

Washington Park Access & Circulation Plan

WORK PLAN



Portland State University
Planning Workshop 2009



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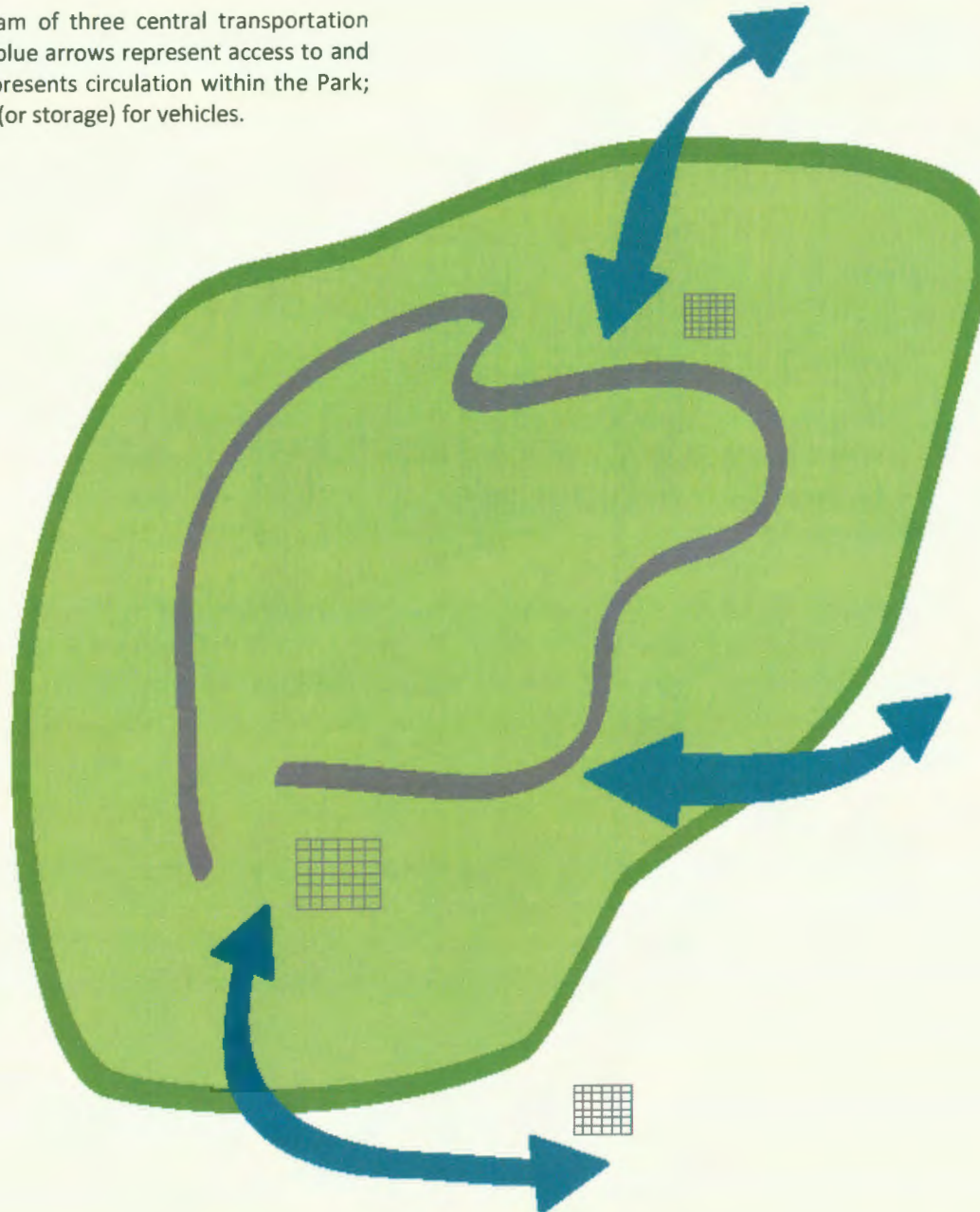
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Problem Statement

The Washington Park Alliance, a coalition formed by the institutions located within Washington Park, embarked on a strategic planning process in 2009 with the goal of enhancing visitor experiences at the Park. Among the highest-priority issues, the Alliance identified the Park's current transportation network as a major obstacle for better serving Park users. The project outlined in this Work Plan will develop and provide recommendations for the transportation component of the strategic planning process. This project will focus on addressing the three central transportation issues articulated by the Alliance (as also shown in Figure 1):

- 1) **Access** to the park is particularly important given recent attendance trends. Three years ago, all Alliance member institutions projected a doubling in attendance over the subsequent five years. Transporting the influx of visitors to the park is a key concern, and addressing it requires consideration of the Park's multi-modal accessibility from the entire region. In particular, the Alliance has cited under-utilization of the existing light rail station as an area for improvement.
- 2) **Circulation** is essential in connecting the Park's attractions. Internal trails are in disrepair. Erosion and invasive species have damaged the trail network, as has heavy foot traffic on marked trails and short-cuts through non-trail space. Also, while the trails provide an off-street alternative supporting internal circulation, current wayfinding systems are insufficient for many users. Internal roads also connect destinations within the park, but there is a lack of pedestrian and bicycle facilities within these rights-of-way. Connectivity between road segments is poor, and many key links are one-way, lengthening the travel time between destinations. The trails and roads are a park asset that the Alliance seeks to enhance in the coming years.
- 3) **Parking** is a current area of concern for Park institutions. On high-use days, some visitors reportedly leave the Park without entering any of the attractions because they cannot find a parking space. Moreover, demand for parking facilities and services is likely to increase along with projected increases in attendance. The city and regional governments are reluctant to fund construction of additional parking due to concerns that it increases dependence on automobiles. Resources for additional parking are scarce, making it necessary to maximize existing assets.

Figure 1. Conceptual diagram of three central transportation issues at Washington Park: blue arrows represent access to and from the Park; gray line represents circulation within the Park; and grids represent parking (or storage) for vehicles.



Project Background

Washington Park

In 1871, the City of Portland purchased approximately 41 acres of land in the hills west of downtown for a city park. In 1887, a zoo began operation in the park, and by the early 1900s the site had evolved from a wilderness area to a regional destination of paths and drives, manicured landscapes, and family attractions.

Present-day Washington Park, now over 400 acres, is shown in Figure 2. The Park is located west of downtown Portland and is bounded by the residential neighborhoods of Arlington Heights to the north, Sylvan Highlands to the west, and Goose Hollow to the east. The Southwest Hills neighborhood lies to the south of the Park, on the other side of the Sunset Highway (US Route 26). The Park's northwest corner connects to Forest Park, the nation's largest forested natural area within city limits.

The Park houses five non-profit institutions and numerous attractions, activities, and facilities. The Oregon Zoo, the Hoyt Arboretum, the Portland Children's Museum, the World Forestry Center, the Japanese Garden, the International Rose Test Garden, the Oregon Holocaust Memorial, and the Vietnam Veterans of Oregon Memorial all reside within the Park. Additionally, the Park features an amphitheater, tennis courts, a soccer field, a playground, an archery range, rental venues, sculptures and fountains, 15 miles of hiking trails, and two of Portland's water storage reservoirs.

As one of the largest green spaces within the city limits, Washington Park offers an unparalleled urban park experience for residents of the Portland metropolitan region. However, Washington Park is more than an urban green space. The diversity and scale of cultural institutions residing within Washington Park make it one of the few major agglomerations of its kind in the nation, along with San Diego's Balboa Park, San Francisco's Golden Gate Park, and New York City's Prospect and Central parks, among others.

Washington Park offers numerous benefits to the region, ranging from trails and recreation to research and education. These opportunities and other amenities attract users from throughout the region and beyond. However, the high level of demand for the Park's services has placed a strain on its existing facilities.

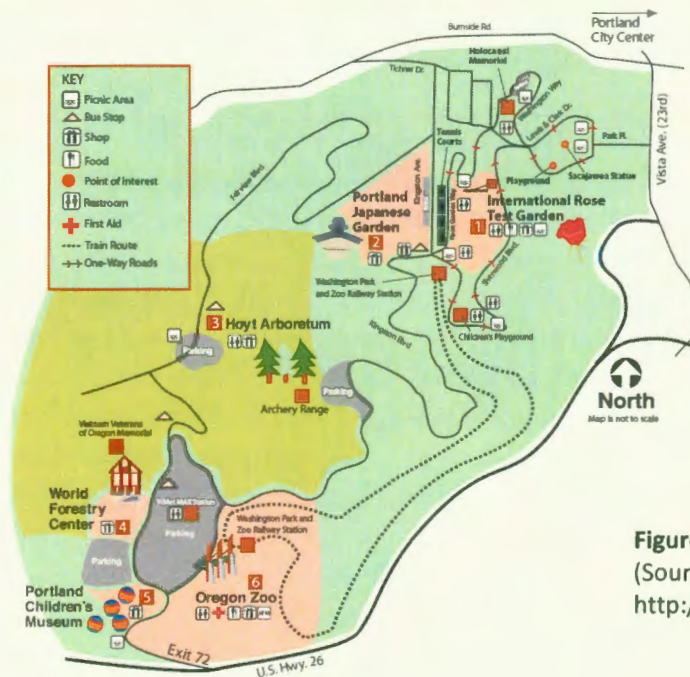


Figure 2. Visitor Map of Washington Park
(Source: Washington Park Alliance website at <http://www.washingtonparkpdx.org/map.htm>)

The Washington Park Alliance

The Washington Park Alliance formed in 2006 in the interest of providing an enhanced user experience to the Park's 3,100,000 annual visitors and to better serve the Portland region. The Alliance is composed of representatives from each of the Park's institutions and agencies: Hoyt Arboretum, Japanese Garden, Oregon Zoo, Portland Children's Museum, World Forestry Center, and Portland Parks & Recreation. In the years leading up to its conception, Alliance members recognized that significant challenges facing individual institutions could be better addressed through a coordinated, pro-active effort between them.

In January 2009, the Alliance contracted with c3 strategy, a strategic planning firm, to strengthen communication and promote coordination among these Park entities. Currently, c3 strategy is in the process of developing a long-term strategic plan for the Park, which will outline recommendations for creating a permanent Alliance organizational structure, as well as provide short- and long-term action plans for addressing the Park's existing challenges.

Project Scope

In the past, efforts to address transportation needs at the Park have been limited by the lack of a unified body authorized to take park-wide action. The 1980 *Washington Park Master Plan Study* identified many of the same access, circulation, and parking issues described here, but no single entity had the resources and authority to implement the *Study's* recommendations. In 1997, the Oregon Zoo completed a *Transportation Demand Master Plan*. The Zoo then partnered with the Portland Children's Museum and the World Forestry Center to gather data on visitor and employee travel and manage operations for the parking resources the three attractions share. Their joint efforts over the last 12 years generated useful data but provided limited insights into the Park's transportation issues, and the implemented transportation demand management measures have had mixed results. More recently, the organizations within the Alliance have renewed their strategic and master planning efforts, but the existing policies offer little concrete direction on solving the transportation problems affecting the Park as a whole.

With the official formation of the Alliance and the strategic plan effort led by c3 strategy, there is a unique opportunity to create a single, coordinated plan for addressing the transportation needs of all Park institutions and visitors. Six students from the Master of Urban and Regional Planning program at Portland State University have formed a project group, hereafter referred to as New Leaf Planning (NLP), to undertake this planning effort.

The project described in this Work Plan will explore transportation opportunities and constraints at Washington Park, proposing strategies to improve access, circulation, and parking to support the high-quality visitor experience the Alliance seeks to offer. NLP will explore existing conditions of the Park, review policies currently affecting transportation, evaluate solutions implemented at similar regional attractions, and assess best practices in transportation demand management (TDM). Data analysis will combine existing Park travel data with new information obtained through surveys of the Park's users and regional residents, inventories of the Park's facilities, and traffic counts.

With the input of the Alliance, the public, and an expert panel of regional transportation and planning professionals, NLP will generate and evaluate alternative solutions to address the Park's transportation challenges. The final project report will include immediate recommendations for improving multimodal access, circulation, and parking, and recommendations for pursuing long-term improvements to transportation at the Park.

Methodology

This section of the Work Plan describes the program for this project, which is structured around the phases of:

- Project Development
- Research and Literature Review
- Development of Criteria and Standards for Recommendations
- Data Collection
- Data Analysis
- Public Participation
- Identification and Analysis of Alternatives
- Final Plan and Recommendations

Project Development

Problem Definition

During the early stages of project development, NLP, the Alliance, and c3 strategy will work collaboratively to identify and clearly articulate the specific problems this project will address. The transportation challenges of the Park are encompassed by the three following problem areas:

- *Access*: how to increase the ease and means by which potential visitors can reach the Park.
- *Circulation*: how to help visitors move easily among the Park's attractions.
- *Parking*: how to most efficiently accommodate the vehicles of visitors who drive to the Park.

These problem definitions will inform the next step of the planning process: establishing project goals and objectives.

Initial Site Visit/Qualitative Observation

Members of NLP will conduct an initial site visit to familiarize the group with the existing conditions and facilities at Washington Park. The visit will include observations of parking facilities and use, the internal road network, and the internal trail system. Additionally, NLP will explore multimodal transportation options for internal circulation, such as the Zoo Railway and the Japanese Garden shuttle, and options for external access, such as personal vehicle, bus, and MAX.

The initial site visit will assist NLP in further defining the transportation problem areas identified by the Alliance. In addition, the observations gathered during the site visit will serve to inform the project's goals, objectives, and overall scope.

Interviews with Park Staff, Agency and Neighborhood Representatives, and Consultants

As part of the planning process, NLP will consult with a wide range of individuals with expertise in Washington Park's transportation needs, policies, and political context. Sources will include the following:

- Current and former executives and staff of Alliance organizations.
- Staff from public agencies who have participated in oversight of the Park, such as the Portland Bureau of Transportation, the Oregon Department of Transportation, Metro, TriMet, and Portland Parks and Recreation. The staff selected for these interviews will be those previously involved with the Park's policies, resources, and/or operations, and will not overlap with the Expert Panel.
- Representatives from adjacent neighborhood organizations.
- Consultants with past involvement in key Washington Park projects.

Establishment of Goals and Objectives

NLP will work with the Washington Park Alliance to develop and articulate specific goals and objectives for the project in the three problem areas of access, circulation, and parking. This process will include individual interviews with representatives of all six Alliance institutions as well as other stakeholders, and a formal presentation to the

assembled Alliance for further discussion and feedback. Once established, the goals and objectives identified will serve to delineate the project's scope and guide the evaluation process.

Completion of Work Plan and Memorandum of Understanding

With input from the Alliance and c3 strategy, NLP has developed this Work Plan to outline the range of activities that will be undertaken to achieve the objectives established. As part of the project development phase, the Alliance and NLP will enter into an agreement described by a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). The purpose of the MOU is to establish a cooperative relationship between NLP, the Alliance, and c3 strategy. This document enumerates the roles and responsibilities of the parties and outlines the scope of work to be completed. The completed, signed MOU is included as an appendix (Appendix B).

Expert Panel Recruitment

The technical nature of the problems identified for this project necessitates the consultation of transportation professionals. Recruiting an expert panel will assist NLP in identifying useful resources, research methods, and analytical procedures. Consultation of an expert panel will also ensure the viability of final project recommendations. This panel will include representatives from Metro, Portland Bureau of Transportation (PBOT), TriMet, Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT), and Portland Parks and Recreation (PPR). NLP will consult members of the panel at the following strategic points during the project timeline: the development of criteria and standards for recommendations; the formation of a data collection plan; and the identification and analysis of alternatives.

Research and Literature Review

In order to identify the data collection and analysis needs for this project, NLP will undertake a comprehensive review of literature related to the project's three problem areas. In addition, NLP will consult sources with local expertise on the specific issues affecting the transportation behavior of Washington Park users.

Washington Park Policies

As part of the planning process, NLP will document existing conditions affecting transportation at the Park. This will include an overview of current and past customer parking policies as well as provision of employee parking. Additionally, NLP will document the operating policies and wayfinding signage of the internal road system and inventory the park's extensive trail system with respect to path conditions, user types, wayfinding, and legibility. The project team will also document operating policies and characteristics for existing transit and shuttle systems, including Tri-Met services (MAX light rail, bus route 63, and the seasonal park shuttle), the Zoo Railway, and the Japanese Garden shuttle bus. Finally, NLP will consider upcoming changes in policies and conditions expected to impact transportation issues in the Park, such as the proposed discontinuation of the 63-Washington Park bus line.

Policies and Practices at Comparable Parks

NLP will review a range of plans, studies, and policies for other parks in the U.S. that feature similar collections of trip-generating public institutions. Many of these parks – examples include San Francisco's Golden Gate Park, San Diego's Balboa Park, and St. Louis' Forest Park -- face access, circulation, and parking challenges similar to those faced by Washington Park. Lessons learned from these other regional cultural hubs will help inform the methodology and development of recommendations for this project.

Portland Area Access and Parking Policies and Practices

Access and parking management efforts have been undertaken at other institutions and locations in the Portland metropolitan area, such as the Oregon Museum of Science and Industry, Oregon Health Sciences University, and Northwest 23rd Avenue. As part of the research and literature review, NLP will study background and documents related to policies and practices at these locations.

Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Toolbox

Because of the mounting political and fiscal challenges involved in building new transportation infrastructure, TDM is increasingly seen as a cost-effective element of any new transportation project. The collection of behavior change strategies comprising TDM is continually evolving, so NLP will review the current state of the practice in order to identify measures that are likely to improve transportation conditions and user experience. NLP recognizes that not all TDM measures are effective in all contexts, so this review will focus on the topography and access limitations unique to Washington Park.

Development of Criteria and Standards for Recommendations

NLP will use the information gained through background research, the input of the Alliance, and the advice of the expert panel to generate criteria for comparing alternative solutions. As this project is meant to generate a package of recommendations, the criteria and standards will be structured to help identify measures that will function well in concert.

Data Collection

This project will use secondary data collected by other agencies and primary data collected by the project team, including both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods.

Secondary Data Sources

- TriMet ridership data
- Transportation demand and parking studies conducted by the Zoo
- Membership and attendance data from all Alliance entities
- Visitor and employee travel data from all Alliance entities
- Portland Transportation Archive Listing (PORTAL) data
- Motor vehicle, bicycle, and pedestrian counts conducted by the Portland Bureau of Transportation

- (PBOT) and/or the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT)
- Washington Park parking data
- Crime data

Primary Data Collection Activities

- **Intercept surveys of Park users.** NLP will develop and administer an on-site survey to elicit Park visitor responses regarding mode of travel, purpose of visit, and length of stay.
- **Online regional survey.** NLP will develop and administer an online survey to elicit responses regarding familiarity with the existing Park transportation network, perception of problems with the network, and attitudes toward different types of potential solutions. The web address for this survey will be distributed to a wide range of potential respondents. Distribution methods will include handing out fliers at the Park, using park institution member email lists, publication to local neighborhood association newsletters and websites, and links on relevant websites such as Portland Parks and Recreation.
- **Inventories of existing Park access/egress points.** NLP will document conditions of all formal and informal access and egress points by transportation mode.
- **Inventory of Park transportation network.** NLP will document the capacity, condition, and use of internal roads, trail networks, and on- and off-site parking facilities.

Data Analysis

NLP will analyze the data collected using statistical analysis, GIS mapping, and qualitative response analysis. The project team will consult with the expert panel to formulate specific analytical processes, focusing on integrating data collected from disparate sources. These analytical processes will help refine the project's approach to the three problem areas, and will help identify appropriate alternative solutions for further consideration.

Public Participation

In order to make recommendations informed and supported by all stakeholders, including park users, area residents, and the general public, NLP will engage the public in a deliberative process. This process will serve to inform, obtain feedback, and solicit suggestions on possible solutions. Three public involvement elements will be incorporated into this process:

- **Neighborhood Outreach.** NLP will meet with each of four surrounding neighborhoods to briefly explain the project and invite them to an open house. These neighborhoods are Southwest Hills, Arlington Heights, Sylvan Highlands, and Goose Hollow.
- **Open House.** NLP will invite park users, neighbors, and the general public to assist us in brainstorming transportation solutions. This event will use the information NLP has gathered, as well as the public's unique knowledge of the Park's transportation issues, to generate ideas that can be incorporated into the final recommendations. The format for the open house will be a brief presentation followed by structured small group discussions and activities on the issues of access, circulation, and parking.
- **Focus Group.** The final element of public involvement will consist of a focus group convened to consider the set of alternatives NLP produces. The purpose of this event is to refine the alternatives and help select a preferred package. Participants will be recruited from the open house, an online user survey, and the adjacent neighborhoods.

Identification and Analysis of Alternatives

Synthesizing primary and secondary data, research of similar practices and strategies, and public input gathered through the open house, NLP will identify potential strategies that can be implemented to address the three transportation challenges facing Washington Park. As discussed above, the focus group of park users, neighbors, and other stakeholders will be convened to generate feedback and suggestions with respect to the possible solutions. NLP will then evaluate alternatives based on public input and the criteria and standards for recommendation generated in the development phase described above.

Final Plan/Recommendations

The project will culminate with the production of a final Access and Circulation Plan. This Plan will expand upon the context and background described in this Work Plan, and will feature the recommendations and suggested implementation strategies identified by NLP.

Roles and Responsibilities

The student members of NLP offer their skills and efforts as a service to the Alliance in order to produce a professional product that is useful for the long-term planning efforts of the Alliance. In return, NLP expects an involved and responsive client, providing the group with a meaningful learning experience. The specific roles and responsibilities of each party are outlined below and are confirmed in the Memorandum of Understanding (see Appendix B).

New Leaf Planning shall:

- Complete the project phases outlined above, culminating in an Access and Circulation Plan for Washington Park
- Meet periodically with c3 strategy and the Alliance to discuss project progress and needs
- Convene an expert panel to review draft products from the above tasks
- Present final recommendations to the Alliance in conjunction with delivery of the Plan

Alliance shall:

- Provide direction and articulate needs to NLP
- Meet bi-weekly with NLP to discuss project progress and needs, or designate c3 strategy to do the same
- Contribute relevant information and data, including membership information and past transportation studies of Washington Park
- Contribute resources for surveying, printing, and public meetings and/or focus groups, or designate c3 strategy to do the same
- Review final products

Appendix A: Work Plan Timeline

				February				March				April				May				June					
Start Date	End Date	Lead		2	9	16	23	2	9	16	23	30	6	13	20	27	4	11	18	25	1	8	15	22	29
1. Project Development																									
1.1 Initial Site Visit	2/7	2/7	A																						
1.2 Interview Park Staff, Neighbors & Experts	2/9	3/15	A																						
1.3 Problem Definition	2/2	3/1	A																						
1.4 Project Scoping	2/2	3/1	A																						
1.5 Expert Panel Recruitment	2/9	3/15	A																						
1.6 Work Plan & MOU - Draft	2/9	2/13	A																						
1.7 Work Plan & MOU - Revisions	2/15	3/9	C, R, T																						
1.8 Work Plan & MOU - Final Due	3/9	3/9	A																						
2. Research & Literature Review																									
2.1 Washington Park Policies	2/9	3/15	D, T																						
2.2 Similar Park Practices	2/9	3/15	M, R																						
2.3 Local Access Management Policies	2/9	3/15	M, R																						
2.4 TDM & Access Strategies	2/9	3/15	C, B																						
2.5 Literature Review - Synthesis & Bibliography	3/16	3/29	B																						
3. Develop Evaluation Criteria																									
3.1 Goals & Objectives - Draft	3/2	3/4	A																						
3.2 Goals & Objectives - Revisions	3/4	3/15	R																						
3.3 Goals & Objectives - Finalize	3/15	3/15	R																						
3.4 Evaluation Criteria - Draft	3/8	3/10	A																						
3.5 Evaluation Criteria - Revisions	3/10	3/16	A																						
3.6 Evaluation Criteria - Finalize	3/16	3/16	T																						
4. Data Collection																									
4.1 Data Collection Planning - Draft	2/9	3/15	A																						
4.2 Data Collection Planning - Revise	3/10	3/29	A																						
4.3 Secondary Data Collection	2/9	3/15	A																						
4.4 Primary Data Collection	3/23	4/19	A																						
4.5 Intercept Surveys - Create, Test, Finalize	3/16	3/27	D,M,B																						
4.6 Intercept Surveys - Administer	3/27	3/29	A																						
4.7 Online Survey - Create, Test, Finalize	3/16	3/27	D,M,B																						
4.8 Online Survey - Administer	3/30	4/19	A																						
4.10 On-Site Facilities Inventory	4/6	4/13	M																						
4.11 Off-Site Facilities Inventory	4/6	4/13	T																						
5. Data Analysis																									
5.1 Secondary Data - Analysis	3/9	5/3	R																						
5.2 Secondary Data - Synthesis & Bibliography	4/27	5/3	R																						
5.3 Primary Data - Analysis	3/30	5/3	B																						
5.4 Primary Data - Synthesis & Bibliography	4/27	5/3	B																						

Alliance Board Meeting

c3 strategy Meeting

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Public Outreach Events

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Expert Panel Contact

Appendix B: Memorandum of Understanding

Memorandum of Understanding

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is hereby made and entered into by *New Leaf Planning* (NLP) and the Washington Park Alliance (the Alliance).

A. PURPOSE

The purpose of this MOU is to establish a cooperative relationship between NLP and the Alliance. This document describes the roles and responsibilities of the parties and outlines the scope of work to be completed.

B. STATEMENT OF MUTUAL BENEFIT AND INTERESTS

The Alliance has identified four specific problems related to transportation in the Park: access to the Park, parking, internal trails, and the internal road network. Whereas NLP seeks a learning experience by which the students can apply their planning skills and expertise, and whereas the Alliance has formed to improve the user experience in the park, an access and circulation plan to address these four problems will mutually benefit both parties.

C. NEW LEAF PLANNING SHALL:

- a. Complete the following seven project phases:
 - i. Project Development
 - ii. Research and Literature Review of Practices
 - iii. Establish Decision-Making Criteria
 - iv. Data Collection
 - v. Data Analysis
 - vi. Identify & Analyze Alternatives
 - vii. Produce Final Recommendations
- b. Meet periodically with *c3 strategy* and Alliance to discuss project progress and needs.
- c. Convene an expert panel to review draft products from the above tasks.
- d. Present final recommendations to the Alliance, accompanied by a professional-quality report documenting the process and recommendations.

D. WASHINGTON PARK ALLIANCE SHALL:

- a. Provide direction and articulate needs to *New Leaf Planning*.
- b. Meet periodically with *New Leaf Planning* to discuss project progress and needs, or designate *c3 strategy* to do the same.
- c. Contribute relevant information and data, including membership information and past transportation studies of Washington Park.
- d. Contribute resources for surveying, printing (up to 10 copies), and public meetings and/or focus groups, or designate *c3 strategy* to do the same.
- e. Review final products.

E. THE FOLLOWING IS MUTUALLY UNDERSTOOD AND AGREED TO BY THE PARTIES:

a. Principle Contacts

- i. *New Leaf Planning* has designated Talia Jacobson as the principal contact with *c3 strategy* (taliaj@pdx.edu). Ray Delahanty will serve as the contact for communications between the Alliance and NLP (raydelahanty@gmail.com).
- ii. Nichol Simpson will be the principal contact for *c3 strategy* (nichol@c3strategy.com). Gary Hartshorn will act as principal contact for the Alliance (ghartshorn@worldforestry.org).
- iii. It is understood by both parties that most communication should be made between *c3 strategy* and NLP, with Alliance to be included for matters of particular importance.

b. Modification

- i. Any party may modify the scope of work or Work Plan at any time by consent of both parties and by issuing written notice.

c. Termination

- i. Any party can terminate this agreement in whole, or in part, in writing at any time before the expiration of the agreement. Prior to such action, the terminating party is expected to make a good faith effort to reconcile any differences leading to termination, and to provide written justification.

d. Commencement/Expiration Dates

- i. This agreement is executed as of the date of the last signature and is effective through June 30th, 2009 at which time it will expire unless extended.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties hereto have executed this agreement as of the last written date below.

New Leaf Planning

Urban and Regional Planning

Portland State University

David Amiton Date Mallory Atkinson Date Catherine Cibor Date

Ray Delahanty Date Brendon Haggerty Date Talia Jacobson Date

Washington Park Alliance

Gary Hartshorn, Date
Chair