

Draft Forest Park Planning Principles

Revised based on feedback from the Project Advisory Committee

February 15, 2017

- Pages 1 through 6 have been added for context and clarification
- Revisions to the Planning Principles are highlighted
- Planning Principles have been re-numbered sequentially for ease of reference.

DRAFT

Forest Park & the Portland Off-road Cycling Master Plan

The Portland Off-road Cycling Master Plan aims to make a recommendation to City Council regarding **whether (or not) off-road cycling access should be expanded or improved in Forest Park.**

If No, the Plan will recommend maintaining existing – but not expanding or improving – off-road cycling opportunities with the park.

If Yes, the Plan will provide further recommendations including:

- Concept-level project recommendations that could be forwarded to the PP&R CIP list, including project descriptions, conceptual alignments (if appropriate), planning-level cost estimates, and additional considerations.
 - Projects could include changing allowed users, improving or changing the alignment of existing trails, closing trail segments, or building new trails.
 - Projects could improve access or create new recreational opportunities for multiple types of users.
 - Projects will include complementary natural resource protection, enhancement or restoration elements.
- Guidelines and best practices for trail construction and management, as appropriate.
- Complementary programmatic and monitoring recommendations.
- Guidelines for community engagement.
- Initial findings against the Forest Park Natural Resource Management Plan. (?)
- Next steps for implementation.

Implementing any changes to trails in Forest Park, including changing allowed users, improving or changing the alignment of trails, closing trail segments, or building new trails, will require:

- additional funding;
- approval through the budget's CIP process;
- detailed design and alignment planning;
- community engagement;
- Type II or Type III environmental review pursuant to the Implementation Procedures identified in the Forest Park Natural Resource Management Plan and codified in the Portland Zoning Code.

Environmental Review Applicability and Criteria

Carrying out any potentially project recommendation will require Type II or Type III environmental review pursuant to the Implementation Procedures identified in the Forest Park Natural Resource Management Plan and codified in the Portland Zoning Code. Chapter 8. Implementation Procedures of the Forest Park Natural Resource Management Plan establishes the applicability and criteria for these reviews.

Chapter 6. Implementation Procedures is presented in the following pages. The full text of the Forest Park Natural Resource Management Plan can be found at <http://www.portlandoregon.gov/bps/article/103939>.

CHAPTER 8. IMPLEMENTATION PROCEDURES

Introduction

This chapter presents procedural requirements for projects identified in Chapter 7 and for other future park improvements or resource management actions. These procedures apply to all publicly-owned park land located within the Forest Park NRMP boundary as shown on the Official Zoning Maps. It is intended that these procedures shall also apply to parcels of land that are acquired by the City and added to Forest Park.

Numerous NRMP projects, identified under Uses Allowed in the following section, receive approval through adoption of this NRMP and require no further review. Other projects, found under Uses Needing Further Evaluation, require a Type II Environmental Review procedure. Exceptions to the plan require a Type III Environmental Review procedure. New criteria apply to both the Type II and Type III procedures. Modifications to Plan Vision, Goals or Strategies require a legislative procedure as provided in 33.740.

Procedures

A. Actions in Conformance with the Plan

1. Uses Allowed.

No land use review is required for projects that support Plan goals and strategies and are specifically identified and evaluated in the Management Plan. The following projects listed in the plan are allowed uses:

- All RP projects (resource protection)
- All RE projects (resource enhancement)
- RT-1N, RT-2N, RT-4C, RT-4S, RT-5S (trail connections)
- RT-3C (bike trail)
- RT-2S (Balch ADA/Interpretive trail)
- RT-4N, RT-6S (trail removals)
- RT-5C (trail maintenance)
- PI-1N, PI-2N, PI-4N, PI-2S, PI-5S (parking, trailheads)
- PI-1S, PI-3S, PI-9S, PI-1All, PI-2All (miscellaneous projects)
- S-1All, S-1C, S-1N, S-1S, S-2S (specific sign projects)
- S-2All (interpretive signs)
- All SV projects (street vacation)

Resource monitoring projects and modification of trailhead locations, trail alignments, and interpretive signage for any projects identified above are allowed if the following standards are met:

1. No woody vegetation is removed or disturbed during construction.
2. Signs are within 10 feet of edge of the trail.
3. Wet weather erosion control standards of the Bureau of Environmental Services are met.

2. Uses Needing Further Evaluation.

Certain projects identified in the Plan, and certain unanticipated uses, require additional review before a determination can be made as to conformance with Plan goals and strategies. These projects and uses are processed as minor amendments to the plan and are reviewed through a Type II environmental review procedure.

The following unanticipated projects and modifications to identified Plan projects are minor amendments:

1. Resource enhancement projects not identified as allowed uses.
2. Expansions of less than 50 percent of site area for projects identified as allowed uses.
3. Modifications to design or location of Plan projects identified as allowed uses.
4. New facilities requiring above or below ground structures, which cumulatively disturb less than 10,000 sq. ft. of soil or vegetation.
5. Creation of new trails or closure of existing trails.

The following projects need more detailed evaluation before they can be approved. They are also considered minor amendments.

RT-3N (Wildwood Trail extension)

RT-3S (bike trails)

RT-5N, RT-1C, RT-2C, RT-1S (40 Mile Loop connections, improvements)

PI-1C, PI-2C, PI-3N, PI-4S, PI-7S, PI-8S (parking, trailhead improvements)

PI-6S (Lower Macleay trailhead and park facilities)

BES-1 (Balch Creek water quality project)

Environmental reviews for minor amendments are evaluated using the following approval criteria:

Approval Criteria for Minor Amendments: The amendment will be approved if:

- A. There is a demonstrated need for the proposal.
- B. The proposed action is consistent with Forest Park Natural Resources Management Plan Goals and Strategies.
- C. Alternative locations and design modifications were evaluated to show that the proposal has the least significant detrimental environmental impact of the practicable alternatives.
- D. A construction management plan and a mitigation plan will minimize impacts on resource and restore adjacent disturbed areas.

B. Exceptions to the Plan

All other projects are processed as exceptions to the Plan.

Exceptions

1. Expansions of 50 percent or more of site area for projects identified as allowed uses.
2. New public or park facilities requiring above or below ground structures, which cumulatively disturb 10,000 sq. ft. or more of soil or vegetation.
3. Changes to Management Unit boundaries.
4. All other projects or Plan modifications except changes to Plan Vision, Goals or Strategies.

Procedure: Exceptions to the Plan are reviewed through a Type III environmental review procedure.

Environmental reviews for exceptions will be approved if the following approval criteria are met.

Approval Criteria for Exceptions:

- A. The proposal meets all the criteria for minor amendments.
- B. The proposal is a park-related development, or no alternative locations exist outside of Forest Park for the proposal.
- C. There are no practicable alternative locations within Forest Park suitable for the use in which the development will have less adverse impact on resource values.
- D. Any long-term adverse impacts of the proposed action on resource values are fully mitigated within the Management Unit.
- E. The proposal is consistent with the purpose of the Environmental Zones.

C. Plan Policy Modifications

Modifications to Plan Vision, Goals or Strategies are processed using a legislative procedure, as provided in Chapter 33.740, Legislative Procedure, of the Zoning Code.

DESIRED OUTCOME

The Portland Off-road Cycling Master Plan...

Is built on an inclusive, constructive, and transparent planning process that:

- Fosters an open, honest, and productive conversation that is easy and fun to participate in and that builds trust in City planning efforts
- Is inclusive, engages historically under-represented groups, and brings people with different perspectives and experiences together
- Engages kids and families
- Is coordinated across City Bureaus and leadership
- Looks to other cities for best practices and tools to create a reasoned and sustainable approach to planning, designing and managing off-road cycling trails and facilities.

Draft Citywide Planning Principles

- A. Support an inclusive and transparent planning process for off-road cycling access in Forest Park, following the Off-road Cycling Master Plan's Community Engagement Plan.
- B. Engage diverse community members from across the city in the planning process, as Forest Park serves the entire city. Ensure the voices of historically under-represented groups – including people of color, immigrants and refugee communities, people with disabilities, low-income Portlanders, and youth – are included in the planning process.
- C. Encourage the participation of park users and others who will be directly impacted by any recommendations.

Draft Forest Park Planning Principles

- D. Consider community input gathered in previous planning processes for Forest Park.

DESIRED OUTCOME

The Portland Off-road Cycling Master Plan...

Lays a foundation for how off-road cycling is understood, discussed and planned for in Portland. The Plan establishes the role of the City and its public spaces in meeting off-road cycling needs and provides a comprehensive framework for successfully meeting community needs. The Plan defines off-road cycling and develops a baseline understanding of who is, or would like to, ride off-road in the city now and in the future.

Draft Forest Park Planning Principles

- E. Use the Off-road Cycling Master Plan's background reports on recreational participation rates, impacts and benefits of off-road cycling, and best practices to inform recommendations.

DESIRED OUTCOME

The Portland Off-road Cycling Master Plan...

Blends visionary goals with a practical and realistic approach. The plan is realistic, feasible, and works within the context of community needs and values, City goals, Portland's urban environment and landscape, and regulatory constraints. But, it is also visionary, ambitious, and strives to make Portland a national example for incorporating off-road cycling into healthy communities. The Plan thinks creatively about all opportunities across the City, and within the region. To realize long-term success, the Plan sets a clear course for implementation by addressing funding, design, development, and management.

Draft Forest Park Planning Principles

- F. Recognize the role of Forest Park as a regionally significant ecological, recreational, and educational resource. Recognize that the unique natural quality of Forest Park makes it popular and cherished place to recreate, learn and reflect.
- G. Develop recommendations that align with the goals and strategies in the Forest Park Natural Resource Management Plan, including the Goals for Trail Management, the Northwest Hills Management Plan, and the Greater Forest Park Conservation Initiative.
 - Use the Management Units (divides the park into North, Central, and South management units) and the vision for each unit to guide planning and recommendations.
 - Recognize that trail improvements, closures, or development will require environmental review, which adds to the complexity and cost of a project. **When considering any potential project recommendations, take the implementation procedures and approval criteria established in the Natural Resource Management Plan into account.**
- H. **In planning for off-road cycling access in Forest Park, advance recommendations that will meet multiple community and ecological goals and foster improved environmental and recreational conditions in the park.**

DESIRED OUTCOME

The Portland Off-road Cycling Master Plan...

Designs with nature, by enhancing nature in the city and avoiding, limiting then

mitigating adverse impacts on wildlife and natural resources, including fish and wildlife habitat and water resources. The Plan incorporates the City's watershed health goals and reflects best practices in sustainable off-road cycling systems in its policy guidance, siting criteria, design, and management strategies.

Draft Forest Park Planning Principles

- I. Apply ecologically sustainable best management practices to the siting, design, construction, and maintenance of trails.
- J. Enhance nature in the park. Aim for a net ecological benefit through implementation of Plan recommendations.
 - Pursue opportunities to pair enhanced recreational access with restoration of habitat and water resources, particularly as established in the park's Desired Future Conditions and Ecological Prescriptions.
 - Where opportunities exist, encourage the narrowing of trail corridors to improve habitat function and cycling experience.
 - Encourage the improvement or closure of existing trail segments that are unnecessary, poorly designed, or which negatively impact areas with the highest ecological function and value.
- K. Avoid, limit, then mitigate adverse impacts on wildlife and natural resources.
 - Avoid adverse impacts to areas of park with highest ecological function and value, including the North unit, interior forest, the Balch and Miller Creek Watersheds, the Newton Wetlands and Doane Lake, and rare plant and animal communities. In other areas, plan any new trail alignments or trail management activities to result in the least adverse impact to sensitive habitat areas.
 - Limit adverse impacts to forest vegetation. Site and design trails to avoid removal of native forest vegetation if possible. Mitigate any unavoidable removal through revegetation strategies.
 - Limit adverse impacts to streams and other water resources. Site and design trails using best management practices to limit erosive potential, stream crossings, and the creation of impervious surfaces, and otherwise reduce potential negative impacts.
- L. Recommend continued monitoring of natural resources and fish and wildlife populations within the park. Use adaptive management strategies, potentially including the temporary or permanent closure of trails, to address unintended negative impacts.

DESIRED OUTCOME

The Portland Off-road Cycling Master Plan...

Identifies a variety of trails and facilities that accommodate different ages, abilities, and riding experiences to meet community needs, while establishing where these facilities are most appropriate. The Plan envisions opportunities to expand access to recreation and nature across the city, especially for children, people of color and underserved communities. It proposes a bicycle- or transit- accessible system of off-road cycling trails and facilities for recreation and transportation across the city.

Draft Forest Park Planning Principles

- M. Continue to allow off-road cycling where currently allowed, unless the Off-road Cycling Master Plan recommends restricting access on certain trails for environmental or user-experience reasons.
- N. Enhance and expand appropriate opportunities to ride a bicycle off-road within Forest Park. Recognize cycling as a recreational activity that is appropriate within Forest Park, if provided sustainably, responsibly and in accordance the park’s management goals.
- Manage recreational use intensity on a gradient ranging from the most intense in the South unit to the least intense in the North unit.
 - Enhance cross-country cycling experiences, which are best suited to the topography and character of the park.
 - Focus on opportunities to create narrow to mid-width cross-country trails, which are currently limited.
 - Create loops, ideally stacked loops, to provide a variety of riding options and lengths. *Note, the length of a typical cross-country ride is approximately 10 miles.*
 - Do not recommend the creation of bike parks in Forest Park.
- O. Provide information on each trail segment’s level of difficulty through signage and other public information to improve accessibility for riders of all abilities and skill levels. Avoid the use of bollards or other barriers that may restrict access by some users.
- P. Create connections to improve access to the park by bicycle.
- Connect cycling trails within Forest Park to the regional trail system to allow for longer riding experiences and encourage people to “ride to ride”.
 - Encourage use of transit, pedestrian and bicycle access to the park. Encourage the development of trailheads along transit access. Connect any trailheads that provide access to cycling trails to the City’s paved bicycle network.

DESIRED OUTCOME

The Portland Off-road Cycling Master Plan...

Promotes the health, safety and enjoyment of trail and park users, including people of all ages and abilities who walk, hike, ride bicycles, and otherwise enjoy the outdoors. The Plan carefully considers the needs of diverse users of Portland's parks, employs siting and design best practices encourage mutual safety, and establishes a trail and facility system that extends quality recreational opportunities.

Draft Forest Park Planning Principles

- Q. Recognize the need for pedestrian-only trail experiences. Do not recommend converting the highest-use pedestrian-only trails (the Wildwood Trail and all pedestrian-only trails in the Southern Unit) to shared use.
- R. Use best management practices in trail design and management to promote user safety and experience and reduce potential conflicts.
- Do not recommend converting existing trails to off-road cycling use unless:
 - a) their current design can safely and sustainably accommodate such use or
 - b) the Plan also recommends projects to redesign such trails according to current best practices.
 - Design any recommended new trails as either shared-use or bicycle-preferred use trails, given the recreational demands on the Forest Park and the need to limit duplicative trail systems (to minimize environmental impacts).
 - Use trail design to control cyclist speeds on shared trails to provide safe and enjoyable experiences for all users.
Note: The average speed for typical cross-country riding is 7 miles per hour, equivalent to someone running an 8:30 minute mile.
 - Promote share-the-trail and other safety-oriented management practices.
- S. Maintain maintenance and emergency access routes in the Park.

DESIRED OUTCOME

The Portland Off-road Cycling Master Plan...

Builds community ownership and partnerships for the stewardship of Portland's parks, natural areas and other public properties. The Plan establishes a role for community groups, park users and volunteers – and recognizes their potential contribution – in building, managing and sustaining an off-road cycling system.

Draft Forest Park Planning Principles

- T. Encourage and support active stewardship by all trail users.
 - Support and build partnerships with park users and community organizations (including the Forest Park Conservancy, the Forest Park Alliance, and the Northwest Trails Alliance) for trail construction and maintenance, park restoration and enhancement, and education.
 - Partner with trail-based organizations with expertise in planning, constructing, maintaining, and programming off-road cycling facilities.
 - Encourage volunteer stewardship activities.

DESIRED OUTCOME The Portland Off-road Cycling Master Plan...

Plans for responsible design and management of off-road cycling trails and facilities to cost-effectively meet community needs. In addition, the Plan acknowledges and leverages the potential economic benefits of off-road cycling and of a comprehensive park, trail and recreation system.

Draft Forest Park Planning Principles

- U. Consider the management implications associated with any recommended expansion or improvement of off-road cycling access. Changing uses of existing trails requires the greatest management resources.
- V. Provide public education that supports stewardship of the Park. Use signage, maps, and public information to establish rules and expectations for trail use.
- W. Recognize and support the need for continued enforcement of park rules.
 - Support a continued and expanded Ranger Program.
 - Support the use of volunteer patrols, which can also provide educational, skill-building, and stewardship opportunities.