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Portland Parks : A Vision and Blueprint for Preserving and Enhancing our Park System

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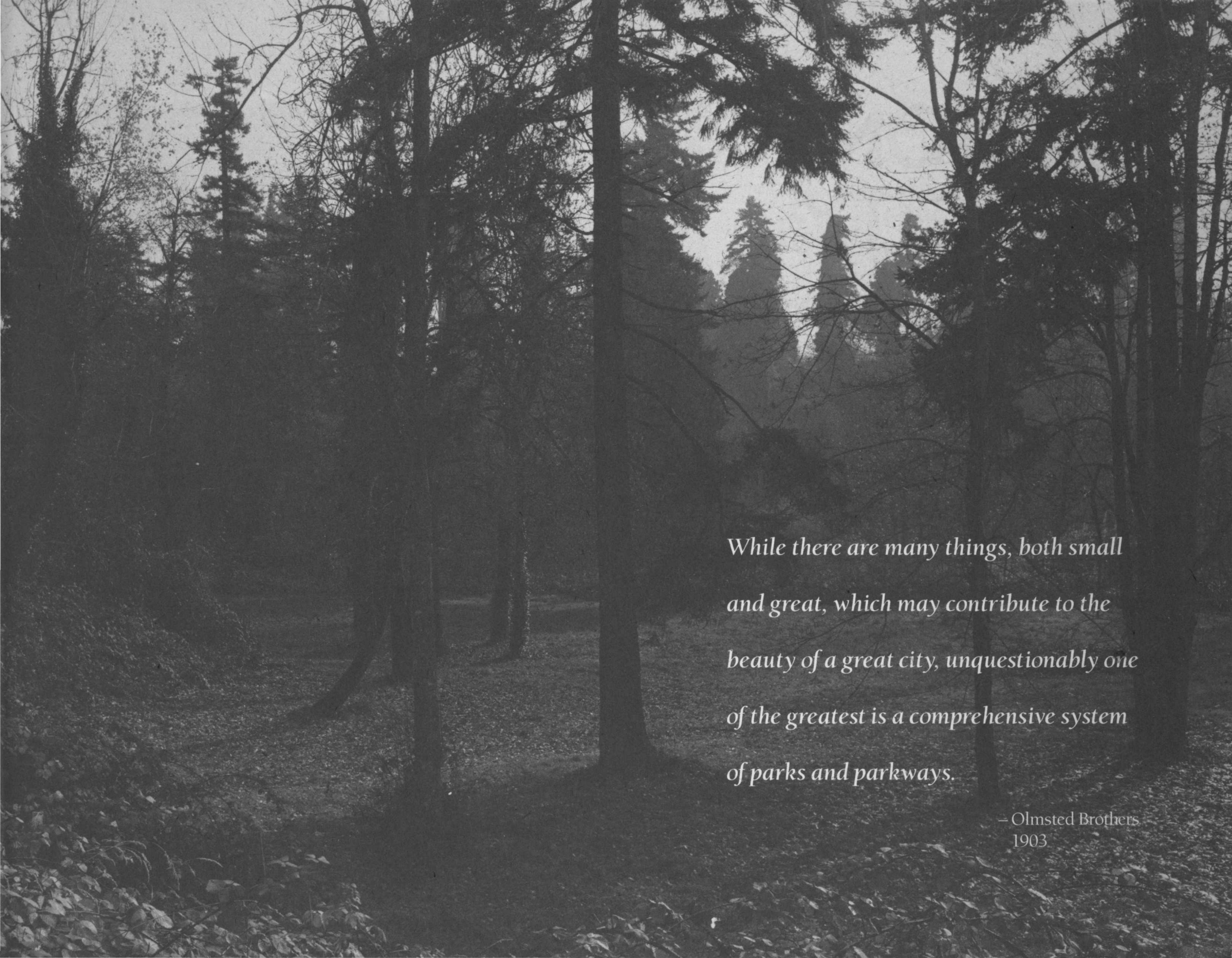


**PORTLAND
PARKS** *A Vision and Blueprint
for Preserving and
Enhancing our Park System*

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*While there are many things, both small
and great, which may contribute to the
beauty of a great city, unquestionably one
of the greatest is a comprehensive system
of parks and parkways.*

—Olmsted Brothers
1903

A VISION FOR OUR CITY

Dear Friends:

It is our pleasure to present *Park Futures* – a visionary plan that describes how the Portland Park Bureau will face the challenges of the next decade. The plan is visionary in that it builds on a tradition of bold action which started when the city was founded.

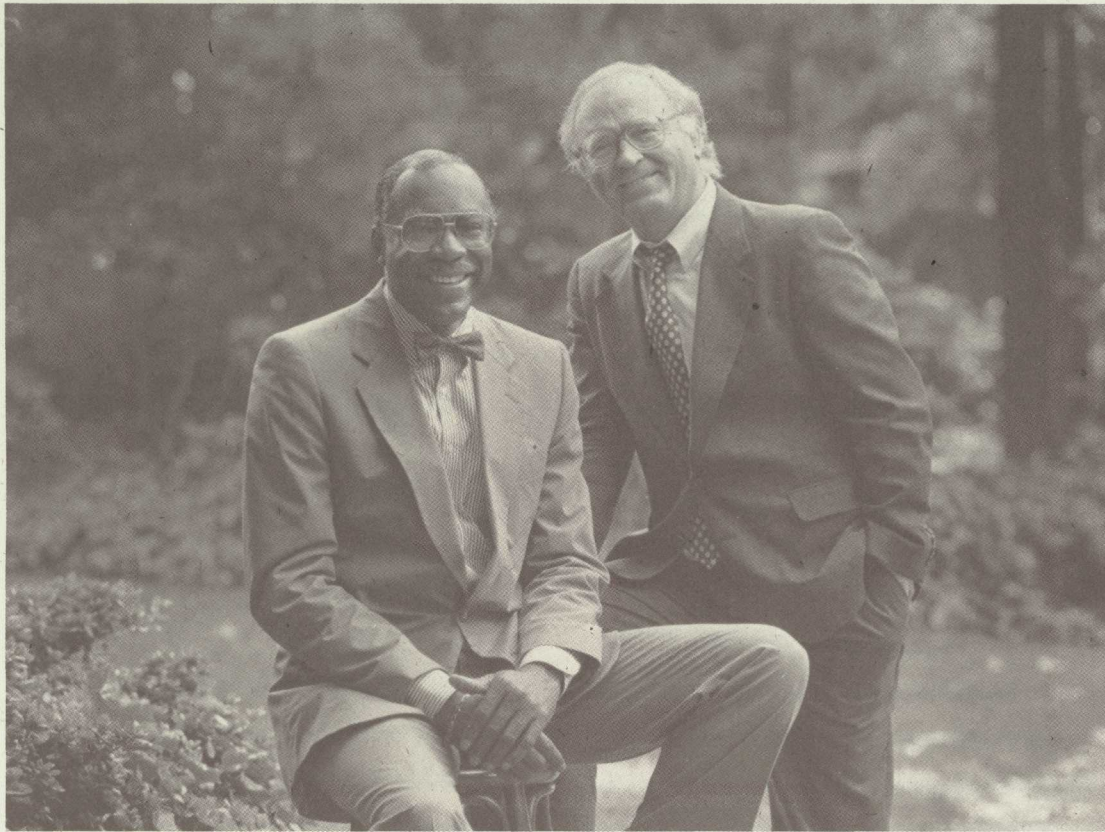
Portland's forefathers incorporated the city in 1852, and they included in the original plan of the city land for parks and open space. This set-aside included what is today known as the North and South Park Blocks, and Lownsdale and Chapman Squares. Concern for open space at a time when the city was largely a wilderness was far-sighted. It is a legacy we continue to enjoy and appreciate, and one on which we have continued to build.

Portland has changed dramatically since 1852, as have its parks. The original park system comprising the Park and Plaza Blocks has grown into a system of 9,400 acres with manicured parks and golf courses, thousands of acres of forested hillsides, and intensively used community centers and pools.

It has grown through community leadership, through the willingness of the public to support park bonds and levies, and through thoughtful planning. While there have been many plans for Portland's parks, including studies in the 1920s, '30s, and '40s, the most influential and long-lasting has been the 1903 Olmsted Plan. This visionary plan established the foundation of what became Portland's system of parks, boulevards, and trails.

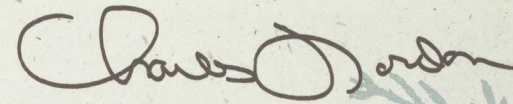
As good as earlier plans have been, we realized that attention must be given to a new vision for parks, a vision that reaffirms our commitment to preserving and enhancing the city's parks legacy into the 21st century.

Portland is blessed with beautiful parks, wooded hillsides, wetlands, and outstanding specialty gardens. In some instances these resources need to be upgraded because of years of wear and tear; in others they need to be improved so the public can fully understand and enjoy them. The challenge will be to rebuild our park system while expanding recreational opportunities through the improvement of such resources as the 40-Mile Loop trail system, and a Smith and Bybee Lakes nature park.

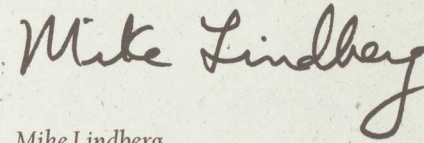


Charles Jordan and Mike Lindberg

Park Futures gives us a blueprint for our parks and facilities, one tested and confirmed through analysis and public participation. But it is a broad gauge of our park needs. Two plans are being developed to translate these broad needs into specific action programs. The first of these is the Public Facilities Plan which will give the bureau immediate, 5-year, and 20-year capital recommendations and costs. The second is the bureau's new capital planning process which will be updated annually and sets one- to five-year capital priorities. Park Futures and its supporting implementing plans will give the city clear priorities for investing in its parks, acting as a good steward, and continuing to further its park legacy.



Charles Jordan
Director



Mike Lindberg
Commissioner

PORTLAND PARKS: THE LEGACY

A city like Portland, to which nature has been more prodigal in climate, diversity and grandeur of surroundings than any other in the country, should provide itself the name of having been worthy of its heritage. A park system embracing riverside, mountains and plains, and connected by wide boulevards, would go far to make this the most beautiful city in the world.

—Portland Parks Commission, 1901

The overpowering sights and scents in Washington Park's Rose Test Gardens... the country-in-the-city sensations of Forest Park hiking trails... monuments, pigeon-feeding and people watching on the Park Blocks... an exhibit of retired citizens' crafts at the Multnomah Art Center... a straight shot down the fairway on the luxurious Eastmoreland Golf Course.

These are a few highlights of Portland's parks – and some of the reasons that people love Portland. The park system shows off the city's finest qualities, sources of Portland pride. More than 140 years ago, far-sighted city founders set the scene for the open spaces and recreational facilities we cherish today.

In 1903, the Portland Park Commission invited the Olmsted brothers, Charles and Frederick, to Portland to help plan park space. The

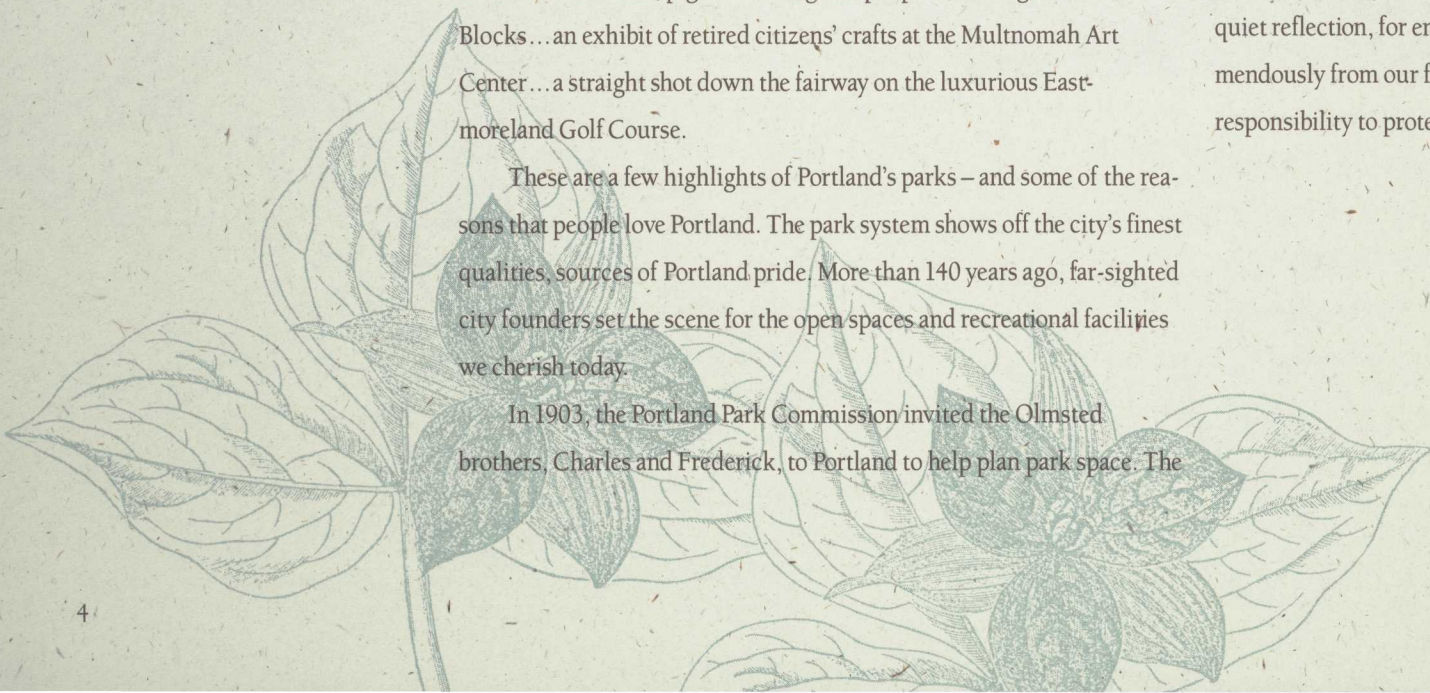
sons of Frederick Law Olmsted, who designed New York's Central Park, were delighted with the opportunities they found here.

As they noted in their report to the Portland Park Commission... "The City is most fortunate, in comparison with the majority of American cities, in possessing such varied and wonderfully strong and interesting landscape features available to be utilized in the park system."

The master plan they created called for park planning well in advance of other development. They encouraged the city to balance the needs of parks with other development demands, and called for an integrated park system connected by boulevards and parkways.

As a result of their plan, today we enjoy Forest Park, the Terwilliger Parkway, Sellwood and Mt. Tabor Parks. Some of their recommendations, like creation of a park adjacent to the Columbia Slough, may yet become reality.

Early city leaders established a vision of a liveable, usable city, with gardens and green spaces, quiet places to sit, areas for children's play, for quiet reflection, for entertainment and for joy. Every day, we benefit tremendously from our forefathers' benevolence. And today, we have a responsibility to protect and enhance their vision.



A CITY'S INVESTMENT

Portland became a city in 1851, and for the next 50 years, landowners often contributed property for public parks. The Park Blocks, Lowndale Square, and Macleay Park in Northwest Portland were donated by civic-minded citizens.

In the first years of this century and for nearly fifty years thereafter, the people of Portland voted for tax levies and bond issues to build and develop city parks and recreational facilities. These funds, and the design abilities of Superintendent of Parks Emanuel T. Mische, created parks throughout the city, from Peninsula Park in the north, Terwilliger Parkway in the southwest, and Sellwood Park in the southeast.

Until 1989, the most recent levy was one that expired in 1958, after which the city turned to other sources. For many years, the federal government funded acquisition and development of parks and facilities. Federal funds helped build or rebuild Cathedral Park, Leach Botanical Garden, Lents Park, and many others.

Portland's far-sighted civic pride kicked in again in the sixties and seventies, when urban renewal funds helped the city move a highway to create what became Tom McCall Waterfront Park. Urban renewal funds have also created or redeveloped some of Portland's urban jewels, like Ira Keller Fountain, and several of the South Park Blocks.

Today, many of the funding sources we have depended upon are no longer available. Federal money is scarce; urban renewal funds are limited to specific parts of the city.

The city's general fund provides parks with \$500,000 a year for capital projects, most of which is used for basic maintenance like replacing boilers or playground equipment.

In 1989, Portland's voters passed a \$7.3 million dollar levy for park improvements. The largest project this levy financed was a covered pool for the Dishman Community Center, at a cost of \$2.5 million, of which \$250,000 has been donated by Nike.

Of the approximately 35 projects to be completed over the levy's three-year span, almost half are renovation or replacement of water, electric and plumbing systems, classrooms, showers and play areas. The rest are for maintenance or development of trails and athletic fields and remodeling for disabled access.



THE STATUS OF STEWARDSHIP

Given this investment pattern, how well are we maintaining and building upon the legacy left to us by earlier citizens?

Frankly, we could do better at investing in our park system.

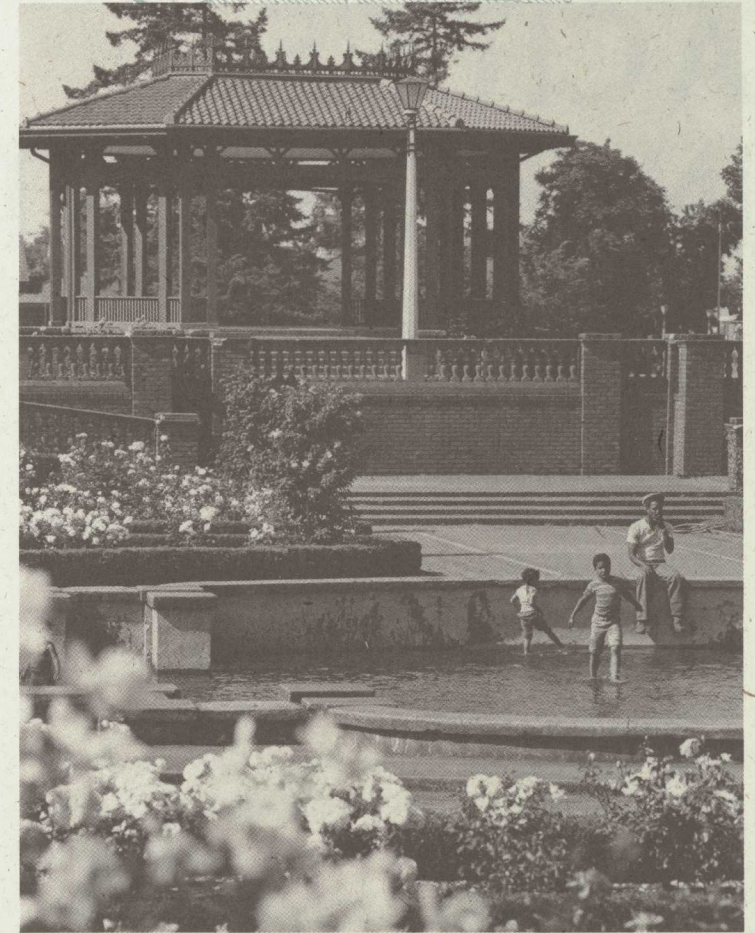
Our facilities are old and many are obsolete. The average age of Park Bureau recreational buildings is over 60 years. The average age of city-run pools is 45 years.

By 1994, one-half of all the watering systems in Portland parks will need replacement, and by 1998, more than 50 playgrounds will need complete overhauls.

In addition to a shortage of athletic fields, Portland's aquatic facilities are limited, especially when considering the size of its population. The pools we have are often overcrowded, and they aren't in the best condition. The fields are overused and therefore hard to maintain.

Old heating, plumbing and watering systems are expensive to operate. They demand additional staff time to maintain, and when they break down – as they often do – park services must be suspended. And maintenance costs pull resources away from programs.

Only one of the city's community centers was built as a center. Many of the others are remodeled schools or firehouses that don't adequately serve the purposes they are used for. Outdated facilities limit the



ability of the Park Bureau to respond to the needs of a growing and changing population.

In short, we have too few facilities to meet current demand, and many of those we have are maintenance intensive and functionally obsolescent. Without greater investment, we can expect to fall further behind in meeting public needs and expectations.

PUBLIC PARKS: MORE THAN RECREATION

Today, parks should provide essential social and cultural opportunities for a broad spectrum of Portlanders. A healthy park system is one element in the deterrence of delinquency and crime, a resource for low- and middle-income families, an environmental necessity and an economic development tool.

In 1988, for example, seniors with limited incomes spent 44,150 hours in Senior Leisure Services Programs. Demand for such programs increases steadily, as well as demand for support services like transportation and clearinghouse functions. But right now, the city is limited in what it can provide these seniors.

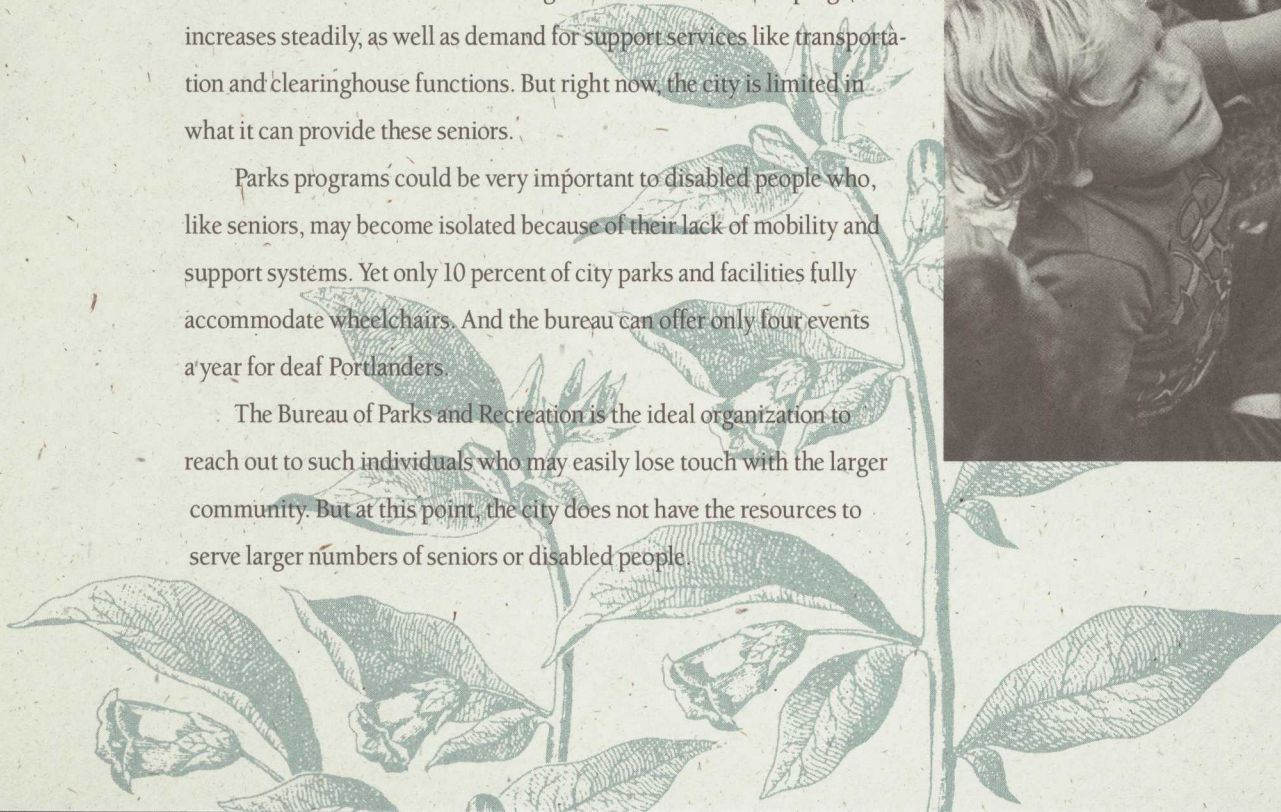
Parks programs could be very important to disabled people who, like seniors, may become isolated because of their lack of mobility and support systems. Yet only 10 percent of city parks and facilities fully accommodate wheelchairs. And the bureau can offer only four events a year for deaf Portlanders.

The Bureau of Parks and Recreation is the ideal organization to reach out to such individuals who may easily lose touch with the larger community. But at this point, the city does not have the resources to serve larger numbers of seniors or disabled people.

Facility shortages prevent the city from fully serving children – the traditional beneficiaries of park programs. Too few pools and athletic fields limit recreational opportunities. Community centers have too few classrooms and little storage space, making it difficult to expand educational programs.

Ideally, the park system could be a tremendous resource for bringing together the many diverse cultural groups represented in Portland. Yet again, poor facilities limit program possibilities.

The Park Futures document plans for more than buildings and real estate. It considers the needs of Portlanders today and into the future.





CREATING A MASTER PLAN

WHAT IS PARK FUTURES?

In 1986, Commissioner Mike Lindberg and Park Bureau personnel recognized that the city's park improvement program needed definition and direction. The Commissioner asked the Bureau to begin a planning process to guide park development.

The result, Park Futures, is a master plan designed to meet four basic goals:

- ◆ To define a creative vision for parks and facilities development during the next 50 years;
- ◆ To identify the major issues and problems facing the bureau today and in the future;
- ◆ To establish policies to guide improvements and developments; and
- ◆ To establish a list of specific projects for completion through the bureau's five-year capital improvement program.

Park Futures is a working document. As with any master plan, the bureau needs to revisit it regularly so that it continues to mirror changing conditions, needs, opportunities and accomplishment within the community and throughout the park system.

PLAN METHODOLOGY

During Park Futures planning, staff concentrated on public input, on-site inventories, evaluation and assessment of city parks and facilities. Citizen involvement was encouraged throughout the planning process. City residents participated through:

Interviews: The first task staff undertook was interviews with 62 city residents who included neighborhood leaders, concerned citizens, representatives of not-for-profit groups, business people, designers and planners. Results of these interviews were summarized in *Perception of Parks*.

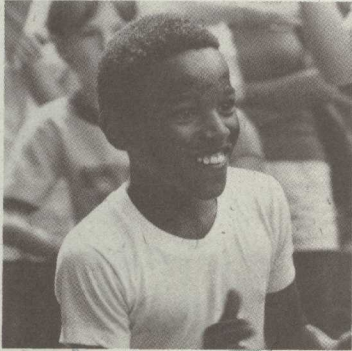
Newsletters: Published and mailed quarterly beginning in May 1986, the Park Futures newsletters gave project progress reports and included articles on park history and the park system in general. The newsletters were distributed to more than 1,000 citizens through a mailing list and to libraries and Portland Park facilities and centers.

Workshops: Three rounds of workshops, a total of 24 separate meetings, were held on the project in Fall 1987, Spring 1988 and Fall 1988. People learned of these workshops through the newspaper, radio, neighborhood associations and special flyers. Summaries of these were published as:

Public Workshop Summary – Round 1, Fall 1987

Public Workshop Summary – Round 2, Spring 1988

Review of Recreational Surveys: Staff researched national recreational surveys since 1980 and published a summary of its findings.



Telephone Survey: In a city-wide telephone survey conducted in April 1987, 1200 citizens were asked questions about the use of Portland Parks, satisfaction with parks, support for funding, recreation participation and the motivation for participating in outdoor recreation. The results of the scientific survey are published in *Telephone Survey Results*.

An inventory of the current park system was completed by bureau staff and citizens. Several documents were produced outlining the status of the existing system:

Inventory of Parks: This document is a compilation of all city parks.

Inventory of Transportation Landscaped Areas: This collection of maps and plans outlines all the smaller "beautification" areas maintained by the bureau.

Park Assessment: Grouped by park types, this publication evaluates the condition of each city park.

Facilities Assessment: This report summarizes the condition of the city's recreational facilities including community centers, art centers, special facilities and operational buildings.

Recreational and Population Patterns: This survey focuses on recreation trends by geographical subareas, population characteristics and projected growth for the city.

Community School Assessment: This report reviews the Community Schools Program needs based on staff interviews.

A literature review was made of publications about the development of Portland's park system. Historical reviews about significant leaders in park planning, and City of Portland strategic plans (including Future Focus). The review helped ensure that planning for the future of Portland's park system built upon the foundation of the existing park system.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The Park Futures' primary goal is to guide the rebuilding of Portland's park system – to meet both current needs and the projected demands of 21st Century Portland.

To meet this goal, citizens identified four objectives:

Objective 1: *Make better use of existing resources.*

In some cases, lack of public information, safety concerns, inadequate staff and other reasons prevent the public from taking advantage of parks and facilities. A small investment in these areas may bring a great return to the public.

As an example, natural areas have often been neglected. To protect them and see the public benefit from their recreational and educational potential, greater attention must be given to their management, planning, and physical improvement.

Objective 2: Initiate a major park and facility renovation program.

Renovation of existing parks and facilities, through replacement and renovation of structures and equipment, reduces maintenance and operating costs, corrects problems so that recreational use is enhanced, and increases public safety.

Objective 3: Replace outdated and inadequate recreational facilities to meet today's needs and to satisfy the future's.

New pools and community centers need to be built to replace those that are inadequate, have outlived their usefulness, and are increasingly inefficient and expensive to maintain.

Objective 4: Establish an integrated network of parks, natural areas, trails, and recreation corridors.

The Olmsted's concept of the 40-Mile Loop will be expanded to include other parks and neighborhoods. Long-range planning will also concentrate on the Willamette and Columbia Rivers as major recreation corridors capable of accommodating a range of uses and activities.

These four objectives power the recommendations contained in Park Futures. They establish a framework for recommendations focussing first on minor modification to the park system to allow optimum use of existing parks and facilities.

Second, emphasis is placed on the need to renovate existing pools, parks and centers, and to replace outmoded and obsolete equipment and facilities.

Park Futures' third objective stresses the need to build new parks and facilities to fully satisfy today's demand as well as tomorrow's.

The plan's fourth objective builds on the directive laid out by the Olmsted's at the beginning of this century and which remains a



guidepost as we enter the 21st. Develop a system of linked parks through the creation of natural areas, trails, boulevards and recreation corridors.

The remainder of the Park Futures Master Plan lays out recommendations for improving the city's park system and accomplishing our stated objectives. These recommendations are organized in five parts:

Trends, Issues and Opportunities: Citywide growth and recreational trends and issues that affect the park system are reviewed, as are opportunities for improved service.

Parks: Regional, metropolitan, urban, roadway, community and neighborhood parks, and public and community gardens are discussed and recommendations advanced.

Facilities: Facility condition, adequacy and distribution are addressed. Attention is also given to special facilities including art centers, pools, athletic fields, tennis courts, Pittock Mansion, Portland International Raceway, golf courses and operations facilities.

Natural Areas and Trails: Acquisition and development of natural areas and trails, specifically Oaks Bottom, Smith and Bybee Lakes, Powell Butte and the 40-Mile Loop, are addressed.

Riverfronts and Greenways: Access and recreational opportunities for the Willamette and Columbia Riverfronts are explored.

TRENDS, ISSUES & OPPORTUNITIES

NATIONAL TRENDS

According to forecasts, cities will be facing turbulent times with changing population and demographic pressures, challenging social and ethical issues, and a host of environmental concerns. The following trends have a strong relationship to park development and were considered in developing this plan.

- ◆ Environmental Protection
- ◆ Historic Preservation
- ◆ Regional Planning and Urban Growth Boundaries
- ◆ Open Space Preservation
- ◆ Citizen Participation
- ◆ Neighborhood Planning
- ◆ Urban Design Control
- ◆ State Comprehensive Planning

POPULATION TRENDS AND RECREATION PLANNING

Recreation demands are expected to change significantly over the next twenty years as Portland's demographic profile shifts.

Nationally, over the next twenty years, household composition will show an increase in people living alone or in non-family households. There will be an increase in households headed by 45- to 55-year-olds because of the aging of baby boomers. Add to this the rise of the second wave of baby boomers resulting in an increase of 6- to 12-year-olds.

Population is expected to increase in East, Northwest and Southwest Portland. There will be greater increases in multi-family dwellings.

A 14 percent increase in the 35 to 64 age group and a drop in the 0 to 19 age group is also predicted.

These demographic changes will increase the need for recreational opportunities in these growth subareas and for recreational activities and facilities for younger children.

PARK SAFETY, VANDALISM AND THE MISUSE OF PARKS

The behavior of some park users frequently affects the public's enjoyment of parks, generating an "insecurity" about the safety of a few troubled city parks. Neighbors seem to be concerned about unruly or threatening behavior of some park users, transients, drug use and dealing, drinking and partying, rather than more serious crimes.

Vandalism and misuse of parks are two related problems that plague some city parks.

Vandalism is generally worse at parks next to high schools, and in the southeast and northeast areas of the city. Most serious are problems of graffiti and damage caused by skateboards. Litter is another major problem in parks because it is expensive to police, haul away, and dispose of. It also means maintenance staff must remove litter rather than doing other tasks.

The misuse of parks, characterized by drinking, loud noise, rowdy behavior and damage to property, is a problem at about a dozen parks.

Park Futures proposes several strategies and actions to address safety in parks.





Strategies

- ◆ Increase the attractiveness and positive use of parks through expanded year-round recreational programming, especially for youth, and increased staff presence in the parks on weekends and in evenings.
- ◆ Modify parks and facilities to improve crime prevention through design, landscaping and lighting.
- ◆ Continue the use of private security patrols in parks with serious problems.
- ◆ Encourage neighborhood involvement through programs like "Park Watch."
- ◆ Explore vandalism reduction strategies that identify rates and patterns of vandalism and then employ a variety of opportunities that may include campaigns and educational programs which identify and prosecute the vandals.

UNDERSERVED GROUPS

Awareness of recreational opportunities and participation in activities appears to be lower among certain population groups due to limitations in income, mobility, and because of language or cultural barriers.

The existing and projected needs of disabled and elderly residents cannot be met with current levels of staffing and existing equipment.

Publicity of Park Bureau programs and services does not reach some potential users due to language and cultural barriers.

Low Income Residents, generally concentrated in the Central City, inner Northwest, inner Northeast and a section of North Portland, use parks and participate in recreational programs less than higher income persons. 34 percent of those with incomes less than \$10,000 a year never visit their neighborhood park compared with a citywide average of 24 percent.

Some ethnic communities have to overcome financial or cultural obstacles. The African-American community, for example, is less likely to have the resources to fully participate in the city's recreational opportunities. This may be explained by the fact that about half of all African-American families are headed by women; household incomes tend to be lower; and a large percentage of African-American families have restricted mobility. Efforts to expand African-American participation must include creative programming and outreach programs.

As another example, the Southeast Asian Community shows lower participation rates in recreation programs. Language is a major impediment; cost is also a consideration, and class times often do not fit with their schedules. According to leaders in the community, Southeast Asians have recreational needs that can be met through organized programs and activities.



The Disabled and the Elderly have substantial need for recreational services. Park Bureau programs are often held at times and locations that are not convenient for elderly or disabled participants. In addition, fewer than 10 percent of Portland's Parks are completely accessible to disabled citizens.

Strategies (See Marketing)

CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT

There is considerable public interest in parks, an interest that can be channelled into park maintenance and improvement projects. Involving residents in parks can be beneficial to the Parks Bureau. It will broaden the Bureau's constituency and strengthen its relationship with neighborhoods. Such actions also help to educate the public about the complex issues of developing and maintaining parks.

The Park Futures Plan provides strategies and actions to capture and expand this valuable opportunity.

Strategies

- ◆ Continue using volunteers and expand the number and variety of volunteer opportunities. Possibilities include creating more park projects that neighborhoods can work on, establishing district park commit-

tees and a process to involve citizens in the development of recreation programs. Any increased volunteer programs would require additional staff to manage such projects.

- ◆ Identify and evaluate a variety of ways in which citizens can be involved in the planning and designing of parks and facilities perhaps through the establishment of a Parks Commission.

MARKETING

The Park Bureau lacks detailed information on participation trends and has few procedures to collect and evaluate information. As a result, it's difficult to prepare a marketing plan.

In addition, awareness of recreational opportunities and participation in activities appears to be lower among certain population groups. Population projections indicate a dramatic change in the demographic profile of the city's residents which will affect recreational needs and preferences for both facilities and programs.

Strategies

- ◆ Develop and maintain a comprehensive strategic marketing plan for all of the Bureau's services.
- ◆ Develop a data collection process to identify participation trends for programs and classes.
- ◆ Use existing neighborhood and business networks for dispensing information and working with the community, especially with underserved groups.

BLUEPRINT FOR PARKS

About 40 percent of the city's developed parks have plumbing, irrigation,

lighting, paving, or mechanical systems that are inefficient or in disrepair. The problem is especially acute for neighborhood parks. This poor condition is due primarily to a lack of consistent capital funding sources over the last 40 years. In addition, the bureau's maintenance staff has been reduced despite increases in acreage.

Two primary problems prevail in parks. They are the inefficiency of irrigation systems and the poor condition of play equipment. Half of the existing irrigation systems will be past their useful life within the next few years, with replacement costs totaling nearly \$2 million. Much of the city's play equipment suffers from wood rot with many of the playgrounds needing renovation.

There also is a shortage of usable park land to accommodate active recreational uses. Only limited funds are available for further acquisition and development. Although the distribution of parks is generally adequate with respect to population distribution, there are a few areas that have a shortage of park land.

Neighborhood park deficiencies are most critical in three general areas of the city - Southwest Portland, portions of inner Southeast Portland, and in the Cully-Parkrose neighborhood. These areas are considered to be critical because of existing or projected population growth and because few alternatives exist.

The Park Bureau faces three other key issues: "Problem" sites with limited potential because of poor access, extreme topography or poor configuration; lack of an organized plan for park improvements; and lack of access for disabled visitors (fewer than 10 percent of all parks have wheelchair-accessible facilities).

Several strategies and actions are outlined in Park Futures to address these issues.

Strategies

- ◆ Renovate parks which have a variety of critical needs and which can accommodate large numbers of activities and visitors.
- ◆ Emphasize renovation at sites where such improvements will increase park use or other opportunities for recreation.
- ◆ Ensure that all park and facility renovation includes plans to improve disabled access, where appropriate.
- ◆ Acquire land in the Cully-Parkrose neighborhood, Southwest Portland, and inner Southeast Portland and develop as neighborhood parks.
- ◆ Increase partnerships with other providers.
- ◆ Continue the renovation of other parks through the CIP (Capital Improvement Program) process and as other funds allow.





BLUEPRINT FOR FACILITIES

Certain sections of the city are deficient in recreational facilities, and there are limited funds available for the acquisition and development of facilities.

The number and location of public recreational facilities is minimally acceptable when related to the city's population and demographics. Many community centers were originally built for other purposes, like schools or firehouses. When they outlived their original use, they were turned over to the Park Bureau for recreational use. As Portland looks to the future, recreational centers will be redeveloped with public needs and projected growth as major considerations.

Park Futures also addresses parks which have few critical needs, yet require renovation of specific items. Other park projects include redevelopment and new development, security, the "trading or selling" of problem sites, acquisition of open spaces and parks, and preservation of sensitive areas.

Specific projects are outlined for gardens, including the International Rose Test Garden, Peninsula Rose Garden, Ladd's Rose Garden, Hoyt Arboretum, Leach Botanical Garden, Crystal Springs Rhododendron Garden and the community gardens program.

In addition, many of the Park Bureau's facilities lack adequate space and mechanical equipment, which limits the number and variety of classes that can be offered, and the ability to meet future program needs. Facility condition appears to be especially poor for community centers, arts facilities, support facilities, swimming pools, athletic fields and stadiums. Disabled access is also inadequate.

Discussions and strategy/action plans on these special facilities follow this general overview of Park Bureau facilities.

Facility condition, adequacy and distribution strategies and actions are outlined in detail in the Park Futures Technical Plan. In brief, several strategies have been developed to tackle these issues.

Strategies

- ◆ Maintain the current distribution and location of facilities, but initiate a limited renovation program for the short term, focusing on the most serious problems and facilities with the potential for multiple use.
- ◆ Limit improvements at facilities to those that are the most immediate, endanger the health and safety of staff and visitors, and are needed to meet critical recreation needs.
- ◆ Increase partnerships with other providers.
- ◆ Rebuild community centers and other facilities that are inefficient for programs or in poor condition.

ATHLETIC FIELDS AND FACILITIES

There is an insufficient number of athletic fields for softball and soccer. Soccer fields are generally in poor condition. Despite the relatively large number of fields, several areas of the city have a severe shortage of facilities, including Southwest, Northeast, and the Central City. The greatest demands are for fields in Southwest Portland and for soccer fields citywide.

The shortage of fields has four basic impacts on parks and recreation. Practice time is limited for teams. Opportunities to use the fields are limited for non-team persons and for other sports programs and users. Fields are overused and in poor condition, because there is little time for renovation. Also, fields are being developed in parks that may be inappropriate for organized sports.



Strategies

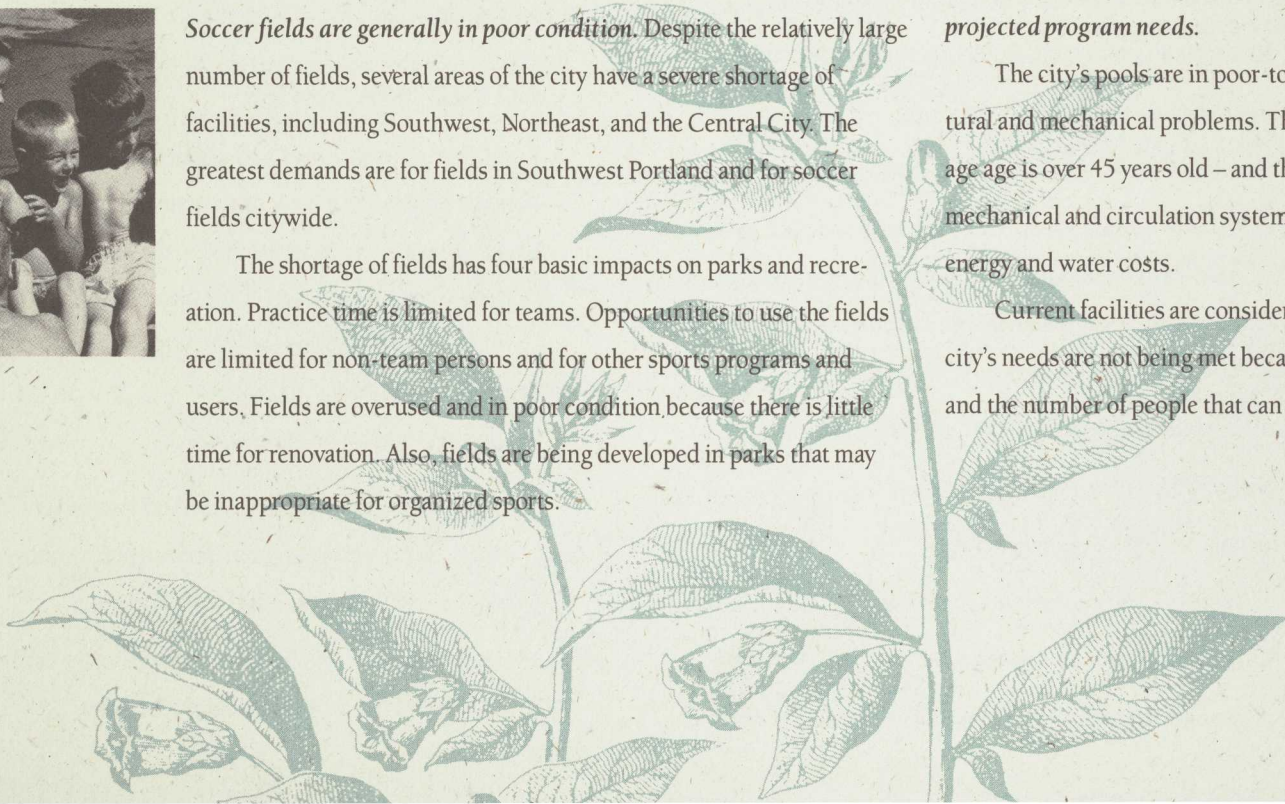
- ◆ Investigate ways to increase field availability and generate revenues that can be used for the development and maintenance of athletic fields.
- ◆ Renovate athletic fields and stadiums that are most in need of renovation.
- ◆ Develop sports field complexes that include many athletic fields and facilities.
- ◆ Continue the renovation of fields throughout the city.

AQUATICS

The city is deficient in the number of indoor swimming pools. Pools also are in poor-to-fair condition and are inadequate to meet current and projected program needs.

The city's pools are in poor-to-fair condition, suffering from structural and mechanical problems. This is due both to their age – the average age is over 45 years old – and the heavy use they receive. In addition, mechanical and circulation systems are inefficient, resulting in excessive energy and water costs.

Current facilities are considered to be inadequate. Many of the city's needs are not being met because programs are limited in variety and the number of people that can be served. With one exception, all of



the city-owned pools are outdoor pools, limiting public use to 10-12 weeks in the summer. They lack support facilities that are essential to meet the different needs of the community; most pools are too small, limiting the programs that can be offered; facilities are old and outdated; crowding and insufficient pool time also are problems.

To address these deficiencies, the Aquatics Task Force recommended the following new facilities be built:

A *multi-use aquatics facility* that is centrally located and includes:

- ◆ a 50-meter pool
- ◆ seating and deck space for competitions
- ◆ therapeutic instructional pool
- ◆ whirlpool and sauna
- ◆ recreational features such as rope swing and waterslide
- ◆ locker facilities for large groups, families, and disabled
- ◆ media facilities such as a “crow’s nest”
- ◆ fitness facilities such as weightroom and aerobic area
- ◆ classroom, daycare room, recreation area, and concessions

Five *multi-use community pools*, preferably near high schools where pools are not available or would not be upgraded. Each pool would include:

- ◆ a 25-meter, L-shaped pool up to 12 feet deep
- ◆ seating and deck space for competitions
- ◆ therapeutic instructional pool
- ◆ recreational features such as rope swing and waterslide
- ◆ locker facilities for large groups, families, and the disabled
- ◆ classroom, daycare room, recreation area, and concessions



A *multi-use wave pool* that includes features such as a waterslide, small waterfall, play area for young children, whirlpool, and sunbathing decks.

In addition to new development, the Park Futures plan recommends the renovation of pools that are in poor condition.

TENNIS COURTS

Tennis courts are in fair condition with consistent maintenance being the most pressing need. The most important maintenance task is to repave courts every ten years. Courts with greater than average use should be repaved every five-to-seven years.

Strategies

- ◆ Continue the regular maintenance program.
- ◆ No major expansion in the number of courts is expected over the short term.

CITY ARTS FACILITIES

Condition of the facilities varied from poor to fair and most of the buildings were not built to serve as Community Art Centers. Consequently, the facilities are extremely limited in the number and variety of programs that can be offered now and in the future.

Specific action plans for City Arts Facilities are included in the Park Futures Plan.

Strategies

- ◆ Maintain the current distribution and location of facilities and initiate a limited renovation program, focusing on the most serious problems, and those with the potential for multiple use.
- ◆ Major renovation will be deferred pending the completion of a Facilities Master Plan for all Park Bureau facilities.

PITTOCK MANSION

Maintenance and restoration work now occurs without proper guidance because of a lack of historical information.

Strategies

- ◆ Define the city's expectations for the Mansion.
- ◆ Increase funding for staffing and programs.
- ◆ Support the Mansion's staff in working with interested citizen groups.

PORTLAND INTERNATIONAL RACEWAY

Substantial improvements in the course's utilities are needed to attract major races and maintain its ability to compete nationally with other tracks. Development of the track has occurred incrementally and basic utilities – sewer, water, and electricity – are insufficient to handle current and projected demands.

Strategies:

- ◆ Continue the improvement program which is aimed at providing a permanent facility.
- ◆ Focus on the improvement of basic utilities such as sewer, water, and electricity.
- ◆ Continue to cooperate with other agencies and organizations in funding improvements and activities.

GOLF COURSES

Golf is becoming increasingly popular but the current number of public courses is inadequate to meet current and projected demands. Some clubhouse facilities are outdated and require substantial renovation. Also, the quality of some of the city's golf courses is not consistent with contemporary standards.

Strategies:

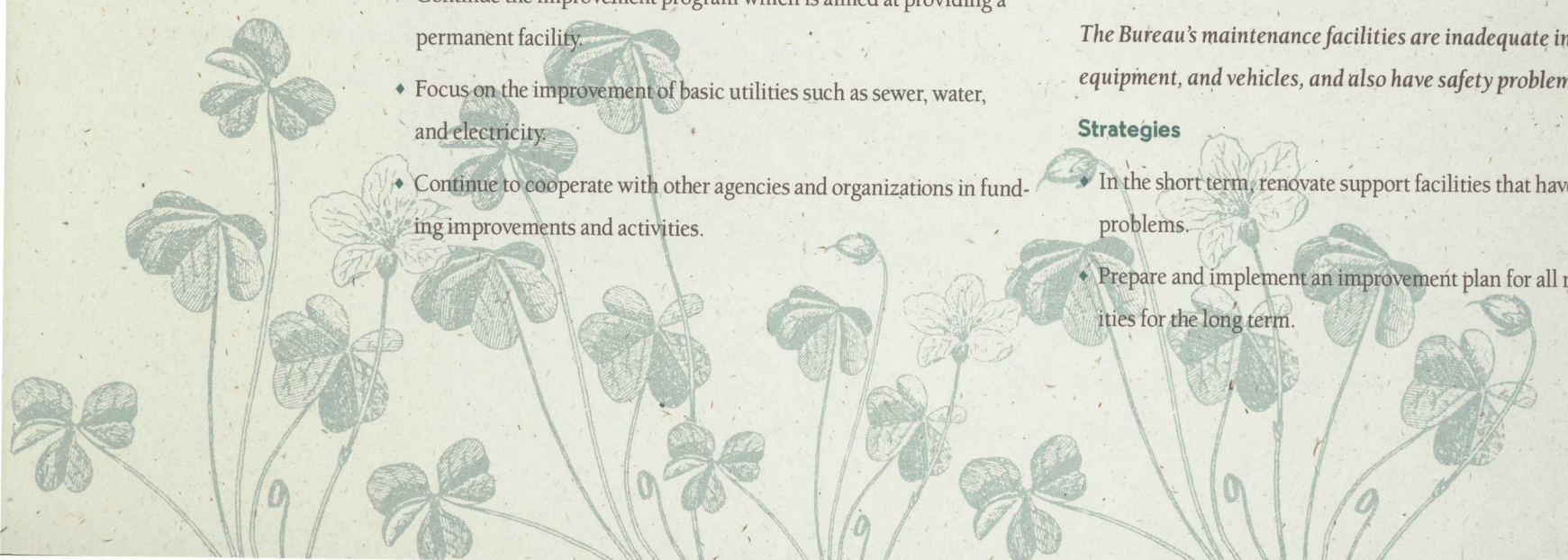
- ◆ Utilize revenues generated from the sale of golf revenue bonds for the expansion of the City's golf system.
- ◆ Initiate a program of clubhouse and golf course renovation to meet current and projected needs.
- ◆ Continue to improve maintenance practices and techniques.
- ◆ Continue to support golf facilities as an enterprise fund to ensure a consistent level of funding.

OPERATIONS FACILITIES

The Bureau's maintenance facilities are inadequate in size for staff, equipment, and vehicles, and also have safety problems.

Strategies

- ◆ In the short term, renovate support facilities that have the most serious problems.
- ◆ Prepare and implement an improvement plan for all maintenance facilities for the long term.



BLUEPRINT FOR NATURAL AREAS AND TRAILS

A major feature of Portland's park system is the amount of natural

areas that are easily accessible and offer a variety of recreational opportunities. These range from stands of trees in Forest Park to wetlands, such as Oaks Bottom and Smith and Bybee Lakes. These parks also comprise over 60 percent of the Park Bureau's acreage, and represent a significant asset for the city and the region.



Natural areas such as Oaks Bottom, Forest Park, Smith and Bybee Lakes and Elk Rock Island are major resources that are underutilized for educational purposes. However, the existing and long-term potential of many natural areas has not been defined and as a result, many of these areas are vulnerable to incompatible uses and activities.

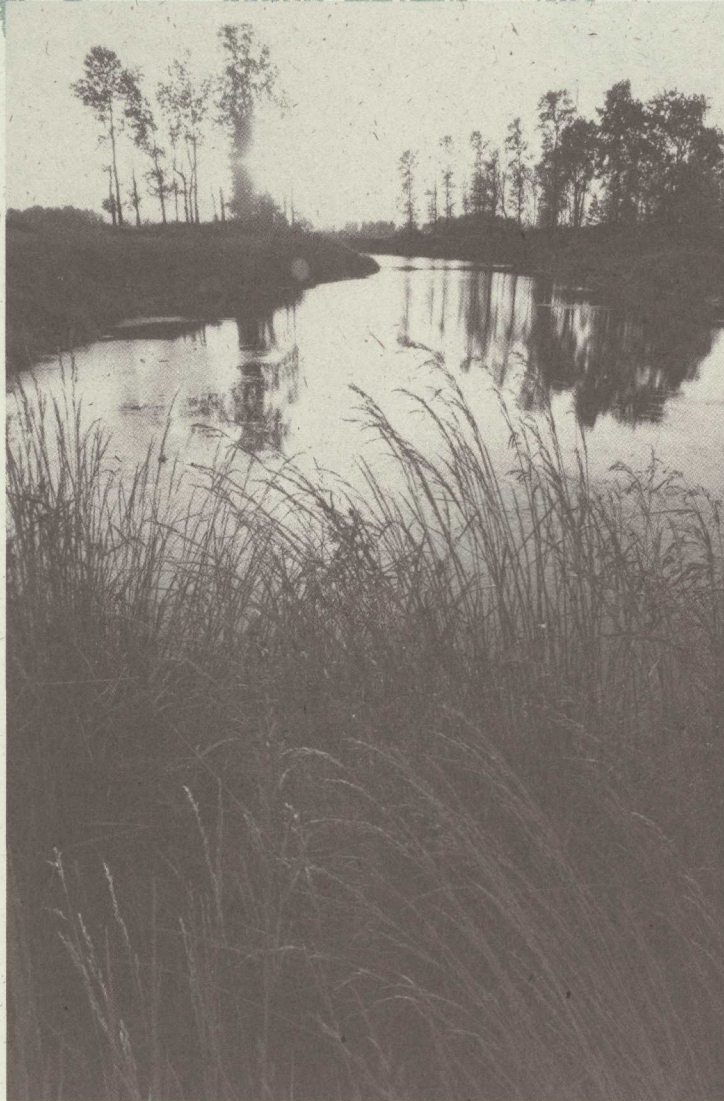
Aside from a shortage of programs at these sites, improvements to accommodate increased use also are limited. Basic facilities such as signage, maps, interpretive exhibits, and adequate trails are needed.

Strategies

- ◆ Emphasize the renovation of existing trails and the development of new trails in existing or potential high-use areas.
- ◆ Initiate a planning program for all natural areas where needed.

- ◆ Improve awareness of trails and other opportunities in natural areas through new or improved maps, brochures, and other measures.
- ◆ Foster an attitude of "active stewardship" toward the management of natural areas.
- ◆ Continue to work with other groups and agencies on capital projects and planning efforts.
- ◆ Encourage the formation of "Friends" groups to work with the Park Bureau in managing natural areas.
- ◆ Develop an extensive network of trails, interpretive centers, and other improvements at the city's natural areas.
- ◆ Establish an environmental education program for school-age children and adults, in cooperation with the school districts and other providers.
- ◆ Participate in the region's Greenspaces Program.
- ◆ Establish guidelines and funding for natural area acquisition.

Two highly visible natural areas in the Portland area are Forest Park and the 40-Mile Loop. Additional strategies need to be developed for the other significant natural areas in the region.



FOREST PARK

Urban development around the park threatens the park's viability as a wildlife preserve. Also, the Park has never had a master plan to guide future improvements. Acquisition of inholdings and other adjacent parcels is hampered by a lack of funds. And although the park has substantial potential for educational and interpretive programs, no programs are now being provided by the Park Bureau.

Strategies:

- ◆ Continue improvement projects that maintain and protect the environmental integrity of the Park.
- ◆ Coordinate programs and volunteer efforts for maintenance, hikes, and environmental education.

THE 40-MILE LOOP

Major portions of the Loop are unimproved and, consequently, cannot now be used as a pedestrian trail. With improvements, the loop could become part of a city-wide urban trail system. Needed is a consistent signage program, trailheads and access points and a comprehensive maintenance policy for the Loop.

Strategies:

- ◆ Continue to develop the trail where current development regulations require trail construction as a condition of development.
- ◆ Explore the use of alternative techniques to develop and acquire right-of-way for trails.
- ◆ Work with other agencies to assist with trail development, especially for on-street trails.

BLUEPRINT FOR RIVERFRONTS AND GREENWAYS

The Willamette and Columbia Rivers are resources with considerable potential but are now underutilized due a lack of planning, riverfront facilities, and financial resources. The Willamette and Columbia Rivers have played key roles in the growth and development of Portland. Like many other port towns, Portland owes its existence to these two rivers and, like other towns, has recently begun to rediscover what a resource and attraction they can be. The popularity of the Columbia riverfront is expected to increase as the South Shore area is developed. Corresponding with this urban development will be opportunities to construct recreational facilities such as trails, viewpoints and other features.



THE WILLAMETTE RIVER

With the river's recreational potential and interest among Portland's residents, more can be done to develop the river as a recreational corridor.

Strategies

- ◆ Develop an overall vision for the recreational use of the river.
- ◆ Establish the development of recreational/bicycle trails in the Willamette Greenway as a citywide priority.

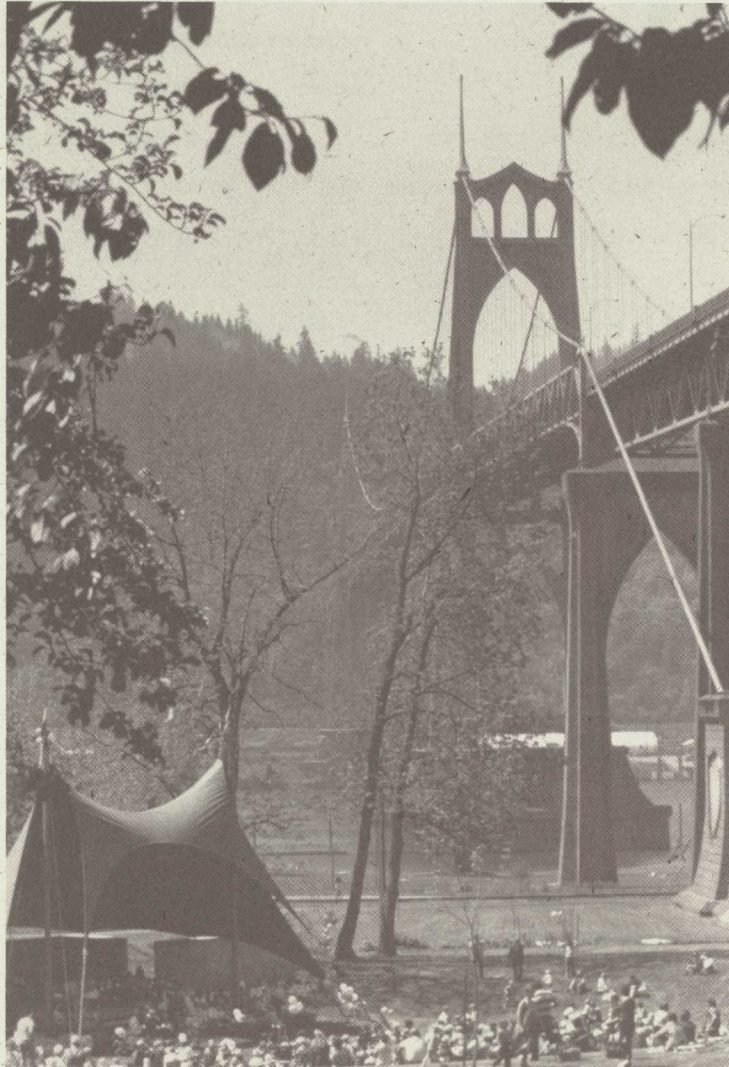
- ◆ Complete the critical linkages in the Greenway Trail and create pedestrian connections across the Willamette River.
- ◆ Improve access from adjacent neighborhoods.
- ◆ Enhance the Eastside Esplanade as a recreational corridor on the Willamette River.
- ◆ Develop the Willamette River as a metropolitan recreational resource and a focus for the city of Portland.

While the entire Willamette River within the city is a resource, the recreational potential of the river appears to be most promising south of the Broadway Bridge. As a recreational and open space corridor, the riverfront could provide a focus for tourist activities and economic development.

THE COLUMBIA RIVER

Recreational uses and facilities along the Columbia riverfront have been less well-developed than along the Willamette, due in large part to the extreme shortage of public land. Despite this shortage, the area has significant potential to offer a host of river-related recreational activities. But as with the Willamette River, several issues must be resolved to realize the Columbia's full recreational potential.

- ◆ There is a shortage of available public land.
- ◆ An overall vision for the recreational use of the river needs to be developed.
- ◆ Access from adjacent neighborhoods to the river is poor.



Other Columbia River opportunities include preserving Government Island as a wildlife preserve, and developing a recreation trail corridor along the river and a scenic parkway or boulevard along Marine Drive.

Strategies:

- ◆ Define the long-term plan for the recreational use of the riverfront.
- ◆ Work with other agencies to acquire additional riverfront land and develop riverfront improvements.
- ◆ Develop the south shore of the Columbia River as a recreational area that complements other improvements planned between Kelley Point Park and Blue Lake Park.

CONCLUSION

For decades, the citizens of Portland have enjoyed a park system abundant and rich with natural beauty. The park system clearly contributes to the quality of life Portlanders enjoy. The public recognizes the benefit while playing team softball at Columbia Park, or while enjoying a daily walk on a Forest Park trail. Whatever the recreational or leisure activity they participate in, citizens of Portland recognize the importance of the park system.

What citizens may not readily recognize is the important role parks play in the city's livability and public safety. It may be easier to understand if one were to imagine what the city would be like without the recreational opportunities, green open spaces, beautiful public gardens and natural wildernesses.

How many visitors would not be able to tell their friends back home about the International Rose Test Gardens or show photographs of the spectacular view of the city from Washington Park? Tourism is the state's second largest industry. The value of the Portland visitor's experience is not simply measured by the number of paid tourist attractions one sees, but the complete impression of the city greatly enhanced by Portland's numerous parks and facilities.

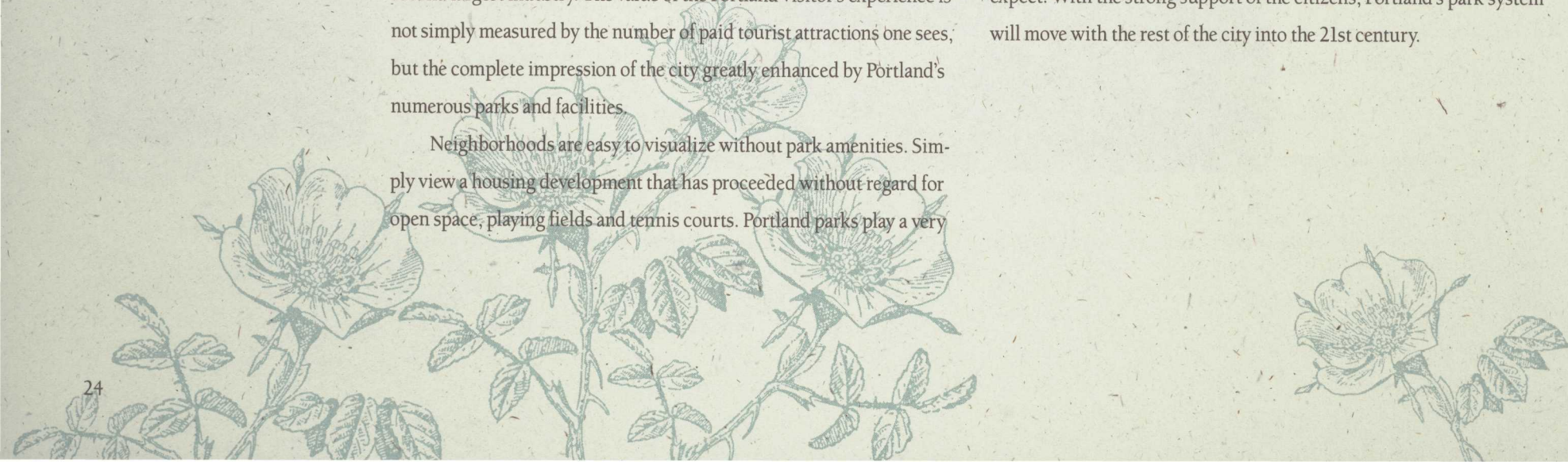
Neighborhoods are easy to visualize without park amenities. Simply view a housing development that has proceeded without regard for open space, playing fields and tennis courts. Portland parks play a very

important role in neighborhood development and revitalization. Home values are higher near a park and real estate agents realize the value of parks in a neighborhood.

A healthy park system attracts new and desirable business to Portland. When the State and the City promote Portland as the premier site to locate new business ventures, the visual attractiveness and livability of our city's parks and open spaces are used as a primary selling tool.

Without safe environments where people can play and learn, there will be an increase in the number of "at-risk" youth. Portland Parks and Recreation is often regarded as one of the only preventive arms of public safety. For decades, youth from all age groups and class structures have been engaged in constructive and healthy activities in the parks and at the recreational centers. Without those facilities and the recreational activities programmed in them, the issue of public safety would be heightened.

The challenge becomes one of building public awareness, understanding, and support for the significant role parks and recreation play in the framework of the city and the quality of life Portlanders have come to expect. With the strong support of the citizens, Portland's park system will move with the rest of the city into the 21st century.



PORTLAND PARKS BY DEVELOPMENT STATUS

STATUS	NUMBER	ACREAGE
Developed Parks	130	2554
Semi-developed and Undeveloped Parks	43	278
Natural Areas	10	5807
Other		839
Total		9478

Park Futures Summary

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RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

Community Centers	11
City Arts Centers	4
Community Schools	11
Swimming Pools	12
Community Gardens	20

