

City of Portland
Land Bank Commission Agenda

The Land Bank Commission is responsible for identifying and protecting open space resources with the city of Portland. The Commission seeks to preserve a balance between development and conservation of open space important for wildlife, ecological, environmental, scenic or outdoor recreational values.



Commission Members:

Alaina Chormann, Daniel Herzlinger, Jon Kachmar, Joshua Barber, Michael Carey, Michael Scrameyer, and Robert Foster.

City Staff: Ethan Hipple (Parks, Recreation, and Facilities Director), Doug Roncarati (Public Works-Stormwater Coordinator), Jessica Teesdale (PRF Sr. Executive Assistant)

September 10, 2025

5:00 PM

On the second Wednesday of the month at 5:00 pm, the Portland Land Bank Commission will hold a meeting at Parks, Recreation, and Facilities, 212 Canco Rd. Suite A conference room.

The Land Bank Commission will conduct this meeting in-person. Public comments may only be submitted in person or in writing. To submit written public comment on an agenda item, email landbank@portlandmaine.gov. Submissions must be received by 12:00 pm the day before the Land Bank Commission meeting to guarantee their inclusion in the agenda packet. All submissions must include the person's name and legal address. To help ensure your comment is submitted for the correct item, please include the name of the agenda item (see below).

To view this meeting please visit the Livestream link:

- I. Call to Order
- II. Citizen Comment Period
 - i. Public comment from 8/13/2025 through 9/9/2025
- III. Agenda Items
 - i. Acceptance of Meeting Minutes: August 14, 2025
 - ii. New Business
 - a. Secretary's Report
 - b. Treasurer's Report
 - iii. Old Business
 - a. Sumner Court Proposal
 - iv. Communications and Parcel Updates
 - a. Parks Division Report
 - b. Parks Commission Report
 - c. Murray St.
 - d. Land Bank Community Outreach and PR
 - e. Redlon

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v. Commissioner requests for Agenda Items

IV. Adjournment

Land Bank Public Comment: Sumner Court Proposal - Process Incompetence

George Rheault <george.rheault@gmail.com>

Tue, Sep 9, 2025 at 7:49 AM

Reply-To: george.rheault@gmail.com

To: landbank@portlandmaine.gov, "Hipple, Ethan" <EHIPPLE@portlandmaine.gov>, Danielle West-Chuhta <dwest@portlandmaine.gov>, Michael Goldman <mig@portlandmaine.gov>, Mark Dion <mdion@portlandmaine.gov>

Cc: Pious Ali <pali@portlandmaine.gov>, April Fournier <afournier@portlandmaine.gov>, bgrant@portlandmaine.gov, Kate Sykes <ksykes@portlandmaine.gov>, Anna Bullett <abullett@portlandmaine.gov>, Regina Phillips <rphillips@portlandmaine.gov>, Wesley Pelletier <wpelletier@portlandmaine.gov>, smichniewicz@portlandmaine.gov

Once again, the Land Bank, in the middle of a raging housing emergency, is being asked to consider what to do with fallow city land without any meaningful counterweight advocacy being allowed at the table to consider long-term housing opportunities on the very same city land.

But most importantly for the current proposal before the Land Bank is the fact that city staff, including the PRF Department Head and Land Bank Chairperson, have completely failed to tee up the issues responsibly and competently.

The first order of business when discussing a "Land Bank parcel" is to produce the City Council action that created the classification of city-owned land as a parcel for which the Land Bank Commission has jurisdiction over.

For the current proposal, the city staff have NOT produced such documentation. In fact, I have tried to search through available city website search options and have not found evidence that the City Council ever formally placed the Sheridan Street lots in question into the Land Bank.

I do not have the ability to do an exhaustive search for this documentation and it may very well exist.

However, as a threshold issue, it is incumbent upon the PRF staff with assistance from the City Manager's Executive Office, Corporation Counsel and the City Clerk to produce this documentation so that the conversation can move forward intelligently.

Otherwise, this whole debate should be taking place in another forum and NOT in the Land Bank arena.

Thank you.

Open Space in Land Bank (Willie Gorham Parcel)-September 10th meeting for proposed status change

John Bowen <john.bowen8117@outlook.com>

Sat, Sep 6, 2025 at 11:32 AM

Reply-To: john.bowen8117@outlook.com

To: "landbank@portlandmaine.gov" <landbank@portlandmaine.gov>

To whom it may concern:

I just to formerly lodge my opposition to the proposal to move (sell) the Willie Gorham "forever wild" parcel out of the land bank for private use.

Thank you!

Sincerely,

John A. Bowen
36 North St

Concern about proposed sale of Land Bank Holding 013K013

louise little <louise.little55@gmail.com>

Sat, Aug 23, 2025 at 8:22 AM

Reply-To: louise.little55@gmail.com

To: landbank@portlandmaine.gov

Dear Ethan,

I am writing to you as Director of Parks, Recreation & Facilities and have grave concerns about the proposed sale of part of the green space between Sheridan St. and North St. It is part of a small forest that runs from the Sumner Court access path to the east side of the Shailer School parking lot.

I have been a resident at 32 North Street since 1998 and was supportive of the move by then councilor, Willie Gorham, to create a green space in this densely populated part of Munjoy Hill. At the time, development was happening on Sheridan St. below us and his concern was that developers would attempt to build right up to the back of North Street, eliminating the green woods that existed there. As neighbors, abutting Sumner Court, we also valued the 200+ year old right of way path that leads down through the woods from Sumner Court to Sheridan Street. My children and I, as well as many others, have used that path to get to Ft Sumner Park and the Jack Path to the school over the years.

In addition, my family has been active in monitoring that piece of the protected green space, culling trash, calling to have campsites removed and placing a heavy rope line down the path to assist folks using the path. As you probably know it is very steep and the paved part is often slippery with pebbles. Last week or so, someone removed the rope. Some folks who usually use the path on their regular walks had to turn around because it was too hazardous. I urge you to come see the path, and perhaps with our help, and Portland Trails, improve it.

This little green-space is a haven for rabbits, raccoons, and all manner of Maine birds including Coopers Hawks in winter. The local community also value the diversity of trees, including a huge blue spruce, several large oaks, some maples and a walnut tree, as much as the wildlife we see pass through. With some improvement to the walking path, people could access this little haven more safely, just as they are able to use the woods along the Eastern Prom between the Loring Memorial to the ball fields.

I want to express my concern about the possible sale of a piece of land, 013K013, for parking, that abuts the privately owned property at the end of Sumner Court. This piece of land and the other 4 adjoining lots owned by the city and conserved by the Land Bank, add much more value to the local environment than 4 more parking spaces ever could. Instead of more black top, we desperately need the cooling factor these trees and bushes provide the area. If this parcel was sold, what is stopping the sale of the other parcels? Developers would swoop in and decimate the little forest in the middle of our city. The large trees are so valuable to our microclimate on the hill and to eliminate any of them goes against the city's expressed goals to plant more trees!

As Director of our parks, I urge you to protect these parcels permanently! My neighbors and other local folks who access this small forest, would like it to have some sort of permanent zoning that keeps it in a protected status. Please help us do that. The work that the Parks Dept, Land Bank Commission and Portland Trails does is so important to keeping Portland green and helping

citizens to access the natural world outdoors. **DO NOT ALLOW THIS SALE GO THROUGH.**
Please.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Louise Little

32 North Street

Portland, ME 04101

207-329-7671

Sumner Court to Sheridan Street Pathway Question

David Cowie <dcowie@maine.rr.com>

Wed, Aug 20, 2025 at 8:39 AM

Reply-To: dcowie@maine.rr.com

To: ehipple@portlandmaine.gov, Alex Marshall <amarshall@portlandmaine.gov>, landbank@portlandmaine.gov, jon@trails.org

Cc: Dave Cowie <dcowie@maine.rr.com>

Good Morning,

My name is Dave Cowie, and I reside at 32 North Street, about one-hundred feet from the top of the pathway which runs from Sumner Court, down the slope through Land Bank land, to Sheridan Street. Due to the steep grade at the top of the path, I installed a rope down the path, at about waist height, to assist anyone going up or down the steep section of the path. The rope had been in place for several years.

Late last week the rope vanished.

I'm wondering if anyone from your department - or perhaps Public Works - removed the rope due to it not being an approved style of handrail? I would understand it being removed by a department of the city for that reason.

Unfortunately, without some form of assistance, the slope of this path renders it dangerous and deters the many folk I watch walk down Sumner Court searching for the start of the path to take them down the hill to Sheridan Street. These folk stand at the top of the path, peer down its steep grade, then turn around consulting their map or phone for an alternative route.

Prior to the rope disappearing, when I would see folk contemplating the journey down the hill I would point out that holding the rope might make the trip doable. That cannot happen now.

Perhaps now with the growing interest with this green space, improvements could be made to the path which would do nothing but increase its accessibility, promoting greater use, allowing more to share in the beauty this green space has to offer.

So to sum up:

Do you know what might have happened to the rope which was installed as an assist for folk using the path?

What can I do to assist your department in executing the needed improvements to the path to improve its accessibility?

Sincerely,

9/9/25, 11:54 AM

City of Portland Mail - Sumner Court to Sheridan Street Pathway Question

Dave Cowie
32 North Street
Portland
Maine
04101

207 318 1810

Possible sale of Land Bank holding on Munjoy Hill

David Cowie <dcowie@maine.rr.com>
Reply-To: dcowie@maine.rr.com
To: landbank@portlandmaine.gov
Cc: Dave Cowie <dcowie@maine.rr.com>

Mon, Aug 18, 2025 at 8:40 AM

I am contacting you today out of concern for the Land Bank holding (E11) bounded by Sumner Court, Sheridan Street, Walnut Street, and North Street, up here on Munjoy Hill.

A request has been made to the Land Bank by Pamela Jack and Devon Platte to purchase a portion of the land contained in the E11 holding. As a resident of North Street, and a neighbor to this Land Bank holding, I oppose the sale of this portion of land to anyone. It was created by City Councilor William Gorham, back in the late nineteen-nineties as a greenspace. With so few green areas left in the City, and for the sake of all the residents of the Hill, Portland, and visitors to Portland, it should remain in the Land Bank Trust as a greenspace - as intended by Counselor Gorham's actions.

Contrary to the claims made by Jack and Platte in their request letter, the neighbors who abut this parcel of land do take an interest in its well being. I frequently take the right of way path from Sumner Court to Sheridan Street, and while doing so I clear the path of any vegetation that may have overgrown this right of way, also policing up any trash that may have been dropped in the area. I also secured a rope railing to the trees that skirt the path to assist the folk who choose to take the right of way both down the hill and back up - it is steep going. Though difficult due to the overgrown nature of the land, I've also hauled from the area debris that will never decompose - plastic trash, an old computer monitor, and chunks of shipping styrofoam. To encourage neighbors to treat the space appropriately I keep a sign posted asking that trash not be disposed of in the area.

Although we have had the occasional encampment of unhoused individuals down in the deeper regions of the holding, I have found that a call to city services

brings in staff who move the folk-in-question who are attempting to live in the area to more suitable locations. Because we have had some unhoused folk down in the area in the past, I and my neighbors along North street are far more watchful of the area and consequently we actively investigate signs of activity that may not be in the land area's best interest. When noticed, we take the appropriate measures to diminish, and hopefully eliminate the misuse of the area.

It appears that this parcel of land also contains the right of way from Sumner Court to Sheridan Street. Though steep, and as yet not developed for easier passage, it has been a public way for over two-hundred years. If this holding is sold, will the path remain available to the public? Portland Trails has surveyed this land in the past and I would be happy to work with them to develop this greenspace as a necessary cooling engine for a warming city, as well as a place with trails similar to the well used Jack Trail.

Allowing this land to be Developed into additional parking, however limited, will only detract from the greenspace benefits the holding presently provides - yes, it is only trees, plants and flowers, and the fauna this flora attracts, but it is these bits of wild which do nothing but help everyone feel just a bit more connected.

Thank you for your attention to this concern. I look forward to hearing your thoughts on the matter.

Dave Cowie
32 North Street
Portland
207 318 1810



Land Bank Commission August 13, 2025 Meeting Minutes

Present Commission Members: Daniel Herzlinger, Jon Kachmar, Joshua Barber, Michael Carey, Michael Scrameyer, Robert Foster.

Not Present: Alaina Chormann

Staff: Ethan Hipple (Parks, Recreation, and Facilities Director), Doug Roncarati (Public Works Stormwater Coordinator), Jessica Teesdale (PRF Sr. Executive Assistant)

Call to Order: J. Kachmar called the meeting to order at 5:05 pm

General Citizen Comment Period- None

Agenda Items

Acceptance of Meeting Minutes:

April 9, 2025-Motion to accept meeting minutes: The motion was made by M. Scrameyer and seconded by D. Herzlinger. Motion passed 4 yes votes, 2 abstentions

July 9, 2025-Motion to accept meeting minutes: The motion was made by R. Foster and seconded by J.Barber. Motion passed 3 yes votes, 3 abstain

New Business-

Hope Ave. acquisition funding request

Anne Read from the Trust for Public Land presented a request for the land bank to consider whether to recommend to the city council committing up to \$400,000 of Land Bank funds towards TPL's bid for the property at O Hope Ave.

M. Scrameyer recused himself due to being a member of Friends of the Presumpscot River.

Public Comment: Bob Benack of District 5, Jessie Pinchoff of Whaleboat Rd., Stephen Champagne of Hope Ave, and George Rheault from West Bayside.

Motion to allocate up to \$400,000 of Land Bank Funds towards the purchase of 0 Hope Ave. at auction on August 15th, 2025. Motion is contingent upon completing a Memorandum of Understanding between the Trust for Public Land and the City of Portland Corporation

Counsel If the parties cannot mutually agree on an MOU within 30 days, the funds are void.

The motion was made by M. Carey and seconded by J. Barber. Motion passed 5-0, 1 recused.

Sumner Court purchase proposal

Pamela Jack presented a request to purchase City-Owned Land Bank Lot 013 K013, consisting of 4,850 sq ft. For the purpose of adding parking spaces behind their property at 28 North Street.

Public Comment: George Rheault from West Bayside.

Motion to defer a decision on the request to make a recommendation to the City Council to sell City-owned Land Bank Lot 013 K013 to Pamela Jack and Devon Platte of 28 North Street for the purpose of adding parking spaces behind the building they currently own.

The motion was made by J. Barber and seconded by D. Herzlinger passed 6-0

Officer Appointments-

- Motion to appoint R. Foster to the position of Treasurer- Motion made by M. Carey and seconded by M. Scrameyer. Passed 6-0
- Motion to appoint D. Herzlinger to the position of Secretary-Motion made by R. Foster and seconded by M. Scrameyer. Passed 6-0

Old Business-None

Communications and Parcel Updates

Parks Division Report-E. Hipple provided an update and answered questions from the commission on the Parks Division Report included in the agenda packet.

Parks Commission Report-R. Foster provided an update on the July Parks Commission workshop.

Project assignments- The Project assignment list was reviewed, and determined that updates need to be made.

Murray St.-D. Herzlinger shared that the letters of interest were sent to 9 parcel owners. 2 responded. Wilson and Reilly. Reilly owns 2 parcels and is interested in discussing a possible conveyance that would meet the goals of the Commission.

Commissioner Requests for Agenda Items

- Sumner Court property purchase proposal
- Murray St.
- Land Bank community outreach, including public relations with local developers
- Redlon
- Fall Brook and Dole Brook Management Plan (rolled over from July 9th meeting)

Adjournment



Jessica Teesdale <jteesdale@portlandmaine.gov>

Re: Purchase of City Owned Lot on Sumner Court

Pamela Jack <pamjack1@gmail.com>

Thu, Jul 10, 2025 at 10:59 AM

To: Ethan Hipple <ehipple@portlandmaine.gov>

Cc: landbank@portlandmaine.gov, Jessica Teesdale <jteesdale@portlandmaine.gov>, Jon Kachmar <jon.kachmar@gmail.com>, Devon Platte <devonplatte@gmail.com>

Good Morning, Ethan:

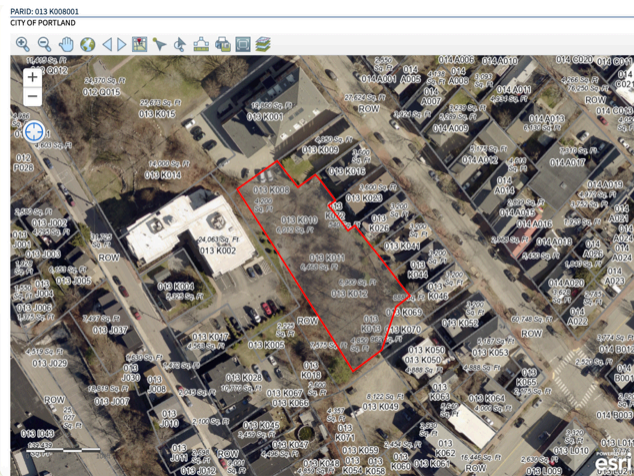
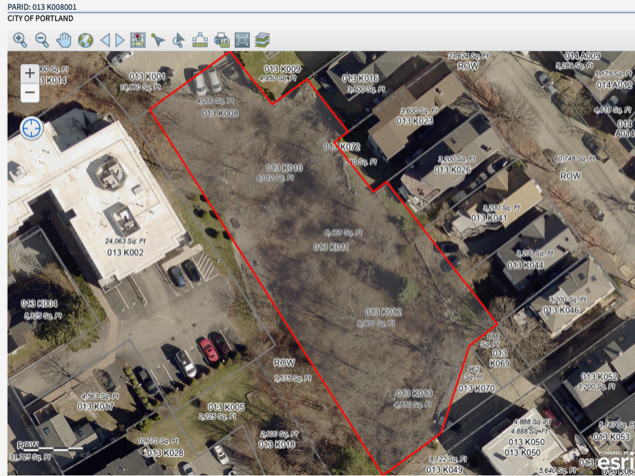
Thanks for your reply regarding our request to purchase a small portion of Land Bank property located adjacent to Sumner Court on Munjoy Hill. Yes, we would like to pursue this request, and welcome the opportunity to have this item added to the August 13, 2025, Land Bank agenda for you and the commission to discuss, thanks.

The specific parcel we are interested in is currently part of a group of five lots with an address of "30 North Street rear," which is the old rock quarry that runs between North Street and Sheridan Streets. The lot we are interested in is marked as 013 K013 on the attached tax map, and consists of 4,850 square feet, with some frontage on the north side of Sumner Court (a dirt lane that connects to North Street).

Following up on your recommendation to demonstrate why this sale would be in the City's best interest, here are a few points for you and the Land Bank Commission to consider:

1. This parcel may never be built upon due to the narrow 12' width of Sumner Court, and also the steep topography of the parcel. Given these facts, the lot holds little to no value to most anyone else. As abutters and owners of 28 North Street, our interest in the property is to increase our off-street parking by two to three spaces on the small level portion on the south end of the parcel before it drops off. This would in turn create more open parking spots on (already congested) North Street, which would be a significant ongoing benefit to the neighborhood.
2. Additionally, we would also landscape and maintain the remainder of this overgrown parcel (which the City currently does not do). As a matter of fact, for many years people have been using the gully of this particular parcel as a dumping ground for trash, discarded furniture, computer monitors, yard waste, etc. Also, homeless people have been chased away from camping and growing marijuana on this site on a regular basis by us, other neighbors, and the Portland Police Department. Our goal is to improve and better maintain the space, stop the illegal dumping, camping and marijuana cultivation, reduce some of the petty property crime that currently plagues our area, and generally be good stewards of the land ... all of which is a significant benefit to our Munjoy Hill neighborhood, and the City of Portland.
3. The general public does not use or even know about this underutilized "30 North Street rear" Land Bank property. As outlined in the Land Bank annual report, "The E11 land drops precipitously from the western side of North Street to the eastern side of Sheridan Street, making most of it unsuitable for development." Also, the land is surrounded by private property with very limited access, rendering it essentially landlocked and unusable by the general public. In summary, given its topography and access issues, the property has no practical use beyond habitat and the aforementioned frequent dumping activity and homeless campers looking for an overgrown, wooded place to hide.
4. The proceeds from the sale of this parcel could be added to the annual Land Bank operating budget, thereby reducing the need to request those additional funds from the City operating budget, and allowing the Land Bank Commission to pursue and manage other more important, higher priority parcels that would be of greater benefit to the citizens of Portland.
5. Additionally, the City would collect our annual property taxes in perpetuity from the sale of this parcel, thereby adding to the annual City operating budget and potentially reducing the need for future property tax increases.
6. As you can see from the current irregular shape of the 013 K013 lot, the City actually has a history of selling portions of this same parcel to private individuals in our neighborhood. Specifically, 013 K070 was sold to a neighbor on 03/12/69 (Book 3077, Page 700), which has been used as unpaved off-street parking ever since. And 013 K069 was sold to a different neighbor on 5/17/2001 (Book 16312, Page 294), and is also now used as unpaved off-street parking. As previously mentioned, our intention is to do the same, extending this existing parking along the north side of Sumner Court by 2-3 spaces (for the benefit of our 28 North Street tenants), and generally cleaning up and maintaining the land going forward (which as avid gardeners, we love to do!).

7. Finally, the City owns an existing right of way along the entire west edge of the larger "30 North Street rear" Land Bank parcel, with access via Sumner Court to the south (and via the old Shailer School to the north). Thus, the sale of this particular 013 K013 parcel would have no negative impact on the City's access to the remaining four Land Bank parcels from the southern end, and plenty of habitat would still remain between North and Sheridan Streets (if that is still a goal for this property).



We would like to attend the August 13 meeting in person, if possible, so that we could be present to respond to any questions raised by the Land Bank Commission during discussion of this topic. Please let us know if this would be okay? Thanks very much!

Regards,

Pamela Jack & Devon Platte
28 North Street
Portland

[Quoted text hidden]

[Quoted text hidden]

Notice: Under Maine law, documents - including e-mails - in the possession of public officials or city employees about government business may be classified as public records. There are very few exceptions. As a result, please be advised that what is written in an e-mail could be released to the public and/or the media if requested.



Jessica Teesdale <jteesdale@portlandmaine.gov>

Re: Purchase of City Owned Lot on Sumner Court

Pamela Jack <pamjack1@gmail.com>

Sun, Aug 17, 2025 at 2:23 PM

To: Ethan Hipple <ehipple@portlandmaine.gov>

Cc: landbank@portlandmaine.gov, Jessica Teesdale <jteesdale@portlandmaine.gov>, Jon Kachmar <jon.kachmar@gmail.com>, Devon Platte <devonplatte@gmail.com>, Alex Marshall <amarshall@portlandmaine.gov>, Jen DeRice <jderice@portlandmaine.gov>

Good Morning, Ethan:

Thanks again for the opportunity to present our proposal to purchase a small portion of land on Sumner Court at last Wednesday's Land Bank Commission meeting.

As a follow up, and to assist in your due diligence, I found the specific language from the current City of Portland Land Use Code (attached here for easy reference) that verifies that no new buildings can be erected on this property, due to the narrow 12' width of Sumner Court (which is its only point of access):

Subsection 6.4.1A (highlighted on page 6-9 and 6-10) says, *"No building intended for use as a habitation shall be erected on a lot which has its only street frontage on a street less than 35 feet wide. No building shall be erected on a lot, except on the islands in Casco Bay, which does not abut a street meeting the minimum requirements for street improvements set forth in this subsection."*

Further, the Zoning Board of Appeals is prohibited from approving any variances to these requirements (highlighted on page 2-15) *"No variance shall be granted from the requirements in Subsection 6.4.1."*

We welcome the Land Bank Commission to verify this (and any other information necessary) in order to make a decision on our proposal, and if there's anything else we can do to help in the due diligence process, please let us know. We also encourage any Land Bank Commission members to do a site visit if they have not yet had a chance to do so. As they say, a picture is worth a thousand words!

Ultimately, while our preference remains an outright purchase of the land, we are also open to any other legal options that might be feasible, including a long-term lease such as your Peppermint Park or West End examples, etc. But either way, our goal here is not to develop this small parcel in any way (which, as discussed, is not possible). To reiterate, our goal is to become good legal stewards of this overgrown and underutilized parcel in our back yard: We would clean it up, remove the trash and other debris, trim back some of the overgrowth down the slope, add landscaping where feasible, and ideally use that small, upper flat portion for another legal off-street parking space or two (which in turn would permanently add more parking spaces for residents on already congested North Street).

As we've pointed out, the City set this precedent twice before by selling off small portions of this same parcel to several neighbors who now use their land for parking. We are simply asking the Land Bank Commission and the City to repeat this same process for a third time (and for the same purpose). And if Portland Trails, in conjunction with the Land Bank Commission, ever wishes to create a safe and proper trail connecting Sumner Court down to Sheridan Street (to replace the existing old steep, slippery, unmarked path down the hill), they could easily do so along the City's adjacent existing Right of Way that would remain.

We look forward to attending next month's Land Bank Commission meeting on Wednesday/Sept. 10 to further discuss. And thanks again for your consideration!

Best Regards,

Pamela Jack & Devon Platte
28 North Street
Portland

[Quoted text hidden]



Jessica Teesdale <jteesdale@portlandmaine.gov>

Re: Purchase of City Owned Lot on Sumner Court

Pamela Jack <pamjack1@gmail.com>

Sun, Aug 17, 2025 at 2:26 PM

To: Ethan Hipple <ehipple@portlandmaine.gov>

Cc: landbank@portlandmaine.gov, Jessica Teesdale <jteesdale@portlandmaine.gov>, Jon Kachmar

<jon.kachmar@gmail.com>, Devon Platte <devonplatte@gmail.com>, Alex Marshall <amarshall@portlandmaine.gov>, Jen

DeRice <jderice@portlandmaine.gov>

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28 North Street
Portland

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Further, the Zoning Board of Appeals is prohibited from approving any variances to these requirements (highlighted on page 2-15) *"No variance shall be granted from the requirements in Subsection 6.4.1."*

We welcome the Land Bank Commission to verify this (and any other information necessary) in order to make a decision on our proposal, and if there's anything else we can do to help in the due diligence process, please let us know. We also encourage any Land Bank Commission members to do a site visit if they have not yet had a chance to do so. As they say, a picture is worth a thousand words!

Ultimately, while our preference remains an outright purchase of the land, we are also open to any other legal options that might be feasible, including a long-term lease such as your Peppermint Park or West End examples, etc. But either way, our goal here is not to develop this small parcel in any way (which, as discussed, is not possible). To reiterate, our goal is to become good legal stewards of this overgrown and underutilized parcel in our back yard: We would clean it up, remove the trash and other debris, trim back some of the overgrowth down the slope, add landscaping where feasible, and ideally use that small, upper flat portion for another legal off-street parking space or two (which in turn would permanently add more parking spaces for residents on already congested North Street).

As we've pointed out, the City set this precedent twice before by selling off small portions of this same parcel to several neighbors who now use their land for parking. We are simply asking the Land Bank Commission and the City to repeat this same process for a third time (and for the same purpose). And if Portland Trails, in conjunction with the Land Bank Commission, ever wishes to create a safe and proper trail connecting Sumner Court down to Sheridan Street (to replace the existing old steep, slippery, unmarked path down the hill), they could easily do so along the City's adjacent existing Right of Way that would remain.

We look forward to attending next month's Land Bank Commission meeting on Wednesday/Sept. 10 to further discuss. And thanks again for your consideration!

Best Regards,

Pamela Jack & Devon Platte
28 North Street
Portland

On Jul 14, 2025, at 10:49 AM, Pamela Jack <pamjack1@gmail.com> wrote:

Good Morning, Ethan:

Thanks for the update. Yes, we'll plan to attend the Wednesday, August 13 Land Bank meeting in person, and will be prepared to present our proposal to the Commissioners and answer any follow up questions. Thanks!

Best,

Pamela Jack & Devon Platte

On Jul 11, 2025, at 9:00 AM, Ethan Hipple <ehipple@portlandmaine.gov> wrote:

Thanks for this backup material Pamela. We will add this to the Land Bank Commission agenda for August 13. Please plan to attend in person to present your proposal and answer any questions from Commissioners. I would plan on a 5-10 minute presentation of your proposal, followed by Q and A.

Take care,
Ethan

Ethan Hipple

Director of Parks, Recreation and Facilities Department
City of Portland, ME
212 Canco Rd, Suite A
Portland, Maine 04103
207-808-5400
ehipple@portlandmaine.gov



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Parks, Rec and Facilities [email newsletter](#)
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www.portlandmaine.gov

On Thu, Jul 10, 2025 at 10:59 AM Pamela Jack <pamjack1@gmail.com> wrote:
Good Morning, Ethan:

Thanks for your reply regarding our request to purchase a small portion of Land Bank property located adjacent to Sumner Court on Munjoy Hill. Yes, we would like to pursue this request, and welcome the opportunity to have this item added to the August 13, 2025, Land Bank agenda for you and the commission to discuss, thanks.

The specific parcel we are interested in is currently part of a group of five lots with an address of "30 North Street rear," which is the old rock quarry that runs between North Street and Sheridan Streets. The lot we are interested in is marked as 013 K013 on the attached tax map, and consists of 4,850 square feet, with some frontage on the north side of Sumner Court (a dirt lane that connects to North Street).

Following up on your recommendation to demonstrate why this sale would be in the City's best interest, here are a few points for you and the Land Bank Commission to consider:

1. This parcel may never be built upon due to the narrow 12' width of Sumner Court, and also the steep topography of the parcel. Given these facts, the lot holds little to no value to most anyone else. As abutters and owners of 28 North Street, our interest in the property is to increase our off-street parking by two to three spaces on the small level portion on the south end of the parcel before it drops off. This would in turn create more open parking spots on (already congested) North Street, which would be a significant ongoing benefit to the neighborhood.
2. Additionally, we would also landscape and maintain the remainder of this overgrown parcel (which the City currently does not do). As a matter of fact, for many years people have been using the gully of this particular parcel as a dumping ground for trash, discarded furniture, computer monitors, yard waste, etc.

Also, homeless people have been chased away from camping and growing marijuana on this site on a regular basis by us, other neighbors, and the Portland Police Department. Our goal is to improve and better maintain the space, stop the illegal dumping, camping and marijuana cultivation, reduce some of the petty property crime that currently plagues our area, and generally be good stewards of the land ... all of which is a significant benefit to our Munjoy Hill neighborhood, and the City of Portland.

3. The general public does not use or even know about this underutilized "30 North Street rear" Land Bank property. As outlined in the Land Bank annual report, "The E11 land drops precipitously from the western side of North Street to the eastern side of Sheridan Street, making most of it unsuitable for development." Also, the land is surrounded by private property with very limited access, rendering it essentially landlocked and unusable by the general public. In summary, given its topography and access issues, the property has no practical use beyond habitat and the aforementioned frequent dumping activity and homeless campers looking for an overgrown, wooded place to hide.

4. The proceeds from the sale of this parcel could be added to the annual Land Bank operating budget, thereby reducing the need to request those additional funds from the City operating budget, and allowing the Land Bank Commission to pursue and manage other more important, higher priority parcels that would be of greater benefit to the citizens of Portland.

5. Additionally, the City would collect our annual property taxes in perpetuity from the sale of this parcel, thereby adding to the annual City operating budget and potentially reducing the need for future property tax increases.

6. As you can see from the current irregular shape of the 013 K013 lot, the City actually has a history of selling portions of this same parcel to private individuals in our neighborhood. Specifically, 013 K070 was sold to a neighbor on 03/12/69 (Book 3077, Page 700), which has been used as unpaved off-street parking ever since. And 013 K069 was sold to a different neighbor on 5/17/2001 (Book 16312, Page 294), and is also now used as unpaved off-street parking. As previously mentioned, our intention is to do the same, extending this existing parking along the north side of Sumner Court by 2-3 spaces (for the benefit of our 28 North Street tenants), and generally cleaning up and maintaining the land going forward (which as avid gardeners, we love to do!).

7. Finally, the City owns an existing right of way along the entire west edge of the larger "30 North Street rear" Land Bank parcel, with access via Sumner Court to the south (and via the old Shailer School to the north). Thus, the sale of this particular 013 K013 parcel would have no negative impact on the City's access to the remaining four Land Bank parcels from the southern end, and plenty of habitat would still remain between North and Sheridan Streets (if that is still a goal for this property).

We would like to attend the August 13 meeting in person, if possible, so that we could be present to respond to any questions raised by the Land Bank Commission during discussion of this topic. Please let us know if this would be okay? Thanks very much!

Regards,

Pamela Jack & Devon Platte
28 North Street
Portland

On Jul 7, 2025, at 9:15 AM, Ethan Hipple
<ehipple@portlandmaine.gov> wrote:

Hi Pam,

We can add this item to the August Land Bank agenda.

Just so you know what to expect, for any sale of Land Bank property to move forward, it would need both review and approval from the Land Bank Commission, followed by a super-majority vote (8 out of 9) from the City Council. It is not typical for the Land Bank Commission to approve the sale of Land Bank properties, so if you decide to move forward with pursuing this, you would want to demonstrate why it is in the City's best interest to sell this property.

Let me know if you'd like to proceed.

Take care,
Ethan

Ethan Hipple

Director of Parks, Recreation and Facilities Department
City of Portland, ME
212 Canco Rd, Suite A
Portland, Maine 04103
207-808-5400
ehipple@portlandmaine.gov



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Parks, Rec and Facilities [email newsletter](#)
Sign up to receive [city news & alerts](#)
Report issues via [SeeClickFix](#)
www.portlandmaine.gov

On Fri, Jul 4, 2025 at 9:12 AM Pamela Jack <pamjack1@gmail.com> wrote:

Dear Land Bank Commission,

I'm inquiring again about the possibility of purchasing a City owned lot for the purposes of expanding our existing vehicle parking. My husband and I own the property at 28 North Street on Munjoy Hill, which has frontage on Sumner Court. The City of Portland currently owns several lots at the end of Sumner Court which are adjacent to our building at 28 North Street.

In particular, we're interested in purchasing Lot 013 K013, consisting of 4,850 sq ft. This lot is currently part of a larger group of lots with an address of 30 North Street (013 K008). We are only interested in purchasing Lot 013 K013.

It's important to note that despite its size, this particular lot is not buildable due both to the narrow 12' width of Sumner Court, and the steep topography of the lot. Our only interest in this lot is for parking and landscaping.

Can you please tell me if the City has any interest in selling this lot and, if so, what the assessed value and asking price would be?

The agenda for the July 9, 2025 meeting has been published and I do not see this request on the current agenda for discussion. Please let us know the process for how to get on the Land Bank meeting agenda.

Thanks in advance for your help.

Pamela Jack & Devon Platte

28 North Street

Portland

> On Jun 25, 2025, at 11:51 AM, Pamela Jack <pamjack1@gmail.com> wrote:

>

> Hello Land Bank Commission,

>

> I'm inquiring about the possibility of purchasing a City owned lot for the purposes of expanding our existing vehicle parking. My husband and I own the property at 28 North Street on Munjoy Hill, which has frontage on Sumner Court. The City of Portland currently owns several lots at the end of Sumner Court which are adjacent to our building at 28 North Street.

>

> In particular, we're interested in purchasing Lot 013 K013, consisting of 4,850 sq ft. This lot is currently part of a larger group of lots with an address of 30 North Street (013 K008). We are only interested in purchasing Lot 013 K013.

>

> Can you please tell me if the City has any interest in selling this lot and, if so, what the assessed value and asking price would be?

>

> We would pay cash and could do a quick closing.

>

> Thanks in advance for your help.

>

> Pamela Jack & Devon Platte

>

> 28 North Street

> Portland

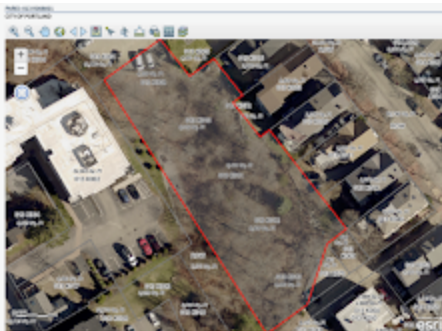
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> 207-450-9108

Notice: Under Maine law, documents - including e-mails - in the possession of public officials or city employees about government business may be classified as public records. There are very few exceptions. As a result, please be advised that what is written in an e-mail could be released to the public and/or the media if requested.

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3 attachments



Screenshot 2025-07-06 at 12.41.42 PM.png
667K



Screenshot 2025-07-06 at 12.41.21 PM.png
685K

 **Chapter 14 Land Use ReCode - Revised 05-06-2024 (PDF).pdf**
17367K



Jessica Teesdale <jteesdale@portlandmaine.gov>

Re: Purchase of City Owned Lot on Sumner Court

Pamela Jack <pamjack1@gmail.com>

Sun, Aug 24, 2025 at 4:05 PM

To: Ethan Hipple <ehipple@portlandmaine.gov>

Cc: landbank@portlandmaine.gov, Jessica Teesdale <jteesdale@portlandmaine.gov>, Jon Kachmar <jon.kachmar@gmail.com>, Devon Platte <devonplatte@gmail.com>, Alex Marshall <amarshall@portlandmaine.gov>, Jen DeRice <jderice@portlandmaine.gov>

Good Afternoon, Ethan:

We received an email that the Land Bank Commission will be doing a site visit on Tuesday, September 2, 2025, at 2:30 PM to review Lot 013 K013 at the end of Sumner Court, in connection with our request to purchase that particular parcel.

We appreciate and fully support your collective due diligence efforts on this purchase request, and please let us know if you'd like us to attend any part of the site visit on September 2 to answer any follow up questions regarding our proposal, etc.

Also, in addition to the map we previously provided that outlines the five Land Bank parcels off Sumner Court between North Street and Sheridan Streets (provided here again as well for easy reference), we thought it might be helpful in advance of your site visit to also provide the larger maps we found online that highlight the two parcels (Lot 013 K069 and Lot 013 K070) that were previously carved out of Lot 013 K013 and sold to private individuals by the City. (All of these maps/photos are available on the City assessor's Web site.)

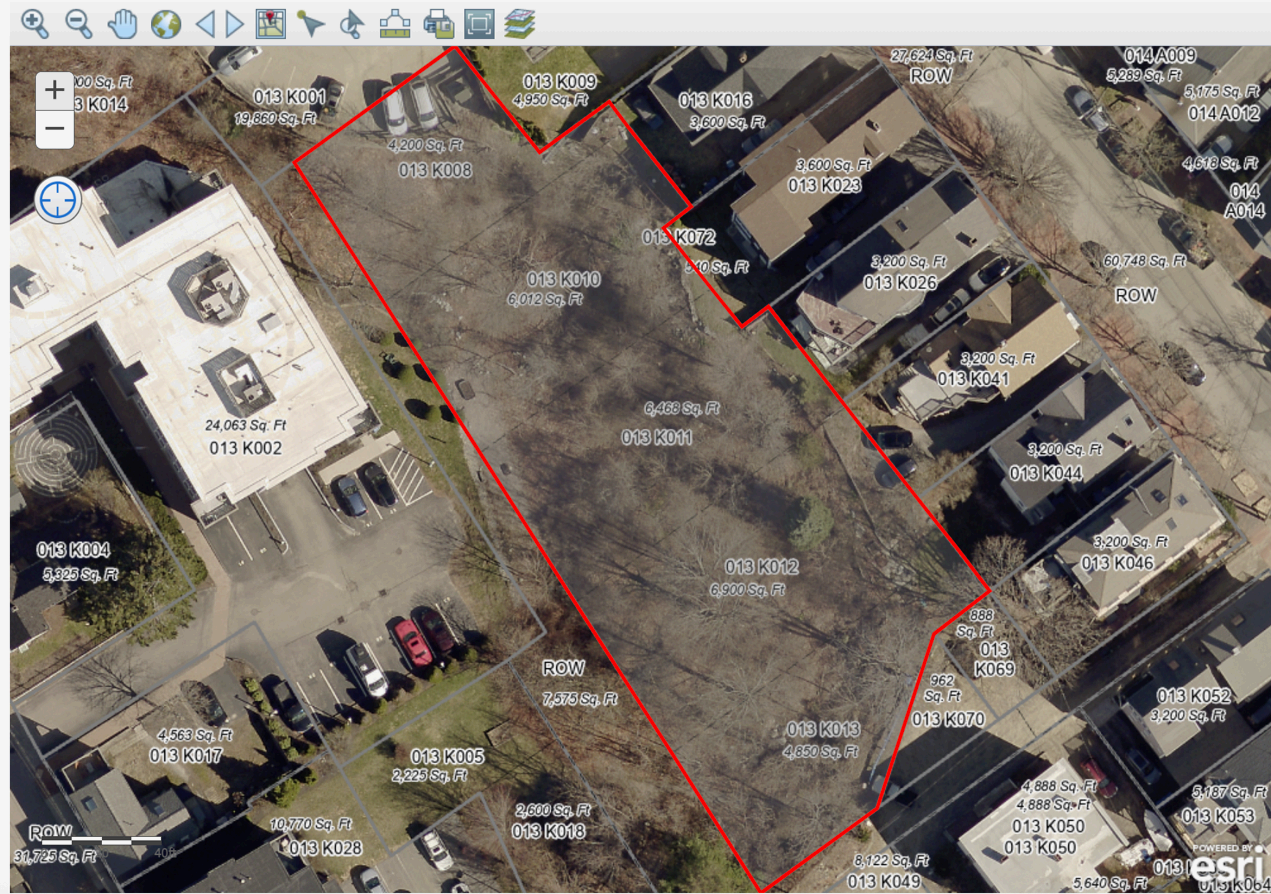
(Please note that while doing our own due diligence for our purchase request, we discovered that the owners of Lot 013 K070 have significantly expanded their parking area in recent months even further beyond the old blue guardrail shown in attached City photos, and are parking vehicles on part of City Lot 013 K013, and even on Sumner Court itself. Naturally this encroachment needs to be resolved, either by us after our purchase and survey of Lot 013 K013 [which we are certainly willing to do], or by the City if our purchase request happens to be denied.)

We look forward to seeing you again at the next Land Bank Commission meeting on Wednesday, September 10, 2025 (if not before), thanks very much!

Regards,

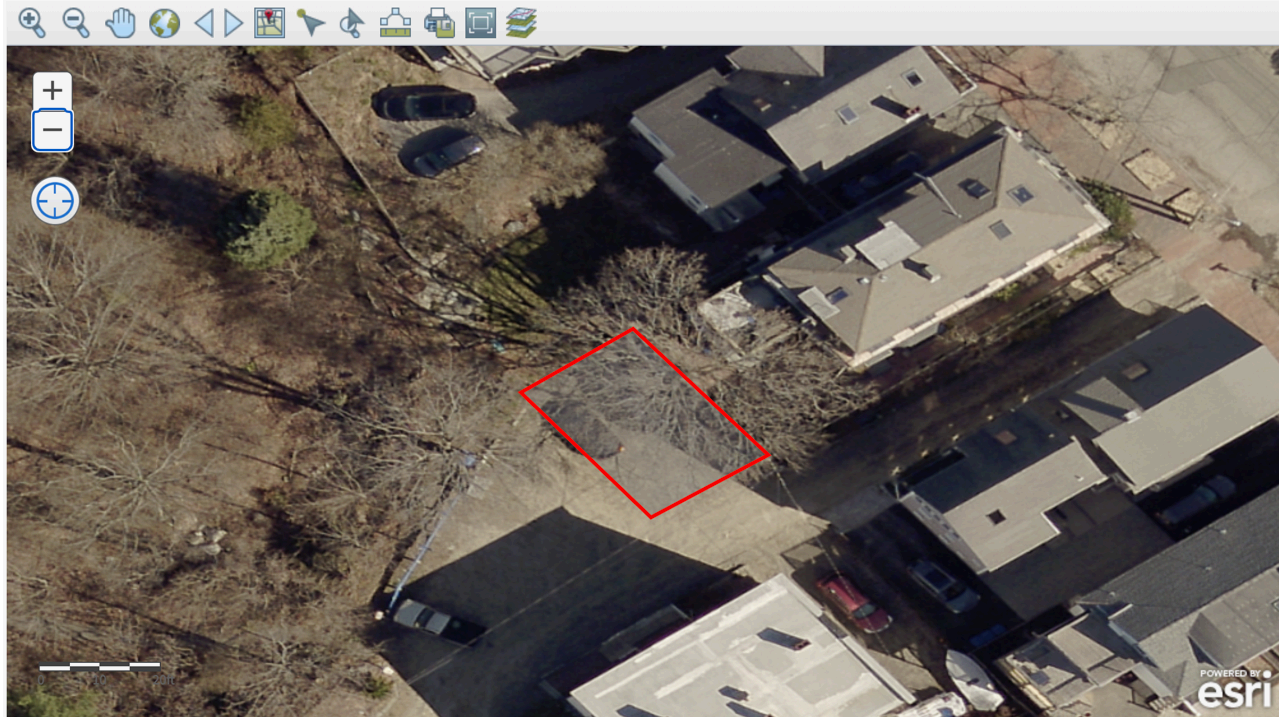
Pamela Jack & Devon Platte

PARID: 013 K008001
CITY OF PORTLAND

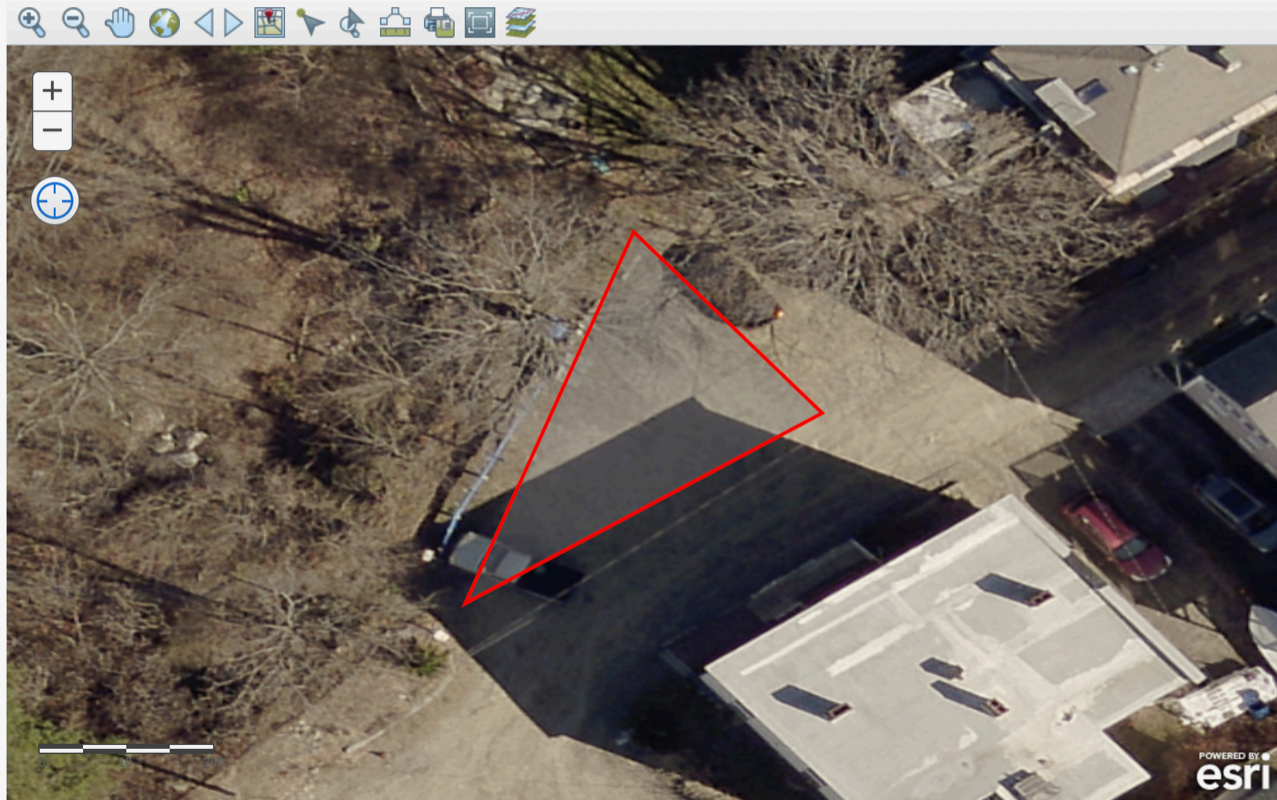


PARID: 013 K069001
KELLY JUDITH C AND RITA E YARNOLD

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PARID: 013 K070001
HELMICK GILBERT AND ANI HELMICK JTS



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parks,
recreation
& facilities

CITY OF PORTLAND
Parks, Recreation & Facilities Department
Ethan Hipple, Director

CITY OF PORTLAND
Parks, Recreation & Facilities Department
Alex Marshall, Parks Director

Memorandum

TO: Parks Commission and Land Bank Commission

FROM: Alex Marshall, Parks Director, Parks, Recreation and Facilities Department

SUBJECT: Parks Division Update

DATE: June/July 2025

Parks Division Staffing

- Total Budgeted positions in Parks Division: 43
- Vacancies:
 - Forestry Supervisor
 - Arborist
 - Horticulturist
 - Cemetery Grounds Maintainer

Citywide Unhoused Report

At this time, there are 40 encampments citywide, which is 3 fewer than this time in 2024 and 188 fewer than that of 2023. Of the 40 active tent sites, none of them are located on City property. Overall, in 2025, City Staff (primarily Rangers) have tagged and removed 384 tents citywide. Park Rangers continue to tag and remove between 5 and 20 tents from City land each week and conduct a thorough clean-up afterward with the help of other Parks staff or contractors. There continues to be a steady capacity available at the Homeless Services Center.

Nathan Clifford Playground Reopening

The Playgrounds Team, led by Keith “Tater” Forest, took on the replacement of the old Nathan Clifford School playground this Spring and Summer. With assistance from a local contractor, the Playgrounds Team removed the old equipment and will be opening up the new and improved playground this coming Friday the 15th. The creative solution for this neighborhood play space was to utilize a swingset recently upgraded at Deering Oaks playground as well as the Kiwanis Pool play structure that came out due to the pool’s reconstruction. Thank you team for making this project a reality for the community to enjoy!

Forestry Spring Planting & Co-Op Program

The Forestry Team planted a total of 125 trees this Spring as part of their annual tree planting program. The focus in 2025 was in the low tree equity score neighborhoods and surrounding areas such as continued efforts in Bayside. Additionally, of these 125 trees, there were 35 co-op trees planted across the city. Additional trees will be planted this Fall during a second surge to reach their annual goal of 150-200 trees.

Court Resurfacing

The Riverton Tennis Courts have been officially renovated into 6 dedicated pickleball courts and one



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Parks, Recreation & Facilities Department
Ethan Hipple, Director

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Parks, Recreation & Facilities Department
Alex Marshall, Parks Director

multi-use tennis and pickleball facility. Additionally, the contractor for that project was also able to reconstruct the basketball courts at Lyman Moore, install sports coating at the Talbot Basketball Court and install the new half basketball court and pickleball court on Great Diamond Island.

Back Cove Music Festival

The Back Cove Music Festival occurred during the weekend of August 2nd and 3rd, 2025. Payson Park was transformed into a festival grounds where 8,000-10,000 people each day gathered to hear incredible music, and eat good food in the comfort of this wonderful park. After the festival concluded, the impacts were deemed to be very minimal to the park.

Preble Field Reconstruction

Back Cove South Stormwater Storage Project, which captures 3.4 million gallons of combined stormwater/sewer discharge during each rain event, has come to a close and the Fitness Course and Bathrooms have been opened up as of Friday, August 1st. The field remains fenced off until September 5 when there will be a Grand Opening Ceremony planned to celebrate the completion of this monumental project. Stay tuned for more details coming.

Park Projects and Department Updates

Staff are working on the following Park Improvement projects:

- Deering Oaks Park ADA Walkway improvements: Phase 3, providing ADA access to the wading ravine, was completed in the Summer of 2023. Phase 4, which is the sidewalk along Tennis Court Drive, is going out to bid later this Summer for a potential Fall 2025 or Spring 2026 construction.
- Riverton Preserve: Recreation improvement plans are in progress and will consist primarily of a trail network with other improvements. This project is intended to fulfill LWCF conversion requirements, and final approval of the improvement plan rests with the state and National Park Service, which has a public engagement process.
- Lower Western Prom Park Improvements: This project has been bid out and did not receive a bid within the allocated budget, so it will be revised and re-advertised in the coming months.
- Longfellow Elementary School Playground: Playground Equipment has been selected. The project went out to bid in the Spring of 2025 only to receive one bid substantially over the budget for the project. Portland School Staff and Park Project Managers are working through the next steps to keep this project going.
- Portland Harbor Common: This project went out to bid in the Spring of 2025 to receive one bidder. The contract is being worked through currently.
- Stroudwater Bridge: The funding gap has been met for this project thanks to a City Council approval of CIP funding this past Spring. The bid documents and construction drawings have all been completed and the project will be bid in the next few weeks.
- Public Restrooms: So far, the city has installed 15 new public restrooms citywide over the past 3 years. Recent modifications were done to the units at The Eastern Promenade, Commercial



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St/Fish Pier, and Fox Field to include a vault for increased storage capacity. 4 more public restrooms are on the way with one at Lower Western Promenade, 1 at the Spring and High street parking lot, and 2 at the Eastern Promenade near the existing bathhouse.