

Portland Open Space Vision and Implementation Plan  
Stakeholder Meeting No. 6  
Wednesday, October 7, 2015  
6pm – 8pm  
Room: Portland City Hall, Room 24

**In attendance:**

Sally Deluca, Christine Cantwell, Anne Pringle, Rick Knowland, Michael Mertaugh, Tom Jewell, Diane Davison, Jamie Parker, David LaCasse, Nathan Robbins, Laura Mailander, Kristen Dow, Bryan Wentzell, Colleen Tucker

From The Trust for Public Land: Wolfe Tone, Kelley Hart, and Jessica Sargent

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**INTRODUCTION**

Wolfe welcomed participants and led a round robin of introductions. He explained that we're beginning to wrap up this work and will soon be producing a short report that we hope will be a living document in that it will be useful to the city and other non-governmental actors, including those who participated in this process, to help guide/coordinate future efforts. Then Kelley provided a brief overview of the meeting agenda.

**DISCUSSION OF CHANGES SINCE AUGUST MEETING**

Kelley referenced a handout (also distributed by email the Friday before the meeting), that is essentially a summary of the last meeting with an explanation as to how TPL followed up on the comments/requested made by stakeholders at that meeting. She reviewed the analysis of service areas for high need populations to show what has changed since the August meeting. Kelley also showed the service area map that illustrate all residents' ½ mile access (or 10 minute walk) to parks or trails, and contrasted that with a map showing the ½ mile service area for just trails. She reminded the stakeholders that in the 2007 Needs Assessment Survey and the fall 2014 Needs Assessment Survey, new trails were the most popular requested park/recreation service. Kelley asked if we should be concerned about the un-served area in the mid-west portion of the map, and stakeholders indicated that it shouldn't be a concern because the area is essentially all commercial or industrial (no residents), though Jamie Parker did talk about Portland Trails' long-term interest in making sure that residents adjacent to those areas are able to connect via trails through those areas.

One stakeholder asked Kelley to clarify if residents were asked to choose from a list of potential services/amenities or if it was an open-ended question. Kelley said she would look into this.

*[Response: the 2015 survey had a list of 20 options and a place for respondents to write-in alternative choices. The 2007 survey had a list of 26 options, and asked respondents which they had the greatest need for in one question; and in a separate question asked which they thought were most important. For both of these, walking and biking trails was the #1 response.]*

Kelley also showed the updated service area maps for 5 types of amenities. Stakeholders noted that some historic landscapes are not showing on this map and requested that TPL's mapping team review the maps and be sure the following historic parks and historic landscapes are included: Deering Oaks, Western Promenade, Evergreen Cemetery, Lincoln Park, Western Cemetery, Eastern Cemetery, and Back Cove. *[Note: After meeting Kelley checked with Bob Heuer on this. Bob explained that Eastern Cemetery and Western Cemetery are not showing on the map and will not be shown because this map (and all of the amenity maps) focus exclusively on the parks, (as opposed to all open spaces in Portland), and two of the cemeteries are not classified as parks.]*

## **REVIEW OF VISION DOCUMENT OUTLINE**

In response to a question about timing, Kelley explained that the hope is that we will have the Vision document completed by Thanksgiving, though we are planning to present draft concepts at a city council workshop in two weeks, and if the concepts are not well-received, we may need to revisit some of the Vision components. She said the Steering Committee will also need to meet once or twice more before we can complete a draft, as some of the Vision concepts have not been fully vetted with them yet. (Note: All of the major concepts – after this evening's meetings – will have all been discussed by the Stakeholder Group.) Stakeholders had a couple of helpful suggestions about the workshop with council, such as recommending that TPL provide a high level overview and highlight the mapping analysis.

Next stakeholders reviewed/commented on the outline for the draft Vision document. They had the following comments:

- Section II:
  - Include some basic statistics about the park system, such as total number of parks, and also the # of parks and # of acres by park type. It was noted that we have lots of parks, but don't have lots of acreage. Necessitates examining and understanding what the parks we do have provide.
  - When defining open space, acknowledge that many of the open spaces are very complex in terms of uses and characteristics.
- Section III:
  - Some modifications to the existing language were suggested. The new language is shown here in italics:
    - Provide high quality, *well designed* parks and open spaces



concept. “Parks lack character”. Examine the amenities, design, and distinction within parks and between parks in the system. Equate “Creative Placemaking” approach and a park and park system that are “well thought out.”

- Re: Connections between parks adds functionality, helps create a healthy, robust “park system.”
  - To help get there, deepen collaborations
  - Open the door/promote the public – private leverage and cooperation opportunities
- The idea of a recommendation around closing the gap in trail coverage, Jamie and others supported this idea and said the map does show where some gaps exist and that this recommendation could include language about the fact that more analysis will be needed to determine the location of these trails . Kelley mentioned that TPL can include mention of Portland Trails and Friends groups potential role in supporting this effort.
- Re: the idea of a recommendation for the city and partners to look at increasing other amenities besides trails, playgrounds, for instance, particularly through time as the park system expands.
  - Some participants liked the idea of showing the high density children layer behind the current playground access layer as a visual to reveal where there are gaps.
  - We should note in the accompanying narrative that:
    - There are different kinds of playgrounds,
    - We are currently tracking only one kind of play space, and not all important playful spaces, such as natural playgrounds.
    - We need to consider different structures/amenities for different age groups.
- Section VI – there was a request that we mention the need for long-term capital planning in the next steps section.

## **DISCUSSION OF PROPOSED ANNUAL BUDGET PROCESS**

Next we discussed the handout that details a proposed annual budget process. Kelley explained that many ideas for this document emerged from initial discussions with the stakeholders a few months ago and that a subcommittee has been refining those ideas over the last few months. Stakeholders had a few questions re: clarifications. Rick suggested that in criteria #3, we also mention city-wide plans, and not just park and recreation based plans. He also requested that we be sure to have criteria that capture efficiencies in doing projects that

benefit multiple departments at the same time, and Kelley explained that that is already included in the criteria (see #10). Through discussion we also realized that the parenthetical in #13 needs to be moved back three words. There were no substantive recommendations to the budget process alternatives.

We also talked about three elements of conservation finance:

- 1) Kelley referenced the Conservation Finance Feasibility study, the main purpose of which was to identify and assess the list of public sources that are legally permissible, and provide a general idea of the respective sources' capacity to generate funds for parks.
- 2) We also discussed the topic of the importance of polling to test voters' willingness to tax themselves to fund parks and related.
- 3) Third, we discussed the fact that success at the polls requires framing for the voter a clear idea of what they get in exchange for their support – a universe of opportunities that can get done with increased funding.

#### **NEXT STEPS**

Wolfe explained that the next step is a vetting of the plan concepts with the city council in a workshop setting. If there are major changes suggested, the stakeholder group will re-convene. If no major re-direction is required, then the Steering Committee will meet a couple more times to finish reviewing and refining materials for inclusion in the plan. If all goes well, a draft plan should be ready in December. Wolfe thanked everyone for their participation.

The meeting adjourned around 7:55.