

WESTERN PROMENADE: LANDSCAPE MASTER PLAN



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26 JUNE 2019 — PUBLIC MEETING #2

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1. Review public meeting feedback & on-line survey feedback
2. Review statement of historical significance
3. Review draft guiding principles
4. Review of design guidelines, design concept diagrams & precedent images
5. Open discussion

PROJECT TIMELINE



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- Current uses: picnicking, skiing, dog walking, bike riding, trail running & open space to play
- Interpretation of views & history would be appreciated
- A creative play space would be great, not a play structure
- Requested amenities: more ornamental plantings, a community gathering space, more trails, return of the stairs & more benches in better locations
- Concern about reconstructing the pavilion
- Desire for the park to be welcoming to all
- Please bring back the concert series

- 243 responses; survey open for 1 month
- Walking/strolling & enjoying the views were the most popular activities
- Activities & amenities requested: concerts/pays, more food trucks, play space for kids, more benches/seating areas, improved walkways, picnic amenities, improved views, more ornamental plantings & better connections to the park
- Multiple requests to “keep it simple” and quiet
- What should not happen: noisy events, no pavilion, crime/drugs/hanging out
- Favorite memories included enjoying views, especially the sunsets; walking/talking with friends/family; picnicking; the summer concert series; & enjoying the peacefulness and open space

Statement of Significance

- National Register Nomination Form (NRNF) identifies the eligibility of Western Promenade (the park) is based on its association with Olmsted Brothers & William Goodwin
- “The site is significant primarily as an early example of a recognized and preserved scenic landscape.” (NRNF, Section 8-1)
- NRNF identifies Period of Significance as 1836 to circa 1920

Character-Defining Features

- Western Promenade - the roadway (1836)
 - Tree-lined street (c. 1876)
 - Treed esplanade (1915)
- “Uninterrupted views of the surrounding countryside” (1836)
- Broad lawn at top of escarpment with seating (1880)
- Prospect Point wall & terrace (1885)
- Ornamental horticultural planting beds (1888)
 - Evergreen plantings (1917)
- Steeply sloped hillside with trees (1894)
- Path system
 - Formal walkways along brow of escarpment (1878)
 - Rambling paths (1878)
 - Walkway from brow of hill down the slope (1907)

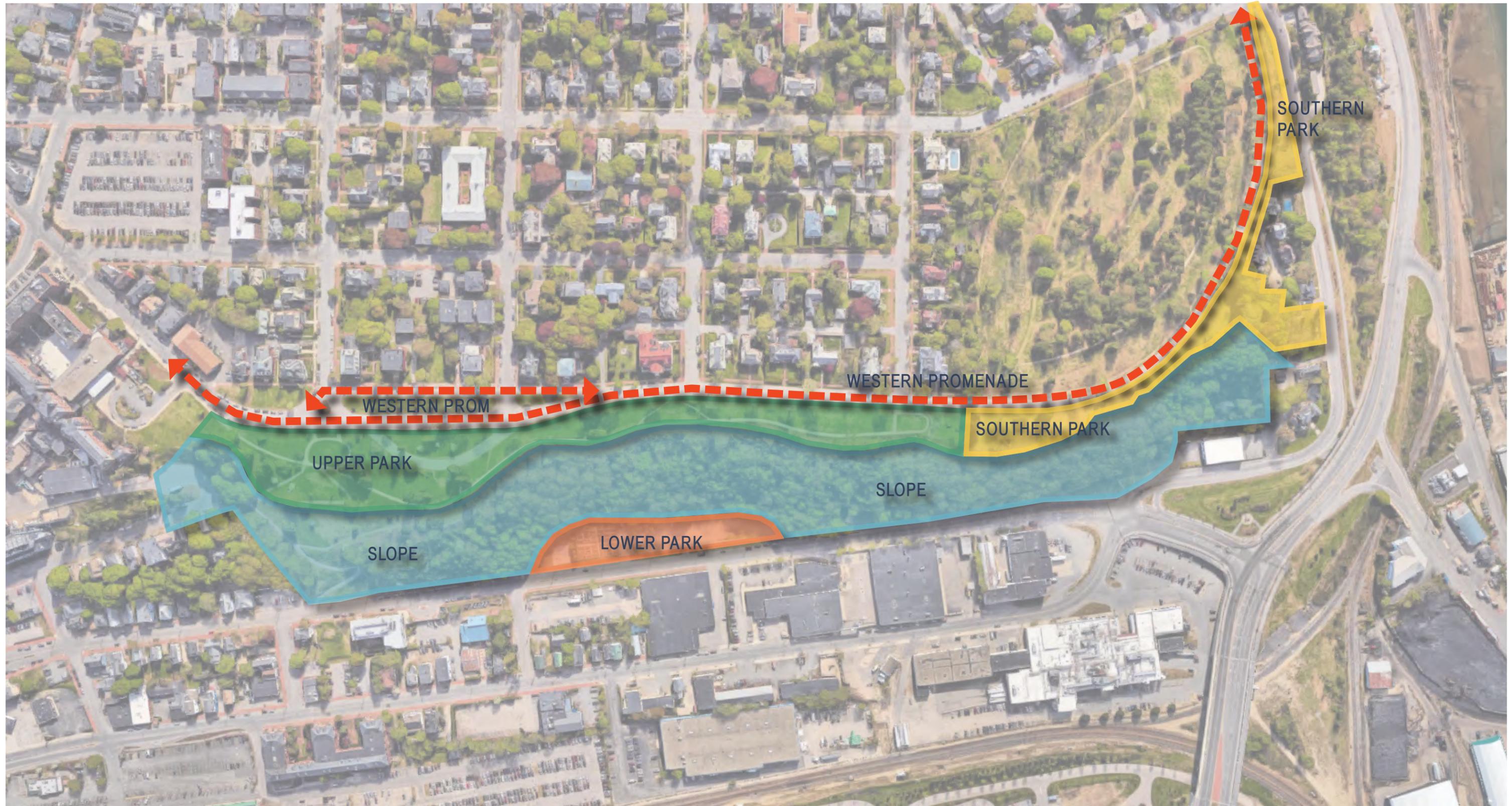
Missing Historic Features

- Stevens & Cobb pavilion (1891)
- Stairs at northern end of park (1905)

NPS Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes

- **Restoration** - “The act or process of accurately depicting the form, features, and character of a property as it appeared at a particular period of time by means of removal of features from other periods in its history and reconstruction of missing features from the restoration period.”
- **Rehabilitation** - “The act or process of making possible a compatible use for a property through repair, alterations, and additions while preserving those portions or features which convey historical, cultural, or architectural values.”

STATEMENT OF HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE: PARK ZONES



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Proposed Treatment Methods

- Western Promenade (the road): Restoration
- The upper park: Restoration
- The southern park: Rehabilitation
- The slope: Rehabilitation
- The lower park: Rehabilitation

Guiding Principles for Design

- A. “Recreate the pastoral qualities of the historic landscape design while solving the contemporary problems of public safety, security, appropriateness of use, maintenance, management, and preservation.”
- B. LMP should emphasize that the Western Promenade is a ‘signature park’ of Portland, not necessarily a neighborhood park. It should welcome all visitors.
- C. Maintain design intent of Olmsted Brothers & William Goodwin plans for the park. Maintain historic materials (including plant materials) to the extent feasible.
- D. Establish site amenity standards which can be used throughout the park. Consider existing standards as appropriate to park setting.
- E. Consider establishing planting zones which are sensitive to the historical context but allow for sustainable plantings.
- F. Consider connections into the park and how visitor access the site, other than cars. And, create better connections through the park (loop trails).
- G. Consider improved trailheads and/or park gateways.

Western Promenade (the roadway): Rehabilitation

- a. Consider narrowing the roadway to reflect its historic width. Consider alternatives for the recovered space (sidewalk, on-street parking, additional greenspace, planting, etc.). Certain options for narrowing the roadway will also provide traffic calming.
- b. Restore the planting design in the esplanade
- c. Reintroduce tree planting lining roadway
- d. Maintain cobble curbs along parking drive
- e. Consider amenities for patients of Maine Medical and their visitors
- f. Potential option for expanded food truck area near Maine Medical

DESIGN GUIDELINES BY PARK ZONE: WESTERN PROMENADE



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DESIGN GUIDELINES BY PARK ZONE: WESTERN PROMENADE



Historic roadway details, including tree planting



Tree planting in esplanade at Eastern Promenade & crosswalks in Old Port

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The Upper Park/the Formal Landscape: Restoration

- a. Maintain historic layout of paved pathways
- b. Consider implementing a hierarchy of paving materials similar to what was established in the Deering Oaks Park Master Plan
- c. The Stevens & Cobb pavilion is a missing feature that should be considered for reintroduction. The community has requested more seating in the park. Consider alternatives that explore these options.
- d. Maintain Prospect Point
- e. Replace damaged/dated site amenities with historically sensitive models (World's Fair bench, Historic Commission-approved light fixtures, etc.)
- f. Consider interpretive elements
- g. Accommodate ADA Accessibility Guidelines, especially at walks & amenities
- h. Given Western Promenade's status as a neighborhood bicycle by-way, consider providing additional bike parking amenities.
- i. Consider the horticultural setting of the Frothingham Memorial.
- j. Relocate bench locations & adjust plantings
- k. Consider horticultural plantings & whether more can be restored and of what type

DRAFT DESIGN GUIDELINES BY PARK ZONE: THE UPPER PARK



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DESIGN GUIDELINES BY PARK ZONE: THE UPPER PARK



Broad lawn and horticultural plantings



Missing feature: Stevens & Cobb Pavilion (1891)



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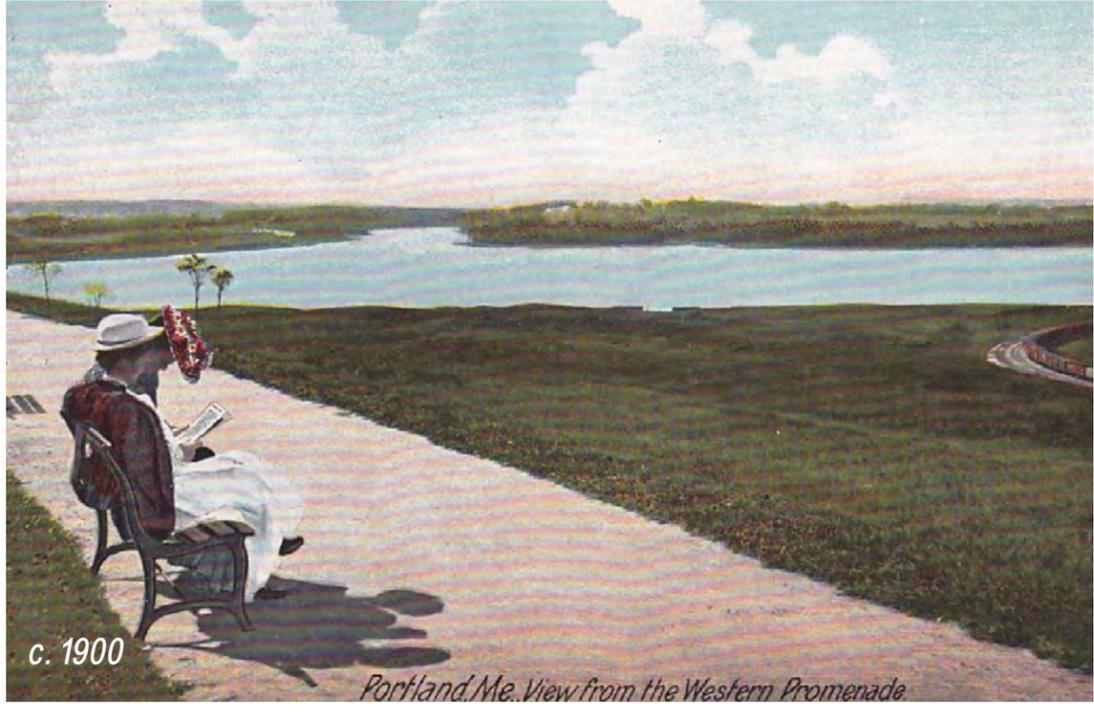
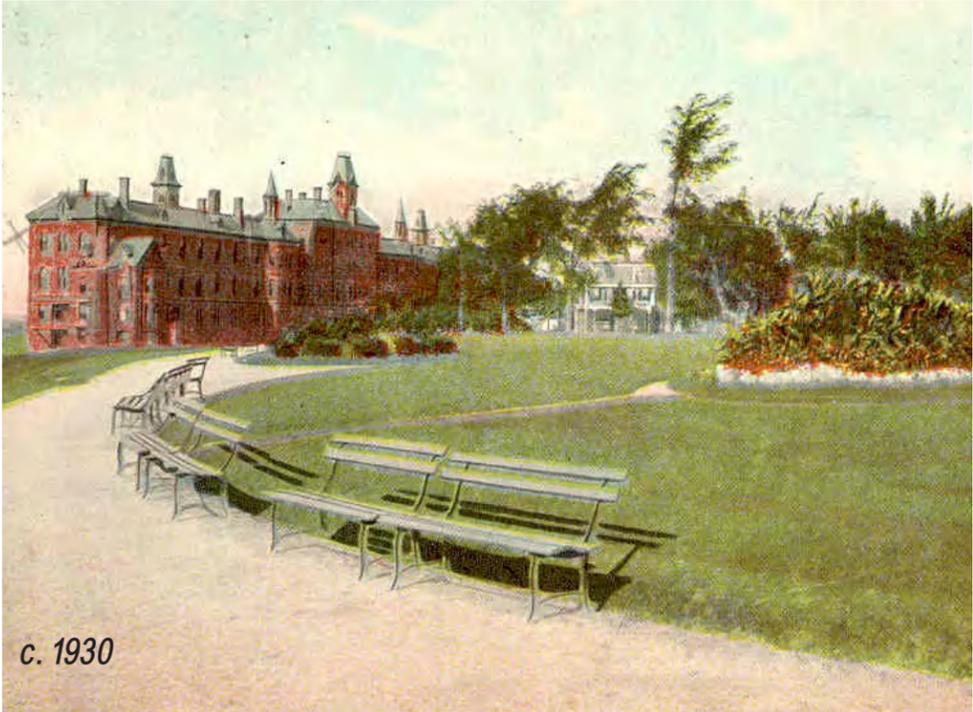
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DESIGN GUIDELINES BY PARK ZONE: THE UPPER PARK



Historical benches: style, setting & location



Site amenities/signage at other Portland historic parks

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The Southern Park: Rehabilitation

- a. Consider options for activating this portion of the park (i.e. play components, event space, etc.)
Potential location for concert series/picnic area.
- b. Maintain visual connection to Western Cemetery.
- c. Provide pedestrian access. Consider providing a crosswalk(s) to Western Cemetery and extending the sidewalk and/or a walkway.
- d. Define layouts for new trail segments to connect Western Promenade to Danforth Street. Utilize Portland Trails to help get these established/constructed.

DESIGN GUIDELINES BY PARK ZONE: THE SOUTHERN PARK



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The Slope: Rehabilitation

- a. Restore select open viewsheds. Vegetation management is essential to reintroducing views in select viewsheds corridors while maintaining vegetative screening where necessary.
- b. Redefine the connection at the northern end of the park to connect Maine Medical to Valley Street. Consider redundant social trails and the impacts to existing vegetation. Consider reintroducing the stairs as well as an accessible approach.
- c. Manage invasive plant species while selectively thinning the trees on the slope.
- d. Reintroduce amenities for winter sports
- e. Consider expanding trail network through wooded area
- f. Strengthen pedestrian connections to Gilman Street & Valley Street properties.
- g. Consider interpretive elements (i.e. Brahmall Hall, impact of the railroad on Portland, etc.)
- h. Consider establishing “planting zones”. (For example, from top of bank to West Prom: turf; from top of bank downslope: turf alternatives: wildflowers, etc.)

DESIGN GUIDELINES BY PARK ZONE: THE SLOPE



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DESIGN GUIDELINES BY PARK ZONE: THE SLOPE



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The Lower Park/Valley Street: Rehabilitation

- a. Consider formalizing parking to be more efficient & sustainable.
- b. Consider creating a consistent sidewalk along the park side of Valley Street.
- c. Consider including standard site amenities (benches, waste receptacles, bike racks, etc.)
- d. Accommodate ADA Accessibility Guidelines
- e. Maintain the CCC-era retaining walls and restore as necessary
- f. Consider improved trailheads and/or park gateways
- g. Consider expanding the Valley Street Community Garden if there is a desire for more plots in the city.
- h. Improve dog park by providing shade, amenities, water & improved drainage

DESIGN GUIDELINES BY PARK ZONE: THE LOWER PARK (VALLEY STREET)



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DESIGN GUIDELINES BY PARK ZONE: THE LOWER PARK (VALLEY STREET)



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DESIGN GUIDELINES BY PARK ZONE: PARK GATEWAYS, TRAILHEADS & TRANSITION ZONES





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