PORTLAND PARKS & RECREATION

Healthy Parks, Healthy Portland

Parks Levy Progress Report

An Update on the Parks Levy Investment

June 2007

A Message From Commissioner Dan Saltzman

Dear Portlanders,

Few amenities in Portland spark the sense of community as do our public parks, trails and recreation facilities. Portland voters demonstrated their commitment to our parks system in 2002 with the approval of the five-year Parks Levy. As well-loved as our parks system is, it requires substantial fiscal resources to keep our playgrounds, parks, natural areas and community centers safe, clean and healthy for the city's residents.

But the Parks Levy does so much more than simply support Portland Parks & Recreation's operations, maintenance and capital improvements—it also represents an important investment in our community. Levy-supported programs do an incredible job at keeping youth safe and engaged after school; recreational opportunities help our senior citizens stay fit and active; and dynamic outreach activities connect our diverse community.

The City's recently approved 2007-08 budget is exciting for PP&R and the citizens of Portland. The Parks Levy currently funds regular maintenance and upkeep in our parks and recreation facilities. The approved budget allows us to continue these important services without pursuing a replacement levy; the Portland City Council has committed to funding half of this cost in the future and is expected to help meet the funding gap in later years. This is good news as it shows the Council's recognition that this core service should be funded out of the City's General Fund.

Thank you again for all you do for our parks system. The Parks Levy has allowed us to bridge some tough financial times while reinvesting what we know makes our parks and recreation system one of the best in the country. It is due to citizens like you that our parks remain healthy and on sound financial footing for the opportunities ahead.

Sincerely,

Dan Saltzman
Commissioner

A Message From Director Zari Santner

Dear Portland Parks & Recreation Users, Staff, Volunteers and Friends,

It is with gratitude for the support you have shown for Portland Parks & Recreation's Levy that I present our Parks Levy Progress Report. In this report we highlight Levy-funded achievements over the last year and look forward to future projects and activities that will improve our parks and facilities and maintain them into the future.

This year Portland Parks & Recreation reached several Parks Levy milestones. We completed skateparks at Pier and Glenhaven Parks, the much-anticipated addition to University Park Community Center is underway, and we continue to progress with maintenance projects throughout the city.

Thanks to your support of the Parks Levy, we all enjoy the results of our significant capital projects, as well as the benefits of a healthy, well-maintained parks and recreation system.

Sincerely,

Zari Santner
Director

About the Parks Levy

In 2002, Portlanders approved a $49.4 million, five-year Parks Levy to fund ongoing Portland Parks & Recreation (PP&R) maintenance and operations, as well as capital projects. The Parks Levy keeps neighborhood parks green; ensures safe playgrounds for youngsters; connects neighbors to one another at community centers; helps seniors stay fit; supports disabled citizens; unites our diverse community through outreach programs; preserves our unique urban forests for the enjoyment of residents and visitors—and much more. It provides for capital improvements, such as pool renovations, community center enhancements and a state-of-the-art aquatic center. All of these projects—from the simple mowing of a sports field to a complicated facility addition—improve our parks and recreation system and help maintain a lasting legacy for future generations.

From Access to Maintenance - Our Levy Objectives

Restore Budget Cuts

The Parks Levy restored funding lost due to budget reductions made to balance the 2002-03 City General Fund budget. Restored services include re-opening two pools, six SUN Community Schools, keeping park bathrooms open, reinstating community partnerships, providing recreational opportunities for youth and continued maintenance of parks and facilities. These are the maintenance services that we couldn't do without and help ensure a pleasant, enjoyable experience for visitors.

Provide Access

Portland is a special place with an active and diverse population. Because we at Portland Parks & Recreation understand that, it is vitally important to meet the recreation needs of all of our residents. The Parks Levy helps ensure access to quality programs for Portlanders of all ages and backgrounds. From kids to seniors, PP&R is providing a multitude of services meeting the needs of our diverse population.

Ensure Safe Places To Play

Ensuring that our playgrounds and parks are safe places in which to play is an important objective of the Parks Levy. Because of the Levy, play equipment and sports fields are cared for and Park Rangers patrol our parks. When our parks and recreation facilities are safe, visitors can focus on what's really important—having fun.

Restoration & Renovation

Portland Parks & Recreation's 250-plus parks, 12 community centers, 13 swim pools, vast natural areas and miles of trails benefit from Parks Levy funds directed toward restoration and renovation. Because the Parks Levy focuses on keeping our parks and natural areas green and healthy, we're helping ensure environmental sustainability and providing an important refuge for people and wildlife alike.

From Skateparks to Swim Pools - Levy Capital Projects

The Parks Levy included funding for several capital improvement projects. From skateparks to swim pools, these projects meet a number of community needs, all aimed at creating a healthy parks and recreation system, which contributes to a healthy Portland. All of these projects provide places for neighbors to connect with one another and spaces that help us stay healthy.

Levy Restores Budget Cuts

- Returned summer programs to all 12 PP&R SUN Community Schools, serving 45,000 participants each year
- Restored 6 SUN Community Schools programs with participants exceeding 55,000 annually

- Maintained and irrigated over 200 parks and returned regular mowing to 420 acres of parkland
- Re-established programs at MLC and Buckman pools, with a combined annual attendance of over 30,000

- Emptied 1,000 trash cans daily
- Cared for 91 Portland Public Schools sports fields, providing safe playing surfaces to 22,000 athletes of all ages

- Restored native plant cultivation and production of other plant materials
- Restored administrative services such as data tracking, technology, planning and public information

Community Schools Provide Healthy Neighborhood Activities & Help Kids Succeed

Community education has a long history in Portland, and because of the Parks Levy, this tradition continues in the form of SUN (Schools Uniting Neighborhoods) Community Schools. Parks Levy funding helps SUN Community Schools support academic success for all students, provides a safe place for kids after school and fosters an environment that ensures young people are part of decision making in our community. SUN Community Schools also provide recreation, education and support for families, adults and seniors.

Levy funding restored six PP&R SUN Community School sites that were cut by budget reductions in 2002. Funding restored summer programs at 12 PP&R SUN Community Schools as well as provided program enhancement funds. Enhancement funds provide family and community activities, after-school programs, cultural clubs and outreach. Approximately two-thirds of total programming at PP&R SUN Community Schools is provided with Levy funds, as well as one-hundred percent of summer opportunities at these sites.

"One of my SUN Community School students recently wanted to know all of the classes I'd be teaching this summer, so she could sign up for each one of them. It's great to see the kids already planning ahead and looking forward to what they can try next. It's so meaningful to expose these kids to so many opportunities that they otherwise would never have."

-Toni Lincoln, PP&R Staff
Faubion SUN Community School

Levy Creates Access for Children, Families & Seniors

Outreach Initiatives Connect Our Diverse Community

One of Portland's greatest assets is the diversity of the community. As our city's demographics change and recreation needs of specific populations emerge, Portland Parks & Recreation responds. The Parks Levy allows PP&R to connect these diverse groups to available amenities and recreation opportunities. Parks Levy funds provided funding for outreach staff to extend additional programs and services to Asian, Latino and teen populations. Outreach efforts include after-school support and guidance, recreational activities and education about potential volunteer and job opportunities.

A multilanguage brochure has also been produced, which informs our community's Spanish, Vietnamese, Russian and Chinese speakers about available programs and services—this Levy-funded item has proved invaluable to staff working with these populations. Through our outreach programs, PP&R has helped create a more effective pathway for our population to access recreation, while enhancing positive youth development and supporting families.

Over the past years I've enjoyed a number of activities with PP&R Senior Recreation. We always have a fun time and find our spirits energized.

- Lenora H.
Senior Recreation
Program Participant

- VanGo, a playground program on wheels, brings summer fun to 2,000 kids who do not live near a park

- Latino and Asian outreach services connects our diverse community to each other and PP&R
- After-school and youth outreach programs help kids succeed in school and life

- 39,000 active senior citizens participated in recreation activities designed just for them
- Teen Council helps local youth grow as leaders, while planning programs and activities that are appealing to their peers

- Summer playground program reaches 30,000 more youth participants
- Disabled Citizens Recreation provides 15% more people each year with activities enhancing their health, well-being and independence
- Provide money to 5 local public school districts for after-school activities

Levy Provides Safe Places to Play

- Improved safety through regular maintenance, irrigation and mowing of sports fields and parks
- Developed a plan for a system of 19 skateparks; built two neighborhood skateparks

- Installed an average of 20 sets of new ballfield bleachers annually, for a total of 82 sets to date
- Replaced or repaired 6 backstops each year, with 16 rebuilt and 2 brand new backstops thus far

- Added 3 summer Park Rangers to patrol central city parks and ensure adherence to dog rules in parks
- Updated or replaced unsafe or outdated playground equipment at an average of 10 playgrounds each year

- Extended seasonal Park Ranger patrols by 8 weeks
- Expanded part-time aquatic staff to offer more swim

Skateparks Provide Safe Place to Stay Healthy & Have Fun

Local skateboarders, BMX bikers and inline skaters have for years advocated for legal, safe public spaces in which to practice their sports. The Parks Levy provided for two such skateparks, as well as plans aimed at siting future skateparks throughout the city.

Pier Park's revamped skatepark, opened in October 2006. The first of 19 skateparks to be constructed by Portland Parks & Recreation, Pier Park's 11,000 square foot skatepark features a number of unique characteristics in both the street and transitional courses.

Recently, hundreds of local action sports enthusiasts joined Mayor Potter and Parks Commissioner Saltzman in celebrating the opening of Glenhaven Park's skatepark, adjacent to Madison High School in northeast Portland. This project, the second skatepark funded by the Parks Levy, marked the next step toward the goal of developing a comprehensive skatepark system in our city.

Whether it's a kid trying out a skateboard for the first time or an experienced skateboarder perfecting her latest trick, the Parks Levy provides Portland's action sports enthusiasts of all skill levels with a safe place to call their own.

"My bike is my inspiration in life. Thanks Portland for giving [BMX] bikers a say. I just want to have drug free fun with my friends and progress my bike riding. I hope skaters and bikers can come together and have fun..."

-19-year-old BMX Biker
In response to PP&R survey

Levy Restores & Renovates Our Park System

Maintenance Keeps Parks, Natural Areas & Community Centers Clean, Green and Safe

Portland Parks & Recreation is the steward of over 10,000 acres of parkland at 250-plus locations, including a multitude of community and neighborhood parks, natural areas, recreational facilities, gardens and trails. We also offer thousands of recreation and enrichment opportunities for people of all ages. The Parks Levy funds many projects which enhance this system, a number of which that are easy to identify—the renovation of Wilson Pool, the nearly-complete addition to University Park Community Center, and the upcoming aquatic center at East Portland Community Center. Also important—and essential—however, is the ongoing maintenance of all parks and facilities, new and old. This work is being done thanks to the Parks Levy.

For most Portlanders, the Parks Levy means that they can enjoy their local parks in the condition they've come to expect—trash cans are emptied, restrooms are cleaned and play structures and trails are safe.

BY THE NUMBERS: PP&R MAINTENANCE

Because our parks and recreation system is so well-loved, it needs much care to stay in good shape for all users. To put the massive endeavor of maintaining our parks system in context, by the numbers the Parks Levy provides:

- regular mowing of 91 soccer fields at Portland Public Schools sites;
- maintenance of 150 miles of soft-surface trails;
- cleaning of 150 restrooms;
- caring and cultivation of thousands of plants;
- repainting, striping and care of over 30 tennis courts;
- bleachers at 23 playing fields;
- mowing of 420 additional acres of grass;
- improved irrigation at over 20 sports fields and parks;
- improved soft surfaces at 111 playgrounds;
- restoration of 4,000 square feet of paths and road;
- removal of hundreds of stumps; and
- innumerable other vital services.

- Improved energy efficiency, fixed leaks, replaced broken fixtures and paint

- Replaced old gas-powered equipment with fuel efficient, quieter maintenance equipment

- Expanded seasonal use of park restrooms

- Maintained and improved paths and trails

- Cared for the health of our urban forest, including tree inspection, pruning and stump removal

- Protected wildlife habitat and water quality, provided erosion control, restored damaged trails and improved trail access

- Removed litter from over 200 parks and regularly emptied 1,000 trash cans

- Cleaned tennis and basketball courts more efficiently, restriped and refurbished 5-7 courts each year

- Increased Neighborhood Tree Liaison participation by 12%

Levy Capital Projects

The Parks Levy will provide approximately $19 million through 2008 for capital projects, all of which are aimed at providing Portlanders with places in which to play, swim and relax. From swimming pools to skateparks, we're building and improving facilities that serve the diversity of Portland's recreation needs in every corner of the city.

Introducing the New University Park Community Center

The Center of a Revitalized Community

University Park Community Center

The photos above show the nearly completed double court gymnasium, fitness room and dance/aerobics room at UPCC.

University Park Community Center (UPCC) was built over the course of a mere eight months in 1942 as part of the University Homes War Apartments—temporary housing to accommodate workers at the nearby shipyards. This was one of the projects that first established the Federal Housing Administration (FHA). The current UPCC building served as the community center for the temporary neighborhood and provided childcare facilities, a central dining hall, a trading post, a gymnasium/auditorium, healthcare offices and even a barbershop. After the devastation of the city of Vanport during the flood of May 1948, the center became Vanport's temporary headquarters and city hall. By the early 1950s, Vanport had been unincorporated and ownership of the facility passed to Portland Parks & Recreation.

Although the housing was removed, the center remained in operation, but could not serve the surrounding community in a comprehensive manner. Portland's City Council helped start the renovation by providing the first $1 million toward the upgrade process. That, in turn, triggered the awarding of two federal Urban Parks and Recreation Recovery Program grants for another $1.25 million.

As the project got underway in 2000, the Housing Authority of Portland (HAP) received notification that its own proposal for rebuilding the Columbia Villa neighborhood had been accepted and was funded through a federal grant. Besides developing new housing and infrastructure,

HAP was committed to providing both recreational and educational facilities to the new model neighborhood, which was renamed "New Columbia." The timing was right, and in 2001, PP&R, HAP, Portland Public Schools and the Boys and Girls Club partnered to develop plans to coordinate resources for New Columbia.

Funding from the Parks Levy is making the vision of a "community campus" a reality in New Columbia. Soon, visitors to UPCC will enjoy a new double-court gymnasium, a new fitness room and a new dance/aerobics room. The new gymnasium, designed and located with the new elementary school and the local Boys and Girls Club in mind, will be ready for neighbors to try out this summer. When finally completed in early 2008, UPCC will be at the heart of the community resources available to this promising new neighborhood.

Before and After – Wilson Pool Shines Following Renovation

The photos above and below certainly illustrate the power of the Parks Levy, with the transformation of the outdated Wilson Pool into the water wonderland it is today.

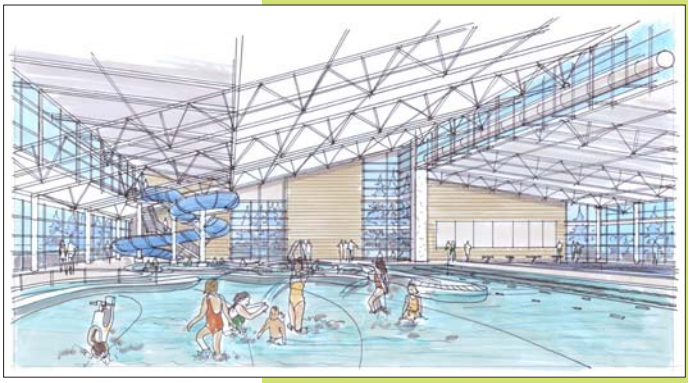
Levy Provides Swim Pools to Opposite Ends of the City

Wilson Pool

Wilson Pool, PP&R's only outdoor pool on the west side of the city, re-opened to much excitement in 2005, thanks to Levy funding. The old 1950s-era pool was built with competitive swimming in mind, rather than summer fun. The Parks Levy allowed us to repair the mechanical and structural problems at the pool, and turn it into the state-of-the-art facility that the community is enjoying today—a 6-lane lap pool and family leisure pool with current channel, vortex, tot slide, water slide and zero-depth water play structure.

East Portland Community Center Pool

The addition of a pool to the East Portland Community Center (EPCC) has been a long-time dream of east Portland residents, dating back to 1998 when the original community center was built. Funds for the facility, which will be the only public pool east of 82nd Avenue, were included in the Parks Levy. Residents of east Portland can look forward to construction beginning in mid-2007, and will celebrate the opening of this new community resource in June 2008.

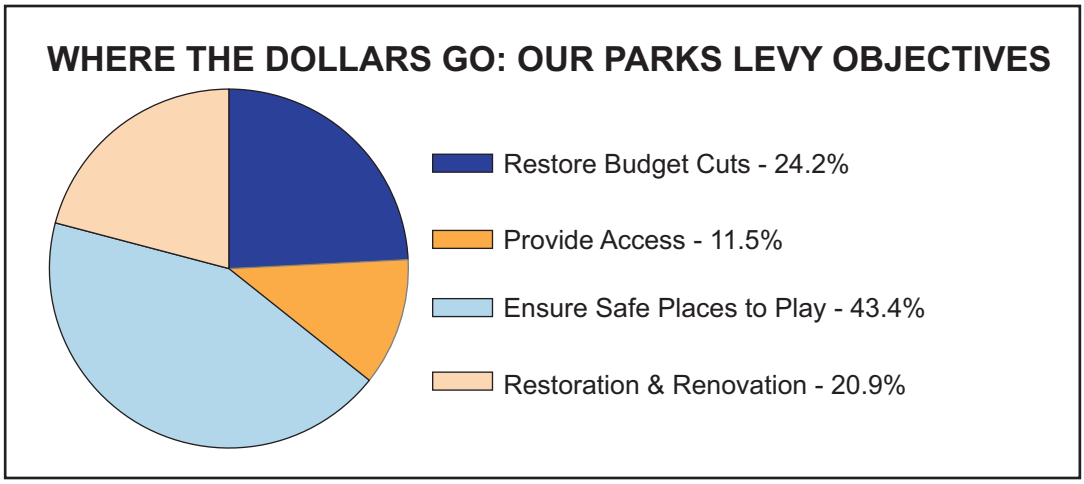


East Portland Community Center Pool

Architectural representation of the aquatic center addition scheduled to begin construction mid-2007.

The Numbers

The original Parks Levy passed by the voters in 2002 divided allocations into the four budget areas indicated in the graph below. Contained within these objectives were over $18 million in projected capital expenditures, which includes the Wilson Pool rebuild, the major renovation at University Park Community Center, the aquatic center at East Portland Community Center, funds for improving O'Bryant Square, play equipment improvements, planning a skatepark network and building two skateparks. All told, by the end of the Levy in 2008, over $42 million will be invested in our community thanks to the Parks Levy.



PARKS LEVY BY FISCAL YEAR - updated June 2007

Levy Allocations by Fiscal Year	Actuals FY 03-04	Actuals FY 04-05	Actuals FY 05-06	Projected FY 06-07	Adopted FY 07-08	Five-year Total
Total Restoration of FY 2002-03 Service Cuts	2,024,476	2,062,640	2,492,827	2,658,888	2,654,377	11,893,208
Total Continuation of School Funding Support	570,097	639,350	577,880	615,891	631,288	3,034,506
Total Service Enhancements	1,141,338	1,129,851	1,766,925	1,689,666	1,731,911	7,459,691
O&M Impact of Capital Projects	-	-	2,101	46,845	226,282	275,228
Total Administrative Costs	72,067	202,504	189,631	205,552	219,549	889,303
Total Capital Improvements* *(see expanded table below)*	1,271,212	3,376,520	1,456,153	5,562,000	7,621,630	19,037,515
Total Levy Allocations by Fiscal Year	***5,079,190***	***7,410,865***	***6,485,517***	***10,778,842***	***13,085,037***	***42,314,223***

TOTAL LEVY FUNDING FOR PP&R CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS—2003-08

Capital Improvements*	Actuals FY 03-04	Actuals FY 04-05	Actuals FY 05-06	Projected FY 06-07	Adopted FY 07-08	Five-year Total
Wilson Pool Renovation	479,583	2,898,912	71,108	-	-	3,449,603
University Park Community Center Renovation	697,317	313,473	897,946	4,280,000	-	6,188,736
East Portland Community Center Pool	32,042	22,462	243,740	282,000	6,629,000	7,209,244
O'Bryant Square Renovation**	-	25,245	5,481	188,000	-	218,726
Maintenance Facilities Replacement/ Renovation	19,208	5,171	297	44,000	324,000	392,676
Play Structure Renovations	6,826	43,335	199,670	270,000	518,630	1,038,461
Skateboard Facilities	36,236	67,922	37,911	398,000	-	540,069
Peninsula Park Rose Garden	-	-	-	100,000	150,000	-
Levy Capital Program Contingency	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Capital Improvements	***1,271,212***	***3,376,520***	***1,456,153***	***5,562,000***	***7,621,630***	***19,037,515***

*** Public input gathered during the initial planning phase for the O'Bryant Square renovation indicated that there was significant public desire for a more comprehensive renovation of the park than called for in the scope of the Parks Levy. Because of this, the new project schedule calls for completion of a schematic design for O'Bryant Square in 2007, with construction underway in 2010-11 (based on funding availability).*

PARKS LEVY FUNDS CARRY OVER INTO 2008-09

Since 2002, the Parks Levy received more tax collections than originally anticipated. This is largely a result of tax compression lifting in the final years of the levy. In addition, the City of Portland has realized better investment earnings than originally forecast, thus providing a larger balance of funds available for operations. Along with a transfer from our trust fund accounts, PP&R is now able to continue its current level of service beyond the life of the Parks Levy. Without this additional funding, a new replacement levy would have needed to be voted upon in November 2008.

In 2007-08, Portland City Council approved replacing half of the current levy funding once these carryover funds are exhausted, which is now expected in June 2009. Starting July 2009, one-half of the funding of the current levy will be provided by the General Fund. This action by the City Council also allows for a replacement levy or other option to be deferred until 2010.

Thank you, Portland

PORTLAND PARKS & RECREATION

Healthy Parks, Healthy Portland

Commissioner Dan Saltzman • Director Zari Santner

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