

Portland Open Space Vision and Implementation Plan  
Stakeholder Meeting No. 3  
Wednesday, May 6, 2015  
6pm – 8pm  
Room: Portland City Hall, Room 24

**In attendance:**

1. Brian Wentzell 2. David LaCasse 3. Bethany Sanborn 4. Rebecca Schaffner 5. Bill Needelman  
6. Dory Waxman 7. Mike Bobinsky 8. Sally Deluca 9. Tom Jewell 10. Anne Pringle 11. Diane  
Davison 12. Colleen Tucker 13. Jaime Parker 14. Bobbi Keppel 15. Nat May 16. Jeremy Bloom 17.  
Troy Moon 18. Jan Kearce

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**1. Introduction/welcome**

- Wolfe welcomed participants and introduced TPL's *Land + People*, describing similar urban work going on across the country.

**2. Review of objectives and process**

- Kelley provided a brief overview of the project objectives the stakeholder and steering committee configuration; and the definition of "parks and open spaces" for purposes of this project.
- Anne asked whether the scope of work included an examination of the administrative structure for parks and recreation within city government and a recommendation on how to structure a parks department to oversee and steward the parks. Kelley clarified that this is not in TPL's scope of work for this project and Wolfe emphasized that although it is beyond our scope of work, it is an important question.
- Dory asked where the recommendations will go when they are complete; she and others suggested that the vision and implementation plan should be presented as a recommendation to city council for adoption so that work and policies will be built around it. *Action: Mike B. to follow up and confirm.*
- *Note: The next stakeholder meeting will be June 24 from 6:00 – 8:00 pm (This will be instead of the meeting previously scheduled the first week of June and the meeting scheduled for the first week of July.)*

**3. Steering committee decision on vision statement.** Two choices emerged from discussion at the last stakeholder meeting. See this month's meeting agenda for the full text for the options. Kelley reviewed the steps undertaken to arrive at these two vision statements. There was a brief discussion and then the Steering Committee voted 4:1 to adopt this as the vision statement for the project: *Portland commits to sustain and build on our historic system of parks, trails, and open spaces to enhance our quality of life, protect our environment, and promote the economic well-being of our remarkable city by the sea.*

4. **Review the high-level *goals* for the park and open space system that emerged during the last meeting, and discuss whether there are any additional goals.** Kelley asked the stakeholders to review a preliminary list of goals for the park and open space system that emerged from the stakeholder discussion at the last meeting when the group was brainstorming ideas for “services” that the park and open space system should provide. (See agenda for this meeting for original list presented.) Kelley mentioned that (at the last meeting) stakeholders were asked to identify services that can be measured and tracked over time. Out of that discussion emerged a wide range of goals, some of which can be relatively easily measured and tracked and others that may not be readily measured, but that are nonetheless important goals to acknowledge as part of this visioning project. She observed that they are, by and large, consistent with the *Green Spaces, Blue Edges* plan. Next, the group reviewed the list and put forward ideas for how to improve it. What follows is a new version of the list that reflects the edits and additions from the group made during this meeting:

**Goals for the Portland Park and Open Space System (draft):**

- Provide an **inter-connected** system of parks, trails and open spaces
- Provide ready **access for all residents** to the wide range of recreation and open space opportunities (thinking broadly park and open space types and amenities)
- Provide **high quality** parks and open spaces
- Have **well-maintained** parks and open spaces
- Provide appropriate **spaces for people of all ages** close to home
- Provide spaces for **multi-generational** use
- Promote engaged **citizen stewardship**
- **Preserve the intrinsic values** of the park and open space system
- **Proactively program** our public spaces
- Make spaces available for **special events** (as site appropriate)
- Provide **free opportunities for physical activity**
- Preserve **historic resources** in the parks and open space system
- Promote **biological diversity and wildlife habitat** (as site appropriate)
- Provide opportunity for **growing food**
- **Manage stormwater** on site
- Sustain the systems’ breadth and quality with **adequate funding and staffing**

5. **Level of service discussion**

Kelley reviewed the purpose of Level of Service Goals and where we are in the process of developing them. She shared a handout with a draft list of services to measure that needs to be further refined by this group. She said the subcommittee (which met twice by phone since the April stakeholder meeting) agreed that the Level of Service Goals selected should apply to the whole park system, and she relayed a conversation that she had with city staff who mentioned that some of the draft goals may best be measured with help from other groups (e.g. around wildlife, historic resources, and invasive species). Stakeholders had several comments and questions:

- Anne asked: Is there another name we could use instead of “level of service goals”? No one had any suggestions so we’ll table for now but revisit later
- Bill asked: how do we prioritize this list and how will results be used?
- Bobbi highlighted “part time parks”: Sundays on the Boulevard, for instance. And possible Federal Street being closed near the Press Hotel. We have not considered this yet in our discussions. How do you measure? Can we come up with way to measure? How to categorize: as recreation, for example?
- There was discussion around events and how to track them. People must get permits for events, which is an easy way to track them. However, there are a lot of “pop-up” events that would not necessarily be tracked. There are also events that are not necessarily “public” – road races, Winter Kids fundraiser, etc. Since we want to track usage of the park system, someone mentioned that it’s okay if events are private or public. Is there a way to track annual versus one-off events?
- Jamie reminded the group that we should be thinking strategically about streets – they are large public open space – how do we take advantage of streets as public places?
- Colleen: wants to make sure we are aware that human use of parks/ programming generally doesn’t push wildlife to the side.
- Tom: biological metric should be included. Jeff Tarling has been doing biological studies. Portland Trails does biological audits. Forest and ecological health should be part of conversation, with sub categories: wildlife habitat and invasive species (for instance; to be refined!).
- Diane mentioned the crowdsourcing bird data that Audubon does. Very effective.
- We could consider subcategorizing some of the level of service items.

Then the participants divided into three groups and each group was assigned 1/3 of the draft goals to review. Participants spent about 30 minutes discussing ways to improve the draft level of service goals assigned to their group. Attached is an updated chart for level of service goals that reflects the feedback that was reported out when the larger group reconvened. This will be reviewed at the next meeting.

## 6. Brief Updates

- Follow-up from last meeting: community survey comparison and cross-tabs.*  
There was not enough time to review the cross-tab results that were requested at the last meeting, but TPL produced and distributed them as handouts during this meeting.
- Looking ahead: Park evaluations.* Kelley mentioned that TPL has developed a tool that will be used to rapidly audit each park in Portland in mid-June. The city has specifically requested that the tool be capable of being administered easily (and inexpensively) so that it can be repeated in future years and provide valuable comparison/tracking data. These stakeholders offered to review the

tool for TPL before it goes live in mid-June: Anne, Diane, Bill, Jamie, Bobbi, Troy, and David.

**7. Park and Open Space Public Fundraising Potential – discussion of Trust for Public Land preliminary research findings.**

Wolfe said that TPL has been studying ways to pay for park work. While we are still pulling data, Wolfe gave examples on different ways to raise funds for parks. He explained that we will create a subcommittee to assist us in further investigating opportunities to raise money for parks and open spaces. Anne Pringle, Tom Jewell, and Michael Mertaugh have volunteered to be on this committee. Wolfe explained that others are welcome to join, and then he thanked all participants and adjourned the meeting.

## Portland Park and Open Space Level of Service Objectives (v2)

### Purpose of this task:

To select *services* related to the parks and open spaces of Portland that can be measured and tracked over time. Note: After a *service* is identified (and prioritized), the next step is to set a *goal* for that service and then measure progress toward accomplishing that goal. ***The level of service objectives should help the Recreation & Facilities Management Department and Department of Public Services evaluate both the short-term and long-term success of the park system.***

### Criteria for evaluating possible services:

1. Feasibility: Feasibility of tracking, including affordability and timing.
2. Importance/relevance: Must be critical mission delivery of the park and recreation system
3. Jurisdiction: Must be a service goal within the city boundaries
4. Scale: Be conducive to a city-wide review and not just pertaining to a small subset of a certain type of park, trail or open space.

### Notes:

- For all of the accessibility measures (which should show where adequate service is lacking), we should consider having a different standard in high density areas. (E.g. part of the peninsula that is already dense and targeted for in-fill). For example, community gardens may need to be closer in high-density areas.
- For all of the accessibility measures, we may decide to look at distribution across the 17 neighborhoods (e.g. which neighborhoods are well-served v. under-served?) or across the 5 districts (e.g. which districts are well-served v. under-served?)
- For some services, the subcommittee suggests acknowledging different park typologies as some types of parks may have different standards than others. E.g. a signature park would be one type.

### Potential Services to Measure (clustered by themes)

Provision of Service	Objectives	Unit of Measure
1. Accessibility / distribution of open space <sup>1</sup>	Every residents within a 10 minute walk of an appropriate open space	# and location of open spaces. # and location of underserved people revealed by spatial analysis that takes into account major barriers. (Could potentially also include findings from a bus route assessment)
2. Accessibility / distribution of open space amenities	Every resident within ___ distance of a ___[amenity]__	# and location of park amenities (by type). # and location of underserved people. E.g. types of amenities that could potentially be tracked: 1) playgrounds, 2) ballfields, 3) picnic areas, 4) park restrooms, 5) park benches, 6) natural areas, or 7) water features
3. Accessibility / distribution of parks for people with disabilities	All parks are in compliance with federal standards	# and location of parks and open spaces accessible to people with disabilities. # and location of underserved disabled people.
4. Accessibility / distribution of Community gardens	All residents within a 10 minute walk (.5 miles)	# of people served and/or # of neighborhoods served.
5. Community gardens	# provided meets the demand	Total # of plots and no wait list for a plot.
6. Open space inter-connectivity	Strive for better connectivity	Total miles of trails connecting one or more park and/or open space
7. Quality of open spaces	[We'll revisit after park audit is complete]	[We'll revisit after park audit is complete]
8. Maintenance of open spaces	Create maintenance guidelines for each park. <sup>2</sup>	Are we meeting these guidelines? Calls to maintenance hotline (click-it/fix-it)
9. Safety of open spaces	Increase safety of open spaces	?

<sup>1</sup> For purposes of this project “open space” means: parks, playgrounds, active playing fields, community gardens, plazas/squares, cemeteries, trails, natural areas or golf courses.

<sup>2</sup> Have service standards for parks by category – e.g. natural playgrounds, manufactured playgrounds, landscaped trails, open parks, natural areas, developed areas, etc.

10. Dollars raised for the open space system	Increase public and private contributions to open space system	Public \$ raised each year and private \$ raised each year that are invested into the open space system.
11. Citizen stewardship	Increase volunteerism	Total # of volunteer hours and total # of annual volunteers <sup>3</sup>
12. Programming of open spaces	Create appropriate programming for each park	?
13. Events	?	# of events per year, <sup>4</sup> track also by type of event and by geographic distribution.
14. Trees	Maintain and expand trees in public parks	# of total trees. <sup>5</sup>
15. Forest and ecological health	Increase ecological health of open spaces	Invasive species reduction? Wildlife count increase?

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<sup>3</sup> To track this, the City will need a system to periodically survey non-profit groups that organize volunteers or donors for Portland's parks and open space system

<sup>4</sup> City is currently tracking.

<sup>5</sup> City is currently tracking.