



DIRECTOR PARK | Frequently Asked Questions

PARK NAMING

Q: Why is the park named “Director Park”?

A: The plaza was named after Simon and Helen Director, who emigrated from Eastern Europe to Portland early in the last century. They worked very hard raising a large family, serving their community and building a legacy of civic engagement. Their grandson, Jordan Director Schnitzer, named the park in their honor in recognition of his \$1.6 million donation to the park’s development.

Q: Why is the fountain named “Teachers Fountain”?

A: The Fountain is dedicated to teachers everywhere, in the words of Jordan Director Schnitzer, in recognition of “their selfless and untiring efforts to inspire the hearts and minds of their students. The work they do enriches all of our lives.” Schnitzer named the Fountain in acknowledgement of his \$400,000 gift toward the cost of the fountain.

Q: Why are the names not “Director’s Park” and “Teacher’s Fountain”?

A: The apostrophe has two uses: contraction and possession. Since Director Park is named after a person’s last name and they do not have possession of the park, there is no apostrophe in the name. The same can be said for “Teachers Fountain”, as it is dedicated to all teachers.

Q: What is the history of the park?

A: Pioneers Daniel Lownsdale and William Chapman donated a row of 19 blocks to the newly-platted City of Portland for parkland in the 1840’s. The blocks to the north and south became the Park Blocks, but the middle seven blocks – including this one – were developed due to legal difficulties with the Lownsdale and Chapman heirs. By 1998 this was a surface parking lot, and the owner planned to construct a multi-story parking structure. That year, Thomas P. Moyer, developer of the adjacent Fox Tower, pledged to acquire the block and donate the surface to the City for a park while constructing underground parking below. This generous gift, in memory of Mrs. Marilyn Moyer, finally allowed creation of a lively community space to connect the North and South Park Blocks.

Q: What was the public process during the creation of the park?

A: An extensive public process was undertaken during the many years of design and development of the park. In the 20 years prior to the park’s construction, there were many studies completed calling for a park on this block, each with its own public process. Once it was clear that the park would be developed, the project began in earnest in 2006. The planning and design phase of the park’s development had a diverse public input process, including an opinion survey, 4 newsletters, 3 public open houses, 13 Citizens Advisory Committee meetings, at least a half dozen presentations to City Council and many smaller presentations to various stakeholder groups and reviewing bodies, including the Design Commission and the Disability Advisory Committee.

Q: What is the mission of Director Park?

A: The mission of Director park is to be a public piazza providing an elegant, clean, safe and versatile space that supports rental use and daily park use.

It is furnished with amenities planned around the idea of sociable urban living in all seasons, with several small spaces within the larger whole of Director Park.

DESIGN QUESTIONS

Q: Who designed the park?

- A:**
- ZGF Architects, prime consultant
 - The Olin Studio, lead designer

Plus a diverse group of firms and individuals, including: Mayer/Reed; KPFF Consulting Engineers; Tad Savinar; Karen Whitman; Interface Engineering; SOLARC; Benya Lighting; CMS Collaborative; Architectural Cost Consultants; TVA Architects; and Kathy Bash.

Q: Who managed the project?

A: Portland Parks & Recreation managed the project with support and consultation by the Portland Development Commission.

Q: Who was the project manager for the program?

A: Allison Rouse, Landscape Architect and PDC’s project coordinator, Eric Jacobson.

Q: Who was the contractor on the project?

A: The Phase 1 contractor was Coffman Excavating, Inc. and the Phase 2 and Enhanced Streets contractor was Brant Construction, with a diverse team of subcontractors.

Q: Why was the park designed like a “Piazza”?

A: After much discussion, it was decided that Director Park had a special character distinct from the other Park Blocks, due to its central location amid tall buildings and between east-west and north-south transportation routes. The number of visitors was expected to rival Pioneer Courthouse Square, which is twice the size, including an increasing number of nearby residents who need a place to be outside year round. Microclimate analysis showed a significant amount of shading, with some downdrafts from the surrounding towers. The “lid” of the parking garage below creates very little room for tree roots on the southern half of the site and none at all on the northern half. These factors combine to produce a socially important and very busy site with tough conditions for plant material. In addition, public input requested the most versatile space possible, so for all of these reasons, a piazza was the favored park model.



Q: What is the public art piece in the park?

A: The public art piece is a light display suspended from the overhead canopy. Titled “Mercurial Skydance,” it was created by Dan Corson of Seattle and provided through the City of Portland Percent for Art Program administered by the Regional Arts & Culture Council. The piece presents patterns derived from natural phenomena and movements (clouds, waves, moving branches, etc.) displayed on an array of LED light tubes forming a screen suspended from the canopy. Corson’s intent was that the art provide an “...abstract, striated tapestry of light and color.” He was interested in “bringing in the feeling and movement of nature in to the space to acknowledge the patterns and randomness of nature.”



Q: How much did it cost to build the park?

A: \$9.45 million – of that \$7.2 million was construction cost, and \$2.25 million was design and administration. The land donated to the City was valued at a further \$6 million (minimum), bringing the total value of the park to \$15.5 million.

Q: How was the Park paid for?

A: Excluding the land, 2/3rds of the funding for the plaza came from public sources and 1/3rd from private gifts facilitated by the Portland Parks Foundation. If the value of the land is considered, then 59% of the cost was privately donated and 41% came from public sources.

The cash funding for construction cost came from a number of sources including:

Private Gifts

The Moyer Family:	\$ 1.1 million	12%
Jordan Director Schnitzer:	\$ 2.0 million	21%

Public Funds

Portland Development Commission, South Park Blocks Urban Renewal:	\$ 4.5 million	47%
City of Portland General Fund:	\$ 0.7 million	7%
Portland Parks & Recreation, System Development Charges:	\$ 1.2 million	13%
	\$ 9.45 million	100% (construction costs)

Q: What amenities does the park have?

A: Tenant:Travel Portland Visitor Center
Fountain:.....Public fountain surrounded by curved benches
Tables and Chairs:European style tables & chairs that can be moved to where the sun is
Glass Canopy:.....Relax and observe the urban scene, rain or shine
Public Restroom:.....One single stall restroom open when park is rented for events

Q: What are the two beige colored one-story structures in the park?

A: They are the Parking Garage Pedestrian Entrances, owned by TMT Development, owners of the Fox Tower adjacent to the park on the east and Park Avenue West to the north. They lead to the six-story parking garage beneath the park.

Q: How does one access the Fox Tower Parking Lot?

A: Underneath the Fox Tower. You enter off of SW Taylor Street between Broadway and Park Avenue.

Q: How many floors is the parking garage immediately under the park?

A: The parking garage has six floors of parking located beneath both Director Park and the Fox Tower. Within the garage, the zones labeled “B” are underneath the Building (Fox Tower) and those labeled “P” are under the Park.

Q: Who owns the parking garage below Director Park?

A: TMT Development, owner of the Fox Tower, also owns the parking lot underneath the Park. The parking garage is managed by City Center Parking.

Q: Who owns the building Travel Portland is in?

A: Portland Parks & Recreation owns the building and leases the space to the tenant.

Q: What is Travel Portland Visitors Experience?

A: Located in the heart of downtown, it is staffed by friendly, knowledgeable volunteers and offers maps, brochures, event listings and itinerary-planning assistance.

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Q: What does the fountain do?

A: The fountain is a playful but elegant display of arcing jets and low bubbles that run downhill into a shallow pool. There are 8 modest jets, between 3 and 5 feet high, and 8 burbles approximately 12” high within the pool to gently move the water. The water in the pool spills over a barrier beneath the bench, recirculates through the sanitary system and then cycles continuously back through the display. The display does not vary or interact with users.

Q: What months will the fountain be turned on?

A: The fountain will typically be on from April through the end of September. It has the ability to be turned off and drained for events, when the fountain is rented, as well as an automatic shut-off during high winds.

Q: Where is the fountain?

A: The Fountain is located in the north end of the park and was designed to blend in with the plaza paving. When it is on, there are modest jets of water coming from the pavers around the sphere. The water runs from there downhill into a pool that reaches to the curved bench.

Q: Are children allowed to play in the fountain in the summer?

A: Yes, children are allowed in the fountain. Infants and toddlers are required to wear swim diapers and water footwear is recommended while in the fountain. The fountain will be shut off occasionally when rented for events. To confirm fountain operation hours, call 503-823-8087.

Q: What is the material the benches around the fountain are made out of?

A: The wood on the benches is Ipe (pronounced “E-pay”). It is a hard wood native to Brazil. Extremely durable, it is not stained and will weather over the years to a silvery-bronze color.

Q: Are dogs allowed in the fountain?

A: Dogs are not allowed in Teachers Fountain per City Code 20.12.140



RENTAL QUESTIONS

Q: Can space be rented for private use of the park?

A: Yes! Please call 503-823-8087 for rental information, fees and availability. For more information visit directorpark.org

Q: What areas may be reserved in the park?

A: Rentals are available in individual spaces, a combination of spaces, or the entire park. For a visual, see the map at the Director Park website under the “Rental” tab.

The Bosque: SE corner of the park

The Upper Terrace Upper area under the glass canopy

The Lower Terrace: Lower area under the glass canopy

The Plaza: Area between the parking entry structure and Teachers Fountain

Teachers Fountain:..... Area within the circular benches. Water can be turned off when rented

The Artist’s Niche: In SW corner of park near the drinking fountain

Teachers Fountain Corner: Commercial sampling space on the corner of SW Park & Yamhill

Park Avenue:..... Entire Street – permitted through PP&R, when part of larger rental

9th Avenue: Entire Street – permitted through PP&R, when part of larger rental

TREES IN DIRECTOR PARK

Q: What types of trees are growing in the park?

A: **Bosque Trees:** These are American Yellowwoods (*Cladrastis kentuckea*), featuring a broad crown with fragrant spring blossoms and yellow fall color.

Park and 9th Ave Street Trees: These are Valley Forge Elms (*Ulmus americana* ‘Valley Forge’) a disease resistant variety of Elm that will produce a tall, vase-shaped shade tree similar to those on the other Park Blocks.

Yamhill Street Trees: These are Red Maples (*Acer rubrum*) to match the trees along the MAX corridor.

Taylor Street Trees: These are Cimmarron Ashes (*Fraxinus pennsylvanica* ‘Cimzam’) a fast-growing, high-branching, pollution-tolerant variety of Ash for this busy corridor.

Q: Why are there trees only on the southern half

half of the Park?

A: The surface grades of the block slope from the SW corner at 9th and Taylor diagonally down to the NE corner of the Park at Park and Yamhill, yet the top of the parking garage below is level. This produces varying amounts of room for tree roots in the park, ranging from 4’-6’ in the southern half to only 18” to 24” in the northern half, which is not enough room to fit tree roots.

Q: Why is the canopy so tall?

A: The canopy is 25 feet tall in order to leave as much open feeling in the park as possible, while still providing some cover. The height of the canopy also keeps it in scale with its surroundings, which helps mitigate the “fishbowl” effect experienced by park visitors amid the tall towers.

Q: What kind of stone are the pavers in the park?

A: The pavers and other granite blocks in the park are “Gobi” honey-colored granite, quarried and individually shaped in China. The very pale color of the granite will weather into a darker honey color as the iron bits in the stone receive rain and sunlight.

Q: What are the cables coming down from the glass Canopy for?

A: The cables are to direct rain from the upper canopy down the cables into the planter boxes.

Q: What are the spigots at the end of the planters for?

A: These were originally installed to let the accumulated water out into a storm drain in the pavement in an artistic manner. An engineering revision changed the design after these outlets were already installed, and the water now exits from a subsurface pipe. The spigots were left as ornamental features.

Q: What is the grade of the park?

A: There is an 11 foot grade change in the park, diagonally from the SW corner at 9th and Taylor down to the NE corner at Park and Yamhill, which equates to a 4.9% slope. To achieve flat areas in the park for activities, tables and chairs, terracing was necessary.

Q: What is the security plan for Director Park?

A: For daily park use, the Portland Park Rangers visit the park several times a day. Events and rentals are typically required to have on-site security.

Q: Are skateboards allowed in Director Park?

A: No, skateboarding is not allowed in Director Park.

Q: Why do we see people skateboarding in the park?

A: The Park is very attractive to skateboarders due to the grade, lines and jump possibilities. Parks has installed “skate clips” to deter skaters from using the ledges in the park. The streets along the eastern and western sides of the park, Southwest Park and SW 9th Avenues, are open to the same vehicles as other downtown streets, which does include skateboards and bikes.

Q: Who do we call if there is a crime in progress or serious threat in Director Park?

A: If there is a crime in progress, if a serious threat or problem is developing, or if there is an emergency, please call 911.

Q: Who should we call about dogs off leash, skate boarders, parkrelated problems or special situations?

A: Call the Portland Park Rangers at 503-823-1637.

Q: Who do we call for dog attacks or other serious situations involving animals?

A: Call Multnomah County Animal Control at 503-248-3790 or call Police Non-Emergency at 503-823-3333.

Q: What plants do you have on the green roof?

A: A mix of tough, drought-tolerant sedums and grasses. The green roof is on top of the Visitor Center building. It is best viewed from above – the Smart Park garage. Theatergoers at the Fox Tower, and those staying at the Paramount Hotel can also appreciate the view.

Q: How are the plants on the green roof watered?

A: There is an irrigation system to keep the roof plants green year round.

Q: What are you doing to filter the storm water and where are the filters located?

A: All of the rain that falls in the Park and Streets is filtered before it is released into the City's stormwater system. In the Park, water that hits the canopy flows into the raised planters on the west edge of the terraces. Water that hits the rest of the park flows into area drains in the pavement and then through pipes to large filters installed in a vault under the Park Avenue sidewalk, immediately south of the Naming Marker, the stone in the NE corner of the park with an explanation of the origins of Director Park's name. Rain that hits the street surface flows into the stormwater planters located in the NE corner of each street.

For more information on Director Park contact us at 503-823-8087.