



# The Diggable City

## Phase III:

Implementation Strategies  
and Recommendations

July 2007



### Portland/Multnomah Food Policy Council

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*Cultivators of the earth are the most valuable citizens. They are the most vigorous, the most independent, the most virtuous, and they are tied to their country and wedded to its liberty and interests by the most lasting bonds.*

*—Thomas Jefferson*



Many thanks to the PSU School of Urban Studies and Planning Diggable City Project Team for their groundbreaking work; the dedicated community members who served on technical advisory committees who nourished this report; and Brendan Finn and Commissioner Dan Saltzman for their support in cultivating this project.

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The Diggable City Phase III report was researched and written by Meghan MacKenzie and Steve Cohen.

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## **I. Introduction**

In November 2004 City of Portland Commissioner Dan Saltzman introduced Resolution 36272 to initiate an inventory of city-owned lands that might be suitable for community gardens and other agricultural uses. The resolution was passed unanimously by Council. Under the guidance of Commissioner Saltzman's office, a team of graduate students from Portland State University's Nohad Toulan School of Urban Studies and Planning collaborated with the Portland Water Bureau (PWB), Portland Parks & Recreation (PP&R), Bureau of Environmental Services (BES), and the Office of Transportation (PDOT) to complete the inventory. Their subsequent report, *The Diggable City: Making Urban Agriculture a Planning Priority*, was formally adopted by Council in June 2005.

City Council directed the Portland Multnomah County Food Policy Council (FPC) to advise them on how best to proceed with the "Diggable City" report. The FPC formed the Urban Agriculture Committee to explore the impediments to community gardens and other urban agricultural uses on city-owned properties and to develop a management plan for use of these lands.

In order to research the best knowledge and practices to carry out this endeavor, the committee formed a technical advisory committee (TAC) made up of more than twenty individuals. The TAC members included individuals involved with existing urban agriculture or food security projects, community organizers, City staff, and others interested in the issues. This committee broke into six topic teams that were charged with reporting back to the Urban Agricultural Committee with recommendations for removing barriers and developing a land management plan.

The six teams included land use planning and zoning, immigrant farmer program, community-supported agriculture, community gardens, public involvement, and other urban agricultural uses. After considerable discussion with over 50 community members and additional research, all six groups delivered their findings to the Urban Agriculture Committee who compiled the results and submitted a final report to the FPC. In February 2006, the FPC brought the final report before City Council for review. Four recommendations from the final report were made to Council as the next steps towards a Diggable City. These recommendations focused on additional filtering of the inventory for its urban agriculture potential, the creation of pilot projects, the development of a land management plan and the exploration of policy changes to remove barriers. City Council accepted the report and encouraged OSD to begin implementation of the recommendations.

During the fall of 2006, the Office of Sustainable Development (OSD) received a grant from the United States Department of Agriculture Risk Management Agency to complete The Diggable City Phase III. OSD hired a graduate of PSU's Masters of Urban and Regional Planning program to assist with the management of this process.

Phase III, which culminates in this report, further delineates the original urban agriculture inventory; provides a progress report on the three pilot projects, outlines lessons learned and identifies recommendations for future urban agriculture program initiatives.

## **II. Urban Agriculture Inventory**

The most critical recommendations from the first two reports identified the need to further screen the existing inventory. The original inventory created by the PSU students resulted in 430 properties presented with a set of searchable attributes. However, it was outside the scope of the students' work to vet the properties with the bureaus to gain other relevant information, including which sites had existing park master plans or areas reserved for wetlands preservation, flood hazard mitigation, wastewater treatment, and stormwater run-off treatment.. As a result, OSD worked with the appropriate city bureaus to re-evaluate the sites included in the inventory. Each bureau provided individual reports to OSD describing the framework

for their evaluation criteria and the results of their analysis. Below *Table One* depicts the distribution of ownership, definite sites and possible future sites.

*Table One. Diggable City Properties by Bureau Ownership*

Bureau	Properties in Original Inventory	Definite Sites	Possible Sites
PP&R	186	7	14
BES	168	3	6
PWB	72	3	7
PDOT	4	n/a	n/a
Total	430	13	27

\* PDOT reports that the four properties in the original inventory that were assigned to their portfolio are currently under BES ownership.

The original inventory included sites that may be opportunities for various agricultural uses – from mushroom and berry growing activities in heavy tree canopy to larger-scale farming, community gardens and farm stands. PP&R and PWB focused on siting community gardens while BES considered additional urban agriculture uses. The following sections detail the process each bureau used to determine a property’s suitability.

**Portland Parks and Recreation**

As more land in the city becomes developed, PP&R is frequently approached with proposals for a variety of uses. Lands that may appear to be available for development often are needed to provide open space and areas of respite from urban development and density and protect areas of natural resource importance.<sup>1</sup> PP&R uses a citywide-system approach to park planning and has recently completed system management plans for sports courts, aquatic facilities, playgrounds and community gardens.<sup>2</sup> System plans for community centers and sports fields are underway. This approach improves their ability to provide balanced and equitable recreation opportunities throughout the city, and it ensures that park development and activities benefit both the local neighborhood and the greater community.

The draft community garden plan states that the community gardens program “provides benefits for community gardeners– to relax, exercise, learn about nature, and to meet new people– that are consistent with those enjoyed by participants in other PP&R programs.” As a result, the draft plan notes that the community gardens program is an integral part of PP&R.

PP&R provides 30 community gardens that serve about 3,000 gardeners throughout the city, and there is strong demand in many areas for more gardens, particularly east of I-205 where there are no community gardens. PP&R leases space to PSU for their Learning Gardens program at our Green Thumb site in SE Portland. This collaborative effort between PSU and Portland Public Schools provides education about, and access to, nutritious food for children in that area.

PP&R staff reviewed the 188 parcels of park land identified in The Diggable City report, comparing them against the Draft Community Gardens Management Plan (CGMP), existing master plans and the established criteria for siting new community gardens. Staff also looked at the existence of nearby community gardens, and the known demand for community gardens. Proposed sites were reviewed against: a) the need to

<sup>1</sup> The Non-Park Use of Park Property, *Binding City Policy BCP-PRK1.02*, Ordinance 171011, Effective March 19, 1977 states “In accordance with its responsibility as the park provider for the City of Portland, Portland Parks and Recreation wishes to provide the greatest degree of protection to the City's park land and its recreational users. Therefore, these policies and procedures have been developed and adopted to guide Portland Parks and Recreation in the protection, preservation and enhancement of the City's real property park assets.”

<sup>2</sup> Draft *Community Gardens Management Plan*, August 2006

protect lands acquired and managed for their natural resource values, b) the need to provide all neighborhoods with areas of unstructured open space for free play and relaxation, and c) known site constraints including springs and steep slopes.

The tables below identify PP&R sites that are appropriate for further evaluation or that may be appropriate for urban agriculture, using CGMP approved criteria. The recently completed system-wide Draft CGMP identified many sites where new community gardens are needed and sites where existing gardens can be expanded to meet demand. *Table Two* identifies neighborhoods in need of new community gardens. The properties listed below are owned by PP&R and were included in the original Diggable City inventory. Property owned by other bureaus within the neighborhoods in need of community gardens will be discussed in the subsequent sections.

*Table Two. Portland Neighborhoods in Need of New Community Gardens*

Identified areas of need in CGMP	Possible park sites
Boise-Eliot area	No available park sites
Downtown	No available park sites, potential may exist for roof gardens
Inner Southeast – need 2	Area beside Buckman Field (NE 12 <sup>th</sup> and Everett) Richmond Property (SE 47th and Ivon)
Linnton area	No available park sites
Mt Tabor area	No available park sites
Outer east— need 3	Beech Property (NE 126th and Beech) Gates Park Property (SE 136th and Holgate) Gilbert Heights Park (SE 130th and Boise) Lynchview Property (SE 165th and Market)
Pearl District	No available park sites, potential may exist for roof gardens
Reed College area	Need to replace lost capacity from Reed College
Rose City area	Frazer Park (NE 52nd and Hassalo)
Sellwood area	No available park sites

Additionally, PP&R identified existing community gardens in need of expansion and other PP&R properties without master plans that could designate portions of the park for a community garden. During the master planning process, extensive public involvement will be sought to assure the adjacent neighborhood's desire for specific park amenities. *Table Three* highlights properties considered for future community gardens and expansion of existing gardens while detailing the location, neighborhood and acreage of each parcel. Of the properties listed below, the following were not included in the original inventory and have been added by PP&R: Floyd Light Park, Clatsop Butte, Parklane Park, University Park, and all the existing community gardens in need of expansion. Upon review by PP&R, these properties were designated as possible community garden sites.

Table Three. PP&R Updated Diggable City Properties

Type of Availability	Park	Location	Neighborhood	Acreage
CGMP Identified Areas of Need	Beech Property	NE 126th and Beech	Argay	4.53
	Buckman Field	NE 12 <sup>th</sup> and Everett	Kerns	11.93
	Frazer Park	NE 52nd and Hassalo	Rose City Park	3.90
	Gates Park Property	SE 136th and Holgate	Powellhurst-Gilbert	1.5
	Gilbert Heights Park	SE 130th and Boise	Powellhurst-Gilbert	3.8
	Lynchview Property	SE 165th and Market	Centennial	7.7
	Richmond Property	SE 47th and Ivon	Richmond	0.3
Expansion of existing community gardens (CG)	Beach CG	N Campbell and Going Ct	Overlook	4.1
	Buckman CG	SE 18 <sup>th</sup> and Oak St	Buckman	0.15
	Colonel Summers CG	SE 20 <sup>th</sup> and Taylor	Buckman	0.11
	Everett CG	NE 27 <sup>th</sup> Ave and Everett	Kerns	0.39
	Lents CG	SE 88 <sup>th</sup> and Steele	Lents	0.22
	Sabin CG	NE 19 <sup>th</sup> Ave and Steele	Sabin	0.10
	Sellwood CG	SE 21 <sup>st</sup> and Harney St	Sellwood	0.23
May be available pending master plan	Albert Kelly Park	SW Dosch Rd and Mitchell St	Bridlemile	12.08
	Clatsop Butte	SE 152 <sup>nd</sup> Ave and Cooper St	Pleasant Valley	16.31
	Parklane Park	SE 155 <sup>th</sup> Ave and Main St	Pleasant Valley	25.02
	Thomas Cully	NE 75 <sup>th</sup> and Killingsworth	Cully	24.96
Areas for future consideration	Floyd Light Park	SE 111 <sup>th</sup> and Alder St	Mill Park	7.68
	Glenhaven Park	NE 82 <sup>nd</sup> and Siskiyou	Roseway	15.69
	Sacajawea Park	NE 75 <sup>th</sup> and Roselawn	Cully	4.89
	Thompson Park	NE 138 <sup>th</sup> and Thompson	Russell	3.93
	University Park	9009 N Foss	University Park	11.26

Note: A community garden is designated in the master plan for the Columbia Children’s Arboretum.

PP&R supports the broad goals of the urban agriculture project and sees meeting the identified need for new community garden sites as its contribution to that project. Providing increased opportunities and equitable access for community gardens in appropriate areas throughout the city is an important part of the recreational opportunities provided to Portland residents.

**Bureau of Environmental Services and Portland Office of Transportation**

Portland is part of the Willamette River Basin and the city is divided into watershed plan areas for its largest urban streams. The City of Portland’s boundary overlaps with five watersheds catchment areas including the Columbia Slough, Fanno Creek, Johnson Creek, Tyron Creek, and Willamette River. The Bureau of Environmental Services (BES) manages properties within their portfolio as sites for watershed, wastewater, facilities and stormwater services. These services include wetland protection, flood mitigation, stormwater run-off, pump stations, and wastewater treatment. Of the 168 BES properties within the original inventory, three were considered suitable for urban agriculture with an additional six potential opportunities. Each property was reviewed by the appropriate management team. *Table Four* depicts the property name, address, neighborhood, designation and acreage.

Table Four. BES Updated Diggable City Properties

<b>Property</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Neighborhood</b>	<b>Designation</b>	<b>Acreege</b>
Furey	SE 117 <sup>th</sup> and Reedway	Powellhurst-Gilbert	Definite	4.86
Sherrett	SE 33 <sup>rd</sup> and Sherrett St	Ardenwald	Definite	0.73
Malden	SE 87 <sup>th</sup> and Malden	Lents	Definite	0.38
St. Johns Unit 3	N Oregonian and Armour	St. Johns	Possible	0.11
Herr	N Argyle Way	Kenton	Possible	0.13
Larsen	10505 N Portland Rd	St. Johns	Possible	22.5
Inverness Pump	12002 NE Inverness	Parkrose	Possible	12.13
NE 66th	NE 66 <sup>th</sup> and Columbia Blvd	Cully	Possible	0.41
Incinerator and Fill	N Landfill and Columbia Blvd	St. Johns	Possible	5.76

Of the neighborhoods identified by PP&R as community garden deficient, BES has properties in outer and inner southeast that could fulfill these needs including Lents, Ardenwald, Argay and Powellhurst-Gilbert. The Inceptor Roberts Street property has an established garden maintained by a neighbor while the Sherrett property was used similarly until the neighborhood advocate moved. BES would like to pursue additional partnerships with other community organizations interested in urban agriculture projects. Some of the properties included in the inventory have current and future uses within BES. These future plans will be used to determine the length of any lease.

Currently, BES has a lease with Zenger Farm, a Diggable City pilot project, and is exploring expanding the parameters to include the Furey property above. Several sites are problem properties for the bureau due to undesirable and illegal activity. These types of activities include illegal dumping, drug use and homeless camps. BES encourages on-site activity that will positively affect the surrounding area and discourage negative or illegal use of the parcels.

### **Portland Water Bureau**

To evaluate each site for its usefulness to the Diggable City program, Portland Water Bureau (PWB) used three main criteria:

- Does the site possess facilities that are in use by the PWB?
- Is the site on the PWB's Property Disposition List?
- Does the PWB have a future or present need for the use of the site?

If the answer to any of these three questions was “yes” the site was generally considered to be not available for Diggable City purposes. PWB is not willing to invest in infrastructure on a site that it might potentially sell in the future or if it interferes with current or future needs and functions on a given site. Properties labeled “maybe,” are properties that could potentially change in function over the next several years, opening up use of the property to a program such as Diggable City. Properties labeled, “yes,” are properties on which PWB hosts an existing community garden or sees the potential for the placement of a garden due to variety of factors centered on geography and community.

In most cases, PWB did not consider the various forms of urban agriculture for each of their properties as most sites will not allow due to size and location. PWB has made a commitment to include community gardens within designated HydroParks. Additionally, PWB is currently working on their HydroPark project, removing fences on land that was formerly not accessible, but in most cases preferring to maintain open space, rather than dedicating land to urban agriculture projects.

PWB plans on using money made from the sale of surplus properties to fund other important bureau objectives such as the removal of inactive tanks, wells and vaults. These superfluous facilities cause a liability for the Water Bureau and could be considered a danger to a community in the event of natural disaster.

Of the 72 properties included in the original inventory, three sites are considered viable opportunities for urban agriculture and seven are possibilities for such purposes. *Table Five* displays the property name, address and neighborhood. The 148<sup>th</sup> Ave and Halsey property, the Hazelwood Tank and the Menlo Park Site are all within the outer east area of Portland, a section of the city identified as community garden deficient. Currently, PWB has begun a consensus-based planning process with various stakeholders to create a community garden at the Hazelwood Tank site.

*Table Five. PWB Updated Diggable City Properties*

<b>Property Name</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Neighborhood</b>	<b>Designation</b>	<b>Acreage</b>
148 <sup>th</sup> and Halsey	NE 148 <sup>th</sup> and Halsey	Wilkes	Definite	2.52
Hazelwood Tank	1017 NE 17 <sup>th</sup> Ave	Hazelwood	Definite	3.89*
Vernon Tank	1907 NE Skidmore St	Sabin	Definite	2.17**
Richland Tank	13730 NE San Rafael	Russell	Possible	0.55
Alma Tank	7025 N Willamette Blvd	Cathedral Park	Possible	0.36
Arnold Tank #3	4228 SW Arnold St	West Portland Park	Possible	0.34
Canby Tanks	1737 SW Canby St	Hillsdale	Possible	0.29
Carey Blvd Tank Site	6631 N Syracuse St	University Park	Possible	2.82***
Menlo Park Site	151 SE 127 <sup>th</sup> Ave	Hazelwood	Possible	0.23
Vermont Hills Tank	6163 SW 37 <sup>th</sup> Ave	Hayhurst	Possible	5.74****

\* PWB has started the development of the Hazelwood HydroPark

\*\* PWB is currently pursuing the expansion of the community garden at Vernon

\*\*\* Eleven parcels are included within the Carey Blvd Tank Site

\*\*\*\* Five parcels are included within the Vermont Hills Tank Site

### **III. Pilot Projects Update**

#### **Verde Native Plant Nursery**

The Verde Native Plant Nursery is a unique, community-driven project to deliver environmental jobs, training and entrepreneurial opportunities to residents of Hacienda Community Development Corporation (HCDC) affordable housing and other disadvantaged communities in the Portland area. Verde's proposed pilot project would lease the Thomas Cully property at NE 75<sup>th</sup> and NE Killingsworth from Portland Parks and Recreation for a limited term to create a nursery. The operation will grow ferns, rushes, sedges, and Oregon iris in one-gallon containers for use in Portland area wetland restoration, streamside revegetation and stormwater management projects.

In addition to promoting social equity in Portland's sustainable development efforts, the Verde Native Plant Nursery will encourage a greater understanding within HCDC's resident community of the connection between watershed health, community and economic sustainability.

The nursery is a project of Verde (<http://www.verdenw.org/>) an independent, tax-exempt non-profit corporation created by HCDC to create the nursery and future environmental job, training, and entrepreneurial opportunities that meet the daily economic needs of disadvantaged communities.

HCDC housing is available to households earning at or below 60% median area income. Many of these residents work jobs that are low paying, unhealthy, unstable, and offer little opportunity to develop new skills. These tenants are economically isolated, disconnected from Portland's broader economic

opportunities. Nursery employees will receive family wages with benefits, work in a healthy and environmentally beneficial field, have year-round and full-time employment, receive job training, and have the chance for revenue sharing.

The nursery will also provide the following services: commercial landscape maintenance of HCDC properties; removal of invasive plant species; and native plant installation and maintenance. Importantly, nursery employees will have the chance to become business owners, either through nursery ownership (tax laws permitting) or through Verde support to establish their own sustainable landscaping and/or nursery businesses.

The Thomas Cully property is the site of the former Killingsworth Fast Disposal Landfill. It is under the supervision of several organizations and involves abiding to protocols from each of the various stakeholders. Metro operates the site, the State of Oregon's Department of Environmental Quality regulates it, and PP&R is the owner. Due to these multiple government stakeholders, Verde is a participant in the Bureau of Development Services' Process Management Program, which works to facilitate the review and approval of development projects through the city's plan review and approval process.

Verde's proposed use of the site has been a catalyst for an accelerated schedule for master planning. The Cully neighborhood is a park deficient area within the City of Portland. The neighborhood hoped for active recreation opportunities to be developed, particularly ball fields. Initially, the Cully Association of Neighbors (CAN) opposed the nursery due to concerns that the project, although temporary, would conflict with its desires for development of the park. CAN discussed their concerns with Mayor Potter and the resulting attention resulted in a \$95,000 allocation towards a master plan to be facilitated by PP&R.

Verde responded to community input and refined elements of its proposal to meet CAN's concerns. At the February 2007 meeting, the neighborhood association approved Verde's proposal for one greenhouse and one acre of outdoor production. As a result of this endorsement, BES awarded Verde a \$25,000 Brownfields Program assessment grant, which will be combined with the existing master plan dollars. The planning process will address Verde's interim use and the site's ultimate park use.

Verde and PP&R are in the process of drafting a short-term lease agreement for the site. Upon completion, this lease will act as a tool to inform future leases with PP&R, BES, and PWB about use of public property for urban agriculture. When development of the park is ready to commence, Verde's nursery operation will need to be relocated.

### **Hazelwood HydroPark**

During 2006, Commissioner Randy Leonard proposed turning most of the 117<sup>th</sup> and Multnomah Street Water Bureau property into a "HydroPark" in cooperation with the Hazelwood Neighborhood. The first order of business was to remove the chain link fencing in order to allow access to the surrounding neighborhood. On September 28, 2006 a tree planting and park dedication was held in order to gather neighbors, community organizations, and elected officials involved in the process. An on-site building is leased by the East Portland Neighborhood Organization (EPNO) for its office and current amenities include a walking path, doggy stations, picnic tables and benches. Future development features include a community garden, sidewalks, and handicap ramps. Neighbors adjacent to the site have expressed concern about the impact of a community garden and playground on their property. PWB has begun negotiations with these landowners to develop a design plan through a consensus based decision making process.

A community garden in a section of the property is highly desirable considering the neighborhood is currently community garden deficient with no sites east of 92<sup>nd</sup> Ave. Linda Robinson, representative of the Hazelwood Neighborhood Association, and Richard Bixby, Director of EPNO, support the creation of a

community garden on this Water Bureau site. Other potential partners include the nearby Fir Ridge School and the Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization (IRCO) located on 103<sup>rd</sup> and Glisan Street. PWB staff are committed to a community garden on this site.

### **Zenger Farm**

Incorporated in 1999, Friends of Zenger Farm (FZF) was created to preserve Zenger Farm ([www.zengerfarm.org](http://www.zengerfarm.org)), a 16-acre urban farm and wetland in SE Portland and transform it into a community learning center for sustainable food systems, environmental stewardship and local economic development. One of the last operational farms within Portland city limits, FZF has a 50-year lease with BES and provides unique "demonstrational" learning opportunities for both youth and adults in subjects such as organic farming, stormwater management, wetland ecology, food security, green building and local economic development.

To fulfill its mission, FZF serves the local and regional community through the following programs:

- 1) Grow Wise Youth Education: educating and empowering disadvantaged youth with knowledge of sustainable food production and local environmental issues such as seasonal flooding and storm water management. Educational activities are interactive and focus on topics such as planting, harvesting, composting, and wildlife viewing.
- 2) Immigrant Market Garden: providing land, training and market assistance to immigrant and refugee farmers
- 3) Scholarship Shares: subsidizing CSA membership for low-income families of outer southeast Portland to receive fresh, seasonal produce on a weekly basis from May-October.

In an effort to expand current programming levels in both the Youth Education and Immigrant Market Garden Program, FZF is interested in accessing the BES property at SE 117th and Reedway, historically known as the Furey Property. This land is directly adjacent to the existing Zenger Farm project and shares a property boundary to the north of the Springwater Corridor Trail. It was originally purchased as part of the "Willing Seller Acquisition Program" to acquire stormwater and habitat significant lands as part of the City of Portland Johnson Creek Watershed Management Plan. The upland portion (approximately 3.85 acres) of the Furey Property has recently been identified as "surplus" due to its lack of habitat or stormwater management significance. The remaining 1.01 acres wetland and floodplain portion of the property has been determined to be "important for the future Springwater Wetland Complex restoration project" by BES.

Several steps have been taken in order to obtain this property for FZF's expansion. First, FZF assured the neighborhood supported their expansion efforts by attending neighborhood association meetings. Second, FZF deliberated with BES about the surplus process and how they could become eligible to lease another BES property. Upon approval from both organizations, FZF began to discuss what part of their operation could be expanded on the parcel. Early discussions identified the desires to expand their crop production, expand growing area for immigrant farmers and for-profit farm production including bees, vermiculture and chickens. Another idea consisted of building an educational trail connecting the Springwater Corridor Trail to Zenger Farm allowing users to explore the natural succession from an upland farmland to a wetland to a wooded wetland to a flat farmland area.

Limited progress has been made towards the acquisition and development of the Furey property due to a FZF capital campaign and change of executive directors. However, FZF expects to continue discussing the future of the Furey property with BES once the fundraising drive is complete in July 2007 and the transition to the new executive director is complete.

## **IV. Lessons Learned from Inventory and Pilot Projects**

Phase III of the Diggable City provided an opportunity to further the work of the original PSU inventory and the development of three pilot projects. From this additional research and the experience of the pilot projects, two observations stand out.

### **1. Relatively Little City-Owned Land Is Available**

- The City of Portland does not own large amounts of property which are vacant or can simultaneously meet existing City goals and be made available for urban agriculture. The vast majority of properties in the original inventory are serving a particular City purpose that negates additional use given existing bureau policies.
- Most of the properties that appear to be vacant or unused are often master planned or being held for a specific future purpose. The bureaus seem at this time unwilling to consider shorter-term uses on these sites.

### **2. Public Involvement Is Critical**

- A proposed project on city-owned land must consider the local neighborhood's desires and secure its support. Neighborhood buy-in for proposed community amenities is critical to the success of any endeavor.
- Outreach to the adjacent community through neighborhood associations and other organizations are the first steps in determining future use.

## **V. Recommendations**

### **1. Pursue Urban Agriculture Partnerships with City Bureaus**

- Friends of Zenger Farm should continue to work with BES to complete the lease for the Furey property.
- OSD should assist BES in exploring the feasibility of agriculture activities on the properties in *Table Four*.
- PWB should continue to work with neighborhood organizations to ensure that the community garden is expanded at the Vernon Tank Site and gardens are included in all of the properties in *Table Five*.
- PP&R should work with Verde to create a short-term lease for an acre of the Thomas Cully property.
- The city should seek to acquire additional land to provide sufficient opportunities for community gardens.
- City Council should encourage all bureaus to work with OSD and the FPC to ensure that appropriate criteria are developed to further assess, identify and develop appropriate park sites or other city lands for urban agriculture.
- While continuing to develop community gardens, the City should also consider other urban agricultural activities such as Community Supported Agriculture, small-scale intensive farming, cooperative fruit and nut orchards, farm stands, farmers markets, and other sites to promote direct market sales.
- OSD should be responsible for future coordination between City bureaus to assure that the promotion of urban agriculture is considered in future planning.

### **2. Expand Scope of Potential Properties by Working with Other Public Agencies**

With the availability of appropriate city-owned vacant lots at a minimum, the FPC Land Use Committee discussed expanding the scope of potential properties. Three ideas emerged at the forefront of these

discussions: establishing property tax abatements for privately held land; creating an inventory of school, county and Metro owned lands; and developing a system to transfer development credits inside and outside of the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB).

- Explore the creation of property tax abatements to allow temporary urban agriculture sites on private property. This would provide an opportunity for short-term projects on vacant commercial property.
- Encourage Multnomah County, Portland Public Schools and Metro to identify agency-owned available tracts of land. It is hoped that larger parcels exist in their portfolios that might be suitable for Community Supported Agriculture or larger urban farms.
- Develop a program to allow transfers of development credits from rural lands outside of the UGB. This type of program would allow larger tracts of land outside the UGB to be preserved as farm land and allow developments within the UGB to grow upwards, while allowing vacant land to remain open for potential urban agriculture opportunities.
- Develop policies that place a high priority on creating plazas in neighborhood town centers and create permanent sites for farmers markets incorporating necessary utilities, parking, and loading areas into the design.

The FPC, through the Land Use Committee, will continue the discussion on these recommendations and advocate policy changes to facilitate their adoption.

### **3. Integrate Urban Agriculture into City Policies**

Urban planners are beginning to consider the role of food systems in their planning process. The American Planning Association recently adopted a report on the role of food systems and planning with suggestions that included incorporating market incentives for food access in the planning process and using community development models to create networks needed for improving food access. Recently, the City of Madison, Wisconsin adopted a comprehensive plan that includes food system planning concepts and benchmarks. The report identified several action items for the City to implement in preparation for a world without oil.

The Portland City Council established the Peak Oil Task Force in May 2006 to examine potential economic and social consequences in Portland. The final report outlines several recommendations focused on preserving the productive capacity of Portland's foodshed. They include holding on to and preserving City land that could be suitable for urban agricultural uses identified by the Diggable City report; allocating direct additional resources toward the Diggable City project, the community garden program and other urban agriculture possibilities exploring options to open public and private land for food growing such as financial incentives for leasing private land to the City for community gardens; and examining current policies to increase sales directly from farmers to consumers, such as making it easier for farmers' markets and farmstands to operate and establishing a public market.

The FPC Land Use and Food Access committees met with the city's Bureau of Planning to discuss incorporating food systems planning into the city's upcoming Comprehensive Plan. The FPC committees will continue to study the issue and work with the Bureau to recommend the inclusion of appropriate policy recommendations.

## **VI. Conclusion**

Despite the disparity between the original number of 430 potential properties and the final numbers of 13 definite and 27 possible sites, it should be recognized that this represents a strong step forward for the City of Portland to consider urban agriculture on underutilized City properties.

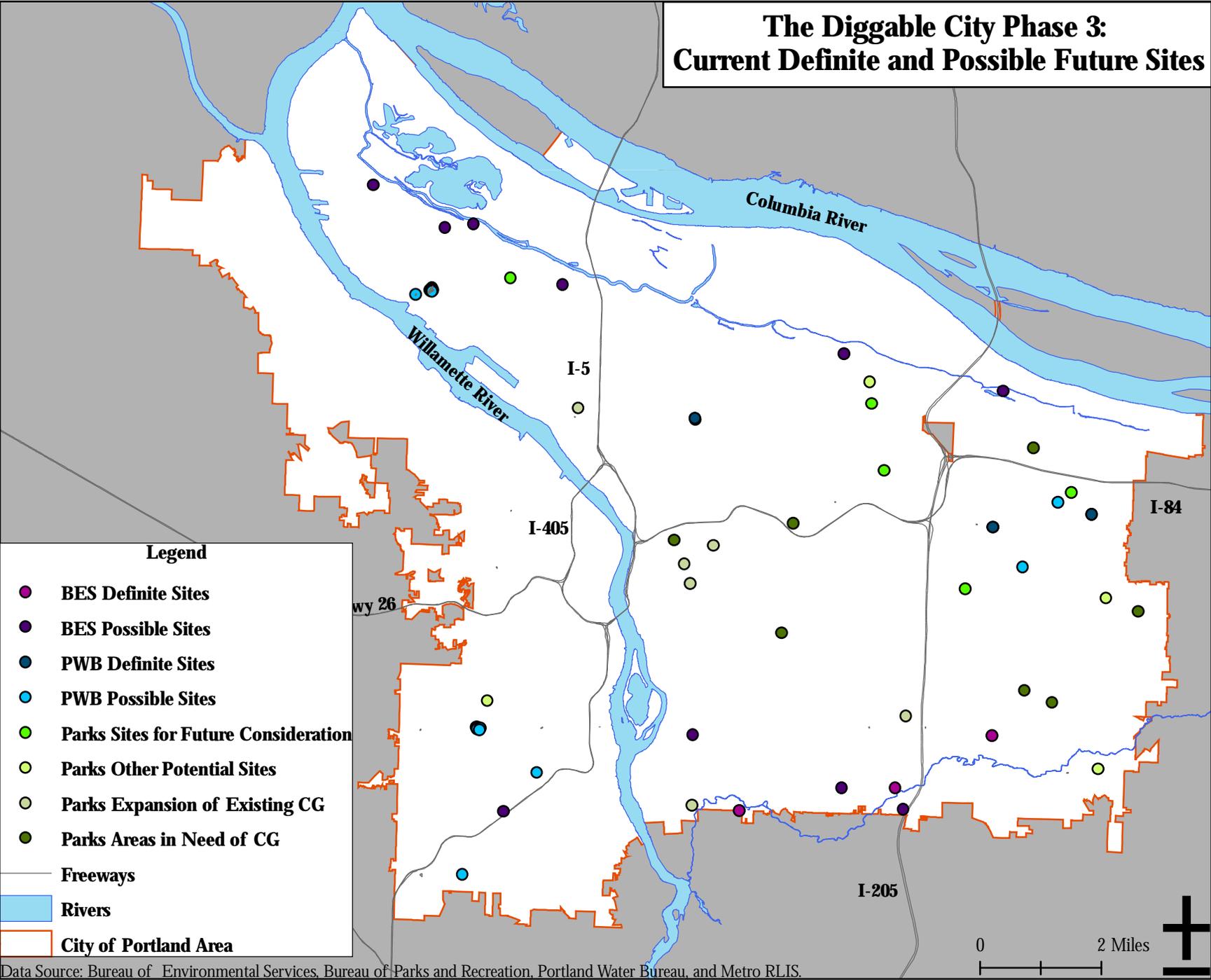
In addition to identifying specific sites, the Diggable City project has also served as a catalyst for raising awareness and advocacy for urban agriculture locally and internationally. BES, PWB and Parks have evaluated their property portfolios for potential new uses and public/private partnerships. Multnomah County is actively pursuing a “Diggable County” project. Presentations at conferences in the U.S, Canada, and India have raised the profile of municipal efforts to growing food in the urban core.

Moving forward, OSD will work with the bureaus to ensure the pilot projects are established and promote and coordinate potential opportunities for additional sites. The Food Policy Council will continue to research and advocate for policies that will support the expansion of urban agriculture, as well as integrating food policy considerations into the City’s planning process.

### **Diggable City Phase III Maps**

The following three maps show definite sites, potential sites, and community garden information. Each map details a different view of the city; east of I-5, west of I-5 and east and west together.

# The Diggable City Phase 3: Current Definite and Possible Future Sites

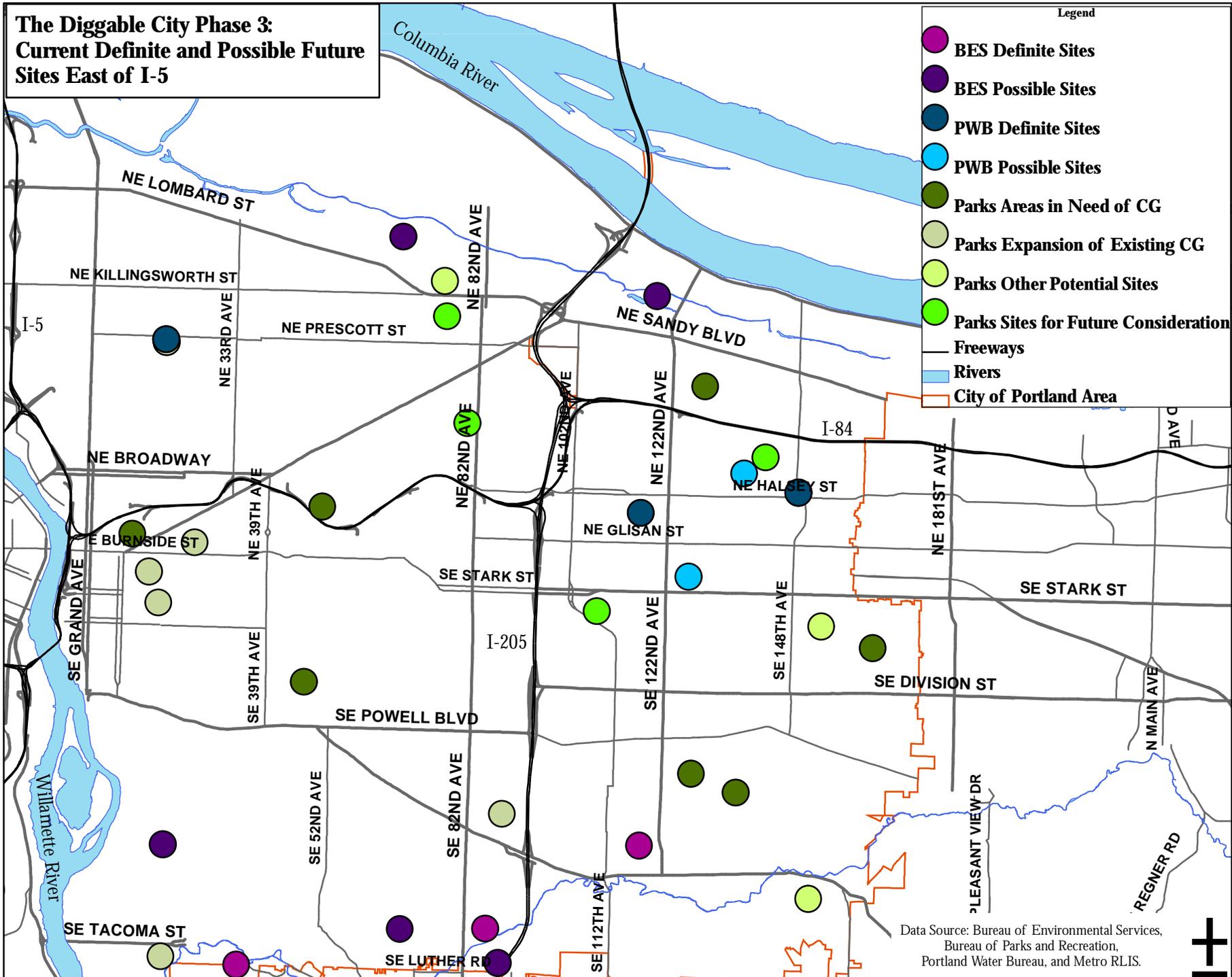


**Legend**

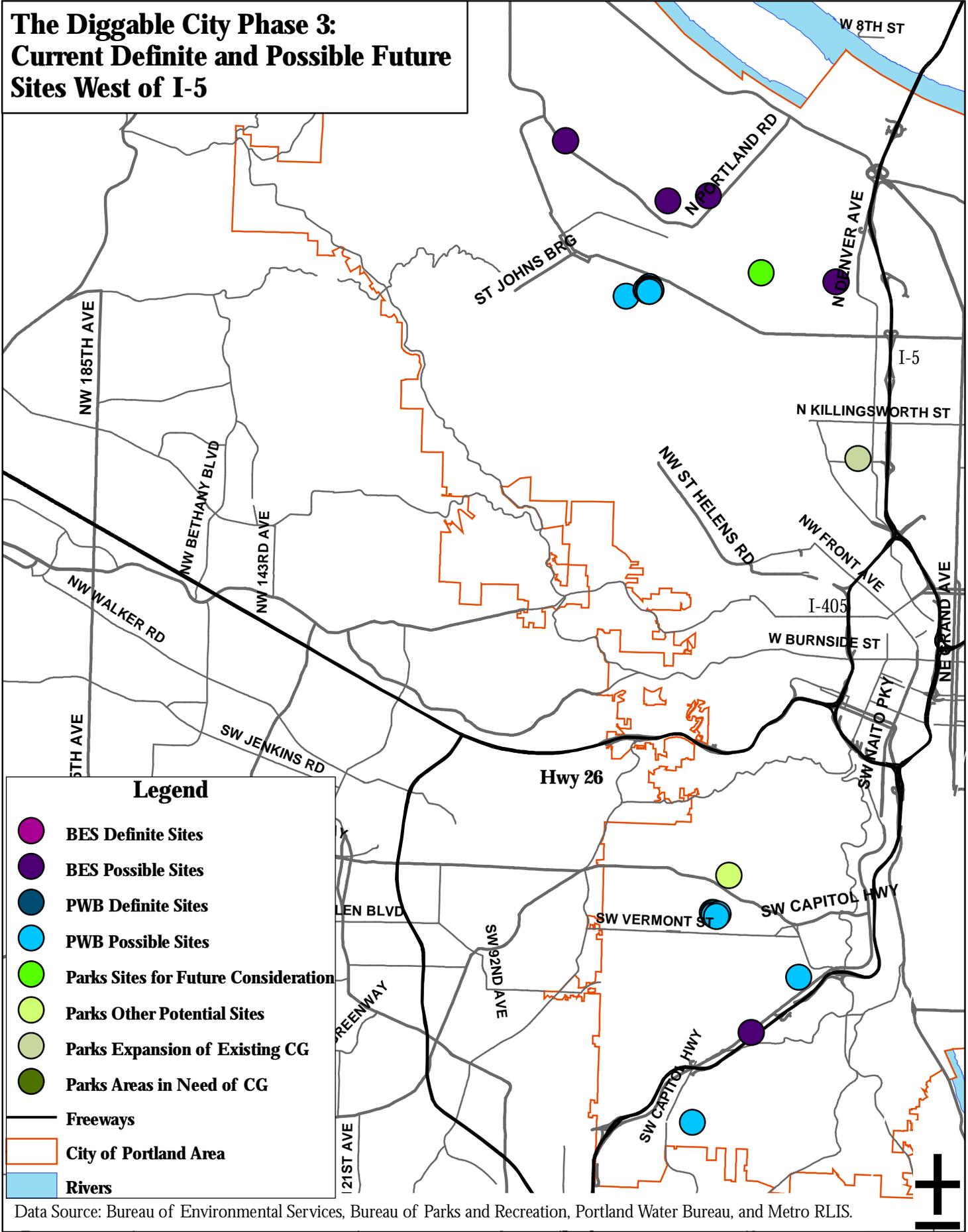
- BES Definite Sites
- BES Possible Sites
- PWB Definite Sites
- PWB Possible Sites
- Parks Sites for Future Consideration
- Parks Other Potential Sites
- Parks Expansion of Existing CG
- Parks Areas in Need of CG
- Freeways
- Rivers
- City of Portland Area

Data Source: Bureau of Environmental Services, Bureau of Parks and Recreation, Portland Water Bureau, and Metro RLIS.

**The Diggable City Phase 3:  
Current Definite and Possible Future  
Sites East of I-5**



# The Diggable City Phase 3: Current Definite and Possible Future Sites West of I-5



Data Source: Bureau of Environmental Services, Bureau of Parks and Recreation, Portland Water Bureau, and Metro RLIS.