



March 10, 2026

Mayor Keith Wilson and Members of the Portland City Council
City Hall
1221 SW 4th Ave., Suite 340
Portland, OR 97204

Dear Mayor Wilson and Councilors,

The Olmsted Network supports the Portland Parks Alliance’s request that the City allocate an additional \$3 million for Parks capital maintenance in the FY 2026–27 budget, bringing total funding to \$10 million. This modest increase—just 0.035% of the City’s \$8.5 billion budget—would be an important first step toward addressing Portland Parks & Recreation’s \$774 million deferred maintenance backlog. Recent city audits also found that 86% of park assets are in poor or very poor condition, underscoring the urgency of increased investment.

Portland’s park system owes much of its national reputation to the 1903 park plan prepared by landscape architect John Charles Olmsted, which envisioned a connected system of scenic parks, parkways, and natural areas supporting public health and civic life. More than a century later, that vision continues to shape a park system of roughly 12,000 acres serving Portland residents and visitors.

Parks are essential civic infrastructure whose value depends on consistent stewardship. Research from the Trust for Public Land shows that high-quality parks strengthen public health, climate resilience, and local economies, generating billions of dollars in economic value annually for U.S. cities. Maintaining park landscapes, facilities, and infrastructure protects these benefits while preventing much higher future repair costs.

The Olmsted Network is also pleased to bring our national conference to Portland from September 23–25, 2026, where park leaders from across the country will gather to celebrate the city’s historic park system and discuss shared challenges, such as long-term funding and deferred maintenance. Portland’s leadership in caring for its parks will be an important part of that national conversation.

We appreciate your commitment to the responsible stewardship of Portland's civic infrastructure and historic landscapes and support the Portland Parks Alliance request for additional capital maintenance funding in the upcoming budget.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sue Breikopf', written in a cursive style.

Sue Breikopf
President
Olmsted Network