



Powell Butte Reservoir No. 2 Phase 2 Public Outreach Plan

Overview

The Public Outreach Plan presents the framework for a well-organized and consistent public affairs program to support the construction of a new second underground 50 million gallon reservoir at Powell Butte Nature Park in southeast Portland. This revised plan concentrates on specific activities and communication methods that will be implemented starting in December 2011. Many of the strategies defined in this plan will be relevant all the way through the end of the construction in 2013.

Situation Analysis

A new buried reservoir is a project of high significance for the City of Portland and the Portland Water Bureau (PWB). Previously proposed projects to cover two, bury two and decommission one of the city's five open reservoirs captured the public's attention and news headlines from 2002 through today. There continues to be neighborhood-led opposition to infrastructure projects that will lead to the disconnection of the open reservoirs from the water system. The Water Bureau's has engaged the state's Congressional delegation to garner more time to implement the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Safe Drinking Water Act's new LT2 rules that mandate the open reservoirs be covered (or water treated at each outlet). The Mount Tabor Reservoirs are scheduled to be removed from service by December 31, 2015 and Washington Park's two reservoirs by 2020.

In 1995-1996, the Water Bureau, in conjunction with Portland Parks & Recreation (PP&R), conducted an extensive public process in the development of the Powell Butte Master Plan. Following eight years of negotiation and public involvement, the Powell Butte Land Use Review Type III with Conditional Use Master Plan (LUR CUMP) was approved in 2003.

The PWB and PP&R have worked to maintain positive relations with the Powell Butte community over the past eight years. In 2009-2010, the Water Bureau, joined by Portland Parks, convened a public advisory committee (PAC) to make recommendations on the "farm theme" designs of the park buildings – an interpretive center/restroom, a permanent Caretaker's House, and a PWB-PP&R maintenance facility as well as propose improvements for the park's system of trails used by hikers, bicyclists, and equestrians. The PAC included representatives from the Friends of Powell Butte, representatives from the Powellhurst-Gilbert, Pleasant Valley and Centennial neighborhood associations, Powell Butte Heights Homeowners Association, Audubon Society, Northwest Trail Alliance and several park users. Staff from PP&R, PWB, and the Bureau of Environmental Services (BES) also participated.

The public outreach activities for this Powell Butte project will be separate from any public process on decisions concerning Mt. Tabor and Washington Park's open reservoirs, and construction of the 25 million gallon reservoir on Kelly Butte in Southeast Portland (atop hill at SE Powell Blvd at SE 99th Ave.)

Plan Timeline - Phase 2

The outreach plan for the Powell Butte Reservoir #2 Project, Phase 2, will cover a two-year period from December 2011 through the end of the project in late 2013. The project is being implemented in two phases. Phase 1 involved site preparation and excavation of more than 323,000 cubic yards of material from the reservoir site. Phase 2 now involves the construction of the reservoir and the park buildings included in the LUR CUMP for completion by 2013.

Phase 1 was completed in May 2010. The Phase 2 primary design consultant was CH2M-Hill. The Phase 2 general contractor is SSC Construction, a Corona, California-based qualified low bidder. They were awarded the contract in August 2011 and established offices in Vancouver, Washington.

Goals

For Phase 2, the public outreach plan and process maintains a set of goals for the PWB and PP&R's public engagement and public information efforts. The 11 goals are:

- 1. To educate the public about the purpose, needs, challenges, opportunities and objectives of the new reservoir project at Powell Butte Nature Park.
- 2. To enhance public trust and confidence in the Water Bureau as being fiscally responsible with ratepayer funds as well as the stewards of the water system.
- 3. To implement an inclusive public process that addresses the needs and concerns of park users, immediate neighbors, the three affected neighborhoods, local businesses, other interest groups and stakeholders, as well as meeting the City's needs.
- To provide factual and clear information to a broad range of audiences to increase public awareness and knowledge of the Powell Butte project and other issues facing the City's water system.
- 5. To effectively communicate, coordinate and cooperate with other City bureaus and agencies as it relates to the construction of the new reservoir and maintaining access and park activities.
- 6. To conduct a collaborative outreach effort supported and assisted by the PWB, PP&R, the Friends of Powell Butte, park users, affected three neighborhood associations (Powellhurst-Gilbert, Pleasant Valley, and Centennial), and the news media.
- 7. To highlight the benefits the estimated \$137 million municipal project could have on the local economy by creating many living-wage jobs in Portland.
- 8. To reassure the public that the project is part of the City's strategy to respond to new EPA rules.
- 9. The City Council and PWB will continue to work to keep water rates as low as possible, but advise the public rates will rise to an affordable amount per month to fund the project.
- 10. To protect and minimize disturbances to the nature park's environment and wildlife inhabitants while implementing this project.

Recommended Strategies

Public Outreach

- Neighborhood Association and Business Association presentations (monthly or as invited): *UPDATE:* Outreach staff have been meeting regularly with these groups prior to construction in September 2009, and frequently on a monthly basis when work is underway.
- Presentation to Neighborhood Coalition leaders
- "Stop & Talk" information booth at the park and other community locations.
- Site tours tours of the excavation site were conducted once Phase 1 work was completed in May 2010. Selected tours will be scheduled for engineering students, government officials, and designated groups.
- Briefings to elected officials
- Hosting music concerts at Powell Butte and participation and, in some cases, sponsorship at several high volume community events, including East Portland Expo and Centennial's Parklane Park movie night.
- A temporary information kiosk along the Mountain View Trail (the ADA path) explaining construction activities

Public Information

- Web page: Project specific page updated with new developments.
- Fact Sheet with FAQ
- Project brochure direct mail
- Water Works E-Newsletter (subscription basis): This online publication provides a wide, diversified audience with regular, updated information about the project, features on various project staff and stories about community partners. It also enables recipients to ask their questions and comments about the project.
- Project displays and signs
- Park kiosks: Each month of active work, posters with news and photos on the project are placed at five trail access locations.
- Articles in community newspaper and neighborhood association newsletters (ongoing)
- Online communications: Water Blog, Facebook, Twitter and other bureau communication tools

Key Messages

- The Water Bureau's long-range water storage plan included the construction of this second reservoir by 2013 at Powell Butte Nature Park. The Powell Butte Master Plan, completed in 1996, states the bureau's commitment to build within the "next 20 years." A long-maintained park kiosk poster identifies the locations of all current and future reservoirs.
- 2. Under an existing Land Use Review Plan for Powell Butte, the Water Bureau was scheduled to build a second reservoir on the site by 2013.
- 3. The Water Bureau conducted an extensive 11-year public process in 1995-2006 to review issues related to Powell Butte Nature Park and the region's water supply system. The process included a formal Stakeholders Advisory Committee composed of interests outside of City government, including neighborhood associations, schools, environmental organizations, recreational interests and outside water districts.

- 4. Powell Butte was purchased in 1925 solely as the site for City of Portland water storage reservoirs. The first City-owned reservoir was built in 1979-1980 and operational in 1981. The property's primary designation is as regional water facility with long-range plans for additional drinking water storage.
- 5. Powell Butte was established as a nature park in 1987, and officially opened to the public in 1990.
- 6. Across the United States, underground reservoirs have been preferred for more than 30 years because they reliably and cost-effectively ensure higher drinking water quality. The federal government no longer allows the construction or rebuilding of the open reservoirs.
- 7. Rumors that cover storage puts the public's health at risk are false and malicious in their intent. Buried water storage facilities only need to be washed of natural sediments every 5 years. An open reservoir must be cleaned two to three times a year each due to environmental contaminants like dead animals, feces from water fowl and park trash.
- 8. The new reservoir construction project will create many living wage jobs.
- 9. The Water Bureau and Portland Parks & Recreation are committed to working with neighbors and park users to identify and minimize construction impacts and protect the nature park environment to the greatest extent possible.
- 10. Park use during construction will change. The Water Bureau will work closely with PP&R to develop alternative temporary public parking spaces, and maintain park activities. Outreach staff recommended the use of under-utilized parking space at a nearby Rose Bowling Center.
- 11. Park will remain open to park users during construction. Vehicular access to the park will be affected by construction traffic and may change. Park users will be encouraged to use alternate sites to park their vehicles and access the nature park during critical construction activities. During non-construction hours, the main park entrance at SE 162nd Ave. will be open for park use normal park hours.
- 12. The safety of park users and construction personnel is a top priority for the PWB and PP&R.
- 13. The construction of the reservoir will employ advanced construction methods.
- 14. There will be important project priorities on erosion control, stormwater management, and tree and wildlife protection.
- 15. The City must have sufficient storage capacity to meet the anticipated growth in demand for water due to population projections, for fire suppression, emergency response and to offset the loss of the open reservoirs.
- 16. Construction work hours will generally be Monday through Friday, 7 am to 6 pm, with some night and weekend work intermittently. Night and weekend hours will be minimized as much as possible. A noise variance may be required for off-hour work. The Water Bureau will notify the public, especially area residents, of any changes to work hours as they arise.
- 17. A public advisory committee worked with PWB and PP&R staffs to guide the design of the park facilities and trail plan that were mandated for building the new reservoir under a CUMP.

Key Audiences

There is no single "public" likely to become involved in the Powell Butte project. There are a variety of groups, each with varying interests that could have a positive impact on the project. They are identified as:

1. Community residents

There are some 8,000 residents in the three neighborhoods surrounding Powell Butte on which the project may likely have an impact. The neighborhood associations are fairly active. Outer southeast Portland also has a high concentration of Chinese-speaking residents with whom the bureau tries to communicate with, as well as Hispanic, Russian and Southeast Asian residents.

2. Adjacent Housing Properties: Powell Butte Heights HOA, Meadowland Park and Meadow Crest Farm Estates

A community of single family luxury homes (with a homeowners' association) and 147 mobile homes are nearby. *Note: PWB Outreach has worked with representatives of the housing units throughout the planning and Phase 1 construction. UPDATE:* PWB Outreach staff have worked with HOA chair to address concerns related to the construction of a section of Conduit 5, the 96-inch water supply pipeline that will cross (with an easement) under Andregg Loop in 2013.

3. Park users

Portland Parks & Recreation (PP&R) estimates approximately 100,000 people visit the nature park each year. There is a trail loop system in the park that makes it a popular location for hikers and joggers.

A mountain bicyclist group, Northwest Trail Alliance, Inc. (formerly Portland United Mountain Pedalers), and many local equestrians also use the park on a regular basis. Some of the trails are closed during seasonal bad weather to protect the natural resources. The park is also used by a large number of dog owners as well as bird watchers.

There are a number school tours and classes that have field day activities in the park throughout the year. Some classes are conducted or assisted by both PWB and PP&R personnel.

During Phase 2 construction, several trails will be closed due to construction work; some for as long as 6 months. The main parking lot will also be closed once work on the Park Center parking lot and Interpretive Center are underway.

4. Special interest groups

Friends of Powell Butte
Northwest Trails Alliance, Inc.
Johnson Creek Watershed Council
40 Mile Loop Trail Land Trust
Equestrians
Audubon Society of Portland
Friends of the Reservoirs
Columbia River Orienteering Club

5. Affected local businesses

Shopping Center at SE Division and SE 162nd Avenue Midway Business Association

6. General public

Ratepayers

Public Utilities Resource Board (PURB)

Wholesale Water Partners

Water Consortium

TriMet (bus lines #9 and #17 travels down SE Powell)

Travel Oregon (formerly POVA)

Residents and businesses along SE 162nd Ave. and SE Division St. (truck routes)

Local schools

7. Other Bureaus & Government Agencies

Portland Parks & Recreation (PP&R)

Portland Police Bureau

Bureau of Planning & Sustainability

Bureau of Environmental Services (BES)

Office of Management and Finance (OMF)

Portland Bureau of Transportation (PBOT)

Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT)

City of Gresham

State of Oregon Drinking Water Program

Oregon Health Authority

Metro (regional government)

8. News Media

The Oregonian

Southeast Examiner

Gresham Outlook

Mid-County Memo

SE PDX News (David Ashton)

Key Community Contacts

- Friends of Powell Butte: Tamra & Richard Dickinson and Carol Pernar
- Centennial Community Association: Tom Lewis, president; *Louise Cody, LU; Patricia Hicks, vp Pleasant Valley Neighborhood Association: *Linda Bauer, president; Gale Gilliland
- Powellhurst-Gilbert Neighborhood Association: Mark White, president; Mary Walker, Land Use;
- Southeast Neighbors, Gresham neighborhood association
- Powell Butte Heights HOA: Dick Hall, chair; Carolyn Smithee
- Meadowland Mobile Home Park: Robert Zimmer, owner
- Meadow Crest Farm Estate Mobile Home Park: Lillian Adams, owner & park manager
- Johnson Creek Watershed Council: Matt Clark, Exec. Dir.;
- 40 Mile Loop Land Trust: Bob Akers
- Columbia River Orienteering Club: Anndy Wiselogle
- Friends of Springwater Trail: TBD
- **NW Trails Inc.** Cecily Norris

Management Approach

PWB Public Outreach staff and members of the Project Team meet on a regular basis -- once a week during construction -- to address any park users, adjacent property owner and contractor issues or concerns. The meetings also focus on planned outreach and media activities, and to debrief on the outcome of these efforts. PWB Outreach staff also support the contractor's effort on notification of subcontracting opportunity for Minority and Emerging Small Businesses. Public Outreach staff will work with contracted staff from JLA Public Involvement on website and outreach assistance and with Jan O'Dell Communications on producing the bi-monthly issues of Water Works online newsletter.

Project Planning and Coordination Groups

- Project Management Team (Teresa Elliott, Ken Fortner, Michelle Lostra, Rick Lapp, Jerry Moore, Cesar Lara, Brenda Nelson, Eric Fullen, Roy Martinez, and Tim Hall)
- PWB Public Outreach (Tim Hall -- assisted by Robin Hagedorn and Terry Black)
- Portland Parks & Recreation (Elizabeth Kennedy-Wong, Lynn Barlow, and Emily Roth)
- Powell Butte Management Team (Tom Klutz, Lynn Barlow, Teresa Elliott, Rich Rice, Mart Hughes and Tim Hall)