



## PORTLAND PARKS & RECREATION

Healthy Parks, Healthy Portland

### **About the plan for parking and transportation management at Washington Park**

**Updated October 8, 2013**

Dear Friends,

Park-wide changes are coming to Washington Park on January 10, 2014. Parking pay stations are being installed, and all parking proceeds will be reinvested in improvements in and around the park, including:

- Better maintenance and security
- Free park-wide shuttle service
- A new park master plan
- Improved safety for drivers, cyclists, pedestrians and visitors with disabilities (for example: better signs, barrier-free sidewalks, and crosswalks.)

Washington Park is one of the crown jewels of our nationally-recognized Portland Parks & Recreation system. The park suffers from problems, which have been widely recognized for two decades. Now is the time to face these challenges to ensure that Washington Park remains a Portland treasure for many generations to come.

Neighbors and park visitors have long recognized serious challenges, including:

- Poor access
- Insufficient parking during peak times
- Limited park-wide coordination among attractions
- Serious congestion issues
- Safety concerns related to vehicle and pedestrian conflicts
- Deteriorating infrastructure in the park
- Visitor and vehicle impacts in adjacent neighborhoods
- Lack of incentives to utilize MAX, in spite of the publicly-funded MAX station
- No single source of consolidated information on transportation options and parking availability

**The park needs some care. So what now?**

After nearly two years of public process and negotiations, perhaps the greatest achievement is that for the first time the Washington Park attractions, public entities, and many of the neighbors have come together around an action plan - and most importantly, a reliable way to fund the solutions: The Washington Park Transportation Management Association, or TMA. The new Washington Park Transportation and Parking Management Plan includes this TMA, a nonprofit entity, to manage transportation-related concerns. One such concern we've heard is about getting around the expansive park.

Before they even leave home, visitors need to be able to go to the web for up-to-the-minute information on alternate transportation options and parking. People who choose TriMet should be able to get off at the Zoo MAX stop and take an easy, free shuttle to the famous International Rose Test Garden or Japanese Garden a mile away.

In an era of limited funding for transportation, the fact that the park has its own transportation network created a unique opportunity. By City Council approving paid parking for approximately 1,400 parking spaces throughout the park, we will now have self-sustaining revenue for improvements the public have asked for, and that they deserve.

### **Considering input about parking and plans:**

Representatives from each of the popular attractions in the park, PP&R, TriMet, as well as board members who are neighborhood association members, will remain deeply involved to implement the new Washington Park Transportation and Parking Management Plan. The TMA will be a one-stop decision-making forum where anyone can bring their park transportation-related concerns and ideas.

The TMA board brings together organizations which are committed to maintaining the best visitor experience at the park. It includes nine directors, with representatives of Portland Parks & Recreation, Metro/Oregon Zoo, World Forestry Center, Portland Children's Museum, the Portland Japanese Garden, TriMet, the Hoyt Arboretum Friends, and one independently-selected member from both the Sylvan Highlands and Arlington Heights Neighborhood Associations.

The interim Board of the TMA is now recruiting an executive Director for the TMA.

### **The money that comes into Washington Park through parking, stays in Washington Park**

*One hundred percent* of the estimated \$2 million of yearly revenues will be reinvested in Washington Park.

Please visit the PP&R website for continuously updated [Frequently Asked Questions](#).

I hope I've been able to address some of your concerns and questions as we move forward with vast improvements to our unique and world-famous park and its attractions.

Very sincerely,

Mike Abbaté  
Director of Portland Parks & Recreation

**Please submit your comments [here](#); the City is compiling all comments and will submit them to the new Washington Park Transportation Association.**