

21ST CENTURY U.S. RIVERFRONTS

Strategies and Solutions

- Creation of a public-private partnership (Riverlife) to manage the long-term planning and development of Pittsburgh's riverfronts
- Put into place design standards and a formal design review process for development at the rivers' edge
- Craft and enact a funding strategy that not only considers new development costs but the ongoing costs of maintenance
- Make use of strategic catalysts by targeting key individual sites, or introducing infrastructure, that could encourage localized development
- Utilize existing buildings by repurposing them with the intent to revitalize neighborhoods while preserving their essential character

Characteristics Shared with Portland

- Both Portland's Waterfront Park and Pittsburgh's Point State Park are approaching a half-century of life and could benefit from modifications.
- Bridges serve an iconic role in the cities' identities
- The riverfront area is a regional draw

Signature Features

- Three Rivers Park
- Mon Wharf
- North Shore
- Public Art
- Bridge Lighting

21st Century U.S. Riverfronts: Lessons Learned

Each of the four case studies offers important guidance for the future of Portland's waterfront. One of the most important lessons gleaned from conducting this research is that cities cannot rely exclusively on public funding to finance large waterfront projects, especially in the post-recession era. Louisville and Pittsburgh created non-profit entities to manage the funding and management of their waterfronts, and Columbus and Boston formed public-private partnerships for the same purpose. These innovative organizations have been able to harness private capital and sustain a consistent waterfront vision for far longer than a standard election cycle permits. Another key lesson learned here is that waterfronts are most successful when they are destinations not only for tourists but also for locals. The waterfronts in the four case study cities feature a diversity of spaces and programming, drawing crowds for everyday use and not just during special events. Overall, these cities have utilized placemaking to create truly special spaces that celebrate local culture and history, ultimately serving to connect waterfront users to the place in which they are spending time.



7

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTIVATING THE WATERFRONT

“The ultimate goals of the Master Plan are simple—to bring greater enrichment to those who live, work, and seek recreation in downtown Portland, Oregon; to bring people together; to generate more life in the park; and to strengthen its connection to the downtown. These ideas were a part of the 1975 plan and they remain powerful and compelling notions. Much has changed in the city since then however, and a fresh approach to achieving these goals has to be defined.”

-Waterfront Park Master Plan, 2003

RECOMMENDATIONS: INTRODUCTION



Salmon Street Springs seating area

Introduction

Popular consensus, gleaned from public feedback gathered throughout the last four decades of Waterfront Park's existence, indicates that the park is a beloved but underutilized public space that needs an update. The recommendations that follow take into consideration the history of consistent goals and non-implemented visions for the waterfront, with a specific focus on overcoming barriers to implementation. While many of the goals throughout this section have been echoed throughout the waterfront's planning history, some of the recommendations are more contemporary, designed to create a dynamic and inviting 21st century waterfront.

Watermark Planning established three guiding principles on which to build goals and objectives:

- 1. Make the riverfront a vibrant place year-round.**
- 2. Better connect the river to the downtown.**
- 3. Promote and celebrate the riverfront as a public space and resource.**

Through discussion with stakeholders, including City agencies, Watermark Planning developed these principles as central themes for the next iteration of Waterfront Park.

Many of the recommendations that follow are contingent upon Portland Parks and Recreation undertaking an update to the 2003 *Waterfront Park Master Plan*—which, to date, remains largely unimplemented. A new master planning process is expected within the next five years and therefore has not been included as a specific recommendation.

RECOMMENDATIONS: INTRODUCTION

KEY: RECOMMENDATION THEMES



PLACEMAKING



ACCESS & CIRCULATION



COMMERCIAL & RECREATIONAL BOATING



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



NATURAL ENVIRONMENT



EVENTS

How to Use this Section

Using the principles listed above to guide the research and outreach phases of this project, Watermark Planning developed a set of six themes around which to align goals for the downtown waterfront.

Icons are used throughout the following sections to illustrate the relevance of certain actions across multiple themes. A key identifying the icon associated with each recommendation theme is provided at left.

Each of the following sections contains policy goals relevant to each theme, followed by visionary but pointed objectives that respond to the goals; action items are listed under each objective.

7.1

RECOMMENDATIONS: PLACEMAKING

While in many respects Portland's Waterfront Park is seen as a regional asset and is the site of various large-scale gatherings and special events throughout the year, it does not function as an everyday destination. A concerted placemaking effort would help to restore the waterfront's prominence as a vital center of activity within the Central City.





RECOMMENDATIONS: PLACEMAKING

Placemaking Challenges

- Waterfront Park provides users with few clues that highlight the site's unique historical and geographical context, making it difficult for visitors to gain a clear "sense of place."
- Portland's waterfront feels disconnected from its downtown
- A lack of regular programming, amenities, and services, both within the park and nearby, provide little reason to stop and spend additional time in Waterfront Park

Great Ideas from Other Cities



Louisville, Kentucky

Adventure Playground was designed to reflect Louisville's river and steamboat heritage, giving children and families a hands-on opportunity to experience history.

Goal: Highlight Portland's uniqueness through arts and culture on the waterfront

Due to its location at the heart of the Central City, Portland's waterfront is an ideal place to feature what has made and continues to make the city a great place. There are abundant opportunities to use culture and the arts as a means of showcasing the many identities of the city and its residents.

Objective: Waterfront Park is a place where Portland's unique history and natural environment are celebrated.

Actions:

- Develop interactive art installations or permanent exhibits that educate, inspire and/or serve a practical or wayfinding function (e.g., create "tree stump" seating dispersed throughout the park to symbolize Portland's early nickname "Stumptown")
- Install an interactive play structure for children designed to incorporate Portland's maritime and Native American history (e.g., a steamboat, play bridges, and dug-out canoes)
- Install crosswalk art (e.g., crosswalks representing salmon, other local flora and fauna)

Objective: Waterfront Park is a public space for the expression and enjoyment of the arts and culture for all.



Portland's connection to the region's wild salmon could be highlighted through crosswalk art that serves a wayfinding function and helps to guide visitors to the waterfront from downtown.

Actions:

- Design public space for ongoing or rotating art displays
- Organize public art walks to connect established galleries, pop-up exhibits in vacant spaces, and more cutting-edge open-air exhibits
- Install lighting on the bridges to transform them into dynamic nighttime attractions
- Explore the feasibility of art on the seawall
- Prioritize and promote art and cultural events that are affordable to and representative of a larger segment of regional residents



RECOMMENDATIONS: PLACEMAKING

Goal: Help people to understand and appreciate the waterfront's historical and geographical context

There are currently few ways for people visiting Waterfront Park to understand and appreciate their location and its significance in Oregon's history and geography. Improving wayfinding and informative displays both to and within the park affords people the opportunity to fully discover their surroundings and engage with the built and natural environments.



Wayfinding signage on the Eastbank Esplanade identifies cross-streets, reinforcing the connection between the eastside waterfront and its adjacent blocks.

Objective: Waterfront history is highlighted in and near Waterfront Park.

Actions:

- Update and replace historical markers using the example of the Eastbank Esplanade
- Increase awareness of Native American history of the Central City and the Willamette River
- Increase awareness of the political legacy of Tom McCall, the park's namesake, and his significance to the State of Oregon

Objective: Multiple ways exist for people to experience the "you are here" concept in the park.

Actions:

- Extend the street grid into the park through a series of paved pathways leading to viewing platforms over the seawall
- Install street signs identifying cross-street connections to Downtown along promenade in the style of the cross-street signs on the Eastbank Esplanade
- Install bridge signs clearly visible to passersby in the park
- Identify the Willamette River through signage

Great Ideas from Past Plans



“Enhance the Willamette River as the focal point for views, public activities, and development which knits the city together.”

“Locate a wide range of affordable and attractive public activities ... along the riverbank and create frequent pedestrian access to the water's edge.”

-Central City Plan, 1988



RECOMMENDATIONS: PLACEMAKING

“Tactical Urbanism”

Tactical urbanism is an important placemaking tool that Watermark Planning recommends for use in Tom McCall Waterfront Park to the greatest extent possible. Tactical urbanist techniques are especially critical as short-term measures to be applied prior to the implementation of more capital-intensive projects. The term tactical urbanism refers to an approach to placemaking that employs low-cost or temporary measures to spur movement towards a long-term transformation. Its five characteristics have been identified by Mike Lydon, of the Street Plans Collaborative, as:

- “a deliberate, phased approach to instigating change;
- an offering of local ideas for local planning challenges;
- short-term commitment and realistic expectations;
- low risks, with a possibly a high reward;
- and the development of social capital between citizens, and the building of organizational capacity between public/private institutions, non-profit/NGOs, and their constituents.”



Moveable tables and chairs at Bryant Park in New York City create a dynamic, flexible space for people to congregate.

Goal: Make the park a regular and year-round destination where people want to spend time

As a regional amenity, Waterfront Park should be a place that people of all ages and backgrounds can enjoy on a regular basis. Currently, however, the park is underutilized. Some of the common reasons survey respondents gave for not visiting the park more often were the lack of seating, food options, and everyday activities. In order to transforming the park from a place people pass through to a destination in and of itself, attractive amenities must be added to make it an inviting place.



Terraced lawn seating area in Grand Rapids, Michigan

Objective: Park visitors feel safe and comfortable in Waterfront Park.

Actions:

- Install a variety of seating throughout the park, including furniture for eating
- Install terracing in the Bowl to create a more formal amphitheater for enjoying performances as well as views of the river
- Install covered areas in conjunction with seating
- Provide and maintain safe public restrooms at convenient locations throughout the park
- Improve lighting throughout the park
- Increase security through the presence of park ambassadors
- Install more trash and recycling receptacles



RECOMMENDATIONS: PLACEMAKING




Objective: The waterfront is an engaging place for users of all ages.






Actions:

- Build an all-weather skatepark and public plaza at the base of the Steel Bridge
- Install an interactive play structure in the park for children designed to incorporate Portland's maritime and Native American history (e.g., steamboat, play bridges, and dug-out canoes)

Implementing Placemaking Recommendations

The Regional Arts and Culture Council and the Portland Development Commission have designated \$280,000 for public art within the Downtown Waterfront Urban Renewal Area, which can be used for projects within Waterfront Park. There are also local and regional organizations that fund culture and heritage projects. Two national organizations, ArtPlace America and the National Endowment of the Arts, have recently developed grant programs specially for placemaking projects.

Placemaking: Goals and Objectives	Action	Timeframe				Implementer(s) (Lead in bold)	Related Planning Themes
		1-3 Years	4-10 Years	11-20 Years	Ongoing		
Goal: Highlight Portland’s uniqueness through arts and culture on the waterfront <i>Objective: Waterfront Park is a place where Portland’s unique history and natural environment are celebrated.</i>	Develop interactive art installations or permanent exhibits that educate, inspire, and/or serve a practical or wayfinding function (ex: Create “tree stump” seating dispersed throughout the park to symbolize Portland’s early nickname “Stumptown”)	X				PPR , private	
	Install an interactive play structure for children designed to incorporate Portland’s maritime and Native American history (e.g., steamboat, play bridges, and dug-out canoes)	X				PPR , private	
	Install crosswalk art (e.g., crosswalks representing salmon, other local flora and fauna)	X				PBOT , private	
<i>Objective: Waterfront Park is a public space for the expression and enjoyment of the arts and culture for all.</i>	Design public space for ongoing/rotating art displays	X				PPR , private	
	Organize/program public art walks to connect established galleries, pop-up exhibits in vacant spaces, and more cutting-edge open-air exhibits	X				PDC, private	
	Install lighting on the bridges to transform them into dynamic nighttime attractions	X				Multnomah County , private	
	Explore feasibility of art on the seawall		X			PPR , private	
	Prioritize and promote art and cultural events that are affordable to and representative of a larger segment of regional residents		X			Private	
	Explore the feasibility of installing a bandshell in the park		X			PPR , private	

Placemaking: Goals and Objectives	Action	Timeframe				Implementer(s) (Lead in bold)	Related Planning Themes
		1-3 Years	4-10 Years	11-20 Years	Ongoing		
Goal: Help people to understand and appreciate the waterfront's historical and geographical context <i>Objective: Waterfront history is highlighted in and near Waterfront Park.</i>	Update/replace historical markers using the example of the Eastbank Esplanade	X				PPR , private	
	Increase awareness of Native American history of the Central City and the Willamette River	X				PPR , tribal organizations	
	Increase awareness of the political legacy of Tom McCall, the park's namesake, and his significance to the State of Oregon	X				PPR , private	
<i>Objective: Multiple ways exist for people to experience the "You are here" concept in the park.</i>	Extend the street grid into the park through a series of paved pathways leading to viewing platforms over the seawall		X			PPR , PBOT	
	Install street signs identifying cross-street connections to Downtown along promenade in the style of the cross-street signs on the Eastbank Esplanade	X				PPR	
	Install bridge signs clearly visible to passersby in the park	X				PPR	
	Identify the Willamette River through signage	X				PPR	
Goal: Make the park a regular and year-round destination where people want to spend time <i>Objective: Park visitors feel safe and comfortable in Waterfront Park.</i>	Install a variety of seating throughout the park, including furniture for eating	X				PPR , private	
	Install terracing the bowl to create a more formal amphitheater for enjoying performances as well as views of the river		X			PPR	
	Install covered areas in conjunction with seating	X				PPR	
	Provide and maintain safe public restrooms at convenient locations throughout the park		X			PPR , PWB, private	
	Improve lighting throughout the park, particularly under bridges	X				PPR , Multnomah County, private	
	Increase security through the presence of park ambassadors	X				PPR	
	Install more trash and recycling receptacles	X				PPR	
<i>Objective: The waterfront is an engaging place for users of all ages.</i>	Build an all-weather skatepark and public plaza at the base of the Steel Bridge			X		PPR , private	
	Install an interactive play structure in the park for children designed to incorporate Portland's maritime and Native American history (ex: steamboat, play bridges, and dug-out canoes)	X				PPR , private	

7.2

RECOMMENDATIONS: ACCESS & CIRCULATION

While access - to the water, to the park itself, or through the park - is extremely important to park users, the park remains disconnected from both the downtown and the Willamette River. Reconnecting the park with its surroundings and enhancing movement within the park will increase the park's value as an urban public resource.





RECOMMENDATIONS: ACCESS & CIRCULATION



Rip-rap at the Hawthorne Bowl beach currently prevents easy access to the water's edge.

Access & Circulation Challenges

- Physical and visual access to the water is limited, making it difficult for visitors to engage in water activities or engage visually with the river.
- Park visitors experience difficulty accessing the park from downtown and the bridges.
- Pedestrian-bicycle conflicts in the park, along with a lack of path varieties, hamper people's enjoyment and sense of safety.

Goal: Improve park visitors' ability to access the water

"Access to the water" was the single most frequent response given by respondents, in both online and intercept surveys, when they were asked "What would make the waterfront more usable?" Other than the Hawthorne Bowl, there are no locations in Waterfront Park that provide direct access to the water. Even so, the presence of rip-rap rocks in the Bowl and the lack of a clear, good path to the water's edge prevent people seeking access to the water from fully utilizing this area. Organizations such as the Human Access Project have been instrumental in getting people into the Willamette River through events such as the Big Float. They have had a role in shaping the signage that appears in the Hawthorne Bowl so that there is at least some indication that swimming is permitted here; nonetheless, few people choose this as a swimming destination. The lack of direct contact with the river contributes to Portlanders' and visitors' lack of knowledge about the Willamette. In fact, park visitors often express surprise when they learn that the river is clean enough for swimming.

Objective: Park visitors swim in the river and recreate by the water's edge.

Actions:

- Remove rip-rap rock in selected areas to create an area conducive to swimming
- Create a beach
- Provide a changing facility for beach visitors

Objective: Residents and visitors are aware of the improved water quality of the Willamette.

Great Ideas from Past Plans



"Create a cantilever walkway that provides views to the river, dock, and Ankeny Plaza."

This cantilever walkway is envisioned to be supported by vertical elements that suspend the walkway over the river and provide a vertical element that can identify the Ankeny Plaza space from the surrounding city."

-Waterfront Park Master Plan, 2003



RECOMMENDATIONS: ACCESS & CIRCULATION

Action:

- Launch an educational campaign to inform residents of water quality issues and other topics concerning the environmental health of the river and its flora and fauna

Objective: Tom McCall Waterfront Park is a destination for watersports activity.

Actions:

- Improve access to Hawthorne Bowl beach
- Encourage a new boat rental facility near Hawthorne Bowl
- Expand options for paddle boats, including beach access and at least one low dock near the downtown core
- Identify and site new paddleboat house
- Develop covered seating area as staging area for recreational boaters

Objective: Waterfront Park provides visitors with visual access to the water.

Actions:

- Install a cantilevered platform or pathway over the river
- Study the feasibility of building a tower that would enable park visitors to take advantage of views of the waterfront, downtown, and Mount Hood
- Improve and protect sight lines to the river from downtown
- Explore the installation of artwork at terminating vistas, for instance, move the mast of the USS Oregon to the termination of Pine St. in the park
- Extend the street grid into the park in a series of paved pathways leading to viewing platforms over the seawall

Goal: Improve connections to the park

How accessible the park is to visitors was another frequently expressed concern. Twenty percent of online survey respondents said that difficulty in getting to the park affected the frequency of their visits. Access from adjacent neighborhoods is challenging, particularly due to the presence of Naito Parkway. When asked generally about Naito Parkway ("What would make Naito Parkway an attractive destination for both Portland residents and visitors?") the vast majority of respondents chose to provide solutions which would make Naito Parkway less of a barrier to park access, such as the introduction of additional crosswalks and sidewalks, reduced speeds or lanes.

Objective: Park visitors can easily walk, bike, and roll to the park from Central City neighborhoods and bridges.

Actions:

- Add crosswalks across Naito Parkway at the following intersections:
 - SW Columbia Street
 - SW Morrison Street
 - NW Couch Street
 - NW Flanders Street
- Modify signalization to prioritize pedestrian movement across Naito
- Study the feasibility of converting Yamhill Street into a pedestrian-only street from Naito Parkway to 1st Ave.



Crosswalks connecting to sidewalks in the park are non-existent in various locations along Naito Parkway, making for difficult access to the park from downtown.

- Improve connections between the downtown bicycle network and park paths by developing two major bicycle gateways into and out of the park from Oak and Stark Streets
- Construct ramps, stairs, or other vertical connections to allow direct access from the bridges (Morrison, Burnside, Steel) into the park
- Eliminate impediments to easy pedestrian and bicycle access to and from the bridges
- Develop a better route for northbound commuter cyclists between the Naito/NW Davis intersection into the park and back onto Naito Parkway.



RECOMMENDATIONS: ACCESS & CIRCULATION

Objective: Park visitors can access the park easily via transit.

Actions:

- Introduce transit service along on Naito Parkway and the waterfront
- Study the feasibility of adding a seasonal circulating shuttle connecting the Waterfront with other downtown locations
- Modify existing transit stop announcements (Yamhill District MAX station, Oak/SW 1st Ave. MAX Station, SW Madison/1st Ave, SW Main/2nd Ave) to call attention to the stops' proximity to waterfront destinations

Goal: Improve circulation within the park

How park visitors move through the park is perceived as one of the most problematic aspects of the park. Resolving the conflict between pedestrians and cyclists moving along the Promenade by mode separation was the most frequently volunteered concern expressed in write-in comments in the online survey.

Objective: Park visitors can safely walk, roll, or cycle at various speeds with minimal conflicts between modes.

Actions:

- Create separated bicycle and pedestrian paths along or near the promenade
- Add signage to improve safety and increase courtesy between users of different modes

Separated Bicycle-Pedestrian Paths

Shared-use paths in urban parks, such as Waterfront Park's esplanade, tend to be popular places. As off-street paths, they are particularly attractive for cyclists of all abilities, including children. As a short-term measure, signage or markings could be introduced to help manage conflicts between modes by reminding users to proceed cautiously and courteously. However, signage alone is typically insufficient for managing conflict, whereas road markings can be more effective.



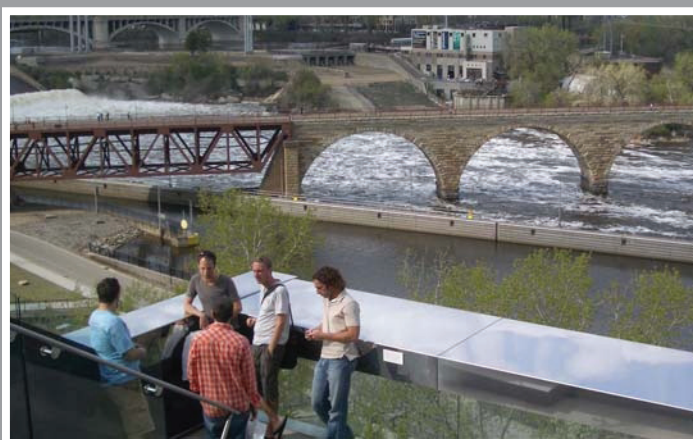
Due to the path's high volume, a longer-term and more comprehensive solution to pedestrian-bicycle conflicts in Waterfront Park would be the introduction of physically separated paths for each mode. Australian guidance (Queensland Department of Transport and Main Roads), for instance, recommends physically separated paths when the combined volumes of pedestrians and cyclists are greater than 300 per hour, a measure that Waterfront Park exceeds. According to Svensson, Jonsson and Hyden (2007), the most effective design is to use different path materials for the modes.

Several examples of physical separated paths can be found in Minneapolis, MN (along parts of the Grand Rounds Scenic Byway), along the Hudson River in New York City, and at Stanley Park in Vancouver, BC. In Portland, a physically separated path has been proposed for the South Waterfront Greenway, to which this path would eventually connect. Shared use paths should be designed to meet the accessibility requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act.



RECOMMENDATIONS: ACCESS & CIRCULATION

Great Ideas from Other Cities



Minneapolis, Minnesota

Grand Rounds Scenic Byway is a loop of over 50 miles that links a number of parks and lakes in the Minneapolis area. It passes through the downtown area and also connects many neighborhoods and diverse landscapes to its trail network. There are physically separated paths for pedestrians, cyclists, and roller-bladers. It also has a cantilevered bridge, Guthrie's Endless Bridge, that extends over the river. It provides views of the river and the St. Francis Falls below from both indoors and outdoors, an important consideration given Minneapolis's climate.














Objective: Park visitors have multiple paths along which to move through the park.




Actions:

- Improve pathways along the western edge of the park by completing the sidewalk network or installing additional paths within the park
- Resolve path conflicts between the Portland Loos, trees, and potential pathways
- Create a more inviting space for pedestrians through the use of vegetation and pedestrian-scale lighting
- Explore the feasibility of building a buffered two-way cycle track on the east side of Naito Parkway
- Explore the feasibility of closing Naito Parkway on Sundays

Implementing Access & Circulation Recommendations

In addition to federal and state funding, in the form of Regional Flexible Funds and the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program, local and private funding may be available for these projects, especially given their strong active transportation focus. Additional options include tax increment financing and the creation of a local improvement district, approaches used in other waterfront pathway projects in Portland, most notably the Eastbank Esplanade. Furthermore, non-profit organizations dedicated to promoting these issues may be able to provide either monetary or in-kind support. Kaiser Permanente has been the main sponsor of Sunday Parkways, for instance. Agencies supporting public health, from the Multnomah County Department of Health to the Department of Health and Human Services, may also be prospective funding partners.

Access & Circulation: Goals and Objectives	Action	Timeframe				Implementer(s) (Lead in bold)	Related Planning Themes
		1-3 Years	4-10 Years	11-20 Years	Ongoing		
Goal: Improve park visitors' ability to access the water. <i>Objective: Park visitors swim in the river and recreate by the water's edge.</i>	Remove rip-rap rock in selected areas to create an area conducive to swimming	X				PPR , private	
	Create a beach	X				PPR , private	
	Provide a changing facility for beach visitors		X			PBOT , private	
<i>Objective: Residents and visitors are aware of the improved water quality of the Willamette.</i>	Launch an educational campaign to inform residents of water quality issues and other topics concerning the environmental health of the river and its flora and fauna				X	BES , private	
<i>Objective: Tom McCall Waterfront Park is a destination for watersports activity.</i>	Improve access to Hawthorne Bowl beach		X			PPR , private	
	Encourage a new boat rental facility near Hawthorne Bowl		X			BPS , PDC, private	
	Expand options for paddle boats, including beach access and at least one low dock near the downtown core		X			PPR , private	
	Identify and site new paddleboat house		X			BPS , private	
	Develop covered seating area as staging area for recreational boaters		X			PPR , tribal organizations	
<i>Objective: Waterfront Park provides visitors with visual access to the water.</i>	Install a cantilever platform or pathway over the river			X		PPR , private	
	Study the feasibility of building a tower that would enable park visitors to take advantage of views of the waterfront, downtown, and Mount Hood			X		PPR , private	
	Improve and protect sight lines to the river from downtown				X	BPS	
	Explore the installation of artwork at terminating vistas, for instance, move the mast of the USS Oregon to the termination of Pine St. in the park				X	PPR	
	Extend the street grid into the park in a series of paved pathways leading to viewing platforms over the seawall		X			PPR , PBOT	

Access & Circulation: Goals and Objectives	Action	Timeframe				Implementer(s) (Lead in bold)	Related Planning Themes
		1-3 Years	4-10 Years	11-20 Years	Ongoing		
Goal: Improve connections to the park <i>Objective: Park visitors can easily walk, bike, and roll to the park from Central City neighborhoods and bridges.</i>	Add crosswalks across Naito Parkway at all intersections: SW Columbia, SW Yamhill, SW Morrison, SW Stark, SW Oak, NW Couch, NW Flanders	X				PBOT	
	Modify signalization to prioritize pedestrian movement across Naito	X				PBOT	
	Study the feasibility of converting Yamhill St. into a pedestrian-only street from Naito Parkway to 1st Ave.				X	PBOT, BPS	
	Improve connections between the downtown bicycle network and park paths by developing two major bicycle gateways into and out of the park from Oak and Stark Streets		X			PBOT	
	Construct ramps, stairs, or other vertical connections to allow direct access from the bridges (Morrison, Burnside, Steel) into the park.			X		PBOT	
	Eliminate impediments to easy pedestrian and bicycle access to and from the bridges		X			PBOT	
	Develop a better route for northbound commuter cyclists between the Naito/NW Davis intersection into the park and back onto Naito Parkway.		X			PBOT	
<i>Objective: Park visitors can access the park easily via transit.</i>	Introduce transit service along on Naito Parkway and the waterfront		X			TriMet, PBOT	
	Study the feasibility of adding a seasonal circulating shuttle connecting the Waterfront with other downtown locations	X				TriMet, PBOT	
	Modify existing transit stop announcements (Yamhill District MAX station, Oak/SW 1st Ave. MAX Station, SW Madison/1st Ave, SW Main/2nd Ave) to call attention to the stops' proximity to waterfront destinations	X				TriMet	
Goal: Improve circulation within the park <i>Objective: Park visitors can safely walk, roll, or cycle at various speeds with minimal conflicts between modes.</i>	Create separated bicycle and pedestrian paths along or near the promenade			X		PPR, PBOT	
	Add signage to improve safety and increase courtesy between users of different modes	X				PPR, PBOT	
<i>Objective: Park visitors have multiple paths along which to move through the park.</i>	Improve pathways along the western edge of the park by completing the sidewalk network or installing additional paths within the park			X		PPR, PBOT	
	Resolve path conflicts between the Portland Loos, trees, and potential pathways		X			PPR, PBOT	
	Create a more inviting space for pedestrians through the use of vegetation and pedestrian-scale lighting		X			PPR, PBOT	
	Explore the feasibility of building a buffered two-way cycle track on the east side of Naito Parkway			X		PBOT	
	Explore the feasibility of closing Naito Parkway on Sundays	X				PBOT, PPR	

7.3

RECOMMENDATIONS: COMMERCIAL & RECREATIONAL BOATING

Portland lives, works and plays around the Willamette River. As “River City,” the waterfront should serve to provide emotional and physical linkages between downtown and the river. Boaters of all types, including recreationalists and commercial operators, desire greater access to and from Waterfront Park; their presence would strengthen the connection between city and river.





RECOMMENDATIONS: COMMERCIAL & RECREATIONAL BOATING

Commercial & Recreational Boating Challenges

- Portland's zoning code currently does not allow overnight mooring as an outright use, forcing commercial boat operators into costly conditional use permits.
- Services needed for commercial boating are not available in central reach and limited opportunity exists for development of these services.
- There is limited opportunity for recreational boaters to access Waterfront Park.
- Current docks are either poorly maintained and unusable (Ankeny Dock) or not located strategically in areas with ready access to downtown.



The S.S. Legacy, of the Un-Cruise Adventures regional cruise line, moored at the downtown seawall.

Goal: Utilize the river as a transportation option

Traditionally used in Portland for the movement of freight, the Willamette River can act as a key north-south circulation route for residents and visitors, especially between residential, employment, and cultural clusters centered around the waterfront. A number of key districts are developed or in the process of developing into vibrant destinations along both sides of the river. Connections via the river will support the needs of a growing population and make Waterfront Park a more vibrant and accessible place.

Objective: People use the river as a travel option.

Actions:

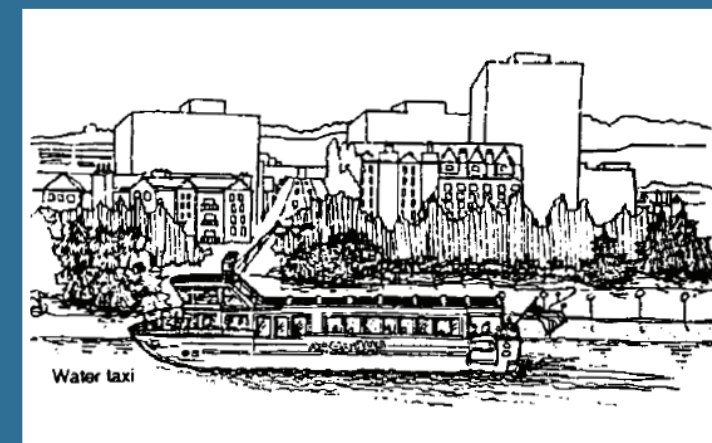
- Create a long-term docks plan
- Commission a feasibility study of a potential Lake Oswego-Downtown Portland commuter ferry
- Develop a governance and management structure for long-term regional on-water transit systems

Objective: Within the central reach, people make short connecting trips across the river by water transit.

Actions:

- Study feasibility and demand for a cross-river, seasonal ferry
- Identify target areas underserved by bridge and road connections for longer-term commuter potential

Great Ideas from Past Plans



“Create a river taxi system with stops at public attractions and existing piers. The taxi system could be modeled on the existing False Creek taxis of Vancouver, B.C. It could link existing and proposed riverfront attractions within the Central City and adjacent areas with a scheduled water transportation network. These taxis may also be used by commuters. Initial use would primarily be for recreation and Portland visitors.”

-Central City Plan, 1988



RECOMMENDATIONS: COMMERCIAL & RECREATIONAL BOATING

Great Ideas from Other Cities



Norfolk, Virginia

Hampton Roads Transit connects the employment center and amenities of the Norfolk downtown waterfront with the cross-river neighbor of Portsmouth via the Elizabeth River Ferry. The transit agency operates three 150-person ferries with service every thirty minutes. During the summer months, more than 40,000 monthly riders, many of them visiting the Norfolk Waterfront Market or attending a baseball game, relax and enjoy the river. Hampton Roads Transit subsidizes ferry ridership at about 80%, similar to TriMet's subsidy of 75%. The Elizabeth River Ferry is a strong placemaking and economic development tool for the region, supporting cultural and civic activities along its riverfront.

Regional Cruise Lines



A number of regional cruise lines currently use Portland as a port of call but homeport in Vancouver Washington. Cruise companies have indicated that they would like to be in Portland but that a number of barriers exist. The needs of a regional cruise company to operate viably in the city include: a zoning change to allow overnight mooring as an outright use, a comfortable and covered seating area with retail services for guests, a place for permanent docking, and access to potable water, blackwater, shorepower and solid waste disposal. While Waterfront Park could support short-term passenger loading and unloading, a permanent docking space with access to utilities and shop services would conflict with the everyday use and activity in the park. It is therefore recommended that permanent docking be located at another nearby location. One potential spot for a permanent cruise ship home is the dock next to Centennial Mills. While Watermark supports regional cruise ships in Portland, it is not listed as an action for two reasons: the City is already tackling some of these challenges, and the necessary implementation actions fall outside of the scope of this project.



RECOMMENDATIONS: COMMERCIAL & RECREATIONAL BOATING



Ankeny Dock in its prime, circa 1980s



A variety of boats and users can be found on the Willamette River in the downtown area.

Goal: Enhance river recreation

Use of the river as a recreational amenity is growing, and there is a stated desire for greater access to and from Waterfront Park. As the interface between the river and downtown, Waterfront Park should act as a worthy transition zone, with services and amenities for recreationalists.

Objective: Mooring, docks and services attract on-water recreationalists to Waterfront Park.

Actions:

- Install permanent mooring buoys in Hawthorne Bowl
- Identify dock for downtown motor boat access
- Expand options for paddle boats, including beach access and at least one low dock near the downtown core
- Identify and site new paddle boat house
- Develop covered seating and staging area that serves commercial and recreational boaters
- Improve access to Hawthorne Bowl beach
- Encourage a new boat rental facility near Hawthorne Bowl
- Install changing rooms/bathrooms near areas of direct river access







Objective: Paddlers, swimmers, and boaters use the river without conflict.

Actions:

- Promote boater education cards for paddle boats
- Create separate zones for swimming and boat mooring in Hawthorne Bowl
- Require boat rental safety education class

Implementing Boating Recommendations

There are a number of opportunities for both private and public financing for commercial and recreational boating. However, river transportation options remain expensive relative to land-based systems, especially from an operations standpoint. A shorter cross-river seasonal or tourist route is more affordable but does not have the same opportunity for regional and federal funding that a commuter-based system would have. A private partnership may be necessary to leverage public funding of initial capital investments for private operations and management with the opportunity for revenue from fares and advertising.

Commercial & Recreational Boating: Goals and Objectives	Action	Timeframe				Implementer(s) (Lead in bold)	Related Planning Themes
		1-3 Years	4-10 Years	11-20 Years	Ongoing		
Goal: Utilize the river as a transportation option <i>Objective: People use the river as a travel option.</i>	Create a long-term docks plan	X				BPS , PPR	
	Commision a feasibility study of a potential Lake Oswego-Downtown Portland commuter ferry		X			BPS , Metro	
	Develop governance and management structure for long-term regional on-water transit systems		X			BPS , Metro, TriMet, PBOT	
<i>Objective: Within the central reach, people make short connecting trips across the river by water transit.</i>	Study feasibility and demand for cross-river, seasonal ferry	X				PPR , private	
	Identify target areas underserved by bridge and road connections for longer term commuter potential		X			BPS , PBOT	
Goal: Enhance river recreation <i>Objective: Mooring, docks and services attract on-water recreationalists to Waterfront Park.</i>	Install permanent mooring buoys in Hawthorne Bowl	X					
	Identify dock for downtown motor boat access		X			BPS	
	Expand options for paddle boats, including beach access and at least one low dock near the downtown core		X			BPS , PPR, private	
	Identify and site new paddle boat house		X			BPS , private	
	Develop covered seating and staging area that serves commercial and recreational boaters		X			PPR , private	
	Improve access to Hawthorne Bowl beach	X				PPR	
	Encourage a new boat rental facility near Hawthorne Bowl		X			BPS , PDC, private	 
	Install changing rooms/bathrooms near areas of direct river access 3-5 years	X				PPR	
<i>Objective: Paddlers, swimmers, and boaters use the river without conflict.</i>	Promote boater education cards for paddle boats		X			Oregon State Marine Board	
	Create separate zones for swimming and boat mooring in Hawthorne Bowl		X			PPR	
	Require boat rental safety education class	X				Oregon State Marine Board	

7.4

RECOMMENDATIONS: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

There is significant unrealized potential, and likely substantial foregone revenue, as the result of underdevelopment in the park and surrounding blocks. Watermark Planning recommends implementing inexpensive short-term measures to expand commercial activity in the park as well as more strategic long-term efforts to make the area a commercial destination.





RECOMMENDATIONS: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Economic Development Challenges

- Naito Parkway and the 1st through 3rd Avenue blocks lack vibrancy and activity, particularly during evenings and weekends.
- Waterfront Park offers very little in the way of food, drink, and other commercial attractions.
- The sparseness of commercial activities in and around the park limits the area's functionality as well as its attractiveness to a more diverse range of users.

Goal: Expand commercial activities along Naito Parkway

Naito Parkway and the surrounding blocks are currently characterized by a lack of vibrancy and activity, particularly during evenings and weekends. If anything, this area is seen as a dead zone between the waterfront and downtown, where parking lots dominate the landscape. Bringing new uses and users to this area through expanded commercial and residential development would serve to humanize and activate the landscape while reducing the popular perception of Naito Parkway as a pedestrian barrier.

Objective: Naito Parkway is a vibrant, pedestrian-friendly corridor that features a variety of active evening and weekend uses complementing Tom McCall Waterfront Park.

Actions:

- Establish car-free Sunday Parkways on Naito Parkway along Waterfront Park
- Recruit property owner participation for a program to use vacant spaces and lots for pop-up activities (food, art, entertainment)
- Study redevelopment incentives to encourage new commercial and residential development along Naito Parkway
- Explore siting options for human-powered watercraft rentals along Naito Parkway
- Encourage redevelopment with key public attractions and mixed uses at the bridgeheads
- Implement incentives that encourage new development in the Naito Parkway/riverfront area, including targeted clusters of commercial uses
- Incentivize workforce housing development along SW Naito Parkway and in the blocks immediately adjacent to the waterfront

Objective: A revenue-generating, all-weather skatepark and public plaza at the base of the Steel Bridge serves as a world-class competition facility and a regional attraction.

Actions:

- Decommission the auto-access ramp leading from southbound Naito Parkway onto the eastbound portion of the Steel Bridge
- Engage the Old Town/Chinatown community to sustain support for the project
- Develop a financial framework to fund the project, including establishing a strategy for operations and maintenance
- Build a skatepark

Great Ideas from Past Plans



“It is recommended that [Naito Parkway] be converted into a tree-lined boulevard...in order to make it [feel like] a part of the park... This will create strong ties between the Waterfront and the Core and a visually attractive foreground for the whole downtown.

The boulevard treatment will provide a generous buffer for properties along the west side of [Naito Parkway] thereby encouraging rehabilitation and infill development.”

-Downtown Waterfront Park Final Report, 1975



RECOMMENDATIONS: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Goal: Expand commercial activities in the park

Although Saturday Market attracts visitors to the park from throughout the region and the world, the park in general suffers from a lack of attractions and services that encourage users of all ages to do much more than merely pass through. Commercial activity clusters should be designated at strategic locations in the park. Given the rainy climate of Portland and safety concerns in the park, the inactive spaces under the bridges and at the bridgeheads should be programmed for active and commercial uses; these spaces would encourage users to sit, relax, purchase food and beverages, get their feet wet, swim, paddle, embark on regional cruises, and truly enjoy the unique experience of being on Portland's waterfront while also providing opportunities to take shelter from the rain when needed.

Objective: Park users can rent recreational equipment and purchase refreshments in the park in locations other than Saturday Market.

Actions:

- Designate commercial activity clusters within the park
- Designate loading-zones to serve commercial activity clusters in the park
- Explore and prioritize alternate commercial uses for the old Visitors Information Center
- Create a hardscaped surface in the park
- Encourage vendors to operate in the park on a regular basis



Pershing Square Cafe, New York City

- Modify the zoning code to allow for small-scale retail uses in the park without conditional use permits
- Develop commercial activity clusters in the park, with design standards

Objective: The space under the Hawthorne and/or Morrison bridges is used for temporary or permanent commercial uses including food/drink establishments.

Action:

- Conduct feasibility and engineering study for siting a cafe or other retail use under one of the bridges



Underutilized space underneath the Morrison Bridge (shown here) and/or Hawthorne Bridge may be used for commercial uses such as a cafe.



Mobile food vendors should be encouraged to operate regularly at Waterfront Park.



RECOMMENDATIONS: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Goal: Develop the waterfront and adjacent blocks as a commercial destination

With the exception of events and Saturday Market, there are currently few attractions in the park that draw users from downtown and nearby transit stops. Once visitors are in the park, there is little in the way of information to help them learn about and navigate nearby amenities. Thoughtful and intentional programming, in conjunction with an expanded retail core and a broad mix of commercial activity at the street level, could serve to better connect Portland's downtown to its waterfront, with the ultimate intention of establishing this area as a unique commercial-recreational destination.

Objective: Amenities and services support waterfront commercial activity and draw residents and visitors to the area.

Actions:

- Create a visitor information booth in the park to direct people to businesses, services, and activities in the vicinity of the waterfront
- Locate pop-up activities, services, and events on the proposed hardscaped surface in the park
- Pair temporary and pop-up uses in the park and along Naito with Sunday Parkways
- Allow events to reserve and utilize Naito Parkway, downtown blocks (with priority on "flexible streets"), and/or adjacent Festival Streets in Old Town/Chinatown
- Expand the downtown retail core on Morrison and Yamhill streets to the Waterfront
- Encourage a broad mix of retail opportunities at the street level

What is a "pop-up"?

A pop-up is a retail venue that is temporary. In this case, it could be an ice cream cart, a tamale stand, or an art sale. It could even serve as a demonstration area for local athletic and outdoor industry companies to provide rentals, testing, and sales of their apparel and equipment.



Tactical Urbanism 2 by The Street Plans Collaborative describes the appeal of pop-ups in the following way:

"Main streets with vacant storefronts, oversized parking lots, and underutilized public spaces are increasingly being used as local incubators for a seemingly endless number of temporary to permanent commercial and community uses. For example, in Oakland, CA an urban planner and restaurant owner are collaborating in producing Popuphood, a three-block stretch of short-term lease pop-up stores intended to revitalize the downtown through new business incubation. In this way, the pop-up trend reflects the new economy where aligning the interests of property owners and local entrepreneurs is happening in a more nimble and creative way. Finally, the interest and public exposure pop-ups generate by way of their temporary nature provide a powerful tool for sparking long-term change. Successful pop-up stores often earn the right to stay, creating a win-win for the property owner, occupant, and neighborhood."



RECOMMENDATIONS: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Incentivizing Workforce Housing Development







Given that adding to the stock of workforce housing in the Central City is a stated policy goal of CC2035, Watermark recommends that the development of workforce housing targeted at a specific income threshold be incentivized through:






- SDC Waivers
- Property tax exemptions for structural improvements to multi-family properties that are in line with standard loan terms (15-year minimum)
- Provision of lower cost construction capital and lower cost long-term financing to developers of workforce housing through financial tools such as tax-exempt bonds
- Establishment of a housing trust fund or use of TIF funds (independent of the affordable housing set-aside) to finance workforce housing development in the Central City
- Developer incentives, such as density bonuses, height variances, and allowing projects with a workforce component to be accelerated through the permitting and design review processes
- Other tools discovered through the redevelopment incentive study that have been proven to be successful in incentivizing workforce housing development

It is recommended that the income levels to which this housing is targeted be explicitly linked to any potential development incentives provided to incentivize workforce housing. In addition, redevelopment incentives that have been proven to be successful in developing workforce housing elsewhere should be studied and applied to Portland.

Implementing Economic Development Recommendations

Commercial development is largely a private sector-led process, although in the case of difficult-to-develop areas and properties the City must take a lead on removing barriers and providing incentives to encourage redevelopment. In terms of economic development in and around Waterfront Park, the City will play a key role in facilitating public-private partnerships. PDC's role is to create programs and flexible funding tools that serve to incentivize redevelopment of workforce housing and new commercial uses in and around Waterfront Park. It is suggested that remaining funding gaps, such as for the construction of the skatepark, be filled through a combination of crowdfunding and corporate sponsorship from Portland-based firms with ties to the action sports market.

Economic Development: Goals and Objectives	Action	Timeframe				Implementer(s) (Lead in bold)	Related Planning Themes
		1-3 Years	4-10 Years	11-20 Years	Ongoing		
Goal: Expand commercial activities along Naito Parkway <i>Objective: Naito Parkway is a vibrant, pedestrian-friendly corridor that features a variety of active evening and weekend uses complementing Tom McCall Waterfront Park.</i>	Establish car-free Sunday Parkways on Naito Parkway along Waterfront Park	X				PBOT , BPS	
	Recruit property owner participation for a program to use vacant spaces and lots for pop-up activities (food, art, entertainment)	X				PDC , private	
	Study redevelopment incentives to encourage new commercial and residential development along Naito Parkway				X	BPS , PDC	
	Explore siting options for human-powered watercraft rentals along Naito Parkway	X				PDC , private	
	Encourage redevelopment with key public attractions and mixed uses at the bridgeheads		X			BPS , PDC, private, Multnomah County	
	Implement incentives that encourage new development in the Naito Parkway/riverfront area, including targeted clusters of commercial uses	X				PDC , BPS	
	Incentivize workforce housing development along SW Naito Parkway and in the blocks immediately adjacent to the waterfront	X				PDC , BPS	
<i>Objective: A revenue-generating, all-weather skatepark and public plaza at the base of the Steel Bridge serves as a world-class competition facility and a regional attraction.</i>	Decommission the auto-access ramp leading from southbound Naito Parkway onto the eastbound portion of the Steel Bridge	X				PBOT	
	Engage the Old Town/Chinatown community to sustain support for the project				X	BPS , OTCT Community Association	
	Develop a financial framework to fund the project, including establishing a strategy for operations and maintenance		X			PPR	
	Build a skatepark			X		PPR , private	

Economic Development: Goals and Objectives	Action	Timeframe				Implementer(s) (Lead in bold)	Related Planning Themes
		1-3 Years	4-10 Years	11-20 Years	Ongoing		
Goal: Expand commercial activities in the park <i>Objective: Park users can rent recreational equipment and purchase refreshments in the park in locations other than Saturday Market.</i>	Designate commercial activity clusters within the park	X				PPR , BPS	
	Designate loading-zones to serve commercial activity clusters in the park	X				PBOT , BPS, PPR	
	Explore and prioritize alternate commercial uses for the old Visitors Information Center	X				PPR	
	Create a hardscaped surface in the park		X			PPR , event organizations	
	Encourage vendors to operate in the park on a regular basis				X	BPS , PPR, private	
	Modify the zoning code to allow for small-scale retail uses in the park without conditional use permits		X			BPS	
	Develop commercial activity clusters in the park, with design standards		X			PPR , BPS	
<i>Objective: The space under the Hawthorne and/or Morrison bridges is used for temporary or permanent commercial uses including food/drink establishments.</i>	Conduct feasibility and engineering study for siting a cafe or other retail use under one of the bridges	X				BPS , Multnomah County	
Goal: Develop the waterfront and adjacent blocks as a commercial destination <i>Objective: Amenities and services support waterfront commercial activity and draw residents and visitors to the area.</i>	Create a visitor information booth in the park to direct people to businesses, services, and activities in the vicinity of the waterfront	X				Private	
	Locate pop-up activities, services, and events on the proposed hardscaped surface in the park		X			PDC , private	
	Pair temporary and pop-up uses in the park and along Naito with Sunday Parkways	X				PDC , PBOT, private	
	Allow events to reserve and utilize Naito Parkway, downtown blocks (with priority on “flexible streets”), and/or adjacent Festival Streets in Old Town/Chinatown	X				PBOT	 
	Expand the downtown retail core on Morrison and Yamhill streets to the Waterfront			X		PDC , PBOT, private	
	Encourage a broad mix of retail opportunities at the street level		X			BPS , PDC, private	

7.5

RECOMMENDATIONS: NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Pollinator Habitat

This area has been planted with pollinator-friendly flowers and is protected from pesticides to provide valuable habitat for bees and other pollinators.

To learn how you can help to bring back the pollinators, please visit www.prc.org

Waterfront Park is central to Portland's green spaces. Native vegetative plantings in the park will create habitat, especially for avian and pollinator species, and connect visitors to the park's natural history and context.





RECOMMENDATIONS: NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Natural Environment Challenges

- There is limited natural habitat in the park and in the river to support wildlife and connect users to nature.
- The public has few opportunities within the park to learn about and appreciate the park's environmental context.
- Visitor experiences in the Hawthorne Bowl suffer from an abundance of resident geese and their excrement.

Great Ideas from Past Plans



“Establish ecologically viable corridors for migratory fish and birds and other wildlife through habitat protection and restoration.”

-River Renaissance Strategy, 2004

Goal: Enhance in-park and river habitat

While not intended to function primarily as a natural open space (such as Forest Park), the waterfront nevertheless should play a role in connecting fragmented urban habitat. The park can also fulfill a need for respite from the fast pace of urban living while connecting users to natural systems, history and context.

Objective: Wildlife is able to travel along natural corridors to and through Waterfront Park.

Actions:

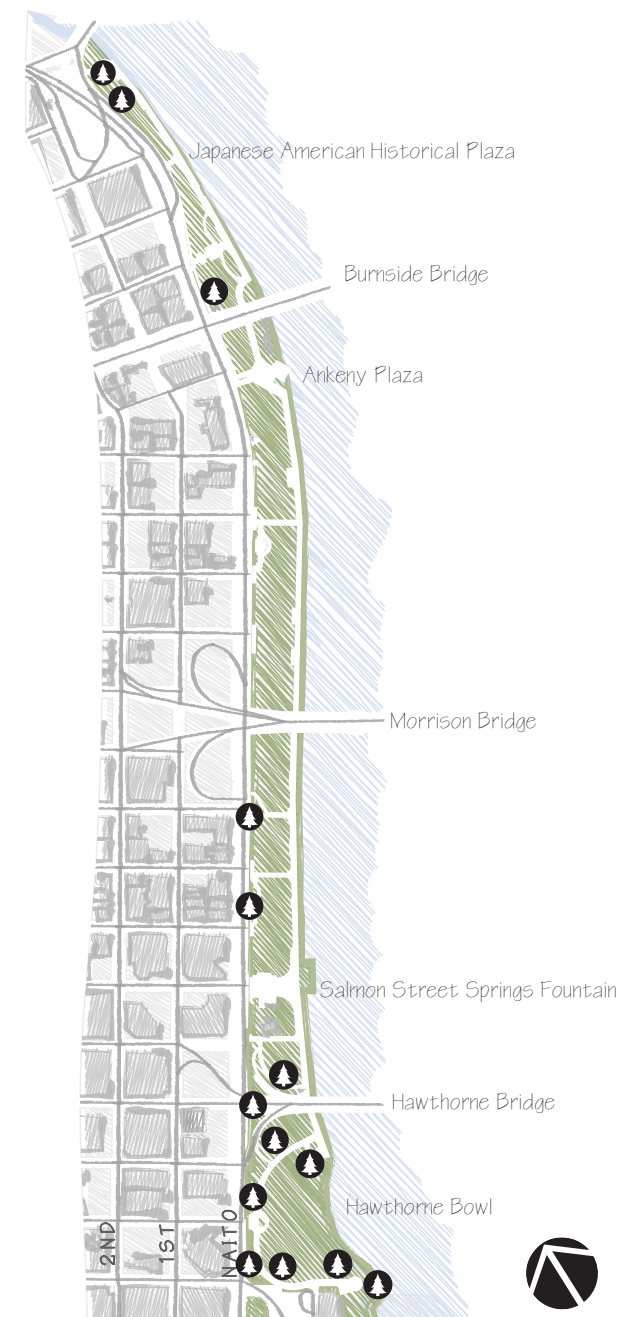
- Install three pollinator gardens using native plants in existing planters
- Study park tree habitat and habitat needs for native avian species
- Identify spaces for clusters of native vegetation and habitat
- Design and install natural contemplative space

Objective: Salmonids utilize shallow water habitat in the Hawthorne Bowl.

Actions:

- Prioritize salmon habitat within the Bowl
- Identify the best locations for in-river habitat, weighing benefit to salmon, balance with human access, feasibility, and maintenance
- Within Master Park Plan, address separation of salmon and human uses

Sites for Native Vegetation





RECOMMENDATIONS: NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Great Ideas from Other Cities



Seattle, Washington

Seattle recently implemented a low-cost program to create linear pollinator-friendly gardens connecting open spaces. A non-profit is working with homeowners along specified corridors in a successful campaign to reduce habitat fragmentation and provide cost-effective solutions to urban habitat loss by focusing on underused strip planters. The program provides both technical and financial assistance to homeowners participating in the program and homeowners are responsible for maintenance. The program offers a number of opportunities for public involvement, including working with local institutions (University of Washington, Woodland Park Zoo) for assessment and monitoring.



Pollinator habitat plantings with educational signage

Goal: Engage the park visitors through educational displays and interactive science

Waterfront Park, as one of the most visited open spaces in the region, offers a unique opportunity to connect people with natural systems. The park's proximity to key regional educational institutions presents an opportunity for partnerships and formalized interactive and experiential programs.

Objective: Residents and visitors are informed about and appreciative of the environmental context of the park.

Actions:

- Develop interactive art installations or permanent exhibits that educate and connect people to natural systems
- Partner with local institutions to develop formal programs, geared toward youth and families in particular

Goal: Reduce the impact of migratory and resident geese on the use and access of the park

The ubiquitous and year-round presence of geese was often cited as a barrier to visitors' access, use, and enjoyment of the park, especially in the Hawthorne Bowl. The large, open grassy elements of the park attract normally migratory geese that instead stay and forego their seasonal journey in exchange for the security of a consistent food source.

Objective: Hawthorne Bowl is clean and geese don't interfere with human use.

Actions:

- Install terracing in the Bowl that blocks goose sightlines and breaks up the large open spaces that geese favor.
- Install linear shrubs or hedges perpendicular to terraces to scare away geese fearful of potential predators.








Terraced lawn at Curtis Hixon Waterfront Park, Tampa, Florida



RECOMMENDATIONS: NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Implementing Natural Environment Recommendations

The proposed actions are a mix of low-cost solutions and larger capital investments. Pollinator gardens are inexpensive, and a number of poorly maintained planters exist in the park that are ripe for small-scale interventions. A number of state and federal grants exist for habitat restoration, especially for riparian and riverine projects. The development of educational programs is prime for partnerships with local organizations and institutions and offers an opportunity for private sponsorship. A project to terrace the Bowl does not have the same access to environmental funding mechanisms. However, it would be able to take advantage of national placemaking grants and would benefit from the involvement of the Parks Foundation in fundraising.

Natural Environment: Goals and Objectives	Action	Timeframe				Implementer(s) (Lead in bold)	Related Planning Themes
		1-3 Years	4-10 Years	11-20 Years	Ongoing		
Goal: Enhance in-park and river habitat <i>Objective: Wildlife is able to travel along natural corridors to and through Waterfront Park.</i>	Install three pollinator gardens using native plants in existing planters	X				PPR	
	Study park tree habitat and native avian species habitat needs		X			PPR , BES, Audubon	
	Identify spaces for clusters of native vegetation and habitat		X			PPR	
	Design and install natural contemplative space			X		PPR	
<i>Objective: Salmonids utilize shallow water habitat in the Hawthorne Bowl.</i>	Prioritize salmon habitat within the Bowl				X	PPR , BPS	
	Identify the best locations of in-river habitat, weighing benefit to salmon, balance with human access, feasibility, and maintenance		X			PPR	
	Address separation of salmon and human uses within park master planning process		X			PPR	
Goal: Engage the park visitors through educational displays and interactive science <i>Objective: Residents and visitors are informed about and appreciative of the environmental context of the park.</i>	Develop interactive art installations or permanent exhibits that educate and connect people to natural systems	X				PPR	
	Partner with local institutions to develop formal programs, in particular geared toward youth and families				X	PPR , private	
Goal: Reduce the impact of migratory and resident geese on the use and access of the park <i>Objective: Hawthorne Bowl is clean and geese don't interfere with human use.</i>	Install terracing in the Bowl that blocks goose sightlines and breaks up the large open spaces that geese favor.			X		PPR	
	Install linear shrubs or hedges perpendicular to terraces to scare away geese fearful of potential predators.			X		PPR	

7.6

RECOMMENDATIONS: EVENTS

Large events and festivals in Waterfront Park generate a number of negative impacts that are frequently borne by other park users. Watermark Planning recommends that the scope of events, both in terms of time and physical space, be balanced with the needs of park users and event attendees.



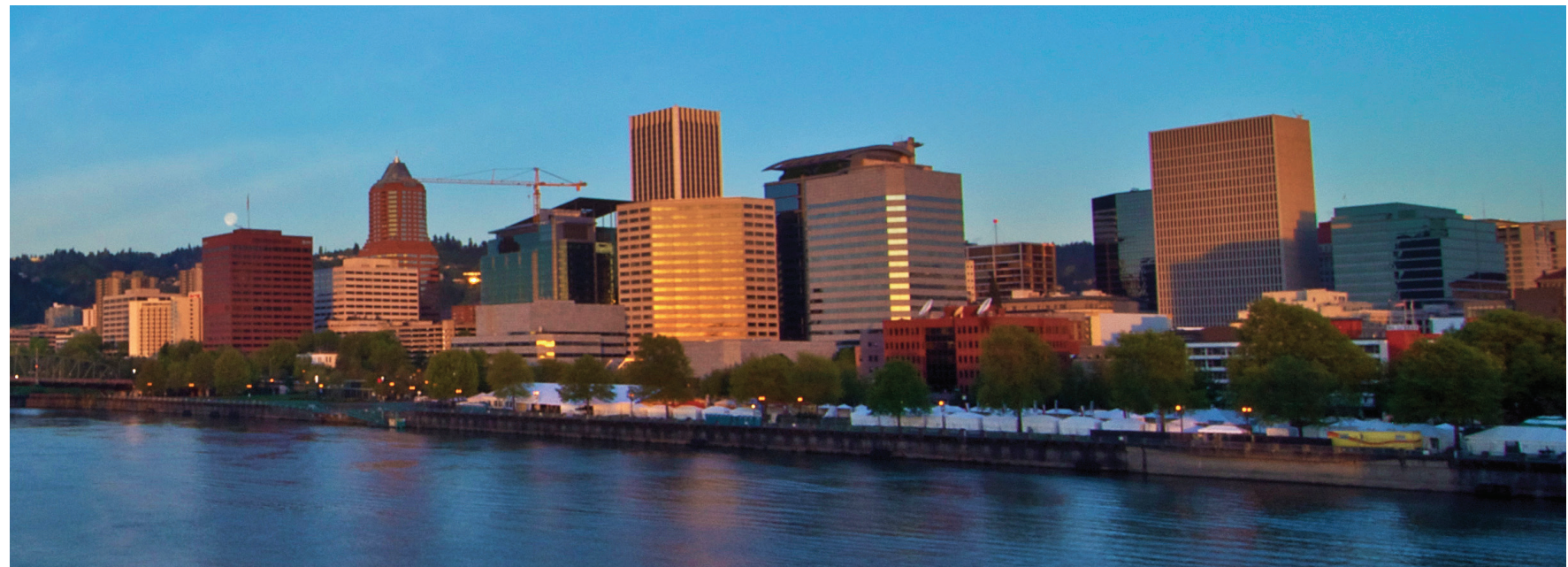


RECOMMENDATIONS: EVENTS

Great Ideas from Other Cities



Columbus, Ohio recently went through a downtown revitalization focused on their riverfront. The regional development corporation intentionally developed a system that opens park spaces to over 200 programmed events a year, most of which last only a day. By focusing on shorter events, Columbus is able to provide events that represent and engage a larger share of the regional population. The city actively recruits and subsidizes events in the waterfront parks that appeal to all audiences. The key element of the program is a fee schedule that rises dramatically after three days, thereby reducing the number of long-term events and retaining most of the park for everyday use.



Portland Rose Festival at Waterfront Park

Event Challenges

- There is an ongoing conflict between the presence of ticketed events in Waterfront Park and public use of the park, particularly during summer months.

Goal: Manage event scope to balance the needs of park users and event attendees

The park's use as a venue for hosting restricted-access events has ultimately served to limit the overall functionality and appeal of the downtown waterfront, particularly during summer months. Watermark Planning recommends limiting event times and managing event scope through the establishment of a citywide events and festival plan so as to strike a more productive balance between restricted and public uses of the waterfront.



RECOMMENDATIONS: EVENTS

Objective: The number of days of unobstructed public park use during prime weather months is increased.

Actions:

- Limit event length, including setup and takedown, by establishing a standard time limit
- Establish escalating fee schedule for events that exceed this standard time limit
- Objective: Event uses enliven the park without negatively impacting other users.

Actions:

- Explore alternate locations for ticketed events
- Minimize the amount of space dedicated to fenced events
- Raise event fees to cover the full costs of park maintenance
- Create a hardscaped surface in the park that can be used for smaller events



Kenton Street Fair

Objective: Events strengthen the connection between Waterfront Park and adjacent neighborhoods, especially Downtown and Old Town/Chinatown.




Action:

- Allow events to reserve and utilize Naito Parkway, downtown blocks (with priority on “flexible streets”), and/or adjacent Festival Streets in Old Town/Chinatown

Objective: A citywide plan for events and festivals coordinates activities in public spaces, including Tom McCall Waterfront Park.

Actions:

- Petition a third-party net economic impact analysis of events and festivals in the city to provide a clear understanding of economic impact and set a baseline for evaluating tradeoffs
- Complete a strategic plan for events to help lay out the future of programming in Portland’s public spaces and provide greater certainty to event operators

Events: Goals and Objectives	Action	Timeframe				Implementer(s) (Lead in bold)	Related Planning Themes
		1-3 Years	4-10 Years	11-20 Years	Ongoing		
Goal: Manage event scope to balance the needs of park users and event attendees <i>Objective: The number of days of unobstructed public park use during prime weather months is increased.</i>	Limit event length, including setup and takedown, by establishing a standard time limit		X			PPR	
	Establish escalating fee schedule for events that exceed this standard time limit		X			PPR	
<i>Objective: Event uses enliven the park without negatively impacting other users.</i>	Explore alternate locations for ticketed events	X				PPR , BPS	
	Minimize the amount of space dedicated to fenced events				X	PPR	
	Raise event fees to cover the full costs of park maintenance		X			PPR	
	Create a hardscaped surface in the park that can be used for smaller events			X		PPR , event organizations, private	
<i>Objective: Events strengthen the connection between Waterfront Park and adjacent neighborhoods, especially Downtown and Old Town/Chinatown.</i>	Allow events to reserve and utilize Naito Parkway, downtown blocks (with priority on “flexible streets”), and/or adjacent Festival Streets in Old Town/Chinatown		X			PBOT	
<i>Objective: A citywide plan for events and festivals coordinates activities in public spaces, including Tom McCall Waterfront Park.</i>	Petition a third-party net economic impact analysis of events and festivals in the city to provide a clear understanding of economic impact and set a baseline for evaluating tradeoffs	X				BPS , PPR	
	Complete a strategic plan for events to help lay out the future of programming in Portland’s public spaces and provide greater certainty to event operators		X			PPR , BPS	



7.7

RECOMMENDATIONS IN PLACE: HAWTHORNE BOWL & STEEL BRIDGE

Developing the park's bookends - the Steel Bridge teardrop and the Hawthorne Bowl - would create centers of activity at the north and south ends of the park, giving people a reason to walk the length of the park and providing visual termini worthy of a true regional destination.

RECOMMENDATIONS IN PLACE: HAWTHORNE BOWL & STEEL BRIDGE



The Hawthorne Bowl

The Hawthorne Bowl, marking the southern terminus of Waterfront Park, is one of the most underutilized spaces in the park and as such affords one of the best opportunities for design and redevelopment as a dynamic space. The natural amphitheater of the bowl is a considerable amenity, offering the only direct access to the river and providing some variety to the otherwise flat park.

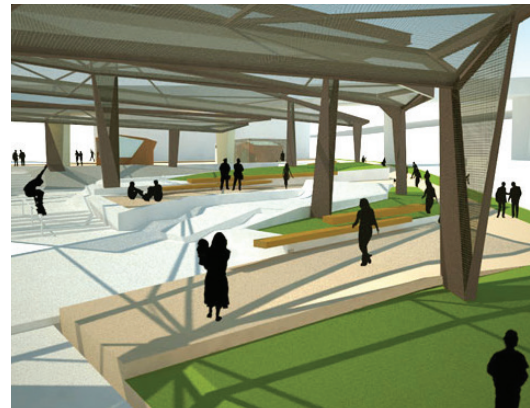
Access to the water, however, is restricted by a poorly maintained cobbled pathway and a large amount of rip-rap rock between the grassy amphitheater and the beach. Improving this access by removing some of the extraneous rocks, redesigning the lower pathway and building an accessible pathway to the beach will immediately encourage access to and from the river.

Public and stakeholder feedback pointed towards the Bowl as a potential center of activity. Recommendations seek to create an interesting and comfortable space that can be used for events such as performance art or more daily uses such as picnics by the river. Terracing the Bowl complements the topography, breaks up the open grassy space preferred by geese, and provides seating with visual connections to the river. Some cities employ temporary or multipurpose floating stages that can be used for motorboat mooring or swimming.

The Bowl offers one of the best opportunities in the park to balance a number of environmental challenges through design. Swimmers, boaters and salmon will need separated zones in the shallow water cove. The manicured, terraced lawn can be visually and functionally enhanced by more natural plantings around the edges.



RECOMMENDATIONS IN PLACE: HAWTHORNE BOWL & STEEL BRIDGE



Steel Bridge Skatepark

*W*hile many other recommendations are of a general nature, there are some compelling reasons to consider a more concrete proposal for a specific site in the vicinity of Waterfront Park. Watermark Planning recommends that a skatepark be sited at the base of Steel Bridge.

A skatepark on this site would serve multiple objectives:

- It would attract positive day- and night-time uses and users of all ages to an area that is currently plagued by crime and safety concerns;
- The proposed design would extend new connections from Old Town/Chinatown into the park and, additionally, provide space for a significant public plaza;
- It would provide programming relevant and attractive to youth in the park and downtown;
- It would serve as the crown jewel in the city's skatepark system, with the potential to generate revenue and serve as a regional attraction by hosting world-class competitions;
- A feasibility study for decommissioning the off-ramp has been conducted by PBOT, with the conclusion that the impact of doing so would be minimal. An extensive plan related to the park's design, engineering, and construction has already been drafted.

The Steel Bridge skatepark proposal has garnered significant support from the Old Town/Chinatown community, and much of the groundwork has already been laid. Watermark Planning would like to take the next step in the process by recommending that this project move forward.



