promenade is a non-profit corporation under the laws of the State of Maine with a principal place of business in Portland, Maine (“Friends”); and

WHEREAS, Fort Allen Park is one of Portland’s premiere public outdoor spaces due to its historical significance, monuments and panoramic views of Casco Bay and Portland Harbor; and

WHEREAS, the Eastern Promenade Master Plan, adopted as part of Portland’s Comprehensive Plan in 2003, recommends improvements to Fort Allen Park; and

WHEREAS, the restoration of Fort Allen Park has been identified as a priority project by the Friends (hereinafter the “Fort Allen Restoration Project”); and

WHEREAS, the purpose of this Memorandum of Understanding (“MOU”) is to address the City and the Friends’ collaboration to restore Fort Allen Park; and

NOW THEREFORE, in consideration of the following, the City and the Friends hereby agree as follows:

1. The Friends and the City will establish a working group including members of the City's Department of Public Services and the Friends to oversee the Fort Allen Restoration Project;
2. The aforementioned working group will work together collaboratively to make all decisions in connection with the Fort Allen Restoration Project. In the event, however, that there is any disagreement between the City and the Friends, the City shall have be the final decision maker with regard to all aspects of the Fort Allen Restoration Project;
3. The Fort Allen Restoration Project including, but not limited to, the development and construction phases will be conducted in accordance with the City Code and State law requirements including, but not limited to, the City's Site Plan and Historic Preservation Ordinances;
4. The Friends shall provide funds to hire a consulting team to perform the research, planning, design, development, bidding and construction of the Fort Allen Restoration Project;
5. The Friends will pursue additional funding including, but not limited to, grants, donations and/or organizational funds for the implementation of the Fort Allen Restoration Project; and
6. The City will pursue funding including, but not limited to, capital improvement funds, grants, in-kind services and/or other financial sources, for the implementation of the Fort Allen Restoration Project;

This agreement represents the entire agreement between the Friends and the City with regard to the Fort Allen Restoration Project and supersedes and replaces all terms and conditions of any prior agreements, arrangement, negotiations and/or representations. This agreement may not be modified except for in writing executed by the Friends and the City.

Seen and Agreed to this ____ day of November, 2011.

WITNESS

FRIENDS OF THE EASTERN PROMENADE

Diane Davison, President

WITNESS

CITY OF PORTLAND

Mark A. Rees, City Manager

ATTACHMENT III

ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION FOR STATE OF MAINE
<http://www.maine.gov/sos/cec/forms/MNPCA6.PDF>

ATTACHMENT IV
LIST OF FRIENDS AND COMMUNITY PARTNERS
From City of Portland Website

DRAFT

Portland Parks Commission Annual Report 2015-2016

October 1, 2016

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Message from the Chair of the Parks Commission

As Chair of the Parks Commission, may I proudly say that 2016 has been an extraordinary year for Portland's parks and open spaces. Passive and active use continues to increase simultaneously with community support through the creation of friends groups and collaborations with external partnerships. Highlights of activities over this past year include:

- Hiring of a full time park ranger to monitor our parks and open spaces and promote safe use;
- Resurgence of the Congress Square Park furthering its status among Portland's jewels of the Art's District;
- Publication of the Trust for Public Land (TPL) report on the status of our parks and options for consideration as we move forward; and
- Reorganization of city administration to support a dedicated Parks, Recreation, and Facilities Department prompting the hiring of a full-time Parks Manager as well as a Recreation Manager.

Along with increased attention and support for parks, the Parks Commission itself experienced our own evolution. We held our first retreat in the early winter of 2016 at Riverside Golf Course with the overarching goal of refining internal operations to better manage the increase demands on the commission and our effectiveness in representing Portland's prized green spaces. As a result, we created the following mission statement:

The mission of the Portland Parks Commission is to advocate for the enhancement and stewardship of our parks and open spaces.

- *Review and propose projects that impact parks and open spaces and recommend action.*
- *Foster collaboration among park users and the City.*
- *Promote public access and enjoyment.*
- *Advocate for public and private funding for parks and open spaces.*
- *Enjoy Portland for Life.*

We also formed four new committees to oversee work as outlined within this report:

1. **Park Initiatives:** Focuses on current "special" PC initiatives such as:
 - Designing consistent signage for our parks
 - Friends & Community Partners (FCP) handbook: This policy is intended to provide resource and guidance through a spectrum of practices for any partnerships formed between the City of Portland and local constituency groups seeking recognition as a "Friends & Community Partner" (FCP).
2. **Annual Report and Inventory:** Tasked with preparing the annual report and creating a single, accurate inventory of our parks,
3. **Green Space Gathering:** Organizes our annual Green Space Gathering
4. **Finance:** Charged with financial oversight and identifying mechanisms for external financial support for parks.

And finally, courtesy of Jeff Tarling, Portland City Arborist, and of the Portland Room at the Portland Public Library, on the Parks Commission website¹ we have posted annual reports of the original Portland Parks Commission from 1885, 1901, and 1909.

The success of Portland parks and recreation relies on collaborative support, advocacy and enthusiasm through dedicated public stewardship efforts. Each year, devoted Portlanders help the city's natural areas, trails, playgrounds, open spaces, athletic and recreational facilities flourish through volunteerism. These relationships are essential for site management and successful fundraising support in a variety of ways.

The Parks Commission is dedicated to ensuring that partnerships formed between local constituency groups and city administration are beneficial for parks, open spaces and our communities throughout the City.

Diane Davison
Chair, Portland Parks Commission

¹ The Portland Parks Commission website: www.portlandmaine.gov/345/Parks-Commission

1.2 The Portland Parks Commission

The Parks Commission is a citizen body of 13 commissioners appointed by the City Council. By city ordinance, members include one City Council member who is on the Transportation, Sustainability and Energy Committee, one member representing Friends of Deering Oaks, one member representing Friends of the Eastern Promenade, one member representing Friends of Evergreen Cemetery; and one member representing Portland Trails. Seven members represent the public-at-large and one member represents the Land Bank Commission. Except for the City Council representative, all appointments are for three-year terms.

As established by City ordinance, the duties of the Portland Parks Commission include:

- Soliciting, encouraging and accepting private contributions to the city, in cash or in kind, whether by gift, trust, or subject to conditions;
- Making recommendations to the city council as to the sale of dedicated parks and public grounds and disposition of trust funds held for parks, trails and open space;
- Maintaining inventories of parks, trails and open space needs as it determines to be desirable;
- Submitting an annual report to the city council regarding the state of the city's parks and public grounds and City of Portland Parks, Recreation and Public Buildings and Grounds making specific recommendations therein about suggested goals and improvements for the parks and public grounds;
- Encouraging educational programs, through the schools or otherwise, in forestry education or other relevant subjects it determines to be beneficial to the parks programs of the city;
- Undertaking such other activities as to enhance the parks, trails and open space programs of the city as it deems appropriate from time to time; and
- Conducting an annual meeting of all parks, trails and open space advocacy groups to discuss annual projects and to recommend goals and priorities for capital improvement projects to the city council.

1.2.1 Current Members of the Parks Commission

Diane Davison, Chair, Friends of the Eastern Promenade	2014-2017
Carol Hutchins, Friends of Deering Oaks	2015-2018
Craig Lapine, Public-at-large	2015-2018
Cynthia Loebenstein, Friends of Evergreen Cemetery	2015-2018
Meri Lowry, Land Bank Representative	2015-2018
Michael Mertaugh, Public-at-large	2014-2017
Steve Morgenstein, Public-at-large	2014-2017
Jaime Parker, Portland Trails	2015-2018
Nathan Robbins, Public-at-large	2015-2018
Travis Wagner, Public-at-large	2014-2017
Dory Waxman, Public-at-large	2014-2017
Belinda Ray, City Council Representative	

1.2.2 Parks Commission City Staff

Sally DeLuca, Director of Parks, Recreation, and Facilities

Ethan Hipple, Parks Director

Laurie Mondor, Executive Assistant, Parks, Recreation, and Facilities



Payson Park - Photo Courtesy of Jeff Tarling

1.3 Brief History of the Parks Commission

1885	The city Cemeteries and Public Grounds Commission was created by the Maine Legislature.
1913	The Cemeteries and Public Grounds Commission was changed to the Parks Commission.
1915	The city Recreation Commission was created by the Maine Legislature.
1923	Citizen Commissioners were replaced by City Councilors who also served as Parks Commissioners.
1947	The Parks Commission was eliminated and the Portland Department of Parks and Recreation was created.
1983	The Friends of the Parks Committee (popularly known as the Friends of the Parks Commission) was created by the city.
1987	The Friends of the Parks Commission held its first meeting.
2008	The Friends of the Parks Commission was changed to the Parks Commission.
2014	Through a city ordinance prompted by a Citizen's Referendum, the role of the Parks Commission was strengthened and given formal advisory and review function to the City Council regarding the modification and/or sale of public parks.

1.4 Heritage of Portland Parks and Open Space

Portland's parks and open spaces are a treasure - an important element of who we are. They anchor Portland's spectacular natural setting and offer repose and recreation for the population of Maine's largest city and for its many visitors. They also offer respectful places for burial and commemoration of Portland's deceased loved ones.

Of all the cities in the United States, few can compete with Portland's unique natural setting - overlooking the beauties of Casco Bay, the islands and seaway to the East, and the White Mountains to the West. Portland's parks and open spaces ensure that these priceless vistas can be enjoyed by present and future generations of Portland residents and visitors.

Portland's parks and open spaces did not just happen. They resulted from the vision, dedication, and generosity of many Portland residents, friends, and public officials over the past two centuries. Safeguarding Portland's existing parks for the benefit of future generations and creating new parks as the city continues to develop will require continuing vigilance and commitment by the citizens of Portland.

Portland's park system began with the city's acquisition in 1828 of a parcel of land on Munjoy Hill that would become part of the Eastern Promenade Park.² The Eastern and Western Promenade roadways were established by 1837, and in 1878 the city engaged Calvert Vaux, Frederick Law Olmsted's collaborator in the design of New York's Central Park, to advise on improvements in Portland's public spaces. That same year, the city's civil engineer, William A. Goodwin, outlined a vision for protection of the vistas from the Eastern and Western Promenades as permanent scenic resources of the city. The high vantage points of the Eastern and Western Promenades were key features of Mayor James Phinney Baxter's 1897 plan for Portland's park system, modeled on the linked system of parks in Boston's "Emerald Necklace." Another element of this plan was the peripheral road and pedestrian trail around Portland's Back Cove, known today as Baxter Boulevard. Baxter Boulevard with its border of linden trees has become a much-loved feature of Portland's park system. In addition to offering a splendid view of the Portland peninsula, the pedestrian trail provides a year-around outlet for exercise and renewal for many of Portland's residents.

The first of Portland's designated parks, Lincoln Park (originally named Phoenix Square), was created just after the great fire of 1866 as a central park for Portland's

² This brief sketch of the history of Portland's parks is drawn from *Bold Vision: The Development of the Parks of Portland, Maine*, Theo H.B.M. Holtwick & Earle G. Shettleworth, Jr., editors, Greater Portland Landmarks, 1999.

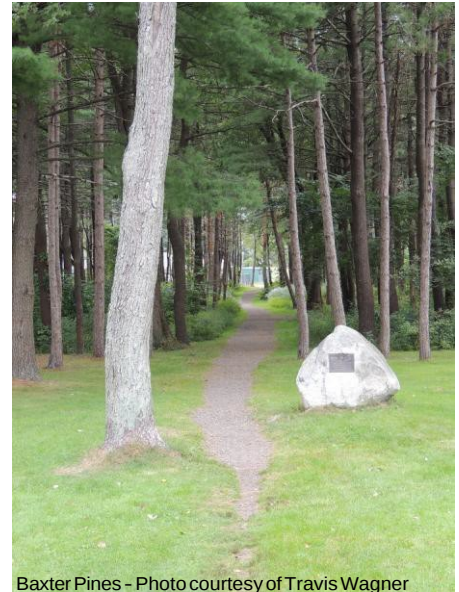
residents and as a fire break in the event of a future conflagration. Lincoln Park became a focal point for the city's development in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, but has suffered from neglect in recent years.

Through the generosity of the Deering family, Deering Oaks Park was another early addition to Portland's park system. The park was given to the city by Nathaniel Deering II and his son, Henry Deering in 1878. For many years prior to that, the park's wooded space had been freely used by the public. Once it became a Portland park, there was a risk that the park's trees would be thinned to make room for organized activities. City engineer William Goodwin successfully advocated to keep the trees and to move slowly and cautiously in deciding how to develop the park, consistent with Olmsted's design principles. He also had the mill pond dammed to create the skating pond, and installed the fountain and the first of the pond's duck houses.

Evergreen Cemetery was established by the city of Portland as a cemetery in 1852 in what was then the town of Westbrook. Its development was inspired by the garden cemetery movement, which had begun with Cambridge's Mount Auburn Cemetery in 1831 and Bangor's Mount Hope Cemetery in 1834. Like Mount Auburn and Mount Hope Cemeteries, the site for Evergreen Cemetery was

selected for its attractive landscape features – its hills and natural contours, pond, and specimen trees. These were enhanced with thoughtful plantings and grave layouts that respect and enhance the natural features of the site. The Friends of Evergreen was established in 1991 to help protect Evergreen Cemetery and to promote public appreciation of the cemetery. This was the first of the several friends groups that have been established since to advocate for the needs of Portland's parks and open spaces. Its first initiative was to obtain recognition of Evergreen Cemetery on the National Register of Historic Places. This was followed soon after by its effort to lead the restoration of Wilde Memorial Chapel after a period of serious neglect.

Congress Square Park has undergone a major revitalization effort and is emblematic of Portlander's support of city parks. Congress Square was created in the early 1980s through an urban renewal grant. In the 2000s, neglect compounded by a poor design led to decline and underutilization. In 2013, the City Council voted to sell most of the park to a private entity for commercial use. This proposal led to a citizen



referendum to block the sale and to restrict the selling of any public park in the future, which was subsequently approved by the voters. The proposed sale also was a catalyst to reimagine Congress Square Park led by the newly formed Friends of Congress Square Park with the intent of redesigning the park and the entire intersection in the heart of Portland's vibrant Arts District. The Park is now a destination park with numerous free events year round ranging from yoga, to music, to film, to kids events and is a focal point during Portland's popular first Friday Art Walk.

As described in this report, Portland has added many parks and open spaces to its parks system since these early park acquisitions. Together with the various parks friends groups, the Parks Commission is committed to protecting Portland's parks, promoting the respectful use and appreciation of Portland's parks by the public, and advocating for their needs.



Congress Square Park - Photo Courtesy of Bree Lacasse

2. PARKS COMMISSION HIGHLIGHTS, 2015----2016

2.1 Reorganization of Portland's Parks and Recreation

In 2015, the City reorganized the responsibility for management of parks and open spaces by consolidating them under a new Department of Parks, Recreation, and Facilities.

2.2 Reorganization of the Parks Commission

Given the renewed interest in parks and increased expectations of the Parks Commission, we had our first ever retreat in January 2016. The goal was to create committees to perform specific functions as a means to improve the Parks Commission's organization and productivity. We created five new committees: Annual Report and Inventory, chaired by Travis Wagner, Park Initiatives, chaired by Steve Morgenstern, Friends and Community Partners, chaired by Diane Davison; Green Space Gathering, chaired by Dory Waxman, and Finance, chaired by Michael Mertaugh.



Deering Oaks Park - Photo Courtesy of Ethan Owens

2.3 Issuance of the Trust for Public Lands Report

In January 2016, the Trust for Public Land (TPL) issued its report, *Portland Open Space Vision and Implementation Plan*. The impetus for a vision plan for Portland's open spaces came from the Portland City Manager's office in 2014. The TPL and city staff formed two citizen groups, the Steering Committee and the Stakeholder Group. This

partnership helped to guide the development of the plan's components. In addition, TPL also conducted a Rapid Park Quality Assessment in the summer of 2015 to compare park quality among most major parks in Portland. Based on the results, TPL issued the 8 following recommendations in its final report:

1. Re-structure park and recreation functions within city government.
2. Follow protocol for involving commissions and general public in annual funding decision-making process.
3. Adopt project selection criteria for prioritizing park and recreation projects for funding (capital and operating).
4. Adopt 15 measurable objectives that collectively provide a desired level of service for Portland's open space system.
5. Close the gap revealed by the service area maps.
6. Improve the distribution of amenities as the park system expands over time,
7. Implement other system-wide improvements to Portland's parks.
8. Consider options for improving financing for Portland's parks and open spaces.

2.4 Hiring of Full---Time Parks Ranger

The city was able to hire the first full-time year-round ranger since 2007. The Parks Commission helped to garner support for, and contributed to the funding of this position in 2015. The park ranger provides a uniformed presence in the Portland Parks to assist park users, to discourage misuse of park property, and to represent the City of Portland. More specifically, Portland Park Rangers:

- Provide park visitors with general assistance, directions, and information of city parks, recreation programs, and other services,
- Promote safe park use and enjoyment by encouraging compliance with park rules, regulations, and requesting police assistance when necessary,

- Assist in crowd control, directing traffic, and protecting city resources during special events,
- Manage the East End boat launch, beach, and bath house,
- Inspect, maintain, and report issues on the trail system throughout the city,
- Maintain daily log and report on park incidents, public contacts, and park conditions and provide case follow through, and
- As sworn constables, enforce rules and write tickets as necessary.

2.5 Green Space Gathering

The Green Space Gathering (GSG) was first held in 2010 with the intention of providing a forum for our parks and neighborhood groups. This annual opportunity assembles park stewardship groups to share updates on the previous year's highlights, provide projects and events for the next year, and consider longer term goals for the future of our park and open space system.

This gathering serves to inform and educate the public (and each other) about both the great work being accomplished and current needs for our city parks and open spaces. The GSG also gives the Parks Commission the opportunity to receive feedback on increasing effectiveness in our role of assisting the city and friends groups in our collaborate efforts to advocate for these invaluable spaces.

The Parks Commission held its 7th Annual Green Space Gathering on October 1, 2015 at the East End School. Our featured keynote speaker was Barbara Wilks, founder of W Architecture and Landscape Architecture in 1999 to create a design-oriented, multidisciplinary practice focused on urban issues. The title of her presentation was, "Our Parks and Open Spaces: Past - Present - Future."

The theme for the 2016 Green Space Gathering is "Get to Know Your Parks." This year's gathering is scheduled for October 6, 2016, from 5:30 PM to 7:30 PM and is sponsored by Park Partners (City Manager's Office, City Council, Parks and Recreation Department, Planning Department, Land Bank Commission, "Friends" Groups, and Neighborhood Organizations).

3. DEPARTMENT OF PARKS, RECREATION, AND FACILITIES

3.1 Mission and Organization

The Department of Parks, Recreation and Facilities manages recreational and cultural activities and spaces for Portland residents and visitors of all ages. The Parks Division within the Parks, Recreation and Facilities Department oversees: 60+ parks spanning over 721 acres, including 30 playgrounds, 24 Tennis Courts, 8 Pickleball Courts, 2 Sand Volleyball Courts, 1 beach, 7.5 miles of city-maintained trails, 7 multi-use fields, 2 artificial turf fields, 4 skating ponds, 1 skate park, 5 splashpads, 10 community gardens, 16 cemeteries with over 100,000 burial plots, dozens of horticultural beds, and 20,000 inventoried park and street trees.

3.2 Summary of Major Accomplishments (2015----2016)

Presented below are lists of major accomplishments achieved or in progress for Portland parks during the reporting year.

- Consolidation of multiple "Open Space" divisions into a single new Parks Division. The new Parks Division includes the following sections:
 - Parks Maintenance
 - Park Rangers
 - Ballfields and Athletic Facilities
 - Playgrounds
 - Forestry
 - Horticulture
 - Cemeteries
 - Community Gardens
- Kaboom Foundation recognition as a Playful City USA
- Congress Square Park Redesign (in progress)
- Amethyst Lot Design (in progress)
- Fort Gorges Preservation Plan (in progress)
- Coordinated plans for Army Corps of Engineers hazard mitigation project at Fort Gorges.
- Bayside Trail Phase II Design (in progress)
- Initiated design phase for Skate Park Phase II Expansion

- Initiated Feasibility study for Disc Golf course on City property
- Planted 132 trees during Spring 2016 planting season
- Leased vacant Deering Oaks Castle space to Tiqa Café
- Constructed a new Community Garden at Eastern Promenade
- Forest Management Project at Riverton Trolley Park and Riverside Golf Course (40 acre project, \$15k in revenue)
- Developed "Meadow Labyrinth" at Riverton Trolley Park (trails mowed into the meadow for wildlife viewing, games of capture the flag, hide and seek, etc.)
- Parks branding project in progress
- Expansion of Evergreen Cemetery, \$500K project, 800 grave sites created
- Completed details of the Fort Allen Rehabilitation Project with installation of 12 interpretive, educational panels
- Implementation of monthly email newsletter to list of 6,000, publicizing parks happenings and projects

3.3 Recreation Opportunities Available at Parks

Presented below are summaries of usage through city organized events and external events.

3.3.1 Estimated Park Usage through Organized Recreation Events

- Passport to Play Scavenger Hunt Program
- Skate Park Pump Track Demo
- Youth Summer Track program
- Junior Naturalist and Hiking Programs
- Geocaching Program
- Winter Kids Program at Payson Park
- Portland Public School Use of athletic facilities **8,750 hours**
- Portland Community Use of athletic facilities **8,578 hours**
- Deering High School Fields **1,838 hours**

- Deering Oaks Park **1,506 hours**
- East Bayside Athletic Facility **658 hours**
- Fitzpatrick Stadium (major renovation in 2014) **3,862 hours**
- Lyman Moore Middle School **1,020 hours**
- Memorial Stadium (Deering High School) **2,775 hours**
- Payson Park **1,509 hours**
- Hall Elementary School **105 hours**
- Preble Street Soccer Fields **971 hours**
- Riverton School Fields **878 hours**

3.3.2 Park Usage through External Events (walks, concerts, etc.)

- 650 Permitted Events on Parks properties (includes walks, runs, marches, protests, weddings, festivals, performances, etc.)
- Adult Sports Leagues: Tennis, basketball, pickleball, volleyball adult leagues and tournaments
- Youth Sports Leagues: soccer, lacrosse, basketball, baseball, softball
- Women's Soccer program
- Concerts on Eastern Prom
- Concerts, Movies in the Park, and Dances at Congress Square Park
- Shakespeare in the Park (co-sponsored by Recreation)
- Farmers Market at Monument Square and Deering Oaks Park

3.4.1 2015---2016 Parks Budget

Division	Budgeted Expenditures	Revenues
Parks	\$0*	\$18,044
Ballfields/Playgrounds	\$740,159	\$280,216
Forestry/Horticulture	\$624,438	\$63,143
Cemeteries	\$581,235	\$402,485
Total	\$1,945,832	\$763,888

* In Districting Budget.

3.4.2 Volunteer and In-kind Support

Project	Group	Attendees	Hours	Volunteer Hours
Riverton Trolley Park Tree Planting	TD Bank	50	4	200
General Park Cleanups x 2	Meeting of the Minds Hip Hop Collective	10	8	80
Deering Oaks Ravine Plantings	Take Action Portland	15	3	45
Playground Mulch Spreading	Cheverus High Students	10	4	40
Ludlow Skating Pond Shoveling	Neighborhood Residents	10	4	40

3.5 Capital and General Improvements

3.5.1 Projects Undertaken or Completed --- 2015---2016

- Western Promenade Walkways, \$50,000
- Payson Park Title IX Improvements, \$200,000 (phase 2 of 2), construction Spring 2017
- Fitzpatrick Stadium Field and Track replacement, \$1,005,000 (completed summer/fall 2015)
- Ft Allen Park, \$1,300,000
- Evergreen Cemetery Expansion, \$500,000
- Eastern Cemetery Dead House Renovation, \$25,000
- Riverton Trolley Park and Riverside Golf Course Forestry Management Project, \$15,000 revenue
- Riverton Trolley Park Tree Planting project, trees and volunteer labor provided by TD Bank, \$12,000

3.5.2 Projects Planned for 2016---2017

- Deering Oaks Pond Restoration, \$1,200,000
- Lyman Moore Athletic Fields Improvements Planning, \$475,000, currently in planning phase, construction Spring 2017
- Lincoln Park Walkway and Fountain Restoration Planning, \$250,000 currently in planning phase, construction Spring 2017
- Libbytown Community Garden, \$17,000, construction Fall 2016

3.5.2 Projects Currently Planned for 2017---2018

- Dougherty Field Multi-Purpose Field, \$250,000
- Lincoln Park Fence Repair, \$224,000
- Island Playgrounds Upgrade, \$135,000

3.6 Pressing Parks and Recreation Issues

3.6.1 Short Term

- Rebuild staffing to appropriate levels to maintain parks to a higher standard.
- Developing Parks Maintenance Standards and performance measures, per the 2016 Open Space Vision Plan
- Advising Pesticide Task Force on current staff practices and recommendations for reduction of pesticide use (synthetic and organic) on city properties.
- Work with police and social service providers to develop plan to reduce homeless activity in parks.
- Implement Invasive Species Plan created in summer of 2016.
- Improvement and redesign of Parks website (within city website)
- Working with Deering Oaks Castle tenant on feasibility of boat rentals on Deering Oaks Pond
- Formalize and improve the "Adopt a Spot" concept, allowing citizens and businesses to adopt small garden sites and horticultural beds throughout the city.

3.6.2 Long Term

- Implement recommendations from Athletic Facilities Task Force Report approved by City Council in 2011.
- Develop 10 year plan for Parks Maintenance and Improvements
 - o Replacement of old playgrounds
 - o Installation of lights for Deering Oaks Tennis Courts
 - o Installation of irrigation/drainage systems on ballfields
 - o Replacement of old cyclone fencing (some is more than 50 years old)
 - o Infield renovation of baseball fields
 - o Development of new fields to handle the demand
 - o Replacement of Deering Oaks lighting with improved, low-energy units
 - o Monument Square rehabilitation
 - o Repair of Eastern Cemetery retaining wall
 - o Redesign of East End beach
 - o Improved bathroom facilities at Deering Oaks
- Develop Parks app for use by the public
- Explore future uses of Harborview Tunnel
- Develop Interpretive and educational programs (Park Rangers)
- Explore the concept of a Portland Youth Corps to engage young people in meaningful service opportunities and career exploration in Portland Parks



University Park, Photo Courtesy of Travis Wagner

4. PARKS COMMISSION PRIORITIES 2016----2018

4.1 The Inventory of Parks

One of the charges for the Parks Commission is to prepare and maintain an inventory of parks. We presented an inventory in our first annual report, but, as noted below, there

are significant issues with the accuracy and completeness of the inventory. Beginning this year, we are decoupling the inventory from the written annual report and instead will be publishing the inventory as a standalone file posted on the Park Commission's website, which will allow us to maintain and update the list on an as-needed basis.

Based on the available information to date, there is no current, accurate inventory of parks and open spaces for Portland. Consequently, producing a complete and accurate inventory has been identified as one of our top priorities for the year ahead.

There are discrepancies in the city's two park inventories and the list in the TPL report. Currently, therefore, neither the Parks Commission nor the city can accurately state the number of parks or acreage that exists within our city parks. A clearly established definition as to what constitutes a park must be identified. The Ordinance enacted following the Congress Square Park referendum brought 34 city parks onto the Land Bank Registry, giving them some protection from development and sale. However, at this time, we believe there are another 17 or so parks that do not enjoy the protection of the ordinance but may be eligible. One issue is that parks have been specifically listed by name. Thus, some properties identified as parks by signage or custom are not in the ordinance or on the inventory. And, if future parks are added, such as the Amethyst Lot, it appears that this may not be a park under the existing ordinance unless and until City Council amends the ordinance to list this as a park.

Thus, in the upcoming year, the Parks Commission will develop a suggested definition of parks and open spaces guided by the TPL report which aligns with the spirit and intent of the ordinance. Our goal is to present a draft definition to the City Council for their consideration and action. The goal is to eliminate the need to continuously amend the ordinance specifically to list or delist parks and open spaces. We also will be developing a single, complete inventory based on a conceptual definition of parks and open spaces keeping in mind Land Bank properties, pending Council action on a definition.

4.2 Citizen Survey of Parks

As noted above, the TPL report conducted a rapid assessment of Portland's parks to assess their quality based on accessibility, trails, park features, supportive facilities, safety and maintenance, and aesthetics. Parks were scored for each category using a Likert scale from 1 to 5 (5 = abundant, well provided, very attractive, excellent condition, no concerns, true, etc. and 1 = scarce, no provision, very unappealing, derelict, very concerning, etc.). The features category was very broad and included such general subcategories as picnic facilities, playground, community garden, dog walk, and so forth. While the TPL assessment was a critical tool to gauge the overall condition of our parks and open spaces, the Parks Commission has identified the need for a citizen survey of our parks and open spaces as a priority for 2016-2017 as explained below.

We plan to include the inventory of parks and open spaces on the Parks Commission website, together with a basic description of each park's park history and features. Our intent is to go beyond a listing of major features, but to provide details such as numbers of swings, picnic tables, natural play features, unique trees, water fountains, vistas, and memorials.

The intent is to start the process and treat this as an ongoing effort over the next few years. Because of the labor involved, we do not expect this to be completed by city staff nor commissioners who serve voluntarily. Instead, the Parks Commission intends to engage friends groups, neighborhood associations, and Portland schools to help carry out the survey. In addition to providing labor, this approach has the potential to better engage citizens with their parks. Our goal will be to develop and field test a Parks and Open Spaces Inventory checklist, which will be designed to be user friendly, meaningful, and accurate.

4.3 Funding Opportunities/Goals

Portland's parks are a blessing that we cherish. But maintaining our parks so that they continue to enrich our lives and remain safe, clean, and accessible to Portland residents and visitors requires a continuing financial commitment on the part of many stakeholders. Moreover, the acquisition and development of new parks - such as the waterfront site, Amethyst Lot -- requires yet additional financial support. A key objective of the Parks Commission is to help mobilize additional financing to improve maintenance standards for Portland's existing parks and, as opportunities arise, to develop new parks.

The city budget is the main source - but by no means the only source -- of financing for Portland's parks. With the support and encouragement of the Parks Commission, Friends & Community Partner groups have been instrumental in making recommendations for improvements to the city's parks and mobilizing grant and private funding for upgrades to several of Portland's parks. Significant examples are the improvements that have been carried out recently or are in progress at Congress Square Park, Lincoln Park, and Fort Allen Park. In addition, friends groups help mobilize important contributions in volunteer and in-kind support (section 3.4.2).

For the past two years, the Parks Commission has made recommendations for city expenditures on parks under the city's operating budget, the annual Capital Improvement Program (CIP), using explicit criteria for expenditure priorities. This is an improvement over the former approach of setting priorities based on ad-hoc decisions for CIP expenditures. In 2014, the Parks Commission also received a small allocation from the city's operating budget for improvements to city parks. Among other things, this allocation helped to finance the recruitment of the city's first full-time park ranger.

But the quality of Portland's existing parks is affected more by the city's recurrent budget than by the investment budget. The recurrent budget typically receives less attention in the expenditure decision-making process than the city's investment budget. Last year's TPL study of Portland's parks included an examination of alternative approaches for augmenting resources for Portland's parks³ through a variety of measures including dedicated bond issues, special property taxes, tax increment financing, and impact fees. Where these measures have been applied to raise park financing in other communities, they have been used typically to mobilize funds for park acquisition and capital improvements, not to improve maintenance standards affecting the quality of existing parks.

Shortages of funding under the recurrent budget have led to neglect of important expenditures in the city's parks and open spaces. Continued neglect of needed maintenance frequently leads to a need for larger capital expenditures to address the cumulative problems of deferred maintenance. For example, a scarcity of financing in the city's recurrent budget in recent years to replace ailing trees in Evergreen cemetery has led to a large backlog of hazardous trees awaiting replacement. A recent assessment estimated at \$250,000 the cost of removal of hazardous trees in Evergreen Cemetery that pose an immediate safety threat to cemetery visitors and to privately owned monuments. The Parks commission devoted some of its discretionary budget in

³ Trust for Public Land, "Conservation Finance Feasibility Study, City of Portland Maine: March 2015."

2014 for hazardous tree removal at Evergreen Cemetery. The city's recurrent budget this year provides an additional \$50,000 for that purpose - a positive start, but still far short of the larger need.⁴

An important instrument for documenting and defending recurrent budget requests to improve the quality of Portland's parks and green spaces is the new maintenance standards that are being developed by the Parks and Recreation Department. These standards will describe the staffing and budget requirements for maintaining Portland's parks, not only to current maintenance standards, but also to desired improved standards.

Comparison of staffing ratios for Portland's Evergreen Cemetery with those of other heritage cemeteries illustrates the magnitude of the gap in some areas between actual and ideal staffing for maintenance of Portland's parks and open spaces: Under current staffing at Evergreen Cemetery, each cemetery staff member is responsible for maintaining cemetery grounds for 5,720 gravesites. The corresponding ratio at Mount Auburn Cemetery, the first of New England's heritage cemeteries, is one staff member per 1,727 gravesites.⁵ Better staffing of our existing parks - including park rangers and seasonal workers - has been a continuing theme of the Parks Commission's advocacy work.⁶

Since 2008, Portland's parks were managed by the Department of Public Services. This arrangement contributed to neglect of ongoing maintenance needs of Portland's parks and open spaces because these needs tended to be eclipsed by the ever pressing needs for snow plowing, road & sewer repair, and other urgent public works. The recent consolidation of parks and open spaces management under the new Parks, Recreation, and Facilities Department should help address this problem by fostering a true sense of institutional ownership for Portland's parks and open spaces.

The Parks Commission expects and recommends that this new management responsibility will lead to increased allocations in the recurrent budget for maintenance and improved quality standards in Portland's parks and open spaces, including

⁴ Under a grant obtained recently by the Friends of Evergreen, standards are being developed for replacement tree planting at Evergreen Cemetery that are designed to restore the key landscape features of the historical cemetery.

⁵ Nathan P. Robbins, "Creation of the Turf Maintenance Calculator and Cost Assessment for Portland's Parks and Cemeteries," page 22.

⁶ The Parks Commission played an important role in the decision to recruit Portland's first full-time Park ranger.

maintaining the full-time park ranger position, adding additional seasonal staff for park maintenance and oversight, replacement of hazardous trees at Evergreen Cemetery and other parks and open spaces, removal of invasive species, and the other actions listed in Section 3.6, above. It also expects and recommends that the City include financing in either the CIP or the recurrent budget for next year to implement the signage project described in Section 4.5.

4.4 Identifying and Supporting Partnerships

Portland's Park and Opens Spaces benefit greatly from collaborative partnerships developed over time. Currently, these partnerships are primarily between the city and non-profit Friends & Community Partner (FCP) groups that support and advocate for specific parks or open spaces in the city. FCP are encouraged to report to the Parks Commission to make the commission aware of needs and improvements that will enhance the user experience in a park or open space or correct a deficiency that might create a risk to those who enjoy the park.

Although currently there is no formal procedure to be designated a FCP group, the Parks Commission has identified the following 11 "friends groups" as being active to some degree in 2015-2016:

- Friends of Capisic Pond
- Friends of Congress Square
- Friends of Deering Oaks
- Friends of the Eastern Promenade
- Friends of Evergreen Cemetery
- Friends of Heseltine Park
- Friends of Lincoln Park
- Friends of Longfellow Park
- Friends of Payson Park
- Friends of Eastern Cemetery - Spirits Alive
- Friends of Fort Gorges
- New Friends Group developed at time of publication is Friends of Fort Sumner Park.

Some of the above friends groups are of long standing (Friends of the Eastern Promenade, Friends of Deering Oaks, and Friends of Evergreen Cemetery). Others have been in existence a comparatively short period of time (Friends of Congress Square Park and Friends of Payson Park). These groups provide the Commission with valuable input that helps define the direction the Commission. Friends groups also secure private grant money for park design, improvements, or special events.

The success of Portland Parks and Recreation relies on the collaborative support, advocacy, and enthusiasm through dedicated public stewardship efforts. Partnerships between municipalities and local constituency groups are crucial for the support of parks and open spaces. Each year, devoted Portlanders help the city's natural areas, trails, playgrounds, open spaces, athletic and recreational facilities flourish through volunteerism primarily through "friends groups" and community partners (FCP). While some of these groups and partners are well established, others are ad hoc, but all are important. The Parks Commission is committed to fostering the beneficially mutual relationship between FCP groups and their collaborative alliances with Portland Parks and Recreation.

Portland's Park and Opens Spaces benefit greatly from collaborative partnerships developed over time. Currently, these partnerships are primarily between the city and non-profit Friends & Community Partner (FCP) groups that support and advocate for specific parks or open spaces in the city. FCP are encouraged to report to the Parks Commission to make the commission aware of needs and improvements that will enhance the user experience in a park or open space or correct a deficiency that might create a risk to those who enjoy the park:

- Getting organized,
- Clarify values, obligations and expectations,
- Providing a spectrum of process and implementation guidelines, and
- Define expectations for best practices.

Friends Success Story: Congress Square Park

The Friends of CSP is an example of a highly successful and productive friends group. They currently have 51 active volunteers in addition to multiple community and external partners to help support programming, infrastructure, and community use. In 2015, the Friends of CSP held 121 events featuring 258 artists who were paid. These events engaged an estimated 8,000 people including seniors, students, families, artists, immigrants, tourists, workers, and the general public. This does not include the many thousands of people who strolled by or stopped by for a short time to enjoy the experience.

The increased activity has added to the welcoming atmosphere of CSP and brought more people to interact in the heart of the Arts District and contributed to attracting an estimated 8,500 additional visitors during non-event times of the day.

4.5 Park Signage

In 2013, the Parks Commission undertook an initiative to inventory and assess the use of signage throughout Portland Parks. The findings were that many parks have no signage; those parks with signage often relied on unwelcoming prohibition-behavior based signage, and there was no consistence in design or messaging.

In 2015, The Park Initiatives Committee was tasked with designing and implementing new and consistent welcoming and regulatory signage for the Portland Park System. The task of this committee is to standardize signage for the parks and begin the process of placing these signs in the parks of Portland. The goal is to improve user experience in parks and make better use of the resource that is the Portland Park System.

The committee researched signage from other cities that might provide a model for our parks system. Committee members identified parks where we could begin the process of placing standardized signs, which: Payson Park, Lincoln Park, Riverton Trolley Park, Back Cove Trail, and Dougherty Field. The committee also studied regulatory signs with the intent of trying to reduce sign clutter. Due to a lack of funding, the committee reconsidered the goals for the implementation of signage in the first year of the project and decided to model signage design based on preferable signs already existing in Portland Parks. One tier of signs would be used for historic parks such as Lincoln Park with the design based on signs at Deering Oaks. . The second tier would be used in general-purpose parks and playgrounds such as Payson Park and would be based on the design of existing park signage such as the sign at Riverton Trolley Park. The committee was given \$2,500 by the city to work with a consultant to site the signs in 5 parks and create a construction-ready design, including a list of materials needed to produce a quality sign, which would be both attractive and long lasting. All design work will be electronically stored for future use. The consultant will also create and collect icons used to promote uses of the park land. A database of regulations that can be adapted for each park will also be produced for use in regulatory signs.



Based on an assessment of necessary resources to design and install construction-ready signs for the five parks, the committee estimates approximately \$25,000 will be needed. Recognizing that the resources for this project are not available at this time, the committee's goal is to work with community partners, friends groups, and the city to gradually fund and implement this important project.

Congress Square Park
Photos Courtesy of Bree Lacasse

