Chapter 9
Portland Parks & Recreation

Note: Parks and recreation facilities are not a required urban service under the Oregon public facility planning goals and statutes. The City of Portland considers parks, natural areas, trails and recreation facilities to be essential infrastructure systems and has included this chapter in the interest of comprehensive infrastructure planning. However, the City does not intend for this chapter to be reviewed for compliance with public facility planning rules, including Oregon Statewide Planning Goal 11: Public Facilities, Oregon Statute 197 or Oregon Administrative Rule 660.

Overview

Portland Parks & Recreation (PP&R) cares for over 11,000 acres of parks and natural areas, manages the urban canopy and the city’s community gardens and offers thousands of programs for all ages at its community centers, swim pools, and other recreation facilities. In 2013, 86% of Portland residents rated the overall quality of parks as good or very good, making Parks the highest rated city service. Public investment in these important recreation facilities, natural areas, and gathering spaces supports a high level of use by Portland residents and visitors. In 2013, there were 4 million visits by Portlanders to community centers, pools, and recreation programs and 88% of Portlanders visited a city park at least once during the year. People from around the world and Portland’s neighborhoods visit the Washington Park International Rose Test and Classical Chinese gardens. There are 155 miles of regional trails used for recreation and active transportation that keep Portlander’s moving and healthy. Annually Portland community members volunteer over 475,324 hours to help maintain parks and assist others at our community centers.

Portland’s treasured parks, trees, gardens, natural areas, and trails are infrastructure that beautify the city, provide important habitat, water quality, and environmental benefits, and add to the quality of life for both residents and visitors. Events and programs stimulate understanding and appreciation of the arts, celebrate diversity, encourage healthy lifestyles, benefit the local and state economy, and contribute to the public safety and stability of Portland neighborhoods. The continued investment in these important public spaces makes Portland a great place to live, work, and play.

Portland Parks & Recreation has adopted the following vision, mission, organizational values, equity statement and Parks 2020 goals to guide the Bureau’s work.

Vision

“Portland's parks, public places, natural areas, urban forest, community gardens, and recreational opportunities give life and beauty to our city. These essential assets connect people to place, self, and others. Portland's residents treasure and care for this legacy, building on the past to provide for future generations.”
Mission

“The mission of Portland Parks & Recreation is to help Portlanders play – providing the safe places, facilities, programs, and nature experiences which promote physical, mental, and social activity. We get people, especially kids, outside, active, and connected to the community. As we do this, there will be an increase in the wellness of our residents and the livability of our city. We accomplish this through:

- Establishing, safeguarding and restoring the parks, natural areas, public places, community gardens and urban forest of the city, ensuring that these are accessible to all;
- Developing and maintaining excellent facilities and places for public recreation and community building;
- Providing dynamic recreation programs and services that promote health and wellbeing for all;
- Partnering with the community we serve.

Organizational Values

Portland Parks & Recreation has the following organizational values:

- Quality, responsive service to our diverse customers and partners.
- Community participation in program and project planning.
- Innovation, creativity, and excellence in all we do.
- Openness, honesty, and respect in all relationships.
- A diverse and culturally competent workforce.
- Transparent, ethical, and accountable decision making.

Equity Statement

“We recognize, understand and encourage celebration of the differences that surround us. Diversity and equity are vital to Portland Parks & Recreation’s ideals and values.”

Parks 2020 Vision Goals

The Parks 2020 Vision outlines the following five goals for the park system:

- Ensure Portland’s park and recreation legacy for future generations;
- Provide a wide variety of high quality recreation services and opportunities for all residents;
- Preserve, protect, and restore Portland’s natural resources to provide ‘Nature in the City’;
- Create an interconnected regional and local system of paths and walks to make Portland ‘The Walking City of the West’; and
- Develop parks and recreation facilities and programs that promote ‘Community in the City’.
Purpose of this Chapter

This chapter describes the public facilities and services provided by Portland Parks & Recreation that are necessary to carry out its mission. It identifies desired levels of service, inventory and condition information for existing public facilities, and desired future facilities. Carrying out the Bureau’s mission and other City and community goals may also require programs, investments and practices that are not related to public facilities. This chapter may acknowledge – but does not comprehensively address – these measures.

System Services

Service Area

Portland Parks & Recreation manages a system of developed parks, natural areas, the urban forest, community gardens, trails, community centers, and special recreation features that serve residents and visitors. See Figure 9.1 for a map of park facilities.

Core Services Provided

Portland Parks & Recreation’s built and green infrastructure forms the base by which Portland Parks & Recreation provides a wide variety of programs and services for the public. The focus of this chapter is built infrastructure, but Portland Parks & Recreation has five service areas:

- Community Services (includes Community Engagement, Leadership & Advocacy, Marketing & Business Development, and Visitor Services)
- Infrastructure Services (includes Capital Development, Maintenance, and Property)
- Support Services (includes Business Services and Planning), and;
- Recreation Services (includes Aquatics, Arts, Community & Socialization, and Sports & Games).
- Natural Resources Services (includes Natural Areas, Community Gardens, and the Urban Forest).
Service Agreements & Partnerships

Partnerships are an important strategy for Portland Parks & Recreation. Healthy, robust partnerships increase the visibility of our programs and work, they can help inform our communities about our strengths and our challenges, they extend our services and bring different skills to help manage resources and they provide us with important information about our communities. Working with community partners is a skill and work ethic that permeates all levels of Portland Parks & Recreation.

Portland Parks & Recreation regularly partners with a variety of agencies and organizations that provide park and recreation services to Portland residents. Governmental agencies include Metro, Multnomah County, School Districts (there are five in Portland that PP&R works with), the State of Oregon and many other regulatory bodies that govern land use and environmental work. Additionally, PP&R has more than 100 formally recognized “Friends and Partner” groups that range in capacity from half a dozen episodic volunteers, to fully developed non-profit organizations that completely manage specific assets. Altogether, Friends, Partners and volunteers contribute more than 470,000 hours annually, comparable to more than 220 full-time staff.

To facilitate efficient and effective provision of services, Portland Parks & Recreation has a number of identified service and partnership agreements. For example, Portland Parks & Recreation has a joint facilities agreement with Portland Public Schools, and agreements for the Schools Uniting Neighborhoods (SUN) program, Hoyt Arboretum, Pittock Mansion, Leach Botanical Gardens, Japanese Gardens, and many other Friends groups who help manage and maintain the park system.

The Portland Parks Foundation, an independent, nonprofit organization, formed in 2001 to assist in bringing long-term stewardship to Portland’s parks and programs. The foundation works closely with Portland Parks & Recreation to raise awareness of the funding and stewardship needs of the park system. They cultivate donors to deliver private dollars in three aspects of urban parks: the land, the amenities and the people.

Inventory Summary

In 2013, the Portland Parks & Recreation system consisted of 11,546 total acres, and includes five main facility types:

- Developed Parks: 209 Parks on 3,455 Acres
- Natural Areas: 77 parks on 7,887 acres
- Undeveloped Properties: 214 acres
- Trails: 155 Miles of Regional Trails
- Community and Arts Centers: 14 Facilities

In addition to the capital infrastructure, Portland Parks & Recreation oversees the City’s urban forestry program, which is responsible for managing the urban forest on City-owned or managed land, and certain private properties, and which coordinates implementation of the City’s Urban Forest Management Plan. In 2010, the urban canopy covered 29.9% of the City.

**Condition Summary**

Portland Parks & Recreation has inspected most of its assets, and strives to re-inspect 20% of its assets each year so that condition information is never more than five years old for any given asset. In 2013, 37% of Portland Parks & Recreation inspected assets were in good or very good condition, 19% were in fair condition, and 13% were in poor condition. Another 32% of the assets have not yet been inspected and given a condition rating. Percentages are based on counts of individual assets, which range in value and complexity, e.g. from pools to playgrounds.

**Capacity Summary**

Portland Parks & Recreation strives to serve all Portlanders, and the park system needs to respond to population growth and recreational trends. In 2013, 4 million visits were recorded to a Portland Parks & Recreation recreational programs. Thirty-two percent of Portlanders participated in a city recreation activity, and 88% of Portlanders visited a city park at least once in 2013. While the park system needs to have the capacity to continue serving the large number of Portlanders using parks and recreation programs, Portland Parks & Recreation is also working to deliver equitable access to parks and recreation facilities geographically across the city. These level of service goals are outlined in the Portland Parks & Recreation Vision 2020, and include the goals to have:

- 100% of households within ½ mile walk of a park or natural area,
- 100% of households within 3 miles of a full service community center.

In 2013, 80% of households were within a ½ mile walk of a park or natural area, and 70% were within 3 miles of a full service community center. For service area maps, see Figure 9.3 and 9.4.

**Key Issues & Concerns**

**Providing Services in Underserved Areas**

Unfortunately, not everyone in Portland has equitable access to the benefits of parks and recreation. Virtually every district of the city has at least one parkland deficiency. In East, Northeast, and Southwest Portland, where there are fewer developed parks and often fewer trees and canopy cover, residents receive fewer benefits from the social and recreational opportunities parks provide. Since there are few remaining sites appropriate for larger developed parks available in the city, remedying park deficiencies...
Figure 9.1 Portland Parks & Recreation Parks, Trails, Community Centers, and Natural Areas (2012)
Proposed Draft Citywide Systems Plan

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Not required by ORS 197

presents a formidable challenge. See Figure 9.3, which shows the areas currently being served and unserved using the ½ mile from a park or natural area level of service.

Although community centers provide the recreational programs and community gathering places that give appeal to urban living, those benefits are unavailable to some residents. Certain areas of the city have no community centers, and others have centers that are housed in old, ill-adapted buildings that lack fundamental elements. Sellwood Community Center (SCC), for example, was built in 1909 as a rooming house. It does not have adequate security surveillance, ADA accessibility, or storage, and many rooms lack basic equipment for classes and programs. Yet, the neighborhood depends on SCC to fulfill its recreation needs. Since recreation programs and facilities are inextricably intertwined, the shortage of quality community centers limits the availability, breadth, and quality of recreation programs. See Figure 9.4, which shows the areas currently being served and unserved using the 3 miles from a full service community center level of service.

Portland’s park system also lacks sufficient quantities of certain types of recreation facilities, like aquatic facilities and sports fields. Both are heavily used, highly programmed, and in short supply. Waiting lists also indicate that the Portland Parks & Recreation community garden program needs to keep expanding. While Portland Parks & Recreation currently has 48 community garden sites, only 7 gardens had plots available and there were almost 1400 individuals on the waiting list for garden plots in 2013.

As more people crowd into existing parks and facilities, user conflicts are increasing and the quality of park resources are declining. Portland Parks & Recreation works to balance the need for expansion of the existing system to address level of service gaps and address equity issues, with the need to adequately reinvest in existing infrastructure.

Improving Access to Parks and Facilities

Lack of access to parks and few connections between parks limits the benefits of the system. Highways, heavy traffic, large taxlots, and industrial properties prevent many Portland residents from accessing park and recreation opportunities. In some situations, if better access to parks were available, including completed sidewalk systems or public access easements acquired, some households not currently considered within ½ mile of an existing park or natural area due to existing street conditions would now be served. Fragmentation reduces optimal conditions and forfeits the immense benefits of a holistic
system, because it is more difficult for people to safely and conveniently access a variety of park and recreation facilities.

Within parks and natural areas, there are also numerous ADA barriers that impact users from fully accessing the park system. Through development of the citywide ADA Transition Plan, PP&R has determined that there are over 20,000 individual barriers to accessibility that need to be addressed. Missing handrails, inaccessible paths, outdated wheelchair lifts, and steep slopes are examples of barriers that prevent people with disabilities or mobility challenges from fully enjoying parks and natural areas. The Transition Plan, with public input, will prioritize the needs and devise a schedule for addressing and funding the improvements given available resources.

Maintaining Existing Infrastructure

In 2013, Portland’s extensive park and recreation system had a current replacement value of over $1.02 billion, not including the underlying land which also adds additional value to the system. The condition of the system directly influences its ability to provide users with quality recreation experiences.

Preserving and improving the condition of a park, facility or natural area requires regular maintenance, which in turn requires sufficient funding. However, Portland Parks & Recreation is currently only able to reinvest 1-2% of facilities current replacement value annually, half of the industry standard of 2-4% for built facilities such as pools and community centers. Reinvestment standards for parks and natural areas are in development.

While the Bureau has identified specific maintenance needs and is currently addressing the most serious needs, Portland Parks & Recreation continues to lack sufficient funds to maintain its assets properly. Improving the level of maintenance and repair of the existing system to sustainable levels would require nearly $36.6 million more in resources each year (based on 2013 calculations, see Table 9.6).

Portland Parks & Recreation has instituted an asset management program to ensure the provision of high-quality facilities, provide for long-range capital planning, and develop best management practices.

However, the asset management program does not account for trees and other green infrastructure found in the Bureau’s parks and natural areas. PP&R, BES, and the Water Bureau are investigating the possibility of modifying asset management and capitalization practices to include important green infrastructure assets, including trees.

Asset Management takes a full life-cycle approach, informing decisions from design through operations and maintenance to renewal and eventual replacement. The goal is to deliver expected levels of service with adequate funding at acceptable levels of risk. Asset Management shifts the operations and maintenance perspective from reactive maintenance and repair to a proactive approach of predictive maintenance and renewal, reducing costs and avoiding unplanned loss of service. Ideally, design and capital construction decisions are made in light of ongoing operations and maintenance costs to achieve the lowest total lifecycle costs. For the Bureau to have a full understanding of its assets, the asset management program will need to be expanded to incorporate green infrastructure, including trees.
Accommodating Growth

Parks and recreation facilities are an important contributor to quality of life in the City of Portland and essential public infrastructure. They provide places to recreate and find respite, and improve the environmental, social, and physical health of the community. Maintaining Portland’s quality of life will require preserving access to high quality park and recreation experiences by acquiring and protecting park lands, maintaining and upgrading existing facilities, and providing additional recreation facilities and services. The actual number of parks and facilities necessary will vary based on where and how growth occurs, the ability of existing facilities to serve additional users, and opportunities to locate and build additional parks and facilities.

Growth and increasing density will provide other challenges as well, including:

- Making acquiring new parks more difficult, as development reduces the number of parcels available for parks and natural areas. It may also increase competition for a fixed amount of land, thereby driving up land prices.
- Heightening the need to retain tree canopy, while causing tree removal.
- Increasing the number of users of already heavily utilized facilities, such as pools, Greater use of trail systems could increase user conflicts on multi-modal pathways.
- Exacerbating needs in currently underserved areas. These pressures may be particularly acute in dense urban centers that currently lack sufficient park amenities, where both existing facilities and acquisition opportunities are scarce.

In planning for growth, PP&R will look for opportunities to acquire sufficient parkland to meet needs and will improve and maintain parks, trails, and other facilities to accommodate more users while preserving a quality user experience. The Bureau will also explore options to create separated bike and pedestrian pathways on anticipated heavily used regional trails. Finally, PP&R will continue to work to preserve and enhance the City’s natural areas and urban tree canopy for its critical environmental and community functions.

Currently, the City assesses a Park Systems Development Charge (SDC) on new residential and commercial construction to partially offset the costs associated with providing park services to new development. SDC funds are restricted to land acquisition and capital improvements in areas of population growth and new development. SDC funds cannot be used to correct existing parkland deficiencies, nor can they be used to meet the equally vital operations or maintenance needs. At a rate that is 75% of the targeted recovery rate, the SDC assessment does not fully offset the true costs of park development in Portland.

Meeting Increasingly Diverse Community Needs

Portland’s system of parks and recreational activities includes a wide variety of facilities and programs. Over time, the recreational needs of Portland have and will continue to grow and evolve. Pickle ball has been replaced with Footsal, the waitlist for community gardens is growing and wading pools are being replaced with splash pads. Senior recreation programs may have different amenity needs than youth programs.
Meeting the needs of a growing and diversifying population is a fundamental challenge for Portland Parks & Recreation. Open space is generally viewed as our most flexible and valuable asset. We are, however, asked to accommodate an increasing number of single use and specialized activities that require dedicated land. These facilities, including off-leash dog areas, community gardens, spray parks, skate parks, and disc golf courses provide valuable recreation opportunities to a wide variety of users but limit the acreage available for more general uses. As Portland’s demographics continue to change, recreational facilities and programs need to be able to accommodate the needs of growing cultural and ethnic communities. PP&R needs to continue to reduce barriers that may be experienced due to race, socio-economic status, or geographic location to ensure that park service is being provided equitably. Currently, to address the needs of diverse communities, PP&R incorporates community feedback into the planning of new park facilities, and to the programming of facilities. Parks will need to further increase its investment in the diverse populations of the city by deepening its inclusion efforts in decision making to advance equity goals.

Different perspectives will provide a richer analysis to factors including current distribution, service areas, and capacity; current and projected demand; available locations; demographics; and resources when planning for and siting new facilities.

**Protecting Portland’s Natural Resources**

Portland’s natural areas and urban forest provide innumerable environmental, economic, and health related benefits to the city. Natural area settings in Portland include forests, meadows, wetlands, streams, and riverbanks. Portland Parks & Recreation currently protects more than 7,885 acres of natural areas. These natural areas are primarily forest and represent the range of forest types naturally occurring in the region including Douglas fir stands, ash and cottonwood riparian forests, and mixed deciduous and conifer forest. The system includes some open woodlands, often dominated by Oregon white oak, and less frequently shrublands and grasslands, including wetland marshes, which offer unique habitat features. Hybrid Parks are managed both as natural areas, and have portions that are developed.

Protecting natural resources is very important to residents who value access to nature, improving the quality of life and environment. As existing open space is developed, more people will seek and use park system resources — crowding into existing parks and facilities, escalating user conflicts, and degrading resource quality. Natural areas are also important for providing wildlife habitat, cleaning the air and water, and enhancing resiliency to the impacts of climate change.
Portland Parks & Recreation’s approach to natural area acquisition, restoration, and management is described in The Natural Area Acquisition Strategy (2006) and Natural Areas Restoration Plan (2010). The plan integrates the goals and objectives established in the Salmon Safe Certification (2004), the Portland Watershed Management Plan (2005), and the Oregon Conservation Strategy (2006). When appropriate, PP&R and the Bureau of Environmental Services (BES) collaborate on the acquisition and/or restoration of natural areas, when the property meets the objectives of both Bureaus.

Portland Parks & Recreation used an Ecosystem Management framework to develop specific, science-based restoration actions for each natural area. The framework is based on six steps:

1. Vegetation Inventory
2. Desired Future Condition (25-year timeframe)
3. Assessment: gap analysis between the inventory and the desired future condition
4. Prescription: specific, localized actions necessary to reach the desired future condition
5. Intervention: on-the-ground work
6. Monitoring: observations and data collection to measure the success of the intervention and to modify the prescriptions.

This framework sets the trajectory for enhancing ecological health and building resiliency for natural area sites. Portland Parks & Recreation is the only park system certified Salmon Safe (2004, recertified in 2012). Certification standards constitute a set of best management practices that are applied across a variety of landscapes from natural areas to golf courses to sports fields. These best management practices – integrated pest management program, reduction in irrigation and runoff, riparian restoration, removal of invasive species, assist the City in meeting its obligations for the Clean Water and Endangered Species acts.

Portland Parks & Recreation faces ongoing funding challenges in its efforts to implement the Natural Areas Acquisition Strategy (2006) and Natural Areas Restoration Plan (2010). PP&R has not had available funding to acquire all the targeted natural areas identified in the Acquisition Strategy, and has not had sufficient levels of funding to fully implement the restoration and management actions called for in the Restoration Plan. Operation and maintenance funding for natural areas is scare. For example when Forest Park was acquired in 1947, no operation and maintenance funds were allocated for its protection and enhancement, and to date there are still no dedicated funds. The current cost estimate for controlling invasive species in Forest Park – which represents only a portion of the park’s operation and maintenance needs – is $10 million.
Figure 9.2 Natural Area System
Stewarding the City’s Urban Forest

The urban forest, which includes all the trees and shrubs in the city, provides environmental, social and economic benefits to Portland’s residents in the form of increased biodiversity, improved air quality, stormwater mitigation, improved neighborhoods and increased property values. Regulation of this important resource is led by Portland Parks and Recreation although management is shared among many city bureaus that have an interest in its improvement and well-being, as well as private property owners. These bureaus have developed an action plan to realize the goals of the 2004 Urban Forest Management Plan. The action plan calls for diverse activities to meet Urban Forest Management Plan goals and outcomes; activities such as education and stewardship, research and monitoring, planting and maintenance, and policy and regulatory improvements. The 2009 estimated operation and maintenance needs for operation and maintenance needs of the City’s street trees is $13 million.

The city’s urban forest faces a number of challenges that have implications for multiple City bureaus and goals. First, canopy cover is being lost to development, particularly in areas of southwest and outer east Portland. Traditional development patterns often involve significant losses of tree canopy cover and increases in impervious surfaces which limits areas for replanting, particularly large tree species. These changes can result in increased stormwater volumes and air temperatures, and heighten pressures placed on hillsides and streams. The urban forest is also threatened by invasive plants and insects. These invasive species can stress the ability of natural species to survive. Invasive pests and diseases can have sudden and devastating effects on the urban forest especially in areas that lack age and species diversity. Climate change will also impact the urban canopy and the tree species survival. The City will need to update the street tree list and plant drought resistance species to increase the resiliency of the urban forest.

Portland’s street and park trees form a sustainable resource vital to the city’s environmental, social, and economic health. Portland’s street and park trees cost the city and private property owners just over $6.5 million annually to maintain, yet provide nearly $27 million worth of environmental and aesthetic benefits. For every dollar invested, $3.80 worth of benefits is returned. Portland Parks & Recreation’s approach to managing the urban forest is described in The Urban Forest Management Plan (2004) and The Urban Forest Action Plan (2007). Portland Parks & Recreation, Bureau of Environmental Services, Bureau of

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1 Portland’s Urban Forest Canopy – Assessment and Public Tree Evaluation (2007)
Planning and Sustainability and Bureau of Development Services also recently partnered in an effort to update the tree code, which covers privately owned land and was adopted by City Council in April 2011 but has not been fully funded for implementation.

**Managing Park, Recreation, and Natural Resources**

Portland Parks & Recreation is developing a System Plan that will provide a holistic and comprehensive approach to park acquisition, management, programming, and resource protection. Portland Parks & Recreation is also developing master and management plans to guide development, management and funding decisions to optimize resources and meet needs.

Portland Parks & Recreation is developing accurate inventory and assessment information for all assets, both capital and non-capital. Without valid, reliable information on which to base management decisions, it is difficult to effectively anticipate and prepare for new park uses, or manage green infrastructure resources like the urban forest and natural areas. For example, the City does not have a complete inventory of private trees, but recognizes that more than half of the tree canopy of the urban forest is located on privately owned land. Basic information such as canopy cover, species diversity and distribution is needed for proactive management.

**Preparing for Climate Change**

Hotter, drier summers and warmer, wetter winters due to climate change will likely have impacts on park habitat areas, tree species, natural areas, waterways, and built infrastructure. For example, warmer, drier summers may result in increased demand for water-related recreation and air-conditioned indoor recreation spaces, or may require adjustments to management practices for the urban forest to ensure resilient tree canopy. Changes in rainfall could impact asset lifespan, increasing maintenance requirements for structures, trails, docks, trees and landscaping, and other facilities. Trails and other assets may be impacted by increased landslides.

To help prepare the city for the impacts of climate change, Portland Parks & Recreation will need to take into account trends in river levels, temperatures, and rainfall when locating and designing future park facilities. In addition, the bureau may need to design and maintain bridges, docks, or park features in flood areas differently, to adjust to changing flooding patterns and water levels. Adding tree and shrub cover where appropriate and selecting planting species that are resilient and water-efficient will help mitigate heat and air quality impacts. Portland Parks & Recreation will also need to continue to increase energy efficiency, water conservation, maintenance efficiency, and the use of resilient materials to help prepare for climate change related impacts.

**Funding the City's Park, Recreation, and Natural Area System**

In the fiscal year 2013/14 adopted budget, Portland Parks & Recreation will spend just under $100 million to operate, maintain, and expand Portland’s park system. Over 40% of Portland Parks & Recreation’s financial support comes from the city’s General Fund (i.e., discretionary resources that the Council allocates). In addition to the discretionary General Fund revenue, Portland Parks & Recreation receives revenue from system development charges, user fees, interagency agreements, and a variety of other
sources. A small (and unpredictable) fraction of Portland Parks & Recreation's budget comes from grants and donations. Portland Parks & Recreation also periodically raises fees to provide the variety and scope of programs that the public needs and wants. Scholarships are available to mitigate the effect this may have on those on fixed incomes or with lower incomes.

Portland Parks & Recreation operating expenses have risen steadily in recent years due to increasing use, utility costs and an aging park infrastructure, as well as construction of new facilities to accommodate a growing population and demand for different recreation activities. Unfortunately, over many decades, park system funding has not kept up with needs. Numerous parks need major renovation and many recreation facilities are in poor condition. Funding is not available for routine maintenance of park trees, and Portland Parks & Recreation's Urban Forestry program does not have a sustainable source of funding for tree replacement or canopy expansion.

Insufficient funding for public schools also has budget impacts on parks and recreation. As public schools cut youth programs, Portland Parks & Recreation's role as the state's second-largest provider of youth programs becomes even more vital. Portland Parks & Recreation now provides many of the arts, athletics and recreation programs that schools cannot.
Regulatory Compliance

Portland Parks & Recreation works to meet all regulatory requirements in the development and maintenance of its assets. Federal, State, Regional, and City legislation and mandates affect how Portland Parks & Recreation operates and manages its park system. Examples of legislation at all levels that affect Portland Parks & Recreation include:

Federal

- The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) requires communities to take into account floodplain hazards in all official actions related to land management and use. Relevant projects must be reviewed and permitted by the Bureau of Development Services to ensure no net rise in stream or river elevations that would harm downstream properties.

- The Endangered Species Act is intended to protect and recover endangered or threatened species, and the habitat and ecosystems upon which they depend. PP&R has been working towards recovery of salmon in the region to help the city meet Endangered Species Act compliance. This includes watershed and fish habitat restoration, removal of invasive plants, redesign of parks and their features, and careful review of management practices. Waterways in parks receive special consideration with specific actions such as invasive species removal, planting native species and working with BES to restore and protect their functions. The IPM Program contributes to the success of the endangered/threatened salmon and steelhead program. PP&R is committed to maintaining Salmon Safe Certification, which requires the use of best management practices throughout the park system to improve aquatic ecosystem and to ensure that any harmful impacts on water quality and fish habitat are minimized.

- The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires that public spaces and programs be accessible, or, where full accessibility cannot be provided in an integrated setting, jurisdictions are required to provide equivalent facilitation opportunities. All new development is required to meet ADA standards, and the City of Portland’s ADA Transition Plan, currently under development, will provide an approach for addressing accessibility barriers in existing public spaces to ensure compliance.

- The National Historic Preservation Act is intended to preserve significant historical and archaeological sites. Portland Parks & Recreation’s portfolio includes several facilities and sites that are listed on the National Historic Register.

- The Clean Water Act regulates discharges of pollutants into waters of the United States, and quality standards for surface waters. PP&R’s Water Quality Testing Program helps the City achieve compliance by providing specific feedback on the effectiveness of the PP&R Integrated Pest Management (IPM) program at protecting water quality, and providing direct accountability for practices most likely to influence water quality such as fertilizer applications and pesticide use.

- The Migratory Bird Treaty Act protects migratory birds, and their habitat and ecosystems. PP&R sponsors the Festival of the Birds to educate the public about migratory birds. Additionally, work PP&R does to remove of invasive species and plant native species enhances native bird habitats throughout the city.
State

- The **Department of Environmental Quality** (DEQ) is a regulatory agency whose job is to protect the quality of Oregon’s environment. Projects are required to comply with DEQ regulations impacting air quality, water quality, and general environmental health (including pollutants, hazardous materials, etc.)

- The **Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP)** looks at recreational trends and needs in the state of Oregon, and provides guidance for delivering quality outdoor recreational opportunities for Oregonians and visitors. The SCORP is also used to provide guidance for state administered grant programs.

- Many of **Oregon’s Statewide Planning Goals** have impacts on Portland Parks & Recreation projects, including Goals 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, and 15. Goals that most directly impact Portland Parks & Recreation work include:
  
  - Goal 5 (Open Space, Scenic and Historic Areas and Natural Resources), which requires inventory of these important resources, and policies that guide treatment of these resources;
  
  - Goal 8 (Recreation Needs), which requires jurisdictions to evaluate its recreation facilities and develop plans to ensure that recreation opportunities will meet projected recreation demand. The Parks Vision 2020 outlines the broad system goals to ensure that Portland Parks & Recreation will be able to address anticipated recreation demands; and
  
  - Goal 15 (Willamette Greenway), which sets forth procedures for administering the 300 miles of greenway that protects the Willamette River. PP&R’s management of public spaces, trails, and access points along the Willamette River Greenway helps the city to be in compliance with Statewide Planning Goal 15.

- The **Oregon Recreation Trails System Act** designates a system of recreation trails statewide to provide outdoor recreation opportunities and access to scenic areas.

Regional

- The **Metropolitan Greenspaces Master Plan** details the vision, goals, and framework for a regional system of natural areas, trails, and greenways in the Metro region.

- The **Metro 2040 Growth Concept** a long-range plan guiding growth and development in the Portland Metro area, including open space, park, and regional trail goals.

- The **Regional Framework Plan** includes Metro’s adopted land use planning policies and requirements, including requirements for parks, open spaces, and recreational facilities, and protection of lands for natural resources.

Local

- Portland Parks & Recreation projects must also comply with **City of Portland Zoning and Building Permit Code Requirements**, often including environmental review. All projects must also comply with the Portland Stormwater Management Manual.
Goals & Policies

Draft Goals and Policies related to Parks & Recreation facilities and services can be found in Chapter 5.

Key Infrastructure Policies.

Desired Levels of Service

Portland Parks & Recreation has two defined level of service goals, from its adopted Parks Vision 2020:

- Provide a developed park or natural area within ½ mile from every household
- Provide a full-service community center within 3 miles of every household

Per Vision 2020, PP&R also seeks to build out the recreational trail system. More asset-specific service goals are outlined in Technical Papers, and as Bureau Performance Measures, identified in the Portland Parks & Recreation Strategic Plan. As Portland Parks & Recreation continues development of its new System Plan, it will continue refinement of recreational feature levels of service.

Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Strategy


- Protect and maintain those existing assets that provide desired levels of service through maintenance, rehabilitation and renewal that extend the life of the asset.
- Provide new service and expand capacity that accommodates growth and provides equitable levels of service through the expansion of existing facilities and the construction of new parks and facilities. Improve efficiency, environmental quality and energy conservation wherever possible.

Portland Parks & Recreation updates its Capital Project List annually. The list identifies projects on a 1-5 year CIP timeframe, a 5-10 year CIP timeframe, and a 10-20 year timeframe. See the Investment Strategy section later in this chapter for more detail on the Portland Parks & Recreation Capital Planning process and project criteria.

Inventory

Built Infrastructure

Portland Parks & Recreation’s built infrastructure system is currently valued at over $1.02 billion, see Table 9.1. This is based on 5 main types of assets, with green infrastructure being the largest percentage of the overall replacement value, at $419 million. PP&R defines its green infrastructure asset group as the urban forest, turf, shrub beds, and botanic gardens located on its properties. Buildings and pools are the next largest category, at $280 million. This multitude of parklands, recreation facilities, support facilities, trees, and natural areas contribute to access to nature, recreational opportunity, environmental quality, and livability within the city.
Besides Portland Parks & Recreation, Metro is the largest park and natural area provider in the city. Metro’s inventory includes significant natural habitat areas, including the over 2,000 acre Smith & Bybee Wetlands, as well as Glendoveer Golf Course, the M. James Gleason Memorial Boat Ramp on the Columbia River, and fourteen pioneer cemeteries. Metro also owns and operates the Oregon Zoo, Oregon Convention Center, Portland Center for the Performing Arts, and Portland Metropolitan Exposition Center. State parks, public schools, cemeteries, and other open spaces also provide park and natural area opportunities.

Table 9.1 Parks & Recreation Asset Groups and Replacement Values, 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Capital Asset Class</th>
<th>Value (in millions)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amenities</td>
<td>$21.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buildings and pools</td>
<td>$280.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreation features</td>
<td>$236.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Built infrastructure</td>
<td>$68.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green infrastructure</td>
<td>$419.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Parks</strong></td>
<td><strong>$1,025.8</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 9.2 Inventory of Portland Parks & Recreation Facilities by Type, 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inventory by Facility Type</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Developed Parks</td>
<td>3,445 acres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural Areas</td>
<td>7,887 acres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional Trails</td>
<td>155 miles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community and Arts Centers</td>
<td>14 facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aquatic Facilities</td>
<td>13 pools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tennis Facilities</td>
<td>124 courts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Athletic Fields</td>
<td>232 fields</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Golf Courses</td>
<td>5 courses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restroom Buildings</td>
<td>97 facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basketball Hoops</td>
<td>229 hoops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spray Features and Interactive Fountains</td>
<td>24 facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skate parks</td>
<td>5 facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Gardens</td>
<td>48 gardens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Playgrounds</td>
<td>129 areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stadiums and Sports Complexes</td>
<td>4 facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Botanical/Public Gardens</td>
<td>8 gardens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Facilities</td>
<td>12 facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance Facilities</td>
<td>44 facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Off-Leash Dog Areas</td>
<td>33 areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>River Beaches</td>
<td>5 areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motorsports raceway</td>
<td>1 area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reservable Picnic Areas</td>
<td>86 areas</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Urban Forest

Portland’s public streets, parks, and natural areas host a diverse array of tree types. Nearly 1.5 million trees grow in these public spaces. The street tree population includes 171 different types, and over 41
tree types are found in developed parks and natural areas. Replacement of the city's urban forest is estimated at $6 billion.

Table 9.3 Inventory of Portland’s Trees, 2007

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tree type</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>street trees</td>
<td>236,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>developed park trees</td>
<td>39,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>natural area trees</td>
<td>1,200,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Broadleaf deciduous trees dominate the landscape, accounting for 85% of street trees and 77% of park trees. Tree size designations (small, medium, and large) are determined by both the functional type and mature tree size of the tree. Parks contain more large-at-maturity trees (64%) and more conifers (23%) than do street rights-of-way. Streets host four times the diversity of tree types than parks, one-third of which are small when mature.

Current Condition

Portland Parks & Recreation is in the process of developing a more formal Asset Management program. Portland Parks & Recreation is working to develop an Asset Register to maintain collected inventory and condition information about its assets. The Bureau has developed an inspection program work plan, and has begun the process of adding routine inspection and condition assessment information into annual operations practices. In general, 20% of all Portland Parks & Recreation assets would be inspected each year, so that condition information on an asset would never be more than five years old.

Table 9.4 illustrates the condition of PP&R’s capital assets, as reported in 2013. Some assets have yet to be assessed, but of those that have been, the majority of assets were in fair or better condition. However, 43% of park furnishings were in poor or very poor condition, 4% of major buildings were in poor or very poor condition, 12% of minor buildings were in poor or very poor condition, 23% of marine facilities were in poor condition, 23% of play areas were in poor or very poor condition, 13% of sports courts and fields were in poor or very poor condition, 19% of community gardens were in poor or very poor condition, 19%
of circulation systems (roads and trails) were in poor or very poor condition, 13% of natural areas were in poor or very poor condition, and 11% of developed park landscapes were in poor or very poor condition.

Table 9.4 Current Condition: Parks and Recreation System, 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Capital asset type</th>
<th>Very Good</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Fair</th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>Very Poor</th>
<th>To Be Determined</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>amenities</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>furnishings in developed parks</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>furnishings in natural areas</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>decorative elements</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>buildings and pools</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major buildings</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minor buildings</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>recreation features</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gathering places</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>marine</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>off-leash areas</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>play areas</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sports courts and fields</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>water play</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>community gardens</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>built infrastructure</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>circulation</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>utilities</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>green infrastructure</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>natural areas</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>developed areas</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Condition of Urban Forest**

Tree condition is the health of the tree as manifest in the condition of its bark and leaves. The condition of urban trees reflects species hardiness, site conditions, and maintenance history. Trees that are well suited to Portland’s climate, that can adapt to the challenges of growing in an urban environment, and that have been maintained using proper arboricultural techniques are generally the most successful. Urban forest condition also includes the distribution of trees and make-up of the forest in terms of tree species; more even distribution of trees and a wide array of tree species comprise a healthier forest which is more resilient to pests, pathogens and catastrophic events such as storms or climate change.
Table 9.5 Current Condition: Street and Park Trees, 2007\(^2\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tree type</th>
<th>Current Condition (in %)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Street trees</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Park trees</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Portland’s park trees are in generally better health than its street trees. While roughly the same proportion of park (94%) and street (91%) trees are in fair to good condition, 24% more park trees are classified in good condition. Compared with parks and natural spaces, the street environment – where growing space is limited, soils are generally poor, and automobile exhaust reduces local air quality – is far less hospitable to trees.

**Projected Condition**

Portland Parks & Recreation is in the process of developing a full Asset Management program, which will provide projected condition information for assets. At this time, Portland Parks & Recreation does not have projected condition information.

**Current Capacity**

Portland Parks & Recreation has not yet met its level of service goals to have every household within ½ mile of a park or natural area, and within 3 miles of a full service community center. In 2013, 80% of households were within ½ mile of a park or natural area, and 70% of households were within 3 miles of a full service community center.

**Park Experience**

PP&R's 2020 Vision includes a goal to "Provide a wide variety of high quality recreation services and opportunities for all residents." An objective of this goal, and a measure of our level of service, is to provide a park experience within a half mile (approximately 10 to 15 minute walk) of every Portland

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resident. The park experience includes developed parks (parks with, at a minimum, grass, trees, circulation, open play areas and seating), and accessible natural areas over 1/6 of an acre in size.

Figure 9.3 shows the areas of the city (in blue) that are within 1/2 mile walk of a park or natural area. The 1/2 mile distance is calculated using the walkable street and trail system, so parks in areas with poor transportation circulation systems have smaller service areas and serve fewer people. The calculation also takes into account walkability to actual park entry points.

Typically, the districts with lower levels of service are the more recently annexed parts of the city, where former county parks with fewer amenities were added to the system. PP&R is actively working to improve that level of service. For example, in 2015 PP&R will be constructing Beech Park and Gateway Park in East Portland using SDC funds. These parks represent a $12.4 million investment in East Portland and will serve more than 1,790 new households. PP&R is presently working with Verde, a nonprofit group, and Let Us Build Cully Park! Coalition to build Cully Park in northeast. The funding for Cully Park is from grants and $1.25 million in from SDC.

As PP&R works to meet the ½ mile goal, it faces the following challenges:

- Properties with the capacity and characteristics to provide a reasonable park experience are not always available in the areas of greatest need.
- Funds for acquisition of new park land often come with restrictions on how or where they can be used. For example, Service Development Charges (SDC) funds can only be used to address needs created by population growth, not to remedy deficiencies in levels of service. Funds that come from Urban Renewal Areas (URA) are restricted to parks within those geographic areas. These restrictions slow progress in meeting the goal.

The percentage of households within a ½ mile walk of a developed park or natural area does not include undeveloped properties or properties not owned or managed by PP&R.

### Community Centers

PP&R's 2020 Vision includes a goal to "Provide a wide variety of high quality recreation services and opportunities for all residents." An objective of this goal, and a measure of the level of service, is to provide a full-service community center within 3 miles of every Portland resident. A full service community center includes a gymnasium, fitness and classrooms, and a pool.

The 3 mile distance is calculated using the walkable street and trail system, so community centers in areas with poor transportation circulation systems have smaller service areas and serve fewer people. The calculation also takes into account walkability to actual community center entry points.

PP&R is actively working to improve that level of service. In 2002, the percentage of households within 3 miles of a full-service community center was 36%; in 2013, it was 70%.

As PP&R works to meet the 3 mile goal, it faces the following challenges:

- Development of a new full-service community center is a major undertaking. Properties with the capacity and characteristics to support a full-service community center are not always available in
the areas of greatest need. Furthermore, experience shows that co-locating any community center with a park expands recreation programming options and enriches the participant experience.

- Funds for acquisition of new land and facilities often come with restrictions on how or where they can be used. For example, Parks Service Development Charges (SDC) funds can only be used to address needs created by population growth, not to remedy deficiencies in levels of service. Funds that come from Urban Renewal Areas (URA) are restricted to facilities within those geographic areas. These restrictions slow progress in meeting the goal.

The percentage of households within a 3 miles of a full-service community center does include smaller community centers or other facilities owned by PP&R and managed by partners. Figure 9.3 shows the areas of the city currently meeting the 3 mile to a full service community center level of service goal.

Trails

The Parks 2020 Vision also includes a goal to create an interconnected system of trails to serve both recreational and transportation needs. PP&R has been working to build out its trail system, as outlined in the Parks Recreational Trail Strategy (2006). The Recreational Trail Strategy calls for 220 miles of a connected trail system; however, only 155 miles are built, leaving 65 miles of future trails that need to be constructed. As PP&R works to build out the trail system, it faces the following challenges:

- Trail easements on private property are acquired when a property develops or redevelops, or through a willing seller program. Waiting for one of these conditions to occur before an easement can be acquired has resulted in a slow process for filling in trail gaps.

- As use, both recreational and transportation, continues to increase on trail systems, PP&R needs to continue to coordinate with other partner groups and agencies to ensure that the existing trail systems are able to handle growing capacity and respond to increased maintenance needs.

Figure 9.5 shows the PP&R trail system, existing and future, as shown in the Recreational Trail Strategy.
Figure 9.3. Portland Parks & Recreation ½ Mile to Park or Natural Area Service Area
Figure 9.4. Portland Parks & Recreation 3 Mile Full Service Community Center Service Area
Figure 9.5 Portland Parks & Recreation Recreational Trail Strategy System Map
Needs & Approach

Built Infrastructure

Portland Parks & Recreation uses community outreach processes to inform design of new park and facility master plans. It occurs in the form of surveys, trend analysis, project committees, open houses, and other specific targeted outreach. Public involvement during initial project planning helps to inform creation of capital projects that are added to the 20-year project list.

Portland Parks & Recreation has strategically mapped the areas of the city that are currently not meeting the ½ mile desired service level for proximity to a park or natural area (see Figure 9.3) and areas not meeting the 3-mile desired service level for proximity to a full-service community center (see Figure 9.4). The Bureau is actively working to fill in those gaps. At the same time, Portland Parks & Recreation needs to invest in and maintain existing infrastructure. Portland Parks & Recreation balances the needs for system expansions and maintenance in decision-making.

The PP&R 20-year Capital Project List includes projects to maintain the existing system, and projects to expand or grow the system to meet service level goals. Typically, the 20-year Capital Project List includes development of those new parks where PP&R has acquired property and created a master plan. If all the parks and park facilities on the 20-year Capital Project List were implemented, there would still be some level of service gaps. Additional acquisition is necessary to continue to address those level of service needs, and that acquisition is represented on the 20-year Capital Project List, though until development plans are in place for those future properties, development expenditures are not represented.

Natural Resources

The City’s Natural Area Acquisition Strategy (2006), focuses future acquisitions on protecting large, sustainable tracts of land and examples of exceptional value for habitat and watershed health. Of primary importance is protecting a large forested site on Portland’s east side, including additional land at Kelly, Powell, and Clatsop Buttes. These, and other “last, best places” in Portland must be protected, as once developed they can never be returned to their natural state.

Portland Parks & Recreation Natural Areas Restoration Plan (2010) is a system-wide, watershed based strategic plan that guides habitat enhancement in natural areas. The plan includes a prioritized list of projects with their objectives and desired ecological outcomes. It guides PP&R in reaching the desired outcomes of protecting and enhancing the biodiversity and ecological health of our natural areas, provides direction for near and long-term actions, and establishes management priorities.

Urban Forest

The Urban Forest Management Plan (2004) calls for expanding the urban forest canopy to cover 33 percent of the city and increasing street tree stocking levels, especially in underserved neighborhoods. The Urban Forest Action Plan (2007) contains the major goals and desired outcomes of the management plan, along with sixty-three actions items. Although these public trees provide a large return for the investment, opportunities exist to further improve the structure and management of the urban forest on
public and privately owned property. To maximize benefits, Portland Parks & Recreation and its partners are focusing efforts on retaining and expanding existing canopy, planting the right tree in the right place, planting large-growing species where appropriate, and keeping trees healthy.

**Recommended System Improvements**

Portland Parks & Recreation’s park system has existing areas that do not meet service level goals. To resolve these deficiencies and to meet goals established in Parks 2020 Vision, Portland Parks & Recreation has identified a need for:

- Approximately 150 acres of new parkland throughout the City, and the development existing park properties, to meet the goal of providing a park within ½ mile of all city residents;
- 75 miles of multi-use trails within the City to connect people and places and address both recreational and transportation needs;
- Civic spaces in dense urban centers;
- Community centers to serve recreation needs in inner southeast, central and outer northeast and distant southeast.
- Additional pools, particularly in outer northeast Portland.
- Play areas, particularly in central northeast and outer east;
- Additional facilities, including skate parks, courts, fields, and community gardens in areas throughout the city.
- 33% tree canopy cover city-wide, canopy increase in low canopy and low-income areas, and tree species composition of no more than 10% of any one species, 20% of any one genus, and 30% of any one family.
- Continuing to treat and remove invasive species from 1000 acres of natural area sites per year to improve forest health and enhance wildlife habitat.
- Working with our partners to control invasive species in Forest Park.

Portland Parks & Recreation also continually looks to expand the system to respond to new and emerging recreational trends, and meet changing community needs.

**Investment Strategy**

**Process**

Portland Parks & Recreation gathers requests for capital projects from various sources including staff-identified needs, policy documents such as Parks 2020 Vision, park master plans, technical papers, asset register reports as well as from residents and other public agencies. Potential projects are screened and reviewed against community priorities and system-wide needs annually by a review committee, per the criteria outlined on the next page. Each project is given a Capital Project score.

The review committee recommends projects for either the 1 to 5 year Capital Forecast track for implementation, or for the long-range 20 Year Forecast for future consideration. Projects needed to fulfill
the bureau’s strategic direction or take advantage of project-specific funding opportunities go to the 1-5 Year Capital Project list. Projects with lower priorities and uncertain funding are put on the 20-Year Long-Range Planning Master List. The 20-Year list is reviewed annually and projects are advanced to the 1 to 5-Year list if they are deemed necessary, have funding, and there is sufficient staff to manage and implement the projects. Both lists are adjusted annually based on changing needs, funding, resource availability and priorities. The final list of recommended projects is considered by the Parks Budget Committee (in 2012-2013 this was the Portland Parks Board), the public and the mayor during the annual budget process.

Once projects are completed, they will be entered into the Bureau Asset Register (under development). Once assets are built, the Bureau tracks asset condition, value, and maintenance of replacement needs. These needs are then submitted as capital requests in ensuing years.

**Contributing Plans**

Projects added to the Portland Parks & Recreation Capital Project List come from many different sources. Plans referenced include Parks 2020 Vision, Master Plans, Technical Papers, System Plans, and Asset Management Plans. Other sources include field staff requests, community-initiated requests through the Park Proposal Process, or projects that originate through specific funding opportunities like grants, gifts, or sponsorships.

**Alternatives Analysis/Prioritization Process**

Portland Parks & Recreation has developed prioritization criteria for its capital projects. The criteria are included in the Portland Parks & Recreation Capital Planning Manual (2008). Each project is rated and given a score, based on the following considerations:

- **Legal Compliance**: Project is necessary to meet a legal mandate, directive by Council, condition of Land Use Review, contractual obligation, etc. Excludes ADA.
- **ADA Compliance**: Project is necessary to meet ADA compliance.
- **Public Support**: Project has documented or anticipated public support.
- **Conforms to City or Portland Parks & Recreation Plans**: Project is vital to Portland Parks & Recreation mission and Vision 2020 goals, is part of a Portland Parks & Recreation master plan, City plan, Urban Renewal Area plan, or continues a prior project.
- **Improves Level of Service**: Provides new service or improves existing service for identified need to a significant population.
- **Equity**: Households in project service area are above city average for populations of color, students in free and reduced lunch, or low income.
- **Human Health & Safety**: Project alleviates significant, minor or potential existing health or safety hazard; improves general health and safety.
- **Protects Capital Assets or Facilities**: Project is critical to save structural integrity of existing facility or repair significant structural deterioration, or repairs important systems/deters major future expenditure, or increases life expectancy of the asset.
- **Environmental Quality**: Improves environmental quality of a large area, facility, or neighborhood, or improves local environmental quality or prevents environmental damage.

- **Financing/Business Opportunity**: Project has outside financing, donation, or business opportunity that covers 50% or more of the cost.

- **Maintenance Financing**: Project has outside funding to cover 50% of ongoing maintenance costs.

- **Effect on Operating Budget**: Project will reduce operations and maintenance costs, or increase revenues.

### Investment Strategy

Portland Parks & Recreation has identified many infrastructure needs over the next 20 years to meet the level of service goals outlined in the Parks 2020 Vision, including necessary expansions to the system, and maintenance of existing assets. Portland Parks & Recreation maintains a 20-year capital improvement plan (CIP) list, which includes known growth and maintenance related projects that have been identified at this time. Where Portland Parks & Recreation has not yet acquired property or developed a master plan for a site, those projects are not reflected on the Portland Parks & Recreation CIP list. Tree maintenance and canopy expansion investment amounts have yet to be identified.

Further information about the Portland Parks & Recreation CIP list, including currently identified projects, can be found on the City of Portland’s website at: [https://www.portlandoregon.gov/parks/63265](https://www.portlandoregon.gov/parks/63265).

The Citywide Systems Plan does not include a detailed 20-year project list for Portland Parks & Recreation because a comprehensive system plan, that reflects asset management needs and community priorities and includes a list of needed investments, costs, and funding sources, will be developed over the next few years. In addition, this information is not required as part of this Plan under Statewide Planning Goal 11: Public Facilities and related statutes and administrative rules.

Examples of projects and programs PP&R will be working to implement are summarized below.

### Acquisition Program

- Acquisition for developed parks, natural areas, trails, recreation and maintenance facilities. Priorities would include acquisition of land to:
  - Accommodate growth by maintaining a relatively equivalent city wide level of service in areas where growth is occurring
  - Correct deficiencies by providing parks in park-deficient areas
  - Connect to and complete trail systems
  - Protect and enhance natural resource systems
  - Eliminate park in-holdings or expand existing park land, and
  - Effectively operate and maintain Portland’s park system.
City of Portland Comprehensive Plan Update

Maintenance of Existing Parks, Natural Areas, Trails, and Facilities

- Maintenance or replacement of assets that have reached the end of their useful life

Development of New Community Centers

- Washington-Monroe
- Additional Community Centers in areas not currently within 3 miles of an existing full service community center

Development of New Parks

- Beech Park – funded for construction in 2015
- Cherry Park
- Chimney Park
- Clatsop Butte Park
- Errol Heights Park
- Floyd Light Property
- Gates Property
- Gateway Green
- Gateway (urban plaza)
- Gilbert Primary Park
- Hazeltine Property
- Lynchwood Park
- Mill Park
- Mock’s Crest
- North Powellhurst Park
- Parklane Park
- SW Thomas & 53rd Property
- Thomas Cully Park – under construction
- Thompson park
- Werbin Property – funded for construction in 2014
- Wilkes Headwaters Property
- Development of additional new parks or natural areas in areas not currently within ½ mile of an existing park or natural area

Improvements at Existing Developed Parks

- Cathedral Park
- Columbia Children’s Arboretum
• Couch Park
• Crystal Springs Rhododendron Garden
• East Holladay Park
• Hillsdale Park
• Leach Botanical Garden – funded for partial improvements in 2015
• Lents Park
• Mt. Tabor Park and Yard
• Spring Garden Park – funded for improvements in 2015
• Washington Park
• Waterfront Park
• Westmoreland Park
• Willamette Park – funded for improvements in 2015

New Trails / Improvements to Existing Trails
• Columbia Slough/ Columbia South Shore Slough Trail
• Marine Drive / Bridgeton Trail
• Mt Scott / Scouters Mountain Trail
• North Portland Greenway
• Red Electric Trail
• Sullivan’s Gulch
• Springwater Trail – construction to complete the ‘gap’ funded in 2016

Natural Area Parks
• April Hill Natural Area – funded for construction in 2015
• Beggars Tick Natural Area
• Buttes Natural Area Complex (Clatsop Butte, Buttes NA, Mitchell Creek Natural Area, Kingsley D. Bundy)
• Elk Rock Island Natural Area
• Errol Heights
• Forest Park
• Deardoff Creek and Wahoo Creek Natural Areas
• Lower Powell Butte Floodplain
• Marshall Park (including Jensen and Foley Balmer properties) – funded for improvements in 2014
• Oaks Bottom/ Ross Island/ Oaks Crossing
• River View Natural Area
• Stephens Creek Nature Park
- Southwest Waterfront Parks (Powers Marine, Willamette Moorage, Butterfly and Cottonwood Bay)
- West Portland Park Natural Area
- Whitaker Ponds – funded for improvements in 2016
- Woods Park Natural Area

The Citywide Systems Plan does not include a detailed 20-year project list for Portland Parks & Recreation because a comprehensive system plan, including a list of needed investments, costs and funding sources, is not available at this time. The project list will be developed over the next few years. In addition, this information is not required as part of this Plan under Statewide Planning Goal 11: Public Facilities and related statutes and administrative rules.

Financial Strategy

Existing Financing Strategies

Definition and Use

The primary sources of revenue to the Parks Capital Improvement Program Fund include service charges and fees from the System Development Charges (SDC) program, Metro Bond local match, General Fund discretionary, local, state & federal grants, and the Portland Development Commission. The Portland Parks & Recreation system has also grown and replaced assets when necessary due to the passage of a bond or levy approximately every decade.

As Portland Parks & Recreation creatively seeks alternative funding sources to respond to priority needs, some types of projects are more readily funded than others. The System Development Charge (SDC) and tax increment financing in urban renewal areas are sources of funding for land acquisition and project development. This is especially true where population growth and capacity-driven needs are the underlying premise to development, since SDC funds are specifically intended to be used to build new parks and facilities to respond to increased park demand that results from new development and growth, and urban renewal area funds are required to be used in those specific geographic urban renewal areas. However, for most existing infrastructure these types of resources are not available. Finding alternative solutions to fund major capital improvements for existing infrastructure as well as improved ongoing operations and maintenance are major challenges. However, options are being explored to meet these challenges.

Anticipated Revenues

On average, Portland Parks & Recreation has been receiving approximately $1 million annually from General Fund discretionary to address major maintenance, and approximately $8 million from System Development Charges (SDC), Portland Development Commission (PDC), and grants/donations. These figures fluctuate and will change over time. As more development occurs, Portland Parks & Recreation will receive more SDC funds. PDC funding has been reduced as Urban Renewal Areas expire and PDC shifts its investment focus from community infrastructure development to economic development.
Financial Challenges, Unmet Needs and Risks

Portland Parks & Recreation does not receive adequate capital revenues annually to address identified capital needs. Portland Parks & Recreation reported an estimated $844 million annual capital funding gap in 2013, including both maintenance to existing assets and expansions of the system to address deficiencies in service. This funding gap represents the total of projects on Portland Parks & Recreation’s 1-10 year Capital Improvement Project list, minus anticipated annual revenues for capital projects, amortized over 10 years.

PP&R has an expected total capital annual funding need of $93.4 million for each of the next 10 years. PP&R receives an average of $8 million annually in System Development Charge funds, plus grants and donations. Additionally, City Council has been able to provide about $1 million annually to address some of the most urgent needs for repair, rehab and replacement and mandated work. This totals an average of $9 million annually available for capital, leaving a funding gap of $84.4 million. This includes $47.8 million for expanding the system to provide standard levels of service for all residents, in addition to $36.6 million in funding needed to maintain existing assets. Where Portland Parks & Recreation has not yet acquired properties to fill service level gaps, there will be additional need to acquire and develop those properties, which are not currently represented on the Capital Improvement Project list. This would further increase the funding gap.

Table 9.6 Portland Parks & Recreation Annual Funding Gap, 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Capital asset type</th>
<th>Value* (in millions)</th>
<th>R/R/R</th>
<th>Mandate</th>
<th>Capacity</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>amenities</td>
<td>$0.2</td>
<td>$0.1</td>
<td>$0.0</td>
<td>$0.3</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>buildings and pools</td>
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<td>$3.0</td>
<td>$23.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>recreation features</td>
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<tr>
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<td>$1.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>built infrastructure</td>
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<td>$1.5</td>
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<td>$14.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>green infrastructure</td>
<td>$2.5</td>
<td>$0.0</td>
<td>$0.4</td>
<td>$2.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$28.1</strong></td>
<td><strong>$8.5</strong></td>
<td><strong>$47.8</strong></td>
<td><strong>$84.4</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

R/R/R: (Repair, Rehabilitation, Replacement): Additional funding necessary to repair, rehabilitate and replace existing assets to bring them up to established service levels. Also includes replacement of assets considered functionally obsolete (not meeting established service levels).
Mandate: Additional funding necessary to improve existing assets to meet regulatory requirements, exclusive of improvements that fall under R/R/R or Capacity
Capacity: Additional funding necessary to meet the demands of existing customers, based on established levels of service.

Alternative Strategies

Portland Parks & Recreation will need to examine options to increase available funding for expansion and maintenance of its park system. Some options could include:

Park Bonds

Continue working with City Council and Portland taxpayers to periodically pass park general obligation “G.O.” bond measures to address capital projects and system expansion. Historically, Portland Parks &
Recreation’s park system has developed with the assistance of a park G.O. bond measure approximately every decade.

**Dedicated Funding for the Natural Resources and the Urban Forest**

Portland Parks & Recreation will need to continue to seek dedicated sources of funding for ongoing natural area restoration and maintenance, including activities such as continued removal of invasive species, planting native species, and safely managing public access to natural areas. The Urban Forest Management Plan calls for the establishment of sustainable funding for the urban forest. Funding sources considered in a 2009 study by Davey Resources Group includes a property frontage fee, among other options.

**Increasing Partnerships**

Portland Parks & Recreation continues to look for opportunities to develop public-private partnerships to help expand the park system.

**Maximizing public use of sports fields**

Portland Parks & Recreation has developed a joint-use agreement with Portland Public Schools regarding use of some sports fields, and continues to work with surrounding school districts and organized sports groups to look for mutually beneficial joint use opportunities. A recent partnership in the enhancement of Buckman Field is a good example.

**Summary**

Portland Parks & Recreation will need to continue to be aware of and implementing best practices and innovative funding techniques used in other jurisdictions may yield other alternative strategies.

If Portland Parks & Recreation is not able to increase funding to address its funding gap, the condition of its assets will worsen, and Portland Parks & Recreation will need to either:

- Reduce levels of service (remove some assets from the system) or;
- Manage a system of assets that is operated with higher levels of risk to the user and organization.