



PORTLAND PARKS & RECREATION

Healthy Parks, Healthy Portland



Hillsdale Park Master Plan

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Cover photo: Hillsdale Park looking south from center of the park

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Introduction

Purpose of the Master Plan

A Level 1 Master Plan is designed to produce a site plan and conceptual development plan for parks that are typically 5 acres or less and that do not have complex issues or concerns. The master plan considers the whole park in the context of all parks in the area and provides a unified site plan for use and development. The master plan guides current management and informs future development when funds become available. For parks with limited development funds, it is a way to develop an agreed-on set of improvements that can be implemented in partnership with neighbors and park users.

Description and Location of Hillsdale Park

Hillsdale Park is an L-shaped 5+ acre park in southwest Portland located off of Beaverton-Hillsdale Highway a short distance west of the Hillsdale Town Center. It is adjacent to Robert Gray Middle School, the Portland Christian Center and The Laurels condominiums.

The park has a variety of landscape settings including open lawns, a wooded hillside and a meadow area. The park is generally undeveloped. A dog off-leash area is located in the north end of the park by a Portland Christian Center parking lot.

The park has been in the Portland Park & Recreation (PP&R) system since 1952. Over the years a number of proposals for developing the park have been advanced; none has come to fruition.

Level 1 Master Planning Process

The process involves initial inventory and research work by staff, public involvement consisting of an initial newsletter and questionnaire, a community design workshop, the posting of plans on PP&R's web site, a public comment period and a review of the results with the community. The result is a final site plan and a written summary document.

Consensus and Optional Elements Plans

The community design workshop for Hillsdale Park resulted in two plans – a minimal development consensus plan that all participants agreed to, and an optional elements plan that included additional improvements. Those plans were made available to the public for comment. There was strong support for all elements of Consensus plan and generally strong support for the proposed Optional Elements plan.

Existing Conditions

Site History

ACQUISITION

The two parcels (1.36 and 3.81 acres) that make up the majority of Hillsdale Park were acquired in 1952. A 10' wide strip of land for the old road that goes from the Beaverton-Hillsdale Highway to the north part of the park was acquired in a land swap with the Assembly of God church (now the Portland Christian Center) in 1974. The road originally provided access to a house and barn in the area now occupied by the church parking lot. A few orchard trees remain in the park when it was a farmstead.

PRIOR DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

Over the years, a number of proposals have been advanced for the park. A 1952 drawing shows full development of the current park area and some areas around it. The plan included an amphitheater north of the current sports fields at Robert Gray, a football field, four tennis courts, a swimming pool, field house / bath house, children's play area, picnic grove and a parking lot behind the condominiums.

In 1979, the Bridlemile / Robert Gray Association, on behalf of 397 petitioners, sent a letter to Mildred Schwab, Commissioner for Public Affairs, requesting play fields and development of the park as a community and recreation center.

As part of a package of bond project soccer fields, Portland Parks & Recreation proposed building a soccer field and small parking lot in 1996. When a synthetic grass field - capable of accommodating much more use - was built at Mary Rieke, that proposal was dropped. Over the years, Portland Christian Center has offered to buy or develop parts of the park for additional parking. None of these proposals has materialized.

Zoning

The park is zoned OS (Open Space). The surrounding area is mainly single family residential (R7 and R10) with multi-family (R2) residential units along Beaverton-Hillsdale Highway.

There is an area of Commercial zoning on Capital Highway about a mile east of the park and another area of Commercial zoning on Beaverton-Hillsdale Highway about two miles west of the park.

Landscape Settings

The park has a variety of settings ranging from wooded to pastoral open meadow. Most of the park consists of rolling or steep land. There are four general areas within the park: the off-leash meadow in the north, the wooded knoll in the center, the open slope and orchard in the east section and the lawn with mature trees in the southwest.

Conifers are prevalent in the south part of the park and a number of old orchard trees exist at the foot of the open south-facing slope by The Laurels. There are approximately 170 trees larger than 6" dbh¹ and 30 of those are 20" or larger. Another 30 trees are located in the B-H Hwy right-of-way, including 4 significant sequoias (32", 36", 40" and 44" dbh).

The midpoint of the site has steep south-facing slopes (50% in places), and north-facing slopes of about 15% down to the PCC parking lot. Most of the site is in grass, either rough mown three times a year (north end) or maintained as lawn with weekly mowing (the remainder of the site).

Natural Resources

There are few significant natural resources in Hillsdale Park and no environmental overlays. Native trees include Douglas fir and alder. Other trees are ornamental trees, orchard trees or non-native invasives. The TNC (The Nature Conservancy) vegetation classification is closed forest, upland forest.

Conditions that would have existed in 1851 are identified as FFHC Bu Mesic mixed conifer forest with mostly deciduous understory. The forest could have included Douglas fir, western hemlock, red cedar, grand fir, big leaf maple, yew, dogwood, white oak, and red alder.

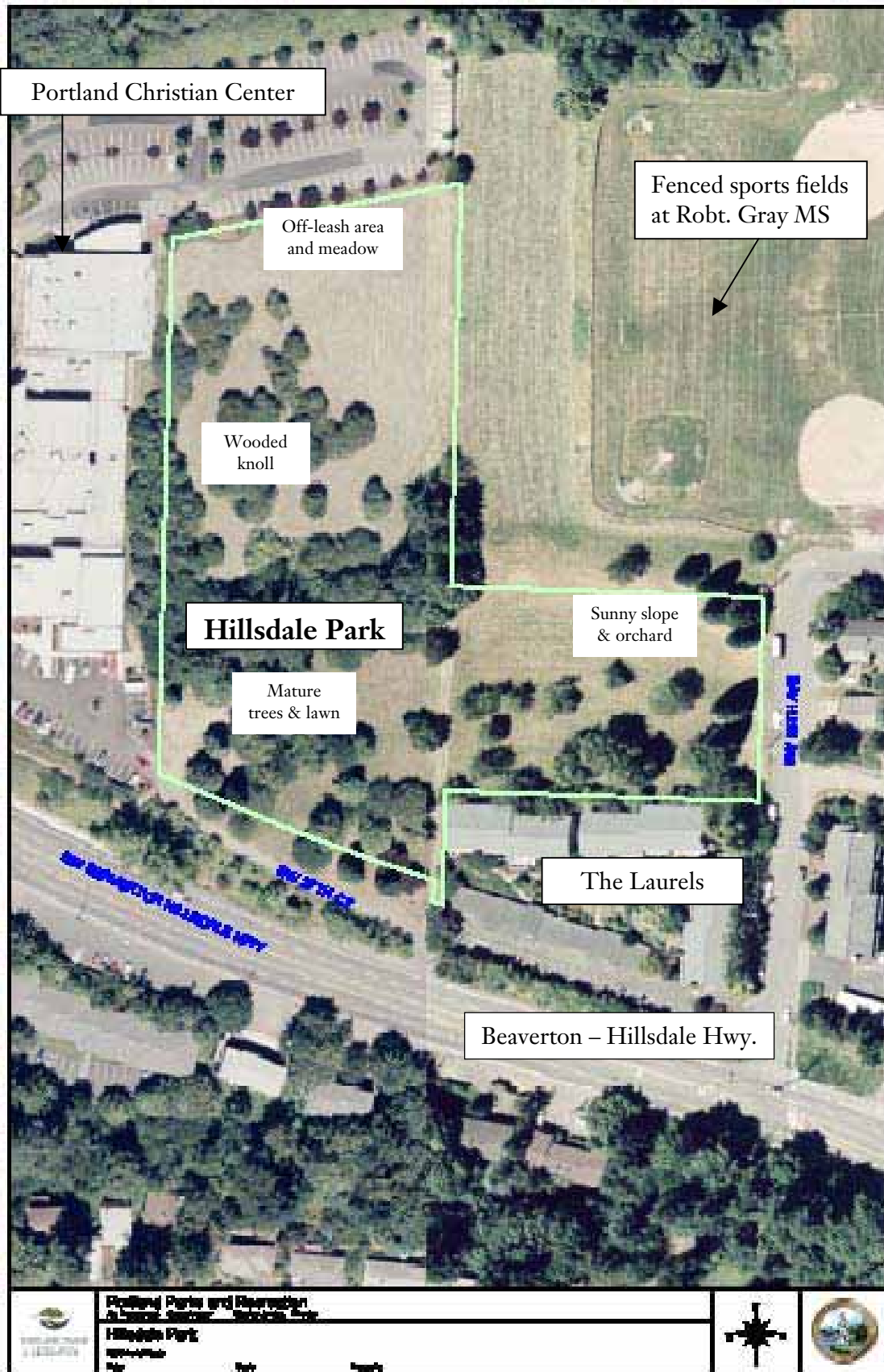
There are springs located in the north portion of the park that are most evident in the winter and spring. A stream with a P-zone overlay is located north of the park on church, school and residential properties.

Current Development and Use

Except for the off-leash area, there is little development in the park. One picnic table is located on the wooded knoll. Primary use of the park is for individual, self-directed activities such as walking, relaxing on the sunny slope in the summer, or sledding in the winter.

¹ dbh: diameter at breast height, measured 4 ½ ' from the ground

Existing Conditions Aerial Photo



Existing Conditions Map



Park and Recreation Trends and Needs

The most basic role of local parks is to provide basic recreation opportunities for self-directed and informal activities such as walking for pleasure or for exercise, neighborhood gatherings, children's play and informal sports. Portland baseline service level for neighborhood parks is 2.5 acres per 1,000 population. As a whole, the Southwest sub-area has above average neighborhood and community park land with 3.85 acres per 1000 people. However, terrain in the southwest makes it difficult to provide traditional park amenities like sports fields and access to parks is often difficult due to the lack of sidewalks.

Because of its site conditions, Hillsdale Park can only accommodate some of the park improvements that are typically found in developed neighborhood parks. These include playgrounds, paths, benches and tables, open lawn areas, and shrub beds. Sports fields cannot be accommodated without extensive grading.

The following recreation assessment is based on an analysis of several conditions and factors such as proximity to other parks, recreation trends, a review of PP&R plans, and a review of participation patterns.

Parks, Schools and Open Spaces in the Area

PARKS

The Hillsdale Neighborhood is located in an area where residents have few options for traditional recreation opportunities such as a playground, open lawn, and walking paths. The closest parks with these amenities are Gabriel Park (89.4 ac.) and Albert Kelly Park (12.1 ac.), both about 0.50 - 0.75 mile away. Each includes a variety of park facilities but because of terrain, distance, and lack of sidewalks are not considered to be within walking distance for children and most families with small children.

SCHOOLS

School grounds sometimes provide opportunities for playgrounds and open play fields, though not serving all of a neighborhood's recreational needs. Several schools are within one mile of Hillsdale Park (see table on the following page) and one – Robert Gray Middle School – is directly adjacent to the park. All of the schools listed in the table have playgrounds, ballfields, and basketball courts.

The proximity of Robert Gray Middle School to the park presents an opportunity create a more expansive open space that, in effect, gives the impression of a larger park. There also is an opportunity to link the paths on school and park property to improve connectivity between the two sites and the rest of the neighborhood.

Summary of Parks and Schools in the Vicinity of Hillsdale Park

Parks Within A One- Mile Radius of Hillsdale Park							
Site	Size Acres	Facilities					
		Playgd.	Ballfields	Sports Fields	Basketball (Outdoors)	Tennis	Restrooms
Gabriel Park	89.41	✓	3	2	1	8	1
George Himes Park	31.69	--	--	--	--	--	--
Albert Kelly Park	12.09	✓	1	1	--	--	--
Custer Park	6.47	✓	1	1	--	--	1
Multnomah Art Center	5.35	✓	--	--	1	--	1
Stephens Creek Natural Area	3.36	--	---	--	--	--	--
Healy Heights Park	1.19	✓	1	1	1	--	--
Dewitt Park	1.09	✓	--	--	--	--	--

Schools Within A One- Mile Radius of Hillsdale Park							
Site	Size Acres	Facilities					
		Playgd.	Ballfields	Sports Fields	Basketball (Outdoors)	Tennis	Restrooms
Gray Middle School	13.32	✓	4	1	5	--	NA
Rieke Elementary School	12.99	✓	1	1	--	--	NA
Wilson High School	22.75	--	3	2	2	2	NA

Source: 2020 Refinement Plan, Portland Parks & Recreation, 2003

Park and Recreation Trends

A trend that is expected to affect the use of Hillsdale Park is overall population growth in the city. Between 1990 and 2000, the U.S. population increased by 13% while the Portland – Vancouver area grew by 27%. This growth results from strong growth in both states, ties to the Pacific Rim, and the area’s quality of life.

As Portland grows both in number and in density, there will be greater demands on parks and recreational facilities. Parks will be used more intensively. Parks such as Hillsdale, which have traditionally had lower levels of visitation because there are no improvements, will experience greater use as the park is developed and improved with recreation facilities.

In the period 1990 – 2000, population in the area around Hillsdale Park changed very little (see table on page 11). Total population increased slightly; there were minor increases in the percent of Asian/Pacific Islanders, Hispanics, and children under 17. Conversely, the percent of older people (over 65) decreased slightly.

DEMAND FOR PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES AND SERVICES

The need for recreation improvements is based also on surveys and other studies that describe how people feel about current park facilities, how they recreate now, and what improvements could be provided to accommodate desired and appropriate uses.

- The 2005 Citywide Survey conducted by the City of Portland provides another index of recreation need. Results from the survey revealed that Hillsdale neighbors are generally satisfied with park and recreation services. The neighborhood ranked 15th out of 76 neighborhoods in satisfaction with the overall quality of parks and in closeness to parks. Other variables (feeling of safety, recreation programs, etc.) also were ranked relatively high.
- The 2004 Survey of Residents by Portland Parks & Recreation provides a more detailed look at recreation needs for the city’s six sub-areas. The need for a variety of park improvements for the Southwest sub-area (generally defined as the area south of Hwy. 26) is shown in the table below.

Park Improvement	% supporting
Swimming pools	47
Natural wildlife areas	46
Gardens	41
Trails for biking	40
Dog off-leash area	40
Trails for hiking/running	36
Playgrounds	35
Grass sports fields	34
Skate parks	34
Group picnic areas	24
Baseball fields	17
Tennis courts	13

- The survey also revealed that the Southwest sub-area has the highest percentage of “empty-nesters” in the city. These are the second largest segment (24 percent) of Portland residents, second to “playground parents.” The empty nester segment has the lowest overall intensity of use of park and recreation facilities and the second lowest percentage of park users (73%). This segment’s members are generally older Caucasian females, unlikely to have children living in the home, with relatively higher annual household incomes. The playground parent segment has the highest intensity use of traditional park and recreation facilities.
- When asked about priorities for new park and recreation improvements, respondents were almost evenly split between traditional facilities (playgrounds, ballfields, etc.) and more natural areas and trails. Support for natural areas and trails was among the highest of the six sub-areas in the city.
- According to PP&R studies and recommended levels of service, the only current deficiencies in the Southwest sub-area for active sports facilities are basketball courts

(seven are needed). If populations increase as expected by 2020, the sub-area will need nine basketball courts and one ball field.

- Play areas are especially important in neighborhood parks because they provide areas for children to exercise and recreate in safe conditions. They should serve a range of ages and provide a variety of stimulating experiences. Ideally, areas for toddlers are separate from facilities for older children. While generally speaking, Southwest has sufficient play areas, access is often difficult due to terrain and lack of sidewalks.
- Group picnic areas accommodate larger groups of people for outdoor eating with numerous tables and often with shelters, electricity and water. Southwest has sufficient group picnic areas.
- Off-leash areas are defined as areas that are designated for recreating with dogs off-leash.

2020 Planning Framework

The *Parks 2020 Vision* document provides a broad planning framework for PP&R's system. In the Southwest sub-area, the 2020 report notes that the area's hilly topography, lack of improved streets, and poor street connectivity makes access to parks difficult in some areas. The report recommends that Hillsdale Park be developed as a neighborhood park, one of five in Southwest that are currently unimproved.

Recreation Assessment Summary

- The Hillsdale neighborhood has a limited number of easily accessible developed parks.
- The park is in an area of park deficiency and few options exist for residents.
- Population growth and increasing density will result in an overall increase in use at Hillsdale Park.

Consequently, Hillsdale Park is, and is expected to be in the future, important for meeting the basic recreational needs of the immediate residents as well as neighbors from other areas, especially those to the west. With the proximity of sports fields at the adjacent Robert Gray Middle School, Hillsdale will serve an important role in reducing park deficiency in Southwest.

Recommendations

This section describes the proposed management and development improvements agreed to by the community and PP&R during the master planning process. These recommendations are based on the following goals developed at the community design workshop.

Goals

- Provide safe recreation experiences.
- Maintain and enhance the current character of the park².
- Provide a variety of signage³.
- Provide improved access and parking.
- Provide a clean and well-maintained park and school grounds.
- Develop partnerships to help enhance the park and encourage community ownership.
- Provide a balance of appropriate unstructured activities and accessibility⁴ for all ages and abilities.

Management Direction and Recommendations

- Maintain and enhance native vegetation in the treed area; remove invasives.
- Develop a parking and access agreement with PCC to enable park users to use the church parking lot.
- Develop a use agreement between schools and parks for L-shaped property adjacent to park below school sports fields.
- Minimize development that would generate an inappropriate level of vehicular traffic from park activity.
- Do not consider development of a parking lot on park property.

Site Development Issues and Conclusions

The following issues were identified and discussed at the July 2005 community design workshop with the following conclusions:

² In particular, maintain and enhance the existing tree canopy and the historic orchard.

³ Both directional and interpretive signage

⁴ Accessibility in and to the park is limited by the topography.

LIMITED PUBLIC PARKING FOR PARK USERS

Due to the configuration of Hillsdale Park, public parking is only available along SW 25th and Kanan streets. Church parking lots adjacent to the park on the north and west sides are generally available to the public. However, there are times when the church needs all of their parking for church functions.

Conclusion: Work with the church to continue use of their parking lots and develop specific use agreements if possible. Explore the possibility of developing a few parking spots in the Beaverton – Hillsdale Highway right-of-way, if they can be provided without negatively impacting the existing mature trees. Note: It is important to not add impervious surfaces that will increase run-off and negatively impact water quality in the Fanno Creek watershed; in fact, it is desirable to reduce runoff and improve water quality wherever possible.

DOG OFF-LEASH AREA

The off-leash area has been in place since 2003. Design workshop attendees agreed that it is functioning well. The off-leash hours are limited from 5:00 a.m. to 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. until closing to minimize conflicts with the church, the school, other park users and neighbors. Much of the success of this site comes from its effective separation from the rest of the park. The neighborhood is actively involved in ensuring compliance with off-leash rules.

Conclusion: Continue current efforts to keep this area working as intended, and ensure that activities in the off-leash area do not negatively affect water quality for the creek located north of the park.

PEDESTRIAN ACCESS TO THE PARK

Much of the access to the park comes through school or church property. This requires that park users respect the needs of those property owners and if necessary, have acceptable agreements in place for access across their property.

Conclusion: Work with the church and the school to continue to use their properties to access the park and provide connectivity in the neighborhood. Develop specific use agreements or recreation easements. Designate appropriate paths as “Safe Routes to School”.

Recommended Improvements and Implementation

The final master plan (see map on page 15) includes the agreed-on improvements from the Optional Elements plan. These improvements are conceptual. As funding becomes available, PP&R will work with the community to design, build and install the park improvements. Park improvements will be built to PP&R standards to ensure public safety and accessibility.

MASTER PLAN ELEMENTS

The elements are described from north to south.

Loop Trail and Paths

The loop trail will be built primarily on park property. As much of the trail as possible will be built to accommodate those with disabilities, but due to steep terrain in some areas, it may not be feasible to provide access around the entire loop. PP&R will work with the CCACD (city / county accessibility review group) on park designs to ensure reasonable accessibility.

Any connecting paths on school property require school permission before work is started and must be built to school district specifications. The school district does not endorse use of the existing narrow gravel trail outside the fenced sports field in its present condition. The path is steep and narrow with a steep drop to the ravine on the north; grade changes along parts of the route are significant. Further investigation of the cost and feasibility of providing a safe pathway from the park along its present route to the northern edge of the school site (outside of the sport field fence) to connect with the footbridge accessing SW Boundary must be done before that work can be approved.

Off-Leash Area / Meadow

This area functions very well as an unfenced off-leash area by virtue of its separation from the rest of the park and its accessibility via the church's parking lot and a narrow trail from the school. The neighborhood works actively to ensure that rules are followed.

Parts of this area are very wet in the winter and spring because of natural springs. Further study is encouraged to remedy this situation and make the area more usable year-round. Develop protocols to ensure that water quality is not negatively impacted by the off-leash area.

“L-Shaped” School Property

The area below the school's fenced sports fields functions as part of the park even though it is owned by the school district. The community and PP&R would like to develop a permanent agreement for its use that would allow development of connecting trails, consistent maintenance or other appropriate uses. It is also desirable to develop a collaborative maintenance agreement with Robert Gray Middle School for certain portions of school and park property.

Seating and Picnic Tables

A few benches and picnic tables will be located in the park in appropriate locations. The benches are proposed to be informal in nature using long-lasting natural materials such as basalt columns.

Main Park Entry at Sw 25th and Kanan

Most elements of this project are located on school property and will require school district permission before work can begin. The ADA parking spot is proposed at the intersection of SW 25th and Kanan. An accessible route will need to be developed from the parking spot to the main park entry and the trails that emanate from it.

Elements at the main entry include: a drinking fountain, portable toilet, garbage can and designated disabled parking and access at SW 25th and Kanan.

Natural Area Vegetation Management

This work consists of removal of non-native invasives and replanting with appropriate native plants. PP&R staff will work with community volunteers on the timing of removal and installation of plants.

Maintain and enhance the existing tree canopy.

Orchard Area

The area north of The Laurels condominiums has remnant orchard trees from when this area was a farmstead. Interpretive signs will be placed here and in other areas of the park to explain its history.

Children's Play Area

The community supports an informal children's play area consisting of more informal play elements rather than traditional swings and teeter-totters.

Parking in Beaverton-Hillsdale Highway Right-of-Way

SW 27th Court functions as an exit driveway from the church down to B-H Highway. The neighborhood association is interested in developing some parking on the north side of the drive. Portland Department of Transportation is responsible for the right-of-way and any improvements in it require their approval and permission. PP&R, as the abutting property owner, is responsible for maintenance of elements in the right-of-way.

The following map illustrates the recommended park improvements. Cost estimates on page 17 are very preliminary and will be adjusted at the time of design development.

Master Plan Map



Master Plan Cost Estimate

The cost estimate was prepared in November 2005 and provides a guideline for funding design and development of the park in the future. It is a relatively detailed estimate including all anticipated site improvement costs and the associated costs necessary to bring the project to construction. The estimate should be revised prior to funding or construction. Costs are based on 2005 dollars using contractor prices. Costs may be lower depending on the amount of volunteer effort and contributions or higher depending on when improvements are made.

Design Costs

Design and Planning Fees

Design and Project Management (20%)	\$62,460.00
Public Involvement allowance	\$8,000.00
Subtotal	\$70,460.00

Construction Costs

Permits and Fees

PDOT Permits and ROW Inspection (15% of construction costs)	\$3,600.00
Printing, construction signs, etc.	\$3,000.00
Subtotal	\$6,600.00

Site Utilities

Description	Unit	Quantity	Unit Price	Estimated Cost
Water Service (2" meter)	EA	1	\$20,000.00	\$20,000.00
Water line to off-leash area from SW 25th and Kanan	LF	600	\$14.00	\$8,400.00
Subtotal				\$28,400.00

Right of Way Development

Description	Unit	Quantity	Unit Price	Estimated Cost
Parking in ROW to PDOT specifications	EA	1	\$21,300.00	\$21,300.00
Curb and Sidewalk at B-H Hwy	LF	300	\$20.00	\$6,000.00
Street trees at B-H Hwy if required	EA	5	\$800.00	\$4,000.00
ADA parking signs at SW 25th and Kanan	EA	1	\$200.00	\$200.00
Subtotal				\$31,500.00

Site Development

Description	Unit	Quantity	Unit Price	Estimated Cost
Gravel Trails (ADA accessible) on park property - 6'	LF	1300	\$16.00	\$20,800.00
Gravel Trails (non-ADA accessible) on park property - 4'	LF	1500	\$12.00	\$18,000.00

Site Development (cont'd)

Description	Unit	Quantity	Unit Price	Estimated Cost
Gravel Trails (non-ADA accessible) on school property - 4'	LF	850	\$12.00	\$10,200.00
Picnic Tables	EA	3	\$3,000.00	\$9,000.00
Basalt Columns for casual seating	EA	8	\$2,000.00	\$16,000.00
Drinking Fountain at 25th and Kanan	EA	1	\$4,000.00	\$4,000.00
Drinking Fountain at off-leash area	EA	1	\$4,000.00	\$4,000.00
Trash Can	EA	2	\$1,800.00	\$3,600.00
Porta-Potty Enclosure & Slab	EA	1	\$20,000.00	\$20,000.00
Bollards	EA	6	\$500.00	\$3,000.00
Interpretive Signs	EA	4	\$400.00	\$1,600.00
Landscaping at entry	SF	800	\$20.00	\$16,000.00
Natural area vegetation management	AC	2	\$2,500.00	\$5,000.00
Subtotal				\$131,200.00
Design and Construction Total				\$268,160.00
Additional Cost Factors				
Design/Construction Subtotal				\$268,160.00
Bond and profit (8%)				\$21,452.80
Construction Contract Administration (7%)				\$18,771.20
Staff Construction Management (4%)				\$16,035.97
Subtotal				\$308,384.00
Construction Contingency, early estimating (30%)				\$92,515.20
Project Total				\$400,899.20

Implementation Priorities: High priority projects are natural area management, trails and development of the entry at SW 25th and Kanan.

Appendix: Population Information for the Hillsdale Area

Population Characteristics: Hillsdale Park Area & City of Portland

CATEGORY	SUB-CATEGORY	HILLSDALE AREA	CITY OF PORTLAND
Total Population		16,718	543,205
Age Groups	0-17	19.1%	21.2%
	18-34	22.5%	28.2%
	65 and Over	14.2%	11.6%
Ethnic Minorities	Black	0.8%	6.1%
	Native American	0.2%	0.9%
	Asian	3.9%	6.2%
	Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0.5%	0.3%
	Hispanic	2.5%	6.8%
	All Minorities	7.8%	26.9%
	Foreign Born Residents	Entry From 1990 - 2000	3.6%
Education	Some School (No Diploma)	2.1%	8.9%
	High School Diploma (Incl. GED)	5.6%	15.2%
	Some College	12.5%	17.2%
	Associates or Bachelors	30.5%	18.7%
	Masters or Professional	18.8%	7.1%
Median Income		\$59,864	\$44,080
Housing	Owners	69.1%	59.1%
	Renters	29.4%	38.2%

Changes in Population in Hillsdale Area: 1990 - 2000

	1990	2000
Total Population	16,521	16,718
Population by Race (Percent of Total)		
White	94.2	92.1
Black	.7	.8
Asian/Pacific Islander	3.6	4.4
Hispanic	1.3	2.5
Other	.2	.2
Population by Age Group		
Under 17	16.6	19.1
18-34	27.2	22.5
Over 65	17.0	14.2

Source: 1990 and 2000 Census of Population