

Portland Parks Commission Report

October 2016 – May 2018



Prepared By:

PORTLAND PARKS COMMISSION

&

PORTLAND DEPARTMENT OF PARKS, RECREATION, AND
FACILITIES

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Table of Contents

- 1. INTRODUCTION 4
 - 1.1 Message from the Chair of the Parks Commission 4
 - 1.2 Background to the Annual Report..... 5
- 2. PORTLAND PARKS COMMISSION 6
 - 2.1 Mission and Organization..... 6
 - 2.2 Members of the Park Commission 7
 - 2.3 Planning and Vision 8
 - 2.4 Subcommittees of the Park Commission 11
 - 2.5 Projects Reviewed by the Parks Commission 13
- 3. DEPARTMENT OF PARKS, RECREATION, AND FACILITIES 17
 - 3.1 Mission and Organization..... 17
 - 3.3 Accomplishments 17
 - 3.4 Partner Opportunities 18
- 4. OPERATIONS, IMPROVEMENTS, AND GOALS..... 20
 - 4.1 Operating Budget, Non-Capital, and General Improvements 20
 - 4.2 Volunteer and In-kind Support..... 20
 - 4.3. Capital Improvement Projects & Funding Goals 21
- 5. RECOMMENDATIONS 24
- 6. ADDITIONAL RESOURCES..... 28
- Appendix A: Portland’s Park System..... 29
- Appendix B: Brief History of the Parks Commission 31
- Appendix C: Park Inventory 2018 32
- Appendix D: Timeline for Annual Report and Capital Improvement Projects 34
- Appendix F: Capital Improvement Project 10-year Plan 35

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Message from the Chair of the Parks Commission

It is with great pride and honor as Chair of the Portland Park Commission that I present on behalf of The Portland Park Commission our 2016-2018 Park Commission Annual Report. We have watched the Parks Department continue to grow stronger and more vibrant and have seen continued increase usage and interest in our parks, trails and open spaces. As Chair I am grateful for each and every Commissioner for their dedication and guidance to ensuring that our city honors our incredibly beautiful parks system by volunteering their time and hours in this work. I am especially grateful to and extraordinary Parks Department staff and our community for all of their hard work support and love for our city.

Here are a couple of highlights of activities this past year among many included in this report:

- Lincoln Park revitalized with incredible community and city efforts to bringing back to life one of Portland's finest jewels.
- The Blue Sky Commission (BSC) was formed to explore the idea from Lucas St Clair and his family who came to us with the notion of starting a Parks Foundation. This entity that would run parallel to the Commission with a focus on education. The BSC worked through the winter and spring coming forward with a Portland Parks Conservancy (PPC). A memorandum of understanding between the City and the PPC was adopted this spring and the Portland Parks Conservancy is presently looking to hire its first executive director.
- Congress Square Park continues to thrive and has been filled almost every night since spring with food, music, dance, art and children activities to name a few. Its redesign was presented and the work moves onward to field staff.

We bid farewell to Chair Diane Davison who's work guiding the commission through many transitions with grace and grit will forever be remembered and we are forever grateful. To Jaime Parker for the many years of dedication and fortitude in guiding this ship we also say thank you. Carol Hutchins and Steve Morgenstein our heartfelt thanks for all of your work over three terms years on the Park Commission. We are better for the guidance, friendships and wisdom that you all have given to us and will continue to do our best at stewardship in the years ahead.

Along with raising awareness and continuing to reach out to our community the Parks Commission has welcomed strong and vibrant subcommittees with many new members over the past two years. Please take time to review their outstanding work over the past two years in this report.

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

My thanks to all and hope that you enjoy this report and all that we celebrate and treasure in Portland's parks. May you all enjoy a walk in a park today!

Dory Waxman ~ Chair Portland Park Commission

1.2 Background to the Annual Report

The Portland Parks Commission (PC) is required to submit an annual report to the city council regarding the state of the city's parks and public grounds and make specific recommendations therein about suggested goals and improvements for the parks and public grounds per City Code (Sec. 18-10(d)(4))¹. The primary audience for the report is Portland's City Council. It is the hope of the PC that anyone interested in, or is an advocate for, the enhancement and stewardship of our parks and open spaces also enjoy and make use of this report.

The Annual Report is intended to help accomplish multiple goals for the park system including covering its use, planned improvements, emerging issues, and interests for its future. The Department of Parks, Recreation, and Facilities (DPRF) and the PC use this as their reporting mechanism to summarize activities by each entity over the reporting period. The information contained includes a digest of PC monthly meetings, annual strategic meeting, and the Capital Improvement Project hearing and workshop, including an aggregated list of project proposals and review from Friends Groups and Community Partners ("FCPs") and stakeholders. Based on this overview of the state of the parks, goals for improvements and recommendations are identified for consideration by the City Council, City Manager, park managers and other stakeholders.

The cyclical nature of the Annual Report helps establish a baseline that can be updated to identify where progress is being made or is needed. Moreover, as new Councilors, Commissioners, park managers, and FCP members address park system goals, this report can serve as an efficient tool to get up to speed instead of reviewing more lengthy meeting minutes. Additional resources and reference materials are suggested for questions beyond the scope of this report. Some initial links to suggested materials are provided throughout the report, as well as in Section 6.

Lastly, the PC is required to conduct 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 (CIP) to the city council per City Code (Sec. 18-10(d)(7))². The report is released in the Spring and covers the previous year's findings. Therefore, this information can be informative to the CIP process and deliberations for FCPs, the PC, and the City to advance ideas from that will later be presented to the City Council and City Manager when the CIP list is considered for funding.

Please contact the PC if you are interested in becoming involved with any of the projects or ideas contained in the report via email at parkscommission@portlandmaine.gov or by phone at 207-808-5428.

¹ Submitting an Annual Report. Code of the Ordinances, Chapter 18: Parks, Recreation and Public Buildings and Grounds <http://portlandmaine.gov/DocumentCenter/Home/View/1084>

² Conducting an Annual Meeting. Code of the Ordinances, Chapter 18: Parks, Recreation and Public Buildings and Grounds <http://portlandmaine.gov/DocumentCenter/Home/View/1084>

2. PORTLAND PARKS COMMISSION

2.1 Mission and Organization

The PC is a group of volunteer members of the community who are interested in the stewardship of the City of Portland Parks. The PC is a citizen body of 13 commissioners appointed by the City Council (Sec. 18-10(c))³. 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 (LBC). Except for the City Council representative, all appointments are for three-year terms. Commissioners are interviewed and appointed by the Council's Legislative/Nominating Committee.

The mission of the Portland Parks Commission is:

The Mission of the Portland Parks Commission is to advocate for the enhancement and stewardship of our parks and open spaces, to review and propose projects that impact parks and open spaces and recommend appropriate action, to foster collaboration among park users and the City, to promote public access and enjoyment of our parks and open spaces, and to advocate for public and private funding for parks and open spaces.

Enjoy Portland for Life!

Each month the Commission meets with the Director or Deputy Director of the DPRF to review projects and proposals. The Commission also receives citizen input prior to and during each monthly public meeting to provide recommendations to the Director of Parks, Recreation & Facilities and the City Council.

As established by City ordinance (Sec. 18-10(d))⁴, the duties of the Portland Parks Commission include:

1. **Soliciting, encouraging and accepting private contributions** to the city, in cash or in kind, whether by gift, trust, or subject to conditions;
2. **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;
3. **Maintaining inventories** of parks, trails and open space needs as it determines to be desirable;
4. **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

³ Composition. Code of the Ordinances, Chapter 18: Parks, Recreation and Public Buildings and Grounds <http://portlandmaine.gov/DocumentCenter/Home/View/1084>

⁴ Duties. Code of the Ordinances, Chapter 18: Parks, Recreation and Public Buildings and Grounds <http://portlandmaine.gov/DocumentCenter/Home/View/1084>

Grounds making specific recommendations therein about suggested goals and improvements for the parks and public grounds;

5. **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;
6. **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
7. **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.
8. **Adopting reasonable rules for the conduct of its meetings**, which rules shall include provisions for public comment.

The PC meets the first Thursday of each month from 5:00 pm – 6:30 pm at City Hall, 389 Congress St. Portland, ME 04101 in Room 24 (Basement Level) unless otherwise noted. All meeting and information pertaining to them are posted on the City website prior to the meeting. Meeting materials and minutes are also made available there.

<https://www.portlandmaine.gov/345/Parks-Commission>

A brief selected history of the park system is also included in Appendix A⁵.

2.2 Members of the Park Commission

Park Commissioners

List includes all who were commissioners during this reporting period, and only includes their most recent term length.

Ana Lagunez, Public-at-large	2018-2021	current
Craig Lapine, Public-at-large	2018-2021	current
Cynthia Loebenstein, Friends of Evergreen Cemetery	2018-2021	current
Nathan Robbins, Public-at-large	2015-2021	current
Brian Batson, City Council Representative	2018-present	current
Amy Segal, Public-at-large	2017-2020	current
Zack Anchors, Friends of Eastern Promenade	2017-2020	current

⁵ For a more complete history of the parks some suggested reading includes *Bold Vision: the development of Parks of Portland, Maine* (1999), as well as additional park planning documents on the City's website <https://www.portlandmaine.gov/1862/Park-Master-Plans>

Chelsea Malacara, Public-at-large	2017-2020	current
Colette Bouchard, Public-at-large	2017-2020	current
Michael Mertaugh, Public-at-large	2017-2020	current
Dory Waxman, Public-at-large (Chair)	2017-2020	current
Meri Lowry, Land Bank Representative	2016-2019	current
Jaime Parker, Portland Trails (Vice-Chair)	2015-2018	past
Carol Hutchins, Friends of Deering Oaks	2015-2018	past
Steve Morgenstein, Public-at-large	2014-2017	past
Diane Davison, Friends of Eastern Promenade (Chair)	2014-2017	past
Travis Wagner, Public-at-large	2014-2017	past
Belinda Ray, City Council Representative	2016-2018	past

City Staff

Sally DeLuca, Director, Department of Parks, Recreation, and Facilities

Ethan Hipple, Deputy Director, Department of Parks, Recreation, and Facilities

Allison Carroll, Senior Administrative Officer, Department of Parks, Recreation, and Facilities

Recruitment

In 2017 the PC created a temporary trial Recruitment subcommittee. This concept was supported by the Commission to have an opportunity to keep the subcommittee strong and conduct strategic outreach for new members. Two Commissioners participated and City staff supported the Recruitment Subcommittee in 2017. Outreach occurred in parallel with the existing process under which individuals are invited to apply for PC vacancies as they are posted by the City Clerk. In Spring 2017, the Recruitment Subcommittee met with several candidates and forwarded their names and credentials to the rest of the Parks Commission.

2.3 Planning and Vision

Since reporting in the previous *2015-2016 Annual Report*, the PC has said goodbye to long-serving Commissioners and welcomed new ones, shared gratitude to our previous and new City Council representatives, elected a new Chair and Co-Chair, re-organized the roles and membership of the standing committees, and discussed several administrative aspects including roles outlined in the new park ordinance for the PC and beginning successes to fulfill them.

The Commission acknowledged and thanked Diane Davison for helping to Chair the PC for multiple terms through a period of great transition in responsibilities and of substantial growth. Many Commissioners remember challenges when they first began that were occurring in the parks, and in the organizational structure supporting them. In part, this was reflected at PC meetings, where there once seemed to be less ability to focus on visioning for the parks, less public participation, and observable deferred maintenance growing in the parks themselves coupled with lower financial support available. Over the years, the dedication of our communities to the Portland's Parks by community and subcommittee volunteers, city staff, and by the City Council, has resulted in several concurrent developments and visioning for the park system, and a common voice is beginning to emerge. For example, the turnaround that has been made since the DPRF was created after a hiatus since 2009 has been instrumental. The cumulative impact of these changes was discussed as bringing the PC to "another level". The PC feels that Portland's parks are beginning to receive the attention they deserve once again.



At several points throughout the year, there are opportunities where the PC can become uniquely informed, reflect, and discuss visioning for the parks. Green Space Gatherings held October 6, 2016 and May 3, 2018 continue to provide a unique opportunity for park stewards and local leaders to assemble in one place, to present recent accomplishments and highlights occurring in the park system, and to consider longer term goals for the park and open space system. On February 23, 2017, the LBC and PC held a joint meeting with Corporate Council to clarify each body's charge as outlined in the City Ordinances, and to create a guide for each body. On March 4, 2017, the PC held a strategic planning workshop to discuss larger issues relating to the PC, visions for the Park System, and ways the PC can help to achieve those goals. Commissioners and the DPRF Deputy Director also went on two field trips to collectively visit and tour the city's parks and open spaces in August 2017. The ideas gathered at these served as a basis for continued conversation throughout the year at monthly meetings.

Below are highlights of some of these updates:

Members and Officers

PC rules were amended to elect officers in June. This is consistent with the LBC terms, and aligns them with the City of Portland's fiscal year. The PC also contemplated amending officers to two or three year terms, and passed through a unanimous vote to send to the City to make these changes to the rules. Current term length for Commissioners is three years, and for officers on the Commission, one year.

Meetings

The PC established new meeting protocols, processes, and procedures to among other goals, increase transparency, efficiency, professionalism, and public engagement opportunities. The Commission makes efforts to review and engage those making presentations ahead of monthly meetings. Public comment is taken on action items and subcommittee agenda items where a vote is required, and a public comment period is included at the beginning of the meeting. Written comment is also invited at any time.

All dates, locations, times, and materials are added to the City of Portland website in advance of meetings.

<https://www.portlandmaine.gov/Calendar.aspx?EID=4386>

Review of the Park and Open Space Ordinances

On February 23, 2017, the PC and LBC had a combined meeting with Corporate Council to clarify each body's charge as outlined in the City Ordinances. Some takeaways, further discussions and clarifications are summarized in the following sections. More information on the meeting can be found on the City's website here:

<https://www.portlandmaine.gov/AgendaCenter/Parks-Commission-13>

Regarding scope of work:

- Chapter 2⁶ and Chapter 18 are the scope of the Commissions and the focus for each. Specifically, Sections 2-41 thru 2-45, City Code for City of Portland, Maine, revised 7/10/14 (the "Land Bank Ordinance"), and Chapter 18, City Code for City of Portland, Maine, revised 5/28/14 (the "Parks Ordinance"). Section 18-10D are the primary source of duties. 2-42B describes the purpose of the commission. 2-42G includes the deliverables, registry, record keeping, etc. 2-42H pertains to permissive things that the LBC may do. 2-45 describes the Land Bank fund.

Regarding sale and development review:

- For non-LBC parks, properties fall under the process in 18-14 to go to the PC for advisory opinion prior to review by the City Council. Most of these properties, though, have deed restrictions. Proposals or leasing of parks are reviewed by the PC only if the lease is greater than one year.
- If the park falls under both LBC and PC purview and if the LBC votes no to a sale or development of that park property, then it does not go to council for review.
- If a park is under both Commission ordinances, then sale or development review goes through both bodies. For that reason, PC meets earlier in the month so that the LBC will have the benefit of the PC's input, advice and opinion with respect to any contemplated sale or development of a park. Generally, LBC focus is on LBC properties, and PC on focus is on parks. With some exceptions, not every use of parks or LBC parcels comes to the commissioners. For example, if there is a legal requirement an approval process is not necessarily also required. In this case, staff informs each commission of the activity.

⁶ Code of the Ordinances, Chapter 2 Administration

<https://www.portlandmaine.gov/DocumentCenter/View/1066/Chapter-2-Administration---Revised-642018>

Regarding protections for Parks, Cemeteries, Open Spaces, and Land Bank Properties:

- In preparation of the inventory of park, open space, and cemetery lands in the City on behalf of the Annual Report subcommittee in 2015 and 2016, it was found that unless otherwise mentioned in City Ordinance, lands that were not listed as “Parks” are not afforded the same protections as those lands that are. Land Bank properties enjoy separate protections than parks or cemeteries. Under the current ordinance for cemeteries (Chapter 7 of the City Code), cemeteries can be sold, enlarged, reduced, replotted or have boundaries or grading changed.
- Increased protections for Cemeteries could be provided by strengthening the language in the existing Cemetery Ordinance, Chapter 7, or by including these properties in Park or Land Bank ordinances, particularly in those cases where the cemeteries also perform park functions and do not have another city commission with oversight for them.

Several recommendations regarding these findings and research needs are reported in the recommendations section of this report.

“No Net Loss” Discussion

The PC considered and discussed the concept of a “No Net Loss” policy or a change to City ordinance to include this provision. The concept regarded PC review of the lease or sale of park lands, and provided that there be no net loss of park land, with any prospective sale of park property offset with park land elsewhere in the City. The draft concept was included in discussion at PC meetings and considered by Corporate Counsel. After review it was determined the PC can change its bylaws, but including this additional policy would go beyond the provisions of the current parks ordinance; however, it could be included as a recommendation to those making proposals before the PC. The current review process involves at minimum four levels of review before the sale or lease of park lands, including a discussion with City staff, following by advisory review by the PC and by the LBC, with final approval by City Council (except for Land Bank property where the LBC has superseding approval after the City Council). The PC decided not to pursue establishing an offset policy, and instead retains procedural discretion to oppose proposed sale of park property in the course of its ongoing review. . This framework and procedural step is intended to align more consistently with other review levels on sale and lease of park lands.

2.4 Subcommittees of the Park Commission

There are four Subcommittees of the PC. A summary of recent work on each Subcommittee is included below.

Park Initiatives

The Parks Commission initiative for 2017 was to create a system of signage for the Portland Parks System. Commissioner Steve Morganstein, Cynthia Loebenstein, and Jaimie Parker along with Ethan Hipple from the City, and Mike King from the landscape architecture firm of Mitchell Associates designed a pilot project which included a large multi-mobile access park, Payson Park, an historic urban park, Lincoln Square, a linear park, Back Cove and a multi-recreational park, Dougherty Field.

Funding for the smaller family of signs are in the operating budget, and the larger signs are in the CIP. The PC is looking to expand this pilot system throughout the Park system. Signs will be under the City budget and in all City parks, not just those piloted, or that are gifted by a donor.

The Parks initiative for 2018 is the creation of the Baxter Trail. The Baxter Trail is an east- west trail over 3 miles long which begins on Back Cove/Baxter Boulevard and terminates at the Baxter Memorial in Evergreen Cemetery connecting points of interest celebrating the lives of James Phinney Baxter, his son, Percival Baxter, and the Baxter Family contributions to the City of Portland Parks System. By follow the wayfinding markers and the interpretive signs one can follow a route originating from the Back Cove, traveling up Vannah and Woodfords Streets to Woodford Corner, meandering through the Woodfords neighborhood streets named for the Mayor Baxter's children, through trails and Baxter Park and ending at the Baxter family circle burial sites in Evergreen Cemetery. This project has been chaired by Commissioner Cynthia Loebenstein, Friends of Evergreen Board Member David Little, City Staff, Ethan Hipple and Jeff Tarling.

Annual Report and Inventory

Focus areas for the Annual Report and Inventory Subcommittee during 2017 and 2018 were to produce the Annual Report 2017-2018. This included making efforts to align the reporting process and information included with other activities. An outcome of this coordination is available in Appendix D adoption of the Park Inventory, and Appendix E the Timeline for Annual Report and Capital Improvement Projects.

The Park Inventory was researched and drafted between 2016 and 2018. In February 2018, the PC adopted the Park Inventory (as per City ordinance). At the same time the PC voted to have the park inventory adopted at the same time as the annual report, and have included in the 2017-2018 Annual Report. The parks inventory is determined by the list of parks in the Parks Ordinance at Section 18-11. It is not subject to change unless a change in the ordinance that includes a broader definition of city parks is enacted by the City Council. Consideration of changes to the Parks Ordinances is included under the scope of work for the Annual Report, under Annual Report Initiative.

The Annual Report and Inventory also is tasked with work on any ordinance changes. Some preliminary discussion and recommendations pertaining to any changes is included in Section 2.3 and again in Section 5. Some discussion has already been initiated by the PC Chair and PC/LBC representative. It is anticipated additional conversations will continue through early- to mid-2019.

Communications and Outreach

In 2017, the Green Space Gathering Subcommittee was renamed as the Communications and Outreach Subcommittee. This change reflects the newly defined roles of this subcommittee, in addition to planning the annual Green Space Gathering, these include support for other outreach efforts and events and corresponding communications with FCPs and other interested stakeholders that the PC is intended to engage and support.

Focus areas for the subcommittee during 2017 and 2018 were to continue to maintain and update a current list of friends and community partner groups and organizations with contact information for each, and coordinated activities for the 2018 Green Space Gathering. The Green

Space Gathering is an annual occasion for the PC, the LBC, and the public to celebrate the significant accomplishments of the City's parks and land bank properties throughout the year.

Finance

In addition to its ongoing review of the annual Capital Improvement Program (CIP), the Finance Subcommittee continued to explore options for augmenting resources to improve the quality of Portland's parks and open spaces. Among the options examined were: a) earmarked property taxes, b) improved cost recovery through user charges, c) tax increment financing, d) public gifts, and e) impact fees. The Finance Subcommittee Chair provided documentation to city planning staff on experiences of impact-fee financing for parks in other communities. The city is currently pursuing the collection of impact fees for future development projects. Revenues from impact fees could help finance the provision of infrastructure and services necessitated by development projects. This could include new park facilities such as Portland Landing, the new waterfront park that is to be developed on the site of the current Amethyst Lot. This site is adjacent to the Portland Company development and close to a number of new developments in the India Street neighborhood.

The Finance Subcommittee is also working closely with staff of the DPRF to update and expand the options for gifts for Portland's parks by individuals and organizations. While there are some large corporate gifts for the benefit of Portland's parks and open spaces, the giving program – called "Giving Back to Portland's Parks" – especially targets individuals who are motivated to support Portland's parks. Key DPRF staff involved in this work are Sally Deluca, Ethan Hipple, Jeff Tarling, Marie Davis, and -- especially, Allison Carroll, who is developing the on-line version of the program, with links to other portions of the city's website. Michael Mertaugh represents the Finance Subcommittee in this work

During the period covered by this Annual report, the new Portland Parks Conservancy came into being, with the mission of "supporting Portland's parks, trails, and open spaces by raising philanthropic capital and encouraging civic engagement in alignment with community priorities." The Conservancy is expected to focus on larger, institutional gifts for the benefit of Portland's parks and open spaces.

2.5 Projects Reviewed by the Parks Commission

Peppermint Park

The City received a request to lease a small parcel of land within Peppermint Park that was currently unused and fenced off but was attracting unwanted activities collecting litter including used needles. The PC discussed this proposal and took citizen comment, noting a long-term interest in the preservation of open spaces in the City. Other bodies were also consulted in the review process. The PC ultimately made a recommendation not to sell the property. The City Manager decided to postpone indefinitely the sale or lease of the small parcel adjacent to Peppermint Park.

Future view protection for Portland's green spaces

Through discussions in 2017, the PC considered future view protection for Portland's green spaces. While the immediate need was prompted by the Fort Sumner Moratorium in response to development occurring adjacent to the park, the PC also considered whether view protections ought to be pursued more generally or addressed place by place to meet different needs of individual parks.



After multiple reviews and design considerations with developers, the planning board, city council, the PC, and the Friends of Fort Sumner a positive outcome was reached. An overlay zone for development was approved that limits the rise over determined distances to keep projects under the viewing area of the plaza in Fort Sumner Park. The project also incorporated a green roof extending the 'meadow feel' from the park, and other stormwater management practices. A shared gate between the two properties will be an architectural, painted, aluminum fence instead of chain-link. And, pending funding, the developer will consider continuing segments of a trail from Fort Sumner to Marion Street to meet a trail that goes down towards Washington Street. The process was suggested as a model for what a review could include when significant or precious resources are at risk.

Portland Landing (Amethyst Lot)

In September 2017, a conceptual design of the Portland Landing project was presented to the PC by the members of the design team and the City's Waterfront Coordinator. This update furthered previous discussion in Spring 2017 by the PC on the Amethyst Lot, now renamed as the Portland Landing to reflect the anticipated park usage for the site. Currently, the area proposed for redevelopment as a park includes an attended vehicle only parking lot and Moon Tide Park that is filled with rip rap. The proposal includes landings for different uses to be determined (water taxi/charter boat and access to Ft. Gorges, public berthing/marina, etc.), a promenade along the water's edge, a naturalization of some of the shore line, a raise in elevation to 14 feet (from 10-11 feet currently) and 21 feet for structures, and expansion of Moontide Park to become a more utilized space for events and incoming cruise ship guests (could include tide pool playgrounds, landscape features, art, etc.). In addition to that there would be hills up to 21 feet for view and wave extenuation in the upland area that wouldn't prevent flooding, but are intended to reduce wave damage to benefit coastal resilience interests.

Relatively quiet for the past twelve years, the site is seeing interest in part from neighboring development and recognition as well as an increase in the number of cruise ships. A phasing budget was not finalized, near term steps include plans to further designs, and to start thinking of the space as a park and presenting it partially as a park. Temporary designs for a "Pop-Up Park" were solicited at the meeting and requested following, and the PC Chair was requested to

participate in future project planning work. Additional funding was anticipated through fundraising and grants, and through Capital Improvement Project funds to bring to a higher level of design and permitting. Pending funding shortfalls, core concepts to retain include the Sail Maine Program, community boating, a view, possibilities of events, weddings, and the pure enjoyment that can be had in this area.

The PC expressed interest in considering impact fees for this project by neighboring property owners and developments occurring.



East End Waterfront Access Project

In Spring 2016, the PC reviewed the EEWAP. Public sentiment at the meeting tended away from a single large intervention (a new floating dock system) and toward a more dispersed enhancement of existing landscape features to satisfy dual goals of improved access and improved safety for users of human-powered watercraft. This led to the selection of a ramp and step structure located east of the existing recreational boat ramp at the North-East Shore. This also includes improvements to the stairs leading to the North-West Beach and development of a wash-down station for boats and gear in the vicinity of the kayak storage racks. The working group, comprised of city staff and Friend of Eastern Promenade board members refined the proposal with the support of project engineers and landscape architects to derive a final plan that both meets fundamental EEWAP goals while bringing some aesthetic distinction to the project. The final design calls for a flared, stepped ramp bordered on one side by elevated drag rails for kayaks and other watercraft, and integrated into an improved waterfront greenspace. The Friends of the Eastern Promenade is currently in the process of raising funds to satisfy the required 1:1 match to DOT's Small Harbor Improvement Program grant, with the goal of having all funds raised and encumbered by the end of 2018. The Quimby Foundation committed \$20,000 toward the EEWAP project. This generous grant provides a solid foundation for future fundraising.

Congress Square Redesign

WRT presented to the PC on December 15th during a public meeting. Traffic will be reworked with project to improve accessibility. Ideally would like to create an identity due to it residing in the arts district. Also, would like to create an open space for citizens. At the time of the presentation, this was shown as a schematic design, with lot of steps to go through still. Materials for example were not selected yet. There was interest in obtaining feedback and thoughts from the PC on how the schematic meets the vision for the space and how it will improve accessibility. The design uses very durable materials such as granite. Overall, the PC was excited about the plaza in front of the art museum and were pleased with its simplicity. They enjoyed seeing it come together. There was interest in hearing more about what is

planned for storm water. At the time, this was not addressed yet, but they will be using local plants that will be naturally watered by rain. The PC expressed some concern that it may be high maintenance cost. Now that this is designed, meeting with field staff to discuss what to expect.

Portland Roundabout Project & Bedford Park – University of Southern Maine

Department of Public Works presented to the PC regarding the proposal to create a roundabout at Bedford street and at the intersection between Bedford and Fessenden Parks. The project is proposed as a benefit to improve traffic flow, prohibit left turns. The project would also reduce impact to USM properties and impact Bedford Park by 2,400 feet with that land given to the University. By deed, when the park was conveyed to the City one of the acceptable impacts to the park would be for widening for roadway purposes. Bedford Park would remain a public park. Public Works engaged the University and City Arborist, for landscaping to identify roles and responsibilities for each entity.

The PC expressed interest in several proposal aspects including, lessening any impacts to Bedford Park, incorporating 'shared space' design concepts, integrating bicycle traffic into designs (could utilize sidewalks and widen), and to review any future developments on the property for example should the University pursue siting a building on the new land deeded. City will continue to update the PC on the process of this project as the DPRF will be working closely with the Public Works Department on this.

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: 66 parks spanning over 1,278 acres, including 29 playgrounds, 24 Tennis Courts, 8 Pickleball Courts, 2 Sand Volleyball Courts, 1 beach, 8 miles of city-maintained multi-use trails, 7 multi-use fields, 2 artificial turf fields, 4 skating ponds, 1 skate park, 5 splashpads, 11 community gardens (at 10 different locations), 16 cemeteries with over 100,000 burial plots, dozens of horticultural beds, and 20,000 inventoried park and street trees. Park Rangers make sure our parks are safe for all, and our hard-working maintenance crews keep our parks beautiful in the summer, and plow our city sidewalks and trails in the winter.

The Parks Division aims to provide outdoor recreational opportunities for everyone, during all four seasons of the year: from the Portland Skatepark, to 4 splash pads and wading pools, 2 dog parks, 4 maintained ice skating ponds, a sledding hill and miles of groomed XC ski tracks.



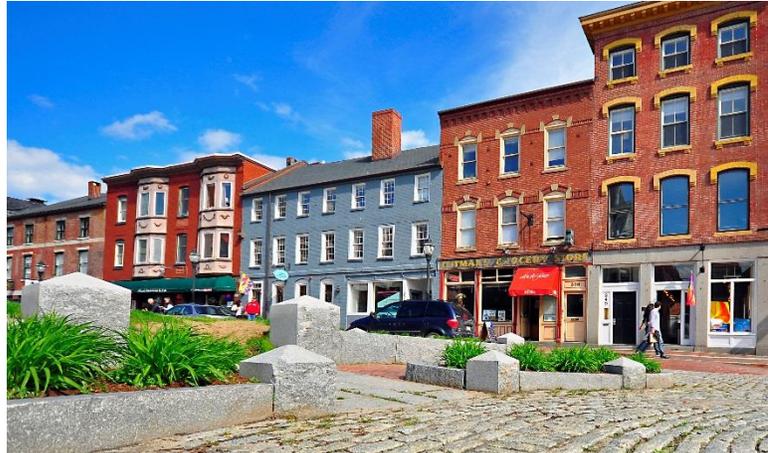
Parks improve our quality of life, increase property values, and contribute to the economic engine of Portland. They are a place for people to come together and create community—whether you are playing an after-work softball game, growing your first tomato, or taking a hike along a babbling brook. These are your parks!

3.3 Accomplishments

The Department of Parks, Recreation and Facilities was able to create a new position of Deputy Director of Parks, Recreation and Facilities. This position will add capacity for management oversight, project management, budgeting, and building partnerships with Friends Groups, Neighborhood groups, and the Portland Parks Conservancy. For a Department with a \$12M budget, \$10M in revenues, and close to 500 employees, this position will add critical capacity to keep priorities moving.

Former Park Manager Ethan Hipple was promoted into the role as Deputy Director. The city plans to hire a new Park Manager who will continue to oversee Parks Maintenance, Athletic Facilities, Cemeteries, Forestry and Horticulture.

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



- Cousins Memorial Plaza Restoration (Complete)
- Deering Oaks Playground Zip Line and Net Climber (In progress)
- Deering Oaks Pond Wall Reconstruction (Engineering and Construction Drawings Complete)
- Deering Oaks Rocky Hill Playground and Water Feature (Complete)
- Dougherty Field Playground (In Progress)
- Evergreen Cemetery Stevens Avenue Wall Reconstruction (Complete)
- Evergreen Cemetery Urban Forest Management Project (Complete)
- Fort Gorges Hazard Mitigation Project (Railings and Gates, funded by US Army Corps of Engineers—Complete)
- Fox Field Food Forest (In progress)
- Futsal Court at Fox Field (In progress)
- Island Playgrounds Replacement: Cliff, Peaks, Great Diamond (In Progress)
- Lincoln Park Fence Restoration (In Progress)
- Lincoln Park Fountain and Walkway Restoration (Complete)
- Lyman Moore Athletic Fields Reconstruction, Drainage and Irrigation (In progress)
- Memorial Field Artificial Turf Replacement (In progress)
- Parks Signage Project: Large Welcome Signs for 5 Parks (In Progress)
- Parks Signage Project: Small Pedestrian Welcome Signs for 15 Parks (In Progress)
- Payson Park Softball Field Upgrades (In progress)
- Pickleball lines and nets added to Tennis Courts at Deering Oaks and Eastern Prom (Complete)
- Skatepark Expansion Design (Concept Design Complete, currently fundraising)
- Tennis Court Resurfacing, Deering High School and Deering Oaks (Complete)
- Tree Planting: 149 Trees planted city-wide
- Western Prom Valley St Wall Reconstruction and Repair (Complete)

3.4 Partner Opportunities

Community Gardens

Community gardeners and urban agriculturalists are dedicated—and among the most volunteer-spirited—users of Portland parks. During the period of this report, two additions were made to

the garden network that dots Portland's parks. The Libbytown Garden was built in Doherty Field and the Common Share Community Garden was added at the site of the Casco Bay Community Garden on the Eastern Promenade. Both were completed in October 2016 and welcomed their first gardeners in May 2017. While City of Portland and Cultivating Community staff oversaw both projects, scores of volunteers contributed thousands of hours of labor to bring both projects into existence. And beyond these two projects, 226 people interested in Portland's edible landscapes—its community and school gardens, its urban orchards, and its emergent food forests—volunteered 2,694 hours pruning trees, spreading wood chips, hauling seaweed and performing scores of other tasks essential to the health and beauty of our community growing spaces. And those are just the people and hours that managed to get logged! We know many volunteer and stewardship efforts go uncounted.

In addition to being a magnet for civic engagement, community gardens are also a place parks are living out Portland's value of being an equitable city. During this year, the Parks Department and Cultivating Community collaborated to ensure that the community gardens program more fully reflected the diversity of the City. The strategies included:

- Reviewing and revising waiting list guideline to prioritize families living on low incomes
- Conducting culturally appropriate and linguistically diverse outreach about the garden program
- More robustly funding a scholarship pool so that fee abatements were available to more families.



This work was generously supported by a grant from the Sam L. Cohen Foundation to Cultivating Community. The efforts yielded undeniable results. Within a year, participation of gardeners identifying as low-income went from under 10% to more than 25%. In a City where 52% of students are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch in schools, community gardens can be an important part of a coordinated community food security strategy—if barriers are lowered and access is equitably made. That is a goal of the program.

<https://www.cultivatingcommunity.org/>

Portland Trails

Portland Trails serves the 230,000 residents of Greater Portland and many of the area's 4 million annual visitors. Our trail network reaches within a half mile of every resident, and within a quarter mile of 95% of all Portland residents. The network includes over 70-miles of trails in Portland, Westbrook, South Portland and Falmouth, and the trails we maintain and build provide free recreation and active transportation for all ages.

<http://trails.org/>

4. OPERATIONS, IMPROVEMENTS, AND GOALS

4.1 Operating Budget, Non-Capital, and General Improvements

The Capital Improvement budget includes projects over \$25,000. Many small projects are accomplished in parks for less than \$25,000 and those items are included in the Operating Budget. These types of projects include fencing, walkway repairs, trail work, crack sealing tennis and basketball courts, hazard tree removal, water fountains, signage and landscaping.

The City Manager and City Council have been supportive of continuing to grow our operating budget for Parks within healthy limits. After several new staff positions were added for FY 2018, we have continued to grow our capacity by replacing aging vehicles and small equipment.

Highlights for the upcoming 2019 Operating Budget:

- Additional Seasonal Athletic Facilities Staff to help with additional work created by the Pesticide Ordinance.
- \$10,000 for ongoing multi-year park rebranding sign project
- Electric chainsaws for Forestry Crew
- Deering Oaks Park Attendant
- \$15,000 for Hazardous Tree removal and replacement in Evergreen cemetery
- Replacement Gator ATV for Deering Oaks Park
- Fence repair at Quarry Run Dog Park and Community Gardens

4.2 Volunteer and In-kind Support

Information is derived from self-reporting by Friends Groups and covers the period of October 2016 to May 2018. It is likely that hours shown are likely lower than actual.

Group or Project	Attendees	Hours	Volunteer Hours
Student Conservation Association youth trail work crew	8	80	640
Maine Conservation Corps Trail Crew	8	40	320
Take Action Portland	20	6	120
Friends of Bramhall Square			150
Friends of the Eastern Promenade			60

Libbytown Neighborhood Association			150
West End Neighborhood Association			770
Cultivating Community / Community gardens, urban orchards, and food forests		678	2694
Peaks Environmental Action Team (PEAT)			215
Friends of Payson Park			41
Friends of Woodfords Corner			100
Friends of Evergreen Cemetery			3,500

4.3. Capital Improvement Projects & Funding Goals

CIP Process and Improvements

In April 2017, City staff crafted a timeline for submission and approval of the DPRF's Capital Improvement Projects. The CIP timeline is expressly designed to invite review and input from the Parks Commission, each of the Friends Groups and the public. The goal of the timeline is to build a schedule for Capital Improvement Projects that reflects the priorities of the DPRF, the Parks Commission, the Friends Groups and the public in a manner designed to be inclusive, responsive, efficient and realistic.

The schedule for the annual CIP review process starts in May, when the DPRF invites Friends Groups to submit CIP proposals for their respective parks by mid-July. Accompanying this request is the DPRF's current 10-year plan of parks investments, based in part on former Friends Groups' requests. The DPRF reviews the submissions from Friends groups, along with proposals from the various DPRF divisions, and information about the status of ongoing and pending operations. Based on this review, the DPRF establishes its priorities for the upcoming CIP and presents them to the Parks Commission at the end of July for review, along with its updated recommendations for the 10-year investment plan. The Parks Commission reviews these materials with Friends groups and other stakeholders in August and September, and hosts a public workshop to discuss the proposed CIP. By the end of September, the Parks Commission provides its comments to the DPRF on the annual CIP request and the 10-year plan. In October, the DPRF refines its CIP request and the 10-year plan, based on inputs from the Parks Commission, Friends Groups and other stakeholders, budget guidelines from the City Manager, and updated information from its staff divisions. In November, the DPRF submits its revised CIP request to the City Manager for review. The City Manager then meets with each Department and prepares a consolidated CIP request for the city which is reviewed by City Council's Finance Subcommittee before being voted on by the full City Council.

The Parks Commission makes recommendations, and works in concert with the DPRF, but the Department acts on it. In this way, the Parks Commission has a concurrent process that supports and fits into the CIP by working more with the Friends Groups, so that they can represent all of them instead of just relying on the members of the Commission who are part of their own groups. By having the City, the Parks Commission, and all Friends Groups come

together to work through the CIP process, a strong ten-year plan is established to bring to the City Manager.

Looking Ahead: 10-year Plan for Capital Improvement Projects

The 10-Year Plan for Capital Improvement Projects provides a complete list of projects contemplated for attention by the Department of Parks, Recreation and Facilities and is designed to reflect priorities established by collaboration between the Department of Parks, Recreation and Facilities, the Parks Commission and the Friends organizations which support Portland's parks. A complete list of the 10-year CIP plan reviewed in 2017 can be found in Appendix E. The Parks CIP 10-year chart, 2020-2029, can be found on the City website at: <https://www.portlandmaine.gov/1943/Park-Projects>.

As of the publication of this report, the CIP 10-year chart includes the following specific list of park projects contemplated for completion in 2019:

- Memorial Field Artificial Turf Replacement - \$673,000 - 2019
- Dougherty Field-Athletic Field at West School Site, Parking - \$350,000 - 2019
- Payson A Replace Lights - \$250,000 - 2019
- Portland Landing Design Development (Amethyst Lot) - \$250,000 - 2019
- Riverton Playground - \$250,000 - 2019
- Dougherty Skate Park Expansion - \$240,000 - 2019
- Fort Gorges Structural Improvements - \$209,000 - 2019
- Fitzpatrick Scoreboard and Road Drainage - \$102,000 - 2019
- Riverton Softball Site Work - Drainage and Erosion Issues - \$65,000 - 2019
- Evergreen Columbarium: Phase II and III - \$52,000 - 2019
- Payson Park Community Garden - Expansion - \$14,500 – 2019

Additional Funding Goals

Portland's parks are a blessing that we cherish. 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 city is now planning for the new waterfront park -- requires yet additional financial support. An 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, parks friend's 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 to support and match city funding for these projects. In addition, friend's groups help mobilize important contributions in volunteer and in-kind support (section 4.2).

For the past three years, the Parks Commission has made recommendations for city expenditures on parks under the city's investment budget, the annual Capital Improvement Program (CIP), based on inputs from Friends Groups and using explicit criteria for expenditure

priorities. The review process described at the beginning of this section of the report was improved by adopting a more formal review schedule that allows Friends Groups, other stakeholders, and the Parks Commission more time for input to CIP formulation.

The Parks Commission is also working with the DPRF to develop a new online resource for public giving for Portland's parks, linked to the city's Park Finder map (please Section 6 for more information). This online resource will be user-friendly and allow immediate contributions for designated gifts and memorials in Portland's parks. Initially, this effort is starting with gifts of trees, park furniture, and youth recreation programs. It will be expanded in the future to include additional park enhancements.



An important new player in park financing is the Portland Park Conservancy.

Blue Sky Commission & Park Conservancy

In May 2017, the PC met with Lucas St. Clair about creating a Parks Foundation for the City of Portland. Parks often get overlooked yet they benefit other organizations and the community. The intention of the foundation would be to help raise money as a philanthropic arm, and would work in alignment with The City, Parks Commission and Friends Groups, including responding to recommendations on how to move forward as a public private partnership. The PC was interested in supporting different types of programming reflecting the different types of parks spaces (for example urban squares versus open spaces), and should be open to opportunities to be additive and expand our thought on park spaces. There was an expressed interest to focus on standard of maintenance and raising those standards, as well as improving the quality and functionality of the parks. There was an interest from the PC to respect equity of parks and potentially uneven representation of those advocating for parks based on presence or absence of Friends groups and the differing capacity at existing groups. For example, there are many parks and few developed Friends Groups. Additionally, the PC expressed concern that funding meant to be additional may end up being substituted for what is budgeted. Ways to involve others should be part of the process, matching opportunities with those wanting to help. The PC also asked for part of the Parks Report to be permanently dedicated to the Park Conservancy.

The Blue-Sky Commission met several times in 2017 establishing the overall structure, bylaws, and organizational relationship with The City. The City remains in charge of maintenance and care of the Parks, and The Conservancy is intended to go beyond that. Currently the Conservancy is seeking an Executive Director.

City Joins Forces with Elliotsville Plantation to Create Parks Conservancy, September 6, 2017.
<http://www.portlandmaine.gov/CivicAlerts.aspx?AID=2778>

5.RECOMMENDATIONS

Information for the recommendations section was cultivated through PC discussion at meetings, and are contributions by members during those discussions. Voting at meetings by Commissioners is only done on specific actions items that require a vote, and is not the case for general discussion. Therefore, the PC did not vote on specific recommendations as they were initially discussed; however, the final list of recommendations was reviewed by the PC prior to adoption of this 2016-2018 report.

1. *Organizational*

- a. The PC and City of Portland staff should make a calendar to keep track of all items worked on by, or presented to, the Parks Commission.
- b. The PC should include a part of the Parks Report to be permanently dedicated to the Park Conservancy.

2. *Ordinances*

- a. Continue to review and be involved in decision making as appropriate or afforded to the PC ordinances. Sent to the PC while in draft, and for discussion at PC meetings prior to public hearings at higher levels, at the LBC, City Council, or other levels.
 - i. For example, reference ordinance 18-1 & 18-12 regarding view sheds.
- b. The park ordinance was enacted on April 28, 2014 and may not be amended or repealed for 5 years from that date – April 28, 2019. Discussion on ordinance changes with the PC should occur throughout calendar years 2018-2019. An ad hoc subcommittee was appointed to work with Corporation Council to work in collaboration with the LBC and authors of the ordinance to see if any changes need to be made.

3. *Inventory, Land and Use Protections*

- a. The ordinance defines city parks in the form of a list. That list serves as the inventory of parks attached to this annual report.
 - i. Further research was also identified to not only determine what defines a park, but also what parks are defined by. Some parks do not have great supporting documents.
 - Locate any back up documents that define these properties, including boundaries and parcel definitions.
 - Look into title related matters of parks, cemeteries, open spaces, and land bank properties, because there could be restrictions that are longer lasting and ironclad to what is currently in City Code.
 - Similarly, a review of state laws should be conducted for additional pertinent information for cemeteries, parks, and open spaces.
- b. In 2017 a subcommittee including, Jamie Parker, Jeff Tarling, Doug Roncarati, Ethan Hipple and Meri Lowry met to look at all the city's open spaces and determine whether any should be included as either parks or land bank properties. The subcommittee did not recommend adding any particular site as a park. Boundaries should be added or confirmed to all parks, for historical precedence as well. Surveyors and lawyers and finances to cover associated costs should be secured for what could be an expensive

project. Original documents should be found if possible, including an initial search of the Public Works 'vault'.

- c. The PC recommends the City Council look into protections for cemetery lands based on the findings by the PC, LB and Corporation Council discussions.
 - i. Possible methods discussed for increasing protections for Cemeteries could be done by strengthening the language in the existing Cemetery Ordinance, Chapter 7, or by including these properties in Park or Land Bank ordinances particularly since they also perform park functions and do not have another city commission with oversight for them.
- d. 2/2018 motion for the inventory to be adopted at the same time as the report.

4. *Advocacy*

- a. PC should become more familiar with the operating budget process and current items (including the list of Minor Capital projects Under \$25,000 kept by the DPRFs) to have a better understanding of the bigger picture addressing Parks and Open Spaces.
- b. PC should also be informed and be proactively engaged in the budget process.
- c. PC should become more familiar with revenues raised through fees gathered at sporting events on athletic.
- d. PC ordinance says that we are to raise funds. The PC should continue to help support the city fundraise for park improvements. Would like to see improvements to the quality of parks, because they are capital investments. They could be valuable if the city has major acquisitions. The best outcome would be to improve ongoing budget process and improve documenting needs. Additional potential sources for funding and financing could include:
 - i. Continued attention the updating and use of the Giving Back to Portland Catalog, putting it on the city website and direction interested individuals to it. For example, the "Adopt-A-Park" program is still in existence, but no one really knows about it. The PC was also interested in creative ways to bulk up the catalogue to fit park's needs,
 - ii. Support investments as park infrastructure,
 - iii. Earmarked property taxes,
 - iv. Improved cost recovery through user charges,
 - v. TIFs (tax increment financing) and impact fees, and
 - vi. Fundraising potential through pursuing a tree fund, or "green fund".

5. *Concurrent City Planning and Efforts*

- a. Support efforts to make use of public lands to further City sustainability efforts such as utilizing the Landfill on Ocean Avenue for a Community Solar Farm.
- b. Work with the LBC and other pertinent entities on priorities for land acquisition and preservation, including a prioritization of those lands and funding sources or mechanisms to realize these strategic planning outcomes.
- c. Take actions to put strategies in motion so funding is available as needed when opportunities arise.
 - i. Example: those identified in the Comprehensive Plan 2017:
<http://www.portlandmaine.gov/DocumentCenter/Home/View/15411>
- d. Coordinate with city departments, boards, councils, and other stakeholder organizations to support them in furthering climate resilience priorities identified in other concurrent Portland park and open space related plans and efforts. Examples:

- i. City's technical standards and land use code, planning for investments (for example, park to buffer accommodate and protect), and pursue strategic study, investment, code changes and education.
 - ii. Some priority locations identified: waterfront and Bayside, Back Cove trail, East End Boat Launch Area and Beaches, and the eastern promenade trail, and properties along the Fore River and neighboring wetlands.
 - iii. Comprehensive Plan 2017:
 - <http://www.portlandmaine.gov/DocumentCenter/Home/View/15411>
 - MEMORANDUM Waterfront: Climate Resiliency:
 - Facilities & Services: Enhance Resiliency:
 - Environment: Develop Climate Resilience:
 - iv. Bayside Adapts: Adaptation Planning
 - v. 2016 Communication on Climate Change Adaptation Planning – Status and next steps Memorandum to: Energy and Sustainability Committee
<http://www.portlandmaine.gov/AgendaCenter/ViewFile/Item/3689?fileID=15668>
 - vi. 2013 Sea Level Rise Vulnerability Assessment
http://www.cascobayestuary.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/SSM-Sea-Level-Rise-Vulnerability-Assessment_FINAL.pdf (Sustain Southern Maine)
 - vii. 2012 Draft Framework for Approaching Sea - level Rise Adaptation To: Transportation, Sustainability and Energy Committee
<http://www.portlandmaine.gov/DocumentCenter/View/6321>
 - Question #6: Approaching Recreation and Park Space Recreational and Park Space in Portland
 - Question #5: Approaching Wetland Impacts
- e. PC should promote and cross-promote active transportation to the parks and through the parks for commuters so that they can be more accessible.

6. *Maintenance & Stewardship*

- a. Continue to build staffing to appropriate levels to maintain parks to a higher standard.
- b. Develop Parks Maintenance Standards and performance measures, per the 2016 Open Space Vision Plan.
- c. Continue to support park partnerships as unique ways to foster improved maintenance and stewardship, such as the well-established examples of existing relationships with Portland Trails and Cultivating Community.
- d. Explore the concept of a Portland Youth Corps to engage young people in meaningful service opportunities and career exploration in Portland Parks.
- e. Encourage revitalizing the “Adopt a Spot” concept, allowing citizens and businesses to adopt small garden sites and horticultural beds throughout the city.
 - i. Highlight historic Baxter family contributions to the Portland park system.
 - ii. Continue collaboration with neighborhood organizations, Cultivating Community and The Resilience Hub to create and expand vibrant community gardens.
 - iii. Collaborate with the Portland Parks Conservancy and continue process of enhancing ease of individual donations to Portland Parks projects.
- f. Support implementation 2016 Invasive Species Plan, including efforts to continue monitoring, treatment and removal of invasive species.
- g. Support Opportunity Group project.
 - i. PC should cross-promote the Department's new initiative to use Mobilecause for fundraising. *Example, the Portland Opportunity Crew:*
<https://www.portlandmaine.gov/1989/Portland-Opportunity-Crew>

<http://www.portlandmaine.gov/2062/Support-POC>

- h. Support efforts to expand the park encroachment project, such as sending friendly letters to residents.

7. Programming / Use

- a. Support the programming opportunities by the DPRF such as:
 - i. implementation of the Athletic Facilities Task Force Report recommendations approved by City Council in 2011.
 - ii. developing interpretive and educational programs.
 - iii. Improving the Parks website, including “Park Finder” and related web pages on parks history, uses, offerings, pictures, events, and other information of interest.
 - iv. developing a Parks app for use by the public.

8. Identifying and Supporting Partnerships

The PC collaborates closely with friend’s organizations and community partners (FCPs) associated with certain Portland Parks. The PC invites regular input from friends groups at its meetings and relies on their advocacy and enthusiasm to provide special benefit to their associated parks. Each year, devoted Portlanders help the city’s natural areas, trails, playgrounds, open spaces, athletic and recreational facilities flourish through volunteerism and can be counted on to make the PC aware of needs and improvements that will enhance our parks. The PC is committed to fostering the beneficially mutual relationship between FCP groups and their collaborative alliances with the PC and with the DPRF. Although currently there is no formal procedure to be designated a FCP group, the PC maintains a list of active “friends groups” and contact information.

Next year, PC should continue to foster relationships with Friends Groups and see what we can accomplish with them.

6.ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Portland's Park Commission

<http://www.portlandmaine.gov/345/Parks-Commission>

Portland's Department of Parks, Recreation and Facilities

<https://www.portlandmaine.gov/182/Parks-Recreation-Facilities>

Park Finder

<https://www.portlandmaine.gov/1063/Parks>

Explore Portland's 63 parks, 27 playgrounds, 10 community gardens, miles of multi-use path, dog parks, splash pads, winter recreation areas and dozens of athletic facilities using the Park Finder Map.

Park 'Places'

<https://www.portlandmaine.gov/1907/Places>

Photo Gallery

<http://www.portlandmaine.gov/gallery.aspx?AID=26>

Open Space Vision & Implementation Plan

<https://www.portlandmaine.gov/1503/Portland-Open-Space-Vision>

<https://www.portlandmaine.gov/DocumentCenter/View/14562/Open-Space-Vision-Implementation-Plan->

Bold Vision, The Development of the Parks of Portland, Maine

Park Master Plans

<https://www.portlandmaine.gov/1862/Park-Master-Plans>

Green Spaces Blue Edges (system wide)

Baxter Boulevard

Deering Oaks

Dougherty Field

Eastern Promenade

Evergreen Cemetery

Green Spaces Blue Edges

Ocean Avenue Recreation Area

Parks and Friends Groups List

Friends of Bramhall Square

Friends of Canco Woods

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

Friends of Fort Sumner

Friends of the Western Promenade

Appendix A: Portland's Park System

Portland Park History (Video)
<http://portlandprf.com/1063/Parks>

As reported in the 2016 Annual Report Section 1.4:

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. [1] 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 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 PC 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.

Appendix B: 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.

Appendix C: Park Inventory 2018

2016 City of Portland, Maine Parks Commission Annual Report Parks Inventory

The following sources were used in drafting the below inventory of Parks of Portland, Maine:

1. Section 2-44, City Code for City of Portland, Maine, revised 7/10/14 (the “**Land Bank Ordinance**”)
2. Section 18-11, City Code for City of Portland, Maine, revised 5/28/14 (the “**Parks Ordinance**”)

N.B. School playgrounds and athletic fields are not included in the park inventory even though the City of Portland does maintain and fund ongoing maintenance and replacement.

PARKS IN THE CITY OF PORTLAND, MAINE

Dedicated Parks Listed in both the Parks Ordinance and the Land Bank Ordinance:

Back Cove Park and Trail
Barrows Park/Baxters Sundial
Baxter Pines
Baxter Woods
Bayside Park, also known as Stone Street Playground
Bell Buoy Park
Belmeade Park
Capisic Pond Park
Clark Street Park
Congress Square Park
Deering Oaks Park
Dougherty Field
Eastern Promenade Park, East End Beach, Fort Allen Park
Fessenden Park
Fort Gorges
Fort Sumner Park
Fox Field/Kennedy Park
Harbor View Park and Tate-Tyng Park
Heseltine Park
Lincoln Park
Lobsterman Park
Longfellow Square
Monument Square
Munjoy South Playground
Payson Park
Peppermint Park
Pleasant Street Park
Post Office Park
Riverside Golf Course
Riverton Trolley Park (incorrectly listed as Riverton Park in the Ordinances)
Stroudwater Parks (there are 2 listed in the Ordinances)
Taylor Street Park

Tommy's Park
Western Promenade Park

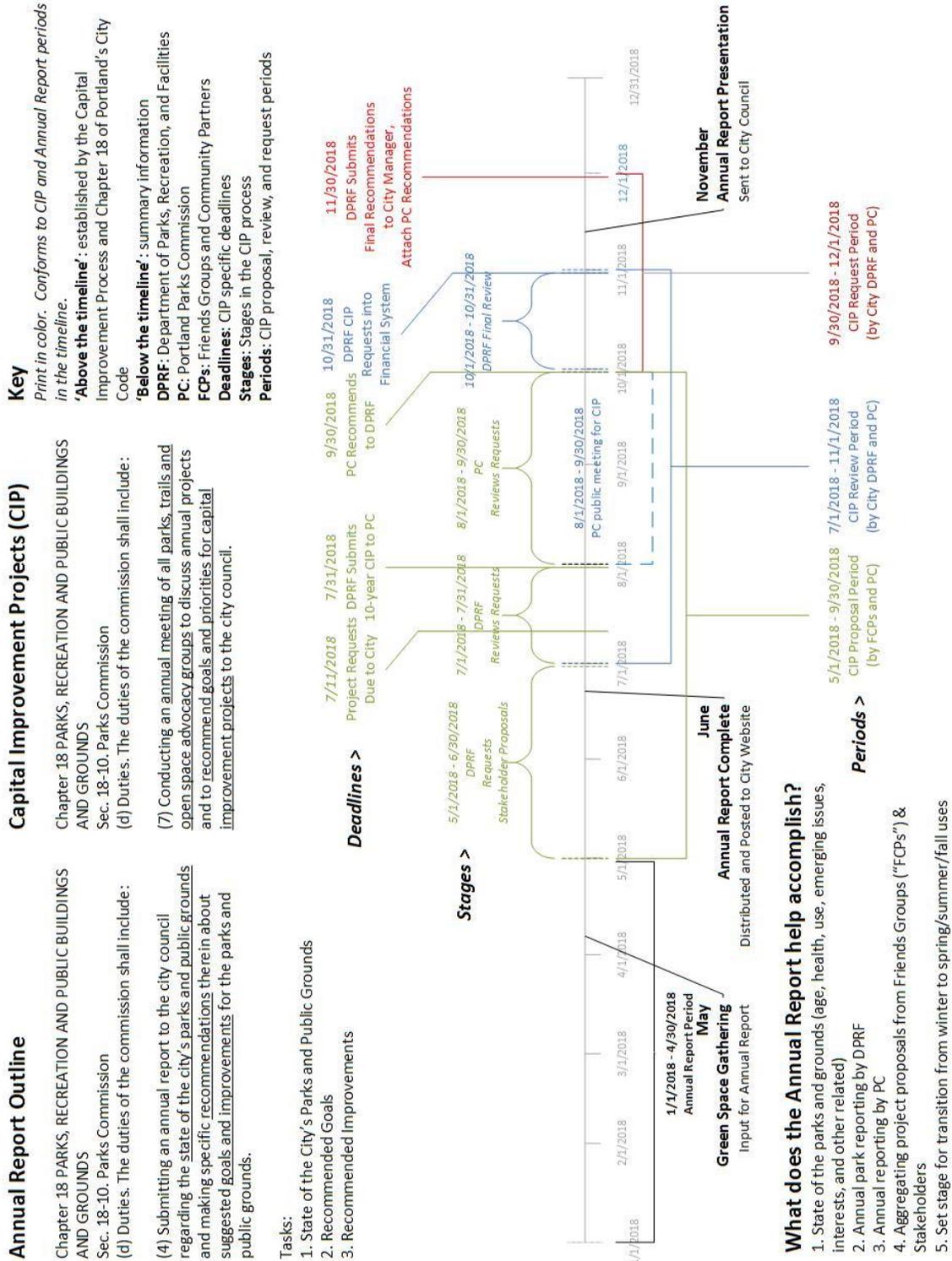
Dedicated Parks Listed in the Parks Ordinance and Not the Land Bank Ordinance

Andrews Square – **N.B.** This Park consists of a flagpole only
Bayside Trail
Bedford Park
Boothby Square
Boyd Street Gardens
Bramhall Square
Caldwell Square
Clark Street Playground
Tate-Tyng Playground (not in alphabetical order because of association with Harborview Park)
Longfellow Park
Marada Adams Playground **N.B.** This Park is located at the corner of Beckett and O'Brion
Streets and is not the Adams School Playground
Martin's Point Park
Nason's Corner Park
Pedro Field
Pleasant Street Playground
Quaker Park
South Street Playground
Trinity Park
Winslow Park

The Parks Commission notes that University Park is listed in the Land Bank Ordinance and not in the Parks Ordinance. University Park is therefore included on the Land Bank Registry as a Land Bank property that is not a park.

Appendix D: Timeline for Annual Report and Capital Improvement Projects

Prepared by the Portland Park Commission Winter 2017/2018



Appendix F: Capital Improvement Project 10-year Plan

Capital Improvement Project 10-year Plan

<https://www.portlandmaine.gov/1943/Park-Projects>

<https://www.portlandmaine.gov/DocumentCenter/Home/View/17170>

2017 PC CIP Public Meeting and Workshop

Public Input

- Great Diamond tennis court redo is not necessary. There are hotel tennis courts around the area and the money could be put to better use. The Fitzpatrick score board could be a great chance for a fundraising opportunity.
- West End Neighborhood Association
 - Regarding Harbor View Park:
 - A great connector between West End and Commercial Street but the area under the bridge is dark and scary. Lighting would make it easier to pass through.
 - Put stairs in from Chestnut Meadow to Commercial Street.
 - Resurface the steps where the concrete facing is flaking off. Suggested granite facing instead.
 - Exercise equipment put periodically throughout the park.
 - Thanked the Commission for listening and to DPRFs staff for continuously taking care of the park's graffiti.
 - Regarding Dougherty Field:
 - Reiterated wishes for Dougherty Field and Playground improvements.
 - Whatever the Division could do to help the field and families there.
- University Neighborhood Association & Longfellow Park
 - Created to bridge between Longfellow neighborhood and to University students by using Longfellow Park.
 - For the past five years, held an annual park cleanup, and held a neighborhood block party. More people came back to the park because of these events.
 - In 2015, proposal to the Parks Commission to help improve the walkways in the park. At the time, the Commission chose not to do that. People redid the walkways in Longfellow Park.
 - Requesting a round patio in the middle of the park, to bring the electricity back, and to be included in the City LED Plan.
 - Left a petition, letters and other information with PC and thanked the Commission for listening.

Additional Requests to the PC Throughout the Year

- Dougherty Field
 - Greatly desire improvements for Dougherty Field and playground. Children who grew up there now want other children to have opportunities to play and enjoy such a great neighborhood.

- Athletic field: There was a masterplan done in 2008 that calls for replacing the West School athletic field. This is a multipurpose athletic field. This was recommended by the 2011 athletic facilities studies that was done.
- Portland Assisted Living Center
 - Expressed a moment where individual got stuck while crossing the park and had to be pushed out. Expressed need for the park to be ADA accessible. Also, hoped that there could be a slab of concrete next to benches so that wheelchair users can sit next to those sitting on the benches. Even lighting could be useful when passing through at night as street lights are not enough.
- Cousins Memorial
 - Questioned where money for Cousins Memorial had come from CIP or another budget. suggested the resurfacing projects to wait until spring so that they don't have to endure the winter elements soon after.

Additional Request to the DPRF from Neighborhood Associations and Friends Groups:

- Deering Oaks Vegetative Sound Barrier:
 - Division is not opposed to this concept, but are designing a multiuse trail for this area and aren't sure what the landscape architect is planning for trees just yet.
- Longfellow Park lighting, electrical and water:
 - Division does not feel that this is necessary because of the size of the park.
- Longfellow Park sidewalk widening to 60":
 - City is aiming to make parks, facilities, etc. ADA accessible. Currently studying the issue and have a consultant. We didn't include this request in this list because we need to know what the study says first. At this time, the sidewalks at Longfellow Park meet the minimum requirements.
- Orland St. Parklet:
 - Requested by Libbytown Neighborhood Association. Transportation project. Recommended to contact that department.
- Thompsons Point boat launch:
 - Requested by Libbytown Neighborhood Association, unfortunately not on City property.

PC Review

- Fitzpatrick Scoreboard and Road Drainage:
 - Pushed forward from last year. Scoreboard is out of date and needs to be replaced. Other piece is the drainage. Road between Hadlock field and Fitzpatrick track has water rushing down it and it is hitting the track.
- Memorial Field Turf Replacement:
 - Biggest project. Estimate from those replacing the turf and sand and rubber base. Usually have a life expectancy of 10 years and is overdue.
- Payson A Softball Field:
 - A number of Title VIII improvements. Lights need replacing. The current lights are too worn to continue to be repaired. They will be LED. This is a legal finding from the office of civil rights to make the girls in compliance to the boys that play on Hadlock.
- Riverton Softball Field:

- Significant drainage problem. All the drainage from the school flows right by the field. When rain comes, it erodes the infield. Crews have been filling it in but the water should be redirected.
- Evergreen Columbarium phases 2 and 3:
 - Part of the cemetery expansion. Have built 1/3 so far and are selling niches slowly. Is revenue producing. Once the circle is complete, believe it would be much more attractive to people. It would be a more secluded place for reflection and mourning.
- Evergreen Tree Planting:
 - Request from the Friends of Evergreen, however, that is in the operating budget. We are not seeking CIP money for this.
 - PC interest in tree planting, especially in Evergreen Cemetery. Currently planting more than taken down, and division is budgeting to take care of hazardous trees and continuing to budget to plant more trees.
- Community Gardens:
 - Have shifted our thoughts on Community Gardens to expanding existing gardens.
 - CDBG usually funds this. Funding could be supplemental, because the division does not know if they will receive CDBG funding.
- Deering Oaks Light Replacement:
 - Could be under the City Manager's budget for the LED street light replacement program. Working with project planners to prioritize parks and facilities lights.
- Deering Oaks restroom:
 - Has been one of the top priorities from the Parks Commission, but CIP listed under fiscal year 2021 (July 2020). There are restaurants there and porta potties. By adding permanent bathrooms have to budget to maintain them. The Department is dealing with not having any sort of bathroom in other areas.
- Dougherty Skatepark Expansion:
 - Loving it to death. It is very crowded and needs to expand. Held two public meetings to plan a design with more advanced terrain. Total price tag for this is \$300,000. It will be a public private partnership with \$100,000 fundraised by the public.
- Fort Gorges Structural Improvements:
 - Public-private partnership with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Friends of Fort Gorges. These are improvements that will help preserve the area, make it safer for the public, and more accessible. Right now, people go at their own risk. The City would like to get to a place where it is comfortable giving event permits. This is a public private partnership with the Friends of Fort Gorges and the Army Corp.
- Portland Landing:
 - For design development.
- Riverton Playground:
 - The City has 27 Playgrounds city wide but the Riverton playground is used heavily. Trying to do a rotation where one year do one playground, the next two playgrounds, the next one, etc. Riverton used to have two playgrounds. Now everyone is using one. New design will most likely be a mixture of manufactured and natural elements.
- Concern that most projects are for playgrounds and ballfields:
 - The amount of use they get and that their revenue needs to come in to offset operations. As for trails, the City maintains Fore River, Bayside, Back Cove, and

Eastern Prom Trail. The City partners with Portland Trails to maintain the rest with some exceptions. Most trail project aren't that expensive, so they don't end up on this list of projects over \$25,000.

- Could an assessment be done so that trails don't fall behind. People do value trails and the improvement of those are instrumental. A bundle of all trail issues could result in \$50,000 in improvements.