



Mayor.Wilson@portlandoregon.gov  
michael.jordan@portlandoregon.gov  
councilor.dunphy@portlandoregon.gov  
councilor.avalos@portlandoregon.gov  
councilor.smith@portlandoregon.gov  
councilor.pirtle.guiney@portlandoregon.gov  
councilor.ryan@portlandoregon.gov  
councilor.kanal@portlandoregon.gov  
councilor.novick@portlandoregon.gov  
councilor.koyama.lane@portlandoregon.gov  
councilor.morillo@portlandoregon.gov  
councilor.clark@portlandoregon.gov  
councilor.zimmerman@portlandoregon.gov  
councilor.green@portlandoregon.gov

Sent via email April 14, 2025.

### **Consider Budget Letter from Portland Parks Alliance**

Dear Mayor Wilson,

The national Olmsted Network applauds the work that the Portland Parks Alliance is doing to care for Portland's nationally significant parks. But they cannot do it alone! Funding, especially for routine maintenance, is essential and will help ensure that generations of Portlanders have access to green, healthful public spaces. Vibrant parks and public spaces also contribute to the economic vitality and safety of communities.

We are asking you to please consider this letter from Suzanne Bishop as you draft the budget for FY25-26:

*Dear Mayor Wilson,*

*I am writing on behalf of the Portland Parks Alliance-58 Park volunteers and advocates representing 32 organizations from each of the 4 council districts - to urge you to ensure that routine park maintenance is adequately funded in the FY25-26 budget. Our coalition grew out of a shared concern about the lack of capital maintenance in our city parks and a decades-long failure to fund our parks on a sustainable basis.*

*We believe that budget decisions for Portland Parks & Recreation (PP&R) should be driven by policy priorities that are essential to its core mission. In the view of the Alliance those policy priorities are:*

- Providing safe, clean, well maintained and accessible parks, public gardens, natural areas and trails, including clean and accessible restrooms, regular garbage and litter pick up, and irrigated and well-maintained green infrastructure;*
- Maintaining and preserving existing hard assets directly linked to the use and enjoyment of open spaces, such as playgrounds, picnic areas, and trails;*
- Providing those direct services to children and youth (and associated assets) that PP&R is uniquely able to provide, such as summer swimming lessons, cooling spots, pools, and splash pads;*
- Focusing community center operations on providing services to children and youth, adjusted seasonally, and reducing net operating costs by reducing hours of operation and/or charging fees for those who can afford to pay. Mindful of the current levy's promise to keep community centers open, full closure should be a last resort.*

*We urge you to reject staff cuts essential to achieving the policy priorities listed above.*

*If garbage and litter (which often includes everything from soiled diapers to discarded needles) are not regularly removed, if trees and turf die from lack of irrigation and if restrooms are closed, all residents, and particularly families, will be deprived of safe and clean places to recreate, connect with nature and escape summer heat. Equally important, PP&R's ability to provide direct services to children and youth, such as outdoor summer camps and youth sports, will be greatly constrained unless the parks are clean and safe places to play and the sports fields are maintained. While residents throughout the city will be negatively impacted if routine maintenance is not provided,*

*the impact on east side residents will be particularly harsh. For decades those residents have waited for the new parks that have been built in the last 15 years. It would be particularly disappointing if, after decades of waiting, they now find their new parks are not usable because they are not clean, safe and well maintained.*

*We understand your difficult budget choices, but basic park maintenance is essential to the vitality of our city.*

*Thank you for your service and consideration,*

*Suzanne Bishop  
Convener,  
Portland Parks Alliance*