



PORTLAND OFF-ROAD CYCLING MASTER PLAN

Project Advisory Committee Meeting #11

Meeting Summary

MEETING DATE: THURSDAY, MARCH 16, 2017

LOCATION: BUREAU OF PLANNING AND SUSTAINABILITY, 1900 SW 4TH AVENUE, PORTLAND

TIME: 4:00 PM – 6:00 PM

In Attendance

CAC Members Present

Renee Meyers
Matthew Erdman
Jocelyn Gaudi
Mike Houck
Adnan Kadir (via Skype)
Carrie Leonard
Torrey Lindbo
Jim Owens
Bob Sallinger (via Skype)
Evan Smith
Michael Whitesel

CAC Members Absent

Punneh Abdolhossieni
Kelsey Cardwell
Erin Chipps
Kelly McBride
Nastassja Pace

Agency Representatives and Resource Members

Emily Roth, *Portland Parks & Recreation*
Rachel Felice, *Portland Parks & Recreation*
Jennifer Devlin, *Portland Bureau of Environmental Services*
Shannah Anderson, *Portland Bureau of Environmental Services*
Marc Peters, *Portland Bureau of Environmental Services*
Robert Spurlock, *Metro*

Staff and Consultants

Michelle Kunec-North, *Project Manager, BPS*
Tom Armstrong, *BPS*
Brandie Dieterle De La Hoz, *BPS*
Kristen Lohse, *Toole Design Group*
Adrienne DeDona, *Facilitator, JLA Public Involvement*
John Todoroff, *JLA Public Involvement*

Audience / Members of the Public

Clint Culpepper	Litza Lovell	Chris Rotvik
Tom Cunningham	Jonathan Maus	Susan Rotvik
Daniel Greenstadt	B. McGillicuddy	Chris Sautter
Andy Jansky	Pat Mullaley	Ron Strasser
Robin Jensen	Cristina Nieves	Catherine Thompson

Overview

The committee:

- Discussed equity in decision-making and how it could be better achieved in this planning effort.
- Discussed and offered ideas for proposed trail concepts in Forest Park.

Welcome, Agenda Review & Project Updates

Adrienne DeDona, JLA Public Involvement, welcomed everyone to the meeting, reviewed the agenda, and reviewed the ground rules. Committee members, agency representatives and project team members introduced themselves.

Meeting 10 Summary

Adrienne asked for any comments or questions about the Meeting 10 summary. There were none.

Equity in Decision-Making, Update on Community Engagement Activities

Adrienne explained the concept of equity and why it is important for this planning effort. A committee member commented that geographic equity — ensuring that people who live in all areas of the city, including underserved East Portland — is important to consider.

Adrienne noted that in April, 2016, Desiree Williams-Rajee gave a presentation to the committee about the importance of equity in planning projects. At that meeting, the committee brainstormed ideas and resources for how outreach efforts could be done with equity in mind.

Adrienne said that the outreach strategy has been developed based on the committee's recommendations.

Michelle summarized the upcoming outreach activities and recapped what has already been done as part of the needs assessment phase, including a questionnaire. Upcoming outreach events include two large community events, designed to be family-friendly, with interpretation/translation. Project planners will work with City's Community Engagement Liaison program and the Community Cycling Center to engage diverse community members and to gather input from a variety of people.

Michelle talked about the need to make this process accessible to all Portlanders. She noted that some committee members have expressed that the meeting location is not very accessible for a lot of people. She asked the committee to provide input on how the planning process could be more relevant and accessible moving forward and acknowledged that improvement is needed. Michelle asked if we are successful in gathering input from diverse voices in our outreach efforts, how should this input be incorporated into the system plan? How do we keep equity at the forefront as we move into the next phase of the process?

Questions and comments from committee members and agency representatives included:

- To include eastside communities, consider tapping into activities related to the Green Ring in Lents and the Jade District.
- More effort is necessary to ensure that diverse voices are heard at the PAC meetings. It would be great to have community leaders representing ethnic groups attending the meetings to share their voice, but if that's not possible, highlight these voices in the public involvement summary.

- A committee member seconded the above point, and said that the Off-Road Cycling Plan’s outreach is far short of the outreach efforts for the Climate Action Plan, which had a multi-year community engagement process. This effort could be used as a template for multi-cultural outreach.

Michelle acknowledged that the project team hasn’t done a good job of keeping the committee informed about community outreach activities or responding to some of the feedback raised by committee members at meetings. Adrienne added that the project team will establish a mechanism to keep track of input moving forward.

Further input from the committee included:

- It is important to include voices of people of color in the discussion, and to ask them how they can be included.
- Look for opportunities to tag along with other already ongoing outreach efforts, rather than convening yet another focus group.
- Avoid jargon (e.g. “pump track”) that is hard to understand by those who are not familiar with off road cycling. It is important to include visual explanations in outreach materials.
- Continued outreach should be included as a component of the plan. Outreach is especially important in lower income communities which may face additional challenges and problems due to lack of resources.
- A question about whether there is actual demand for off road cycling facilities in East Portland, and if so, how can the plan accommodate this demand considering that there are few sites that passed the screening criteria in East Portland.
- The plan will likely reveal inequities in park access in East Portland.
- Outer East Portland residents may be best served in Gresham. We need to work with our co-city partners, because they have more open space available.
- Outreach may not connect with some residents since bike parks are a low priority for people in low income communities. Frame questions about parks in terms of how a park can meet their needs.
- Support for a sincere application of the equity lens in the plan.
- Develop messages that resonate with people. Consider future park programming, such as hiring local teenagers to teach youth bike skills. Be sure to talk about benefits of off-road cycling to the community, such as health, safety and jobs.

Michelle recapped the comments. She emphasized that it will be a difficult challenge to get diverse and representative feedback. Because of this, the project may need to weight feedback from diverse community members in their planning. She expressed appreciation for those who contacted her to bring up the issue of equity.

A resource member asked if there will be a report about outreach efforts that have been done. Michelle responded that the needs assessment questionnaire summary report will be posted online soon. The upcoming online open house and interactive map comments will include a question asking for participant zip codes to better understand the respondent demographics.

A committee member suggested that members who are absent at this meeting should get a chance to add to this list of equity suggestions.

Forest Park Trail Concepts

Adrienne explained the activity for the next part of the meeting. Committee and resource members split into two groups to discuss trail concepts in Forest Park, and made notes on printed maps. The audience also participated in two separate groups. Michelle asked the groups to consider the following points when thinking about the proposed trail concepts:

- Recognize the ecological importance of Forest Park.
- Think about Forest Park in the context of a city-wide plan.
- Current opportunities in the park do not reflect best practices.
- Lack of loop options make it difficult to ride the distances that off-road cyclists prefer.
- The goal of the activity is not to make recommendations, but to generate a list of options that could be included in the plan.

Michelle previewed the upcoming plan approval/adoption process, then steps of implementation (see Forest Park Trail Concepts handout).

Adrienne explained the activity worksheet, which has six proposals to consider in terms of ecology, cycling, other users, and the implementation criteria.

A committee member asked why some trails (Wildwood, Maple, and pedestrian-only trails in the southern unit) are off the table for consideration, and Michelle responded that there is a need for pedestrian-only trails in the Park and in the system since hiking is the most popular use of dirt trails and pedestrian trail opportunities are a local and state-wide priority. She added that shared use trails can work well; environmental impacts from hikers and cyclists are similar if trails are designed appropriately. The high level of pedestrian use on trails like Wildwood would pose a major management challenge if these trails became shared-use.



The following is a summary of the discussion from each small group (see the attached Forest Park trail concepts activity summary for more detail):

Group 1 (Committee and resource members)

This group focused on trail concepts A, B, and C, which all seemed to present some opportunities. A and B could be complementary because of their proximity. The group suggested considering opportunities to decommission some less sustainable trails, such as the Water Line Trail.

Group 2 (Committee and resource members)

This group focused on trail concepts D, E, and C. Their discussion centered on the potential for trails to make larger connections. Proposed trail concept D could connect to Highway 30. They suggested focusing on opportunities with trails that have low pedestrian use, to minimize conflicts.

Group 3 (audience)

This group felt concept A would provide good to St. Johns, while acknowledging that St Johns bridge is not bike-friendly and that there is limited parking in the Linnton area. With concept B, there are concerns about user conflicts with equestrian-only trails and the steepness and difficulty of the trail for cyclists. There were also concerns about steepness with proposal C. Participants at this table had questions about how much these potential trails are being used currently, and if there are restrictions related to the power line easement. There are opportunities with proposal D, but there was concern about the number of stream crossings. The existing fire lane 1 has drainage and erosion problems. Participants at the table discussed opportunities to create new trails adjacent to fire lanes, with the idea of minimizing disturbance to the environment and minimizing fragmentation. An audience member expressed concern about maintenance and management of existing trails.

Group 4 (audience)

This group felt that when utilizing fire lanes, the trail should be contoured. There were also general comments about wanting to keep some trails still open for consideration, like Wildwood and Maple, and in particular a section of Maple below Leif Erickson. It was also discussed that there could be better coordination between the Parks and Fire Departments in terms of trail maintenance along fire lanes. This group also felt like providing loops was important and to look for opportunities to connect trails. There was discussion about opportunities to improve under-used trails. Option C had the least support because of the condition of the trail. A participant expressed a need for clarity about decommissioning trails. A resource member from Portland Parks & Recreation explained collaboration between Fire and Parks Bureaus. There are different standards for different types of fire lanes. Parks and Fire share maintenance responsibility.

Michelle thanked the committee for the discussion.

A committee member requested clarity in outreach materials regarding how Wildwood and Maple trails are off the table for cyclists. He believes that there is still some question about if the idea is settled. This point may require further discussion, and the committee will revisit the issue before the next meeting. Michelle clarified that the committee report could have a more nuanced and complex view about this issue than the staff recommendation.

Public Comment

Ron Strasser said that the increasing demand on Forest Park means that it is very important to preserve the ecology of the park. But he argued that there should be increased bike access as well, implying that without it there will be more illegal use of the park by bicyclists. He also argued for the health, environmental, and equity benefits of bicycling.

Marcy Houle opposes expanding bicycle activity in Forest Park. She read from a resolution written by the Sauvie Island Community Association (attached), and said that other neighborhood associations are in the process of creating similar resolutions. She stated the importance of protecting flora and habitat in the park.

Chris Rotvik, president of the NW Trail Alliance, asked the committee to welcome his organization's voice back to the table as Kelsey Cardwell (Committee member) has stepped down as NWTA Board President. He said his group has invested much volunteer labor in Gateway Green.

Daniel Greenstadt said it would be inappropriate for a master plan to exclude from consideration specific options like Wildwood and Maple trails, especially without data. There needs to be a better rationale than heavy pedestrian use, considering that some segments of the trail are currently used much less than others. He also submitted documents to the committee, which are attached in this summary.

Catherine Thompson urged the committee to be mindful about the environmental value of the park, as well as existing land use ordinances and trail management guidelines in the Forest Park Natural Resources Management Plan. She reminded the committee about statistics from park use studies.

Clint Culpepper is a bicyclist, runner, and hiker in Forest Park. He has attended previous meetings and has seen improvements to how they have handled contention and compromise. He said that there are still some voices who are crowded out of the discussion or feel uncomfortable being part of the meetings. The committee needs to continue to work toward a necessary compromise that includes bike usage in the park.

John Wertzler is a volunteer naturalist with Metro. He suggested that upcoming site visits as part of suitability assessment, which will include a bike expert, should also include a naturalist to provide balance.

Meeting Wrap up/Next Steps

Adrienne thanked the group for participating and being respectful of each other. The next meeting is scheduled for April 27th, where public input from the upcoming outreach activities will be shared.

Michelle announced that the virtual open house and interactive map would be posted online soon. She acknowledged that a draft version of the interactive map had mistakenly been posted online, which included some erroneous information.

Michelle briefly recapped the items for follow-up with the committee: Clarify the decision with regard to Wildwood and Maple trails not being considered for off-road cycling, representation of the NW Trails Alliance on the committee and posting a summary report of the needs assessment questionnaire online.

Adrienne added that the May meeting will likely be pushed into June, after the holiday weekend.

The meeting was adjourned.

Attachments

- Forest Park Draft Trail Concepts - Handout
- Forest Park Trail Concept Worksheet
- Forest Park Trail Concept Worksheet notes
- Comments submitted in writing from the public

DRAFT TRAIL CONCEPTS

FOR EXPLORATION BY THE OFF-ROAD CYCLING MASTER PLAN PROJECT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Forest Park - Existing Conditions & Trails

Trail Users

- Open To Peds
- Open To Bicycles
- Open To Horses

EcoHealth Rating

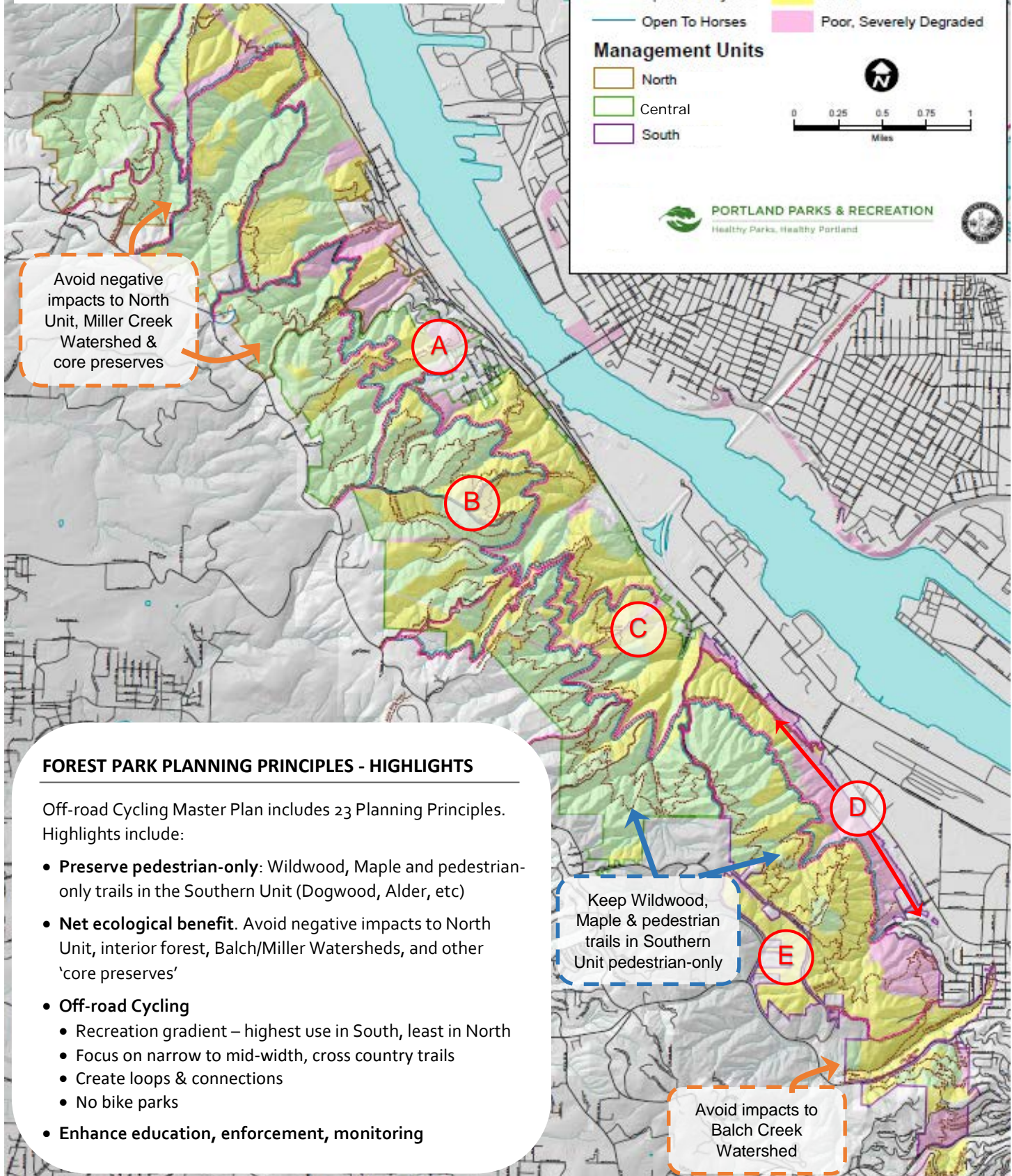
- Healthy, Good
- Stable
- Poor, Severely Degraded

Management Units

- North
- Central
- South



PORTLAND PARKS & RECREATION
Healthy Parks, Healthy Portland



FOREST PARK PLANNING PRINCIPLES - HIGHLIGHTS

Off-road Cycling Master Plan includes 23 Planning Principles. Highlights include:

- **Preserve pedestrian-only:** Wildwood, Maple and pedestrian-only trails in the Southern Unit (Dogwood, Alder, etc)
- **Net ecological benefit.** Avoid negative impacts to North Unit, interior forest, Balch/Miller Watersheds, and other 'core preserves'
- **Off-road Cycling**
 - Recreation gradient – highest use in South, least in North
 - Focus on narrow to mid-width, cross country trails
 - Create loops & connections
 - No bike parks
- **Enhance education, enforcement, monitoring**

Draft Trail Concepts for exploration by the Off-road Cycling Master Plan Project Advisory Committee – March 16, 2017

DESCRIPTION	MGMT UNIT	ECOLOGY & ENHANCEMENT OPPORTUNITIES	OFF-ROAD CYCLING			OTHER USERS
			Considerations	2010 Singletrack	Loop Potential	
A Open Tolinda Trail to cycling <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change use • Improve 	Central	Poor/Stable <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restoration opportunity • Possibly close Water Line Trail (poorly designed, erosive) 	Narrow trail (0.8 mi) Connects Leif Erikson to St. John’s Bridge; More advanced trail; Potentially directional	A11 – 8/2/5 support	None	Steep trail – consider potential user conflicts
B Firelane 7 & Firelane 7A & Oil Line Road <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change use • Improve • Trail Closure 	Central	Stable/Healthy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possibly close Lower Gasline Trail (unsustainable) 	Majority is wide trail	Includes A13 – 6/3/6 support	~ 2.75 mile lollipop ~ 3.5 mile loop with Leif Erikson and Springville Road	Improve PF&R ATV access; Equestrian use; Intersects multiple pedestrian-only trails
C Power Line Corridor/Firelane 4 & Extension <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change use • Improve • New Trail 	Central	Poor/Stable <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restoration opportunity 	Limited narrow-trail opportunity (<0.5 mi) Connects Leif Erikson & Saltzman Road	A8 – 9/3/3 support	~ 3-mile loop with Saltzman Road and Leif Erikson	Trails could be improved for all users Additional access to Saltzman trailhead
D Firelane 1 & New trail along park boundary <i>(parallels Hwy 30)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve • New Trail 	South (possibly in easements outside park boundary)	Poor/Stable <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restoration opportunity 	Narrow to mid-width contour trail opportunity; Beginner-intermediate; Good access New section could be optimized for off-road cycling	A1 – 12/2/1 support + similar to A7 – 7/3/5 support	~ 6 mile loop with Leif Erikson Combines with E ↓	Trails could be improved for all users; Possible new shared-use trail; Would likely terminate in neighborhood
E New trail south of NW 53rd, connect to Holman Lane and Firelane 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Trail 	South	Stable <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restoration opportunity • Could decommission social trails • Site away from streams 	Narrow to mid-width contour trail opportunity; Beginner-intermediate; Could be optimized for off-road cycling	New	~ 7 mile loop with Firelane 1, Leif Erikson, Holman, NW 53 rd Combines with D ↑	Possible new shared-use trail


FOREST PARK TRAIL CONCEPT WORKSHEET

Purpose of this work: To inform which concepts are advanced for public review and feedback; To help identify key considerations and information

Trail Concept being explored: A B C D E				
If a new concept, please describe:				
	Strengths	Weaknesses	Missing Information	Other Considerations or Caveats
Ecological <i>Such as wildlife, habitat, and land, vegetation and water resources</i>				
Off-road Cycling <i>Including riders of all ages and skill levels</i>				
Other Users <i>Such as: walkers/hikers, runners, wildlife watching, educational, maintenance and emergency access</i>				
NRMP Implementation Criteria <i>see reverse</i>				

Forest Park Natural Resource Plan – Implementation Criteria for Environmental Review

Project must meet these approval criteria:

- 
- The diagram consists of two nested blue brackets on the left side of the list. The inner bracket is labeled 'Type II' and encompasses the first four bullet points. The outer bracket is labeled 'Type III' and encompasses all eight bullet points.
- There is a demonstrated need for the proposal
 - The proposed action is consistent with the Forest Park Natural Resources Management Plan Goals and Strategies.
 - Alternative locations and design modifications were evaluated to show that the proposal has the least significant detrimental environmental impact of the practicable alternatives.
 - A construction management plan and a mitigation plan will minimize impacts on resources and restore adjacent disturbed areas.
 - The proposal is a park-related development, or no alternative locations exist outside of Forest Park for the proposal.
 - There are no practicable alternative locations within Forest Park suitable for the use in which the development will have less adverse impact on resource values.
 - Any long-term adverse impacts of the proposed action on resource values are fully mitigated within the Management Unit.
 - The proposal is consistent with the purpose of the Environmental Zones.

Forest Park Trail Concept Worksheet Notes

March 16, 2017

These notes include comments from Advisory Committee members and members of the public who attended the meeting.

Concept A

Strengths

- Potential to be paired with water line being decommissioned
- Restoration could be coupled with trail work
- Could serve St. John's community
- Allows for easy access
- Redesigning trail would allow an easier hike if it was shared use
- Strength is that it's not steep
- Good access from St. John's
- Best access to St. John's but bridge isn't great for bikes
- Good opportunity to decommission unsustainable trails

Weaknesses

- Weigh increasing distance of trail with switch backs with ecological impacts
- Short and steep without adding switchbacks
- Would take away a pedestrian only section
- Not a good loop option
- Germantown trail head isn't good
- Limited parking

Other Considerations

- Wildlife data should be looked at
- Would need switchback to be sustainable
- Ridge trail should be available for bikes either for certain times or shared
- Could A and B work together?

Concept B

Strengths

- Potential to improve sustainability of Fire Lanes 7 and 7a
- Potential of reducing trail density in a high density area
- Multiple loop opportunities
- Proximity of Wildwood Trail may separate users
- Strength - has better grade than trails further south
- For existing fire lanes, route trail across to improve grade and reduce erosion

Weaknesses

- Width is not ideal—potential to improve feel of width with vegetation/other visual cues
- Potential of interaction between equestrians and cyclists
- Steepness does not provide a great bike experience

Other Considerations

- Idea to consider leaving gas line open—change use to include bikes and potentially make a loop with Trail Concept A

Concept C

Strengths

- Pollinator habitat
- Opportunities to improve ecology
- Proximity to Salzman increases mileage
- Not critical for fire access; may offer opportunities for revised slope
- Potential to create short 'figure 8' loop with Fire Lane 5. Would still be short, so the reward may not be great
- Rebuilding trail could offer an opportunity for restoration
- Potential for parking and access via Hwy 30
- Connect bottom with Fire Lane 1
- Wind it to reduce grade
- Strength is the potential connection with Leif Erickson and Saltzman

Weaknesses

- Consider impacts to eagle's nest
- Runs under powerline
- Crosses Maple Trail
- Messy, steep, wide—doesn't create desired experience
- Doesn't connect well to other trails/parts of park, offers limited 'extendability' options
- Not a high value option
- Way too steep and short
- Steepness does not provide a great bike experience
- Issue with powerline
- Condition of trail is a concern

Other Considerations

- Fire Department or power company easement issue

Concept D

Strengths

- Habitat in this already is already fragmented, especially with powerline, so could be a good place to allow trail building
- Offer some good restoration opportunities
- Low existing ped use is an advantage because the potential for user conflict may be lower
- Is one of the lowest gradient stretches of FP, offers opportunity for less steep trail
- Powerline corridor offers great views
- Should be far enough away from road
- Trail close to Thurman Trailhead to get cyclists off of Leif Erickson, then onto Fire Lane 1, then to E concept trailhead, then down modified Holman trail
- Fire lane design issues may be an opportunity for improvement
- Potential to extend further up Hwy 30

Weaknesses

- Many stream crossings; Salzman is already very incised
- Alignment would need to go up and down to minimize stream crossing impacts, making for lots of climbing
- Existing oak habitat and rare plants along Hwy 30 – need to protect
- In the 'backyard' of many businesses
- Some homeless encampments in the area

Other considerations

- Explore feasibility of extending up Hwy 30 to Salzman Rod and beyond
- Explore ownership/easements around Powerline
- Explore ways to connect by staying low without climbing—along Hwy 30, even along the road
- Explore ways to connect with Lower McCleay, Thurman, Aspen

Concept E

Strengths

- Holman Rd and Fire Lane 1 could be improved to reduce erosion
- Purpose built trail could improve the challenging topography but may contribute to issues with high use on Leif Erikson; could use Trail Concept D to diffuse some of the volumes
- No established user conflicts
- Very accessible
- Improve/treat Fire Lane 1 to improve erosion issues.
- Have trail cross (zig zag)/contour Fire Lane when needed
- Strength is that it is a good loop opportunity. Would ride it since there is a lack of loop opportunities
- Near new nature center – provides a destination

- Reroute Holman and Fire Lane 1 to reduce grade
- A designated bike path connecting Holman to Fire Lane 1 is a good idea, then improve Fire Lane 1 drainage.

Weaknesses

- Existing erosion issues and steep topography
- Existing fragmentation issues and potential to exacerbate
- Lack of connections to existing trails, would make an “awesome trail to nowhere”
- 20% grade is steep, most riders would have to get off and walk
- Only viable as a loop with a connection to concept D

Other Considerations

- Check for unimproved rights of way along Hwy 30 for room to extend
- Will activate large user base with willingness to maintain trails
- Focus efforts parallel existing trails to reduce fragmentation

Other ideas

- Pre-emptive removal of any trail at the beginning of the process is improper
- Too many up/down routes, not enough cross grade trails
- Trails should be independent of fire lanes
- Contour trails where they are aligned with fire lane access
- Use signage to manage trail crossings
- There is little new single track proposed
- Recommend improving Fire Lane management and relationship between Parks & Rec and Fire & Rescue
- Put Wildwood and Maple back on the list for consideration
- Put trails adjacent to fire lanes instead of on fire lanes
- Are there any new “mountain biking” miles?
- Open Parks of Maple below Leif Erickson
- Disagree with the decision to take Wildwood and Maple out of consideration – there are ways change pedestrian behavior if we decided to open it to biking.
- This group is only looking at making a trail on a map, not discussing anything else from this paperwork provided.
- Decommission Waterline Trail
- Larger connections are important
- Need user counts (particularly for option C and the powerline easement)
- Flexibility to contour across fire lane trails within disturbed area
- Maintenance collaboration for single track along Fire Lane 5
- Parallel trails along existing disturbed areas
- Minimize fragmentation
- Increase collaboration with Parks & Rec and Fire Department

- Opportunities to create loops
- Can fire lanes be decommissioned?
- What is Fire Department's authority?

Public comments submitted in writing
to the Project Advisory Committee

EQUITY = LOCAL ACCESS
OF NEIGHBORHOODS TO NATURAL
SURFACE TRAILS. NEAR HOMES!

- This could be done with minimal cost by designation of trail areas in or around perimeter of parks so kids/families can ride without need of an automobile.
- Maybe bring in some dirt for some small hills, but keep it simple so ground's crews can mow lawn areas.

Just give people a place to ride in their neighborhoods.

Off Road cycling Committee Testimony
March 16, 2017

Catherine Thompson, M.D.
thomsoca@gmail.com

Here is what ordinance 168905 says about new trails in the Central Unit:

From the FPNRMP page 104

The trail system is varied and nearly fully developed. Important natural resources are the mixed forests, intermittent streams, and good quality wildlife habitat.

Wildlife habitat quality in forested areas in the Central Unit should be improved. Higher quality interior forest habitat should be restored and perfected. Human impacts and English ivy are immediate threats that should be monitored and addressed. With one exception, only minor improvements to the trail system and access points should be made to accommodate use. (Lower Firelane #1, at the boundary between the South Unit and the Central Unit should be improved and an access point at St. Helens Road should be developed)

This is what the trail standard is for bicycle trails in Forest Park per ordinance 168905

In general, fire lanes are the only trails where mountain bikes are allowed (p173)

Trail surface – hard packed dirt or gravel

Width minimum of 2.4 meters (8 feet)

Clear trail of vegetation to a width of 3.7 meters (12 feet) and height of 3.4 meters (11 feet)

Signs- install “no bike” signs on the pedestrian trails where bike and pedestrian trail cross

Education p 83

Providing information to park users about resource protection, stating the reasons for particular management actions will help them to use the park wisely and to appreciate its unique value

I have the following questions for the committee

Who is responsible for informing the committee and the public about these regulations and environmental land use code?

Who is responsible for informing the committee about the successes and failures of previously built sustainable bicycle trail building in Forest Park and Riverview Natural Area?

Who is responsible for informing the committee and the public about safety issues relating to cycling in Forest Park?

Who on the committee is responsible for knowing all of this information and making recommendations and giving input to the process that reflects knowledge about the ordinance and the environmental codes?

Who ultimately is responsible for the accuracy of the information provided to the committee and the public about ordinances, rules, regulations and environment zone restrictions?

Please email me the answers to my questions. Thank you

From: Bonnie Summers [mailto:deefiddledee@yahoo.com]

Sent: Monday, March 06, 2017 12:24 AM

To: Wheeler, Mayor <MayorWheeler@portlandoregon.gov>; Commissioner Fritz <amanda@portlandoregon.gov>; Commissioner Fish <nick@portlandoregon.gov>; Commissioner Saltzman <dan@portlandoregon.gov>; Commissioner Eudaly <chloe@portlandoregon.gov>

Cc: Abbate, Mike <Mike.Abbate@portlandoregon.gov>; Alberta Beale <abb@hevanet.com>; albertabeale@gmail.com

Subject: No! to Single Track Cycling in Forest Park

Mayor Ted Wheeler,
Commissioner Amanda Fritz,
Commissioner Nick Fish,
Commissioner Dan Saltzman,
Commissioner Chloe Eudaly,
Cc: Portland Parks Director, Mike Abbate,

We are shocked and dismayed at the plan by the Off Road Cycling Committee to put single track cycling trails in Forest Park. Forest Park currently has 30 miles of trails where off road cycling is allowed. Furthermore, illegal off road cycling occurs throughout Forest Park. There is no enforcement.

Off road cycling is not gentle on the landscape. And yet the ORCC proposes to introduce an even more destructive and hazardous activity by converting pedestrian trails to single track cycling. Single track cycling is incompatible with any other activity, including walking and hiking. Single track cycling is high speed and high risk. The trails are narrow with hairpin turns and blind corners. Woe to the unsuspecting creature or fallen cyclist who happens to be on the trail when the next cyclist comes flying down the trail.

This is an inappropriate use of our beautiful, wild Forest Park and it is prohibited by city ordinance. We appeal to city council to protect Forest Park from single track cycling and to provide monitoring and enforcement of the off road cycling that is already occurring in Forest Park.

Respectfully,

Bonnie Summers (SE Portland resident)

Alberta Beale (NE Portland resident)

From: Jeff C Burns [mailto:jeff@organicmodern.com]
Sent: Tuesday, March 14, 2017 9:40 PM
To: BPS Off-road Cycling <offroadcycling@portlandoregon.gov>
Subject: RE: Off-road Cycling Master Plan | March 2017

Off road peeps;

I'm a transplant from far inland San Diego (you know, San Diego Zoo).

SD has an interesting topography of mesa and finger canyons – development happens on top of flat land, with these weird canyons dropping off into no mans flat land, often along the railroad. There are s.tons of trails there. We'd do summer night rides thru the canyons across the county. I can't tell you the exillation of dropping into a trail from my neighborhood flat and being to .com work in 10 minutes.

Portland has the same thing! We have lots of neighborhoods above ODOT and railroad right of ways. And blackberry. And the goat block goats for hire. Somebody needs the vision to carve the path. And some goats.

When I moved here, I hung out with the Grotto and Medrumbar folks, who took up shovels all summer long. Get those folks back. They are free labor, enthusiastic, and religious propgandistics of the Mahler Refuge type. I havent' seen them in your plans.

And for gods sakes an bmx race venue. This is still oregon.

Ciao, and carry on!

A Conservation & Recreation Vision for Portland's Forest Park

Managing Cyclists and Other Trail Users

March 2017

Portland's Forest Park is the pride and joy of a city where urban life would not be the same without our parks and green spaces. Located immediately adjacent to Portland's downtown, Forest Park is both a symbol of our city's commitment to land conservation and a destination for escape, contemplation, physical challenge, and a connection with the natural world. From its beginnings at the turn of the 20th century to the present day, Forest Park has always been conceived of as a place for both preservation and nature-based recreation. Is that vision being fulfilled today?

While the early founders of Forest Park had the foresight to secure the land from further urban development, the past several decades have yielded many threats to the park, including invasive species, misuse, severe underfunding, outdated planning, waning public awareness, and a growing disconnect from the needs of Portland's residents. These are familiar themes in many cities around the nation, yet many of those places have enjoyed great success in addressing these issues. While preserving Forest Park for future generations demands a range of tools and initiatives, a key element in the success of other cities has been the thoughtful engagement of the communities upon which all parklands depend. Central to that process is recognizing the recreational interests of park visitors. Just as Forest Park's early founders knew, without enlisting and engaging community support, there is little hope of achieving preservation goals.

Perhaps the most glaring deficiency in Forest Park's recreational landscape is the lack of off-road cycling opportunity. The single greatest change to occur in natural area recreation throughout the country in the past 30 years has been the advent of the modern mountain bike. This created many challenges for land managers and trail users as communities across the country struggled to understand if and how they could manage this new phenomenon. Thinking it might be an unmanageable new use or just a passing fad, many agencies simply banned or severely restricted bicycles on public lands. While those early reactions may be understandable, today we have decades of trail management experience and insight that make it clear that off-road cycling is a readily manageable activity on recreational trails and has become an integral part of recreation and conservation management in countless settings. But we have yet to realize those lessons here in Portland.

Even today, and in stark contrast to what hundreds of other communities have achieved, bicycles are permitted on virtually none of Forest Park's 50+ miles of relatively narrow trails, generally referred to as "singletrack" trails. It's time for change that is based in science and best land management practices. With the City of Portland's Off-Road Cycling Master Plan (ORCMP) process now underway, many questions have emerged about what it all means for Portland in general and for Forest Park specifically.

What Portland needs is a thoughtfully considered and carefully implemented plan that defends Forest Park's ecological legacy and fulfills the park's vision for outdoor recreational opportunities in a way that will best serve Forest Park and the Portland community that adores it. While a detailed plan must be the work of the relevant agencies and community representatives, there are a number of goals, conditions, and issues that can be considered early in the process.

Let's create and improve recreational opportunity in Forest Park.

Forest Park boasts more than 80 miles of trails throughout its more than 5,000 acres. However, virtually none of the park's 50 miles of singletrack trails are open to cyclists. A survey of other urban natural parks around the country suggests that Forest Park might easily accommodate 30+ miles of singletrack trail, leaving cyclists as minority singletrack users yet providing significant and badly needed opportunities for off-road cycling. At this point, it's impossible to say precisely how much trail mileage may be new trail construction versus the re-engineering of existing trails to shared use, but those determinations should be made in accordance with current best management practices and in consultation and cooperation with other trail users.

Let's have the right kind of trails.

The goal is a coordinated trails network built and maintained to modern standards and offering a range of experiences for all visitors. Both physical and policy constraints in Forest Park generally do not support steep trails that might be associated with “downhill” cycling or elaborate riding features more suitable for other settings. Instead, crosscountry (known as “XC”) trails are the goal. XC trails look essentially like backcountry hiking paths with frequent grade reversals, twists, turns and natural features such as rocks and roots that both echo the surrounding environment and slow trail users to a modest pace. Any shared use trails must have sufficient opportunities for travelers to pass safely, whether on foot or bicycle.

Let's fix what's broken using the very best standards and guidelines.

The majority of Forest Park's existing trails, including the various fire lanes and access roads, are substandard in relation to virtually any current recreational trail guidelines. Among other things, this means they are less sustainable, less safe, more prone to erosion, more damaging to the environment, and more costly to maintain than properly built trails. None of those issues are specific to bicycle use.

Instead, we can advocate for state-of-the-art trail standards that conform to those adopted by US Forest Service in 2007. These trail guidelines are designed to prevent damage from runoff by encouraging surface water sheet flow and reducing the potential energy of any water on the trail. This design prevents negative impacts to the environment and reduces the need for trail maintenance. The standards also anticipate and address various other concerns in the areas of user conflict, user safety, and off-trail travel.

The city of Portland also has its own adopted trail standards (2009) but they are less detailed, internally inconsistent, rely on external standards that have been superseded, lead to unnecessary environmental impacts, and aggravate user conflict issues. The Portland city Trail Guidelines should be updated or amended to bring them in line with best management practices.

Let's include everyone.

All proposed trails, whether new construction or newly designated, should be open to all human-powered users. In general, Forest Park trails should meet the needs of beginner and intermediate level visitors, be they on foot or bicycle.

Let's improve and ensure safety for all visitors.

Properly built trails, whether they are shared-use or dedicated-use, are clearly demonstrated to be safe for all users. Non-motorized trail users of all types – foot, bicycle, and equestrian – are currently sharing many thousands of miles of recreational trails all over the country, and incidents of trail user collisions or injuries are extremely rare even though many, if not most, of those trails do not meet current trail design standards. Today, trail planners and builders take safety concerns very seriously and have designed trail guidelines to minimize such risks by providing adequate line of sight and by including features that slow the speeds of faster travelers.

Currently, the situation in Forest Park represents one of the worst possible scenarios for user safety. By concentrating virtually all bicycle use on relatively wide, heavily used fire lanes and access roads such as Leif Erikson Drive, park policy is maximizing the speed differential among bicycle and other visitors. Diffusing cyclists onto relatively narrow, slow, singletrack trails will reduce the chances of serious conflict as it does on other trail systems around the country.

Let's protect Forest Park's delicate ecology.

All human activity has some effect on wildlife. However, mountain bicycling has generally the same impacts on wildlife as hiking or trail running, both of which are currently allowed on all trails in the park. It's very unlikely that the addition of off-road cyclists would have any disproportionate impact.

Let's keep trail users where they belong.

Well-designed and well-signed crossings and trailheads will inform all trail users of any rules and restrictions. The best way to ensure trail user compliance with any restrictions is to provide adequate opportunities that meet trail user needs. Providing high quality trails that deliver the types of experiences trail users are looking for has been a primary technique for encouraging compliance since long before mountain bikes came along.

Let's prevent the creation of unauthorized trails.

Unauthorized trail building and off-trail travel have been a challenge for land managers for centuries. Over the past 100 years, Forest Park has been crisscrossed by casual, unauthorized paths created by foot travelers. As noted above, the single most effective tool for encouraging any trail user to remain on authorized routes is to have designated trails that provide the experience that visitors are seeking. Historically, Forest Park has failed almost entirely to provide any of the singletrack trail experience sought by mountain bike visitors. This has aggravated the problems of illegal trail use and unauthorized trail building. It's no different than in locations where foot travelers are denied access or the opportunity to enjoy the experiences they desire.

Let's think about rain.

Restricting or reducing trail use at times when trails may be particularly sensitive is a consistent challenge for land managers everywhere and applies to all trail users. Unfortunately, land management agencies often lack the resources and can't respond quickly enough to evaluate trail conditions and adjust trail signage or public communications on a daily, weekly or even monthly basis. Ultimately, land managers have had to rely heavily on trail users to regulate themselves. Thankfully, that mechanism has become stronger in recent years as social media has become a tool for spreading important news about trail conditions. Also, sustainable trail design goes a long way toward mitigating negative impacts from misuse.

Let's work together to design, build, maintain and manage the trails.

As is the case today, trail design, construction and management responsibility would rest ultimately with the city and the Parks and Recreation Bureau (PP&R). However, as has been demonstrated clearly in many other settings, the off-road cycling community could begin to significantly bolster the volunteer ranks that Forest Park depends on.

Let's honor and improve the Forest Park Natural Resources Management Plan (FPNRMP).

Off-road cycling is entirely consistent with the vision, mission and goals set forth in the FPNRMP. Forest Park was established as a place for ecological preservation and nature-based recreation for the residents of Portland. However, the 27-year-old FPNRMP contains a trail standard for "bicycle trails" that requires an 8 foot wide path with vegetation cleared to 12 feet. This archaic and uninformed standard is entirely out of step with virtually all modern trail design standards and does little more than aggravate issues of user safety and environmental impact. It is also in direct conflict with the city's other adopted trail standards that indicate a minimum 4 foot trail tread for shared use trails. And as discussed previously, both of those standards fail to meet current US Forest Service trail construction guidelines. It is up to the city to determine the best way to reconcile and update these conflicting guidelines.

Let's think beyond Forest Park

Currently, Portland mountain bikers who are looking for singletrack riding experiences typically travel an hour or more outside the Portland area to find suitable opportunities. For decades now, this has resulted in needless car trips with all the associated impacts on air, water, carbon emissions and roadway crowding. It has also taken potential economic revenues away from the Portland area.

In addition, agencies that manage lands elsewhere in the area, such as Metro, have moved forward to consider and develop bicycle-friendly trail plans on their properties. But the lack of opportunity in Forest Park has crippled efforts to plan for recreational coordination or connectivity.

March 16, 2017:

Please add the following-- *The Sauvie Island Community Association Resolution* -- to the public record of the Off Road Cycling Committee minutes for the meeting March 16, 2017.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Marcy Cottrell Houle



To: Mayor Ted Wheeler, Commissioners Nick Fish, Chloe Eudaly Amanda Fritz, Dan Saltzman and Mike Abbate, Director of Portland Parks

**Re: Sauvie Island Community Association-Support for the *Forest Park Management Plan*,
Ordinance 168509**

Forest Park is the nation's only designated urban wilderness environment. It is protected by environmental code and land use law, Ordinance 168509. This Ordinance states park goals, management, and technical standards.

Since Forest Park's creation in 1948, it has been managed with conservation of its natural features and safety for all users as top priorities. These goals are distinctly defined in the Ordinance (Pages 21 to 23):

Goal 1: Protect Flora, Wildlife and Habitat

Goal 2: Provide Opportunities for Passive Recreation- "Forms of recreation must be passive in nature"

Goal 3: Provide for Quiet, Reflective, Spiritual Experiences

Goal 6: Minimize User Conflict

Goal 7: Promote User Safety- "All users must feel safe when they use the Park"

Goal 9: Protect the System of Trails, Roads and Firelanes-"The system should be protected from unacceptable negative impacts by users."

As a result of this careful management, this 5,000-acre nature preserve now claims more native species than any other city park in the country. Further, scientists have determined that Forest Park has more "interior forest habitat" than any other city park in the nation. *"No other urban park in the United States offers anything comparable in quantity and quality"* (Ordinance, Page 101).

To protect these unique features, the Ordinance is clear: recreational use must not degrade natural resources. As well, forms of recreation must not threaten the safety of park users, 90% who are pedestrians, including up to 50,000 children who visit the park annually.

It is our understanding that currently there are plans being undertaken by the Bureau of Planning and Sustainability to recommend building new trails in Forest Park for the active sport of single-track biking and/or to convert existing pedestrian-only trails to allow this new use. While there are already 30 miles of trails open to cyclists in Forest Park, comprising 1/3 of all pathways in the park, they are only permitted, by law, on paths 8 feet wide, due to the twisting trails and short sight lines in Forest Park. In contrast, the definition of single-track cycling is that it occurs on trails 18 inches to 3 feet wide.

The Sauvie Island Community Association wishes to go on record to oppose any activities that are inconsistent with the goals and objectives of Ordinance 168509 and are thereby unlawful. SICA supports efforts to uphold the law to not allow single-track cycling in Forest Park. We stand with similar position statements opposing single-track cycling in Forest Park presented to you by the Portland Garden Club, the Medical Society of Metropolitan Portland, the City Club of Portland, the Federation of Western Outdoor Clubs, and neighborhood groups. **Actions that threaten user safety or degrade the ecological health of Forest Park, as well as being unlawful, must be prohibited.**

SICA Resolution, approved February 7, 2017. Board of Directors: Grey Horton, Kathryn Hathaway, Sandra Kruger, John Houle, Jaquelyn Petersen, Hannah Treuhaft, Linda Klarquist, Kerri-Lynn Morris

Safety Implications of the 8 Foot Width Guideline for Shared Foot & Bicycle Trails as Defined in the 1995 Forest Park Natural Resources Management Plan

In the 1995 Forest Park Management plan on page 174 it states the following requirements for bicycle trails within Forest Park:

- Trail surface – hard packed dirt or gravel
- Width – minimum 2.4 meters (8ft)
- Clear trail of vegetation to a width of 3.7 meters (12ft) and a height of 3.4 meters (11ft)
- Signs – install “no bike” signs on the pedestrian trails where bike and pedestrian trails cross

Below are other statements regarding biking and trails within the 1995 Forest Park Management Plan. These references will be important for later discussions, so they have been listed in their entirety.

Pg 21

Goal 2: Provide Opportunities for Passive Recreation

Forest Park should offer the citizens of Portland opportunities for outdoor recreation in keeping with the Park’s resource values. Forms of recreation must be appropriate for Forest Park and must be passive in nature. Examples of passive recreation include walking, running, bicycling, riding horses, walking with pets, and observing fauna, flora, and other natural history features. Opportunities should be created for these activities which implies the need for appropriate facilities as well as controls on the level and location of the allowed uses.

Pg 74

As a result of the popularity of mountain biking in the 1980s, many fire lanes in the park have been opened up for cyclists. Since 1986 when cycling was allowed only on Leif Erikson, Springville and Saltzman, the number of miles of track available to cyclists have gone from 15.15 to 25.86 and proposed to increase to 29.23 when projects identified in NRMP are completed... Because of the various needs of the recreational trail users, it is necessary to restrict some trails to single uses only. Other trails are wide enough and have adequate site distance for all users to share the trail.

Pg 75

Bikes Allowed

Mountain bikers are allowed on most fire lanes where there is sufficient sight distance for safety of other trail users. One-way bike traffic is allowed on Holman Lane; cyclists are allowed to go up only. Many trail loops are available for cyclists.

Pg 78

In recent years, increased use of the park has resulted in some conflicts between user groups. The Forest Park Trails Policy Task Force (August 1992) was convened to examine the bicycle/pedestrian and other user conflict issues on Forest Park trail, firelanes and roads, and develop policy recommendation for Parks and Recreation...Biking: In the 1980s, recreational use increased again because of the development and subsequent popularity of the mountain bike. The use causes conflicts in certain areas with pedestrian and equestrian use in the park.

Pg 107

Manage Trail Systems (Plan trails with least impact)

1. Apply ecological management principles to construction and maintenance of trails.
2. Plan future trail extensions which result in least possible impact to sensitive habitat areas and watershed resources.
3. Remove or relocate trails which lead users into sensitive resource areas.
4. Connect park trails to regional trails in area.

Pg 175

See above

Pg 178

Recreation Trail Projects

Goal:

Accommodate recreation trail activities while causing little or no impact on the park's natural resources.

Objectives:

Provide additional foot trail connections between neighborhoods and park; provide more recreational trails within the park; provide connections between park trails and other regional trail systems outside the park.

Recommendations:

Construct new, extend and improve existing foot, bike and horse trails where desirable; remove unused trails; provide connections to nearby regional trail; construct new connections between existing trails to extend usefulness of trails.

Discussion:

The primary recreation use of Forest Park is trail use of various kinds. Use is heavy in some areas now and demand is expected to increase in the future. Foot and bike trails use in particular will increase. Most existing trails are in good condition but there is room for many improvements and additions to accommodate present and future levels of use. Regional trails exist or are being planned near the park. Additional connections and extensions will make the existing system more usable now and in the future.

Maintenance activities and minor improvements will continue as at present. These consist of drainage, grade and surfacing corrections which may impact small trail segments.

Alternatives:

If no action is taken, use will still continue to grow and trails will become crowded and overused. Recreational experiences will be less pleasant and natural resources will be impacted.

It's clear from these references that the subject of trails and mountain biking was important to those that worked on the 1995 Forest Park Management Plan. It's also of note that many of the public statements made by members of the community and even agency personnel regarding what the 1995 Forest Park Management Plan "says" about mountain biking and trails are not borne out by the document itself.

First, the idea of mountain biking within Forest Park is not new. As pg. 78 notes, mountain biking has occurred in Forest Park since the 1980s. It also notes that in 1992, three years prior to this document, it was enough of a concern that a committee was formed to examine the issue. On pg. 75 mountain biking is expressly called out as an acceptable use.

Second, as pg. 21 clearly notes, bicycling is considered "passive use" by the City of Portland. This is in line with other cities across the United States that have mountain biking as an acceptable use in their respective parks. Therefore, Portland's definition of mountain biking as a passive use is not unusual.

These first two points are important. In recent years, individuals and groups within Portland have attempted to suggest that mountain biking is actually a new sport and they have attempted to label it as an "active" use. Unfortunately, these false narratives have gained ground within certain quarters of the Portland public. The problem with these false beliefs is that they muddy the water as to what is (currently) considered acceptable in Forest Park and what (potentially) could be considered acceptable. Having a discussion about what could happen in the future is therefore harder, as time is spent referring back to the Management Plan to disprove some statements.

Who will lose?

Pedestrians will lose. Studies show that 425,000 visitors (90% of all users) walk the trails of Forest Park every year. Children will also lose. Right now, up to 100,000 children walk with their parents on the trails each year. Currently, the law currently protects pedestrians. It specifies that all trails shared with bikes must be 8 feet wide, hard packed, and have good line of sight for safety. All bike trails are shared.

Pedestrians will not feel safe, or be safe, if high-speed, single-track cycling is allowed to occur on pedestrian-only trails in Forest Park, such as Wildwood or Maple Trails.

What's more, Forest Park currently already provides generously for cyclists. While they make up only 8% of park users, they have access to 30 miles of trails, or 30% of all park trails.

But how can the City change what is land use law?

With ease, apparently. Officials with the Bureau of Planning and Sustainability have said that the City Council "will just change the law."

What can we do to save Forest Park?

- We need to get 10,000 letters to City Hall, voicing our concerns.
- We need to tell officials that we want the Forest Park Management Plan, and the law, upheld.
- We need to tell officials they must look at other places in the region to accommodate this active new sport, and not in Forest Park.
- We need to fill out the City's "Off Road Cycling Questionnaire" at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/offroadcycling>. In the comment section, ask that new single track cycling be directed to other city parks, not Forest Park.

Figure 1- A screen capture of an email from a group calling themselves "Friends for Forest Park", headed by Marcy Houle and Dr. Catherine Thompson, falsely claiming mountain biking is a new and active use

Other items of note are that per pg. 178 there was a series of trails to be added to the trail system as it notes, "there is room for many improvements and additions to accommodate present and future levels

of use". Also per pg. 107 those trails should be built and maintained in the most ecological manner possible.

This brings us to the actual width and characteristics of the trails mountain biking is to be allowed on or constructed for. Per pg. 174 they must be 8' wide and hard-packed, if not mildly impervious. It's mostly on this that much of the current controversy has erupted. Some of claimed that any width measurement other than 8' would be unsafe for hikers and their interaction with mountain bikers. Others have claimed it's an archaic measurement, borne out of animus, that needs to be changed.

The rest of the discussion will focus on the safety aspects of the 8' trail requirements of the 1995 Forest Park Management plan and use historical and modern references to discuss the 1995 Forest Park Management Plan as it concerns the safety for all users, whether on bicycle, foot or hoof.

Historical Background

As mentioned on pg. 78, the "Forest Park Trails Policy Task Force (August 1992) was convened to examine the bicycle/pedestrian and other user conflict issues on Forest Park trail, firelanes and roads, and develop a policy recommendation for Parks and Recreation". It's also worth noting that any time mountain biking is mentioned in the document directly, statements about user interactions or safety are almost always mentioned. As pg. 74 says, "...it is necessary to restrict some trails to single uses only. Other trails are wide enough and have adequate site distance for all users to share the trail". Again, on pg. 75, "Mountain bikers are allowed on most fire lanes where there is sufficient sight distance for safety of other trail users". Given these references, it's obvious that the safety of users was paramount in the 1995 Forest Park Management Plan.

Understanding the context of that decision of the past can better illuminate whether that decision is still a workable one today.

As mountain biking exploded onto the scene after the introduction of the first mass-produced mountain bikes in 1981, cyclists ran smack into the realities of putting new uses on lands - and land managers - that were not prepared. The result was a wave of bans on mountain biking in various locations across the country. These bans were largely based around the impacts to the trail tread (sustainable trail construction methods had not been developed), the difficulty in management (advocacy and management methods had not been developed) and on negative user interactions. Some other trail users might easily be startled by a presence or movement they hadn't anticipated and, at the time, mountain biking certainly fit that bill. It didn't help that many recreational trails across the United States started out as First Peoples pathways, game trails or other unplanned routes and often tended to be fall line (straight up or down a hillside), thereby increasing the speed of bicycles.

Advocacy for mountain biking was in it's infancy. The International Mountain Biking Association (IMBA) was formed in. Even though this formation happened seven (7) years before the 1995 Forest Park Management Plan, IMBA had not yet begun to do real advocacy work. That didn't occur until January 1995. Trail construction and maintenance methodologies weren't taught until 1997 with the introduction of IMBA's Trail Care Crew, which, today, has trained countless professional land managers and volunteers worldwide. Yet modern trail construction methods weren't truly codified until 2004 with the release of Trail Solutions: A Guide to Building Sweet Singletrack. It wasn't until 2007, when the United States Forest

Service adopted IMBA's trail building guidelines for all natural surface trails, that these methods saw a nation-wide exposure.

The 1995 Forest Park Management Plan didn't ban mountain biking, though it did limit its use to the aforementioned 8' trails. It also directed the Parks & Recreation department to create new trails expressly for that use. Given the known factors at the time, it's questionable if reasonable people would have come to different conclusions. There was little or no mountain bike advocacy at the time and real work had not yet begun on trail design and maintenance guidelines for mountain bike use. So it seems unlikely that any other trail width standards or concepts would have even been on the radar, let alone considered. Therefore, the belief that the 8' trail width requirement was intended to prevent mountain biking in Forest Park seems unsupportable.

Recent History and the Question of Safety

22 years have passed since the 1995 Forest Park Management Plan was adopted. The question we are left with is a simple one: are 8' wide trails safer than narrower trails?

There are those in Portland that believe so. In 2010, when another process was ongoing within Portland regarding mountain biking, the 2010 Forest Park Single Track Advisory Committee Report, several groups argued that 8' trails were safer.

Those groups included the The Mazamas, the Metropolitan Medical Society of Portland, the Portland Academy of Pediatrics and the Trails Club of Oregon. It should be noted, for transparency, that two of those organizations have ties to Dr. Catherine Thompson, member of the Friends for Forest Park group mentioned earlier who falsely suggested that mountain biking was an active use and a new one to Forest Park.

In 2010, the Metropolitan Medical Society of Portland placed an opinion piece in the Oregonian (http://www.oregonlive.com/opinion/index.ssf/2010/06/in_forest_park_biking_and_hiki.html) that read (in part):

"Single-track mountain biking is often done on trails 3 to 4 feet wide. The current city ordinance pertaining to Forest Park allows cyclists to share a trail with hikers only if it is at least 8 feet wide. Due to the twisting trails and uneven terrain in the park, the sight lines are often short. It seems unreasonable to expect vigorous, exuberant riders to cautiously approach every blind corner or bump. What kind of fun would that be? Because bicycles and hikers are relatively quiet, one can envision many sudden, unexpected encounters, which would be particularly hazardous for young children and the elderly. A stark demonstration of this was the death of a woman hiker during the month of April in Renton, Wash., when she collided with a cyclist on a shared trail.

"...The international experience with 'multi-use trails' to be shared by pedestrians, equestrians and cyclists has been that the horseback riders and hikers avoid the trails used by the bicycle riders. It's easy to imagine why. Even for the most nimble, it would hardly be relaxing to remain vigilant about what may be coming around the next bend. For the elderly or families with young children it would be especially dangerous. Allowing bicycles on the narrow hiking trails of Forest Park would discourage pedestrian use of these trails and would be counter to our efforts to encourage exercise."

Unfortunately, it appears the letters from The Mazamas, the Portland Academy of Pediatrics or from Trails Club of Oregon are not available online. However, it's likely those letters would follow the same reasoning as the Metropolitan Medical Society of Portland.

Let's unpack some of the claims of the Metropolitan Medical Society of Portland and see what we can learn.

First is the death of a woman in Renton, Washington. This person's name was Velda K. Mapelli, age 83. According to the Renton Reporter (<http://www.rentonreporter.com/news/elderly-renton-woman-hit-by-bike-rider-on-cedar-river-trail-identified/>), the paper of record for Renton, Washington she suffered the following injuries:

"Velda K. Mapelli's death was ruled an accident by the King County Medical Examiner's Office.

"She suffered fractures of her skull, clavicle, ribs and pelvis, according to the medical examiner, and had blunt force trauma to her head and torso.

"Mapelli was taken to Harborview Medical Center in critical condition, where she was in the intensive-care unit. Her family reported to Renton Police that she died at about 11:30 a.m. Monday."

How did this accident occur? As the Renton Reporter describes it:

"She was walking east on the popular trail along the Cedar River about a quarter-mile from Interstate 405 at about 4:50 p.m. when she was hit by a bike rider and fell to the ground. The accident happened near the Cedar River Dog Park.

"...According to police, as the bicycles began to pass her on the left, Mapelli stepped in front of them and was struck.

"Cline said it's not known how fast the two bike riders were traveling. The speed limit for bike riders on the trail is 15 mph. They are required to yield to walkers and pass on the left, according to the etiquette rules posted on a kiosk near the trail's entrance."

Another incident that is often used to suggest that mountain bikers and hikers can't share trails successfully is an incident that occurred in Marin County, California. In that incident Ms. Lisa Zeppegno, age 44, was severely injured after being thrown from her horse as it was spooked by two juveniles on bikes that sped down the closed (to bicycles) trail that she and another friend and their horses were on. As the Mercury News (<http://www.mercurynews.com/2013/06/22/oakland-horse-riders-thrown-injured-after-run-in-with-illegal-marin-mountain-bikers/>) reported the incident:

"Zeppegno said the mountain bikers came around a blind corner, terrifying the animals. Both women were bucked off their horses, and Zeppegno's horse, Coco, ran away.

"Zeppegno said the cyclists, who appeared to be 12 to 14 years old, did not stick around.

" 'Nicole was screaming at them and begging them to stay because we needed help, and they just left,' she said.

"Devito, who was not injured as badly as her friend, was able to get reception on her cellphone and called for assistance.

Novato paramedics responded on a fire road, but the area was so remote they had to climb down more than a mile to reach the women, said Novato fire Capt. Dmitri Menzel.”

In some ways, this is a far more troubling incident than Ms. Mapelli’s death. It involves juveniles, illegal riding and the (potential) for a greater loss of life, two individuals and their horses.

Case closed then, right? We have two examples of hiker & biker negative interactions and should we continue to examine this issue, we would find similar circumstances.

Well, no. If you actually examine the circumstances of these (and like) incidents, a pattern starts to emerge. A pattern that dismantles the entire arguments of groups like the Metropolitan Medical Society of Portland and Friends for Forest Park. This pattern also suggests that the 8’ wide trails as spelled out in the 1995 Forest Park Management Plan are actually less safe than other types of trails.

Comparing Apples to Apples

The problem with these two examples used by these groups and individuals is that they are being portrayed as circumstances that occur on narrow shared trails. That is just untrue.

The Cedar River Trail, for instance is a fairly low-grade (shallow ups and downs) trail. In fact, it’s one of

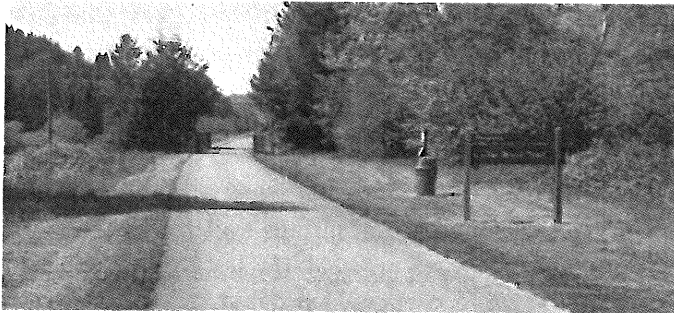


Figure 2- Cedar River Trail, not far from where Ms. Mapelli was killed in a pedestrian & bicycle collision

many rails-to-trails type trails across the country. It has a smooth surface (paved or crushed limestone), great sightlines and does not have steep sections that one might associate with high speeds (see: [https://www.traillink.com/trail/cedar-river-trail-\(wa\)/](https://www.traillink.com/trail/cedar-river-trail-(wa)/)) This type of trail would be similar to the Springwater Corridor in Portland. It is not a narrow, shared trail traversing the woods as the Metropolitan Medical Society of Portland would have you believe.

The incident in Marin County, California at Marin County Open Space’s Indian Tree Preserve (See: <http://www.marincountyparks.org/depts/pk/divisions/open-space/indian-tree>) occurred on a trail called the Big Trees Trail, a trail that runs along a ridgeline and into a valley. It varies in width, from about 5’

wide in most of the forested area to nearly 7’ on the grassy ridgeline. The lower sections would most approximate Forest Park as far as experience, save for the width of the trail, which is more similar to Fire Lane 5 and, at the top of the ridgeline, closer to Leif Erickson Road. Again, this trail is not a narrow (<48”) trail that is supposedly so unsafe, but a wider trail, approaching the width mentioned in the 1995 Forest Park Management Plan. This incident does involve “mountain bikers” and they were riding illegally. There is no way to



Figure 3- Big Trees Trail, location indeterminate to the incident in juring Ms. Zepegno; please note the redwood to the right, the trunk is over 48” is width

excuse that. However, the 1995 Forest Park Management Plan and other entities have focused on the width of trail being the determining factor in safety, not any other metric.

Doing research regarding pedestrian and bicyclist collisions points to a plethora of examples of exactly the type of trail width specified in the 1995 Forest Park Management Plan. Time and time again (See: <http://www.dallasnews.com/news/news/2011/03/08/details-emerge-about-joggers-death-on-dallas-katy-trail->) hikers, joggers or pedestrians are injured or killed in collisions with bicyclists on exactly these type of trails: wide (8') multi-use trails. The number of injuries and deaths are so high on these types of trails that some have suggested real change is needed. The Grist published an article (See: <http://grist.org/article/2010-11-07-we-need-real-bike-paths-for-real-bike-transportaiton/>) in response to the death of Lauren Huddleston, age 28, on the Katy Trail in Dallas:

“It should be no surprise that these [multi-use] paths see a high collision and injury rate. A 2009 literature review of traffic safety studies looked at bicycle crashes and discovered that multi-use paths are more dangerous to ride on than even major roads.”

This is where we need to compare apples to apples and let the facts, not emotions, guide us.

When talking about the death Ms. Mapelli or Ms. Huddleston or injury of Ms. Zeppegno we have to be very clear what type of trail they were on and what the circumstances were. We have to do this because the Metropolitan Medical Society of Portland made a very deliberate choice in 2010 to suggest that death of Ms. Mapelli occurred on a narrow trail. They used that death to show just how dangerous narrow trails are supposed to be.

But when we do research on these trails, we find that they are not narrow trails. They are trails in parks, through rail corridors and the countryside that have widths equal to, or nearly equal to, the 1995 Forest Park Management plan, but without the differences in elevation a natural surface trail in a park with lots of topography would have. In other words, these trails are the very opposite of the trails they were made out to be. Whether this is a failure of the Metropolitan Medical Society of Portland in researching the subject properly or an intentional falsehood designed to mislead the public, it's hard to say. But what can be said is that these wide trails are injuring or killing pedestrians at an alarming rate.

If these wide, relatively flat trails are injuring or killing pedestrians at relatively high rates, then certainly, narrow shared trails through the woods with all the undulations of the ground must be murder corridors, right?

If that is the case, there is dearth of evidence for it. Based on internet newspaper search engines (Google News Archive, Elephind.com), as of March 4th, 2017, there have been no newspaper articles regarding hiker and biker collisions or accidents on narrow trails in the last five years.¹ It's certainly possible that there have been unreported incidents involving narrow trails, but given the vast numbers of trail user encounters all across the country, and noting the vigilance with which anti-bicycle activists have been

¹ There are two incidents that, without further research, some might use to attempt to prove otherwise. One is an assault on a hiker in Marin, CA. (See: <http://www.marinij.com/article/NO/20150307/NEWS/150309851>) In this instance a dispute over right-of-way (and bad manners on everyone's part) led to an on-trail assault. The second is the injuring of Ernest Kuepper on the Castor Cutoff Trail at Lair of the Bear Park. (See: <http://denver.cbslocal.com/2016/09/23/cyclist-could-face-serious-charges-if-caught-after-trail-hit-run/>) Castor Cutoff Trail is a wide, though natural surface trail, being 8' wide with good sightlines. Please refer to link above to see a video of this trail.

soliciting, amplifying and repeating any negative encounters over the past several decades, one would think that the internet would be awash in well-documented cases of collisions and injuries. Yet the opposite is true. Perhaps even more remarkable is the fact that bicycle on bicycle collisions and injuries are also absent. If relatively fast moving bicycles are a hazard to relatively slow moving pedestrians, then surely cyclists must routinely be plowing into each other on narrow trails with devastating results. Their combined closing speeds would be much greater than a hiker and mountain biker. Again, there are no available references to these types of collisions.

It's not as if there is a lack of available urban mountain trails that include hikers and mountain bikers. Currently in the United States there are nearly 2,000 miles of urban mountain biking trails, 99% of which are shared by hikers and mountain bikers. These trails are located in cities as diverse as one can imagine, some with relatively little topographic relief compared to Portland (See: <http://www.desmoinesregister.com/story/life/2016/05/13/decorahs-hills-promise-glory-off-road-riders/84298166/>) or in areas that are mountainous and have similar relief to Portland. (See: <http://dirtragemag.com/featured-ride-knoxville-urban-wilderness-south-loop-tennessee/>).

For emphasis, if narrow trail (singletrack) riding on shared trails is so dangerous, then where are the reams of stories about hikers being injured or killed by mountain bikers? Remember, the Metropolitan Medical Society of Portland said in their op-ed, "...For the elderly or families with young children it would be especially dangerous." Others have claimed the same. Claims need evidence to be true.

Again, we need to compare apples to apples.

We have a type of trail that is supposed to be the safest possible for hikers when sharing with mountain bikers. Yet, trails of that width with that type of shared use are the types of trails we can find multiple verifiable accounts of injuries or deaths. We also have a type of trail that is supposed to be least safe, dangerous, in fact, and yet we can find no verifiable accounts of injuries or deaths.

Let's go back to the incidents that we discussed above. What if those incidents are highlighting the true problem with wide trails? What if the very feature of these trails (their width) that some claim make them safer, actually do the opposite? And what if we could prove the conditions for unsafe trails already exist in Portland and Forest Park?

Speed Kills

Remember, these incidents in Renton and Marin were as wide or nearly as wide as those called out in the 1995 Forest Park Management Plan. But they would not have the grades a trail in Forest Park would. So it's likely that any trail built to the current standard would have grades steeper than the trails that these deaths occurred on. That is an important thing to keep in mind.

What exactly is injuring or killing individuals in these collisions? The short answer is blunt force trauma, usually to the head, that is causing massive injuries to the brain and the nervous system. But how can this type of impact cause that kind blunt force trauma? The answer is kinetic energy.

In all these incidents, the cyclists accelerated to a speed that provided their mass, which was relatively similar to the pedestrian's, with more energy. When the collision happened their mass delivered more energy to the hiker and, again due to their speed, delivered it in a relatively short amount of time. The kinetic energy delivered to the pedestrian was enough to throw the pedestrian with sufficient force that, upon hitting the ground, blunt force trauma occurs.

The higher the speeds, the longer distance a rider would travel before reactions (braking, for instance) could take place. The average human reaction time to visual stimuli is approximately 0.19 seconds. Using that average, a cyclist traveling at 18mph (29km) would cover a distance of 1.52 meters in that time, a cyclist traveling at 7mph (11km) would cover a distance of 0.58 meters. Using the online cycling braking distance calculator (See: <http://www.exploratorium.edu/cycling/brakes2.html>) the distance to stop a bicycle travelling 18mph on dry concrete is 3.74 meters. The braking distance to stop a bicycle travelling 7mph is 0.56 meters. Assuming that for a variety of factors that these totals are 150% greater than what we calculated above, that gives us a stopping distance of 25.87 feet and 5.61 feet respectively.

The Implications of this math exercise explain how cyclists in the circumstances discussed above were able to injure or kill a pedestrian. Those cyclists were travelling at speeds that imparted them with the kinetic energy of a rifle bullet but then decreased the distance they had to react while increasing the total length to stop.

Don't these numbers back up the claim by these groups that trails need to be wide to be safe? They would, if it wasn't for one simple fact: wider trails are faster trails.

Humans have innate levels of comfort borne from our ancestor's experiences. If you are walking across the plains of Africa and you are in an area where you can see for some distance, where any predator or threat can be identified easily, there is no reason to be cautious and you can relax. However, if you are in a deep forest, where a jaguar could jump out of the underbrush and eat your throat, there are plenty of reasons to go slow and be cautious. This innate mechanism explains why driving 65 mph across Nebraska feels so slow and doing 10mph through a parking lot during holiday shopping season feels too fast. Your brain is reacting to the amount of items in your field of vision and deciding if the speed you are traveling is appropriate for that situation based on what could "jump out" at you.

Starting in the 1950's road engineers began to widen accepted widths of road lanes to prevent accidents occurring from lane drifting. Seeing that this reduced one type of accident, it was immediately made the standard for all roads, including those in cities. However, over time it was realized that while it reduced one kind of accident it increased accidents and fatalities involving pedestrians and bicyclists. Why? Because the wide road was tricking drivers' brains into a false sense of safety and they were speeding or not paying close attention or both. Not only did they not have the time or distance to react to human interaction, the increase in speed meant the kinetic energy of the cars were much higher at impact. Slowly but surely, road engineers are understanding the problem and beginning to create narrow, highly chaotic streets in urban areas that make drivers go slower by feeding into that innate sense of a fear of something "jumping out" at them. (See: <http://www.urbancincy.com/2014/07/how-to-reimagine-our-streets-around-the-concept-of-shared-space/>)

This is true of trails too. Up until a few years ago, that statement would be almost complete conjecture. However, with the introduction of Strava and similar services we now have GPS tracked speeds for any number of recreational uses. What is the result? When it comes to bicycles, we see the same relationship between width of trail and speed.

Let's use these tools to examine the speeds of trails, both those similar to the requirements of the 1995 Forest Park Management Plan and those that are the supposedly "unsafe" narrow trails. Here are some examples, starting with a largely gravel roadway and a firelane that pass through Forest Park, both

qualifying as so-called “safe” shared trails as defined in the 1995 Forest Park Master Plan and by groups like Metropolitan Medical Society of Portland and Friends for Forest Park.

Rank	Name	Date	Speed
1	 Marek Litinsky	Oct 9 2015	24.0mi/h
2	Enk Voldengen	Sep 19 2013	22.8mi/h
3	Paul Diefenbaugh	May 26 2015	22.6mi/h
3	Martin Baker	Aug 9 2016	22.6mi/h
5	Craig A	Aug 25 2015	22.5mi/h

Figure 5- Strava segment of Saltzman Road from Skyline to Leif Erikson

Rank	Name	Date	Speed
1	 Andrio Abero	Jun 18 2015	23.7mi/h
2	Mitch Trux	Feb 20 2015	23.6mi/h
3	Tom Scates	May 5 2016	22.8mi/h
4	Paul Diefenbaugh	May 5 2013	21.4mi/h
4	Adrian Bennett	Sep 14 2015	21.4mi/h
6	Christian Reed	May 26 2015	21.3mi/h

Figure 4- Strava segment Firelane 1 Descent

Both routes are downhill, and both have similar topography. And both have top speeds of the five (5) fastest riders within 1 mph of each other. In either case, these cyclists colliding with a pedestrian would result in severe injury or death of the pedestrian.

What about singletrack? What speeds are riders obtaining on local singletrack trails?

Rank	Name	Date	Speed
1	 Jacob Flinn	Jul 14 2016	13.8mi/h
2	Eric H	Jun 12 2016	13.4mi/h
3	Tom Scates	May 31 2016	10.4mi/h
4	jess palacios	May 28 2012	13.2mi/h
5	John Frey	Mar 23 2014	13.1mi/h

Figure 6- Strava segment Hide and Seek DH (full)

So here on a singletrack downhill, a type of trail known as a gravity flow trail, designed for high speed mountain bike use with bermed turns, the fastest speed (so far) on the trail was a **third less** that is currently being obtained on the supposedly safer fire lanes within Forest Park. It’s worth noting here that the elevation drop and length of Hide and Seek compared to Firelane is about 3:1, meaning Hide and Seek is over 3 times as long with 3 times the vertical drop. So even with 3 times the length and 3 times the vertical drop, its 2/3 as fast.

As noted above, the trail Hide and Seek is designed to allow these types of speeds and is likely not the type of trail that would fit the character of Forest Park. However, it's starting to be clear that the biggest determining factor in hiker and biker safety, speed, is actually lower on the supposedly unsafe and dangerous singletrack and higher on supposedly safer wider trails.

But what about really narrow trails as part of an urban mountain biking system? What are the speeds there?

Rank	Name	Date	Speed
	 Jason Colestock	Sep 29 2015	9.2mi/h
2	Owen Thoele	Jun 2 2015	9.1mi/h
3	Jesse LaLonde	Jul 24 2014	9.0mi/h
4	Matt Dowling	Oct 7 2015	8.9mi/h
5	John Wessling	Aug 27 2015	8.8mi/h

Figure 7-Strava segment Theo North Loop

This is the North Loop at Theodore-Wirth Park in Minneapolis, MN. Notice that the fastest rider ever on this trail never exceed a 10mph average. This location was not chosen at random. It was chosen for four (4) reasons:

1. Minnesota is a leader in urban mountain biking with the largest mileage of any state.
2. This trail is an extremely narrow shared trail, being 36" wide at its maximum, with narrower sections.
3. This trail was featured in a New York Times article about urban mountain biking. (See: <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/04/27/travel/escapes/27adventurer.html>)
4. This trail is adjacent to downtown Minneapolis, MN and has high use rates.

This trail has some important items to note. It's a shared use trail and is located between the main northerly parking lot and the Quaking Bog, a popular site for hikers. During its 12 years of use it has never had a hiker/biker collision.

While it does not have the vertical drop that any of the trails and roads featured above do, even if it had that vertical drop, it's unlikely the top speeds on that trail would actually be higher (explained below).

The fact is that there are urban mountain bike trails in other locations with speeds as high as Firelane 1. It would be dishonest to suggest otherwise. However, those are special trails used expressly for a more downhill or freeride experience, not trails through an urban wilderness such as Forest Park.

We also have to be careful not to suggest these numbers discount the need for all types of mountain biking and hiking experiences, including wide (8') trails. To read into this discussion that wide trails are always bad and narrow trails are always good would be learning the wrong lessons.

But, this disconnect between the speeds of narrow trails and wide trails explains why we don't find incidents of bike/hiker collisions on these narrow trails. Due to the lower speeds, about 7mph on average, cyclists generally have more than enough time to react to the presence of a hiker on the trail. Even with relatively short sight-distances, the relatively slow speeds of bicycles on narrow, well designed trails would be enough for one or both parties to react to the presence of the other.

So what is it that we have learned?

- a. We learned that the examples of supposed "proof" that narrow shared use trails with hikers and mountain bikers on them are unsafe actually have little to nothing in common with the narrow trails that they are supposed to represent.
- b. We have learned that, in fact, these trails where injuries and accidents have occurred are closer in width to the trail dimensions called for in the 1995 Forest Park Management Plan.
- c. We have learned that an increase of speeds also increases kinetic energy of cyclists, making it more likely that if any collision occurs, the hiker will be injured or killed.
- d. We have learned that an increase of speeds reduces the time cyclists will have to react and also increases the stopping distance of cyclists.
- e. We learned that in the Portland area, the supposedly safer trails that follow the guidelines of the 1995 Forest Park Management Plan have almost a third more speed than singletrack mountain bike trails at Sandy Ridge, specifically, the fastest trail there, that was designed for high speed.
- f. We learned that other urban mountain biking trails in other cities have speeds that are even lower, are much narrower than the 1995 Forest Park Management Plan would allow and, yet, have perfect safety records.

If all these things are true, then what can we learn from other cities that have lots of urban mountain biking in a multitude of systems? What can we learn about their trails? How do they create safe and serene trails for their users? What can we learn from their management?

Rank	Name	Date	Speed
1	 Thor Shellum	Aug 2 2013	25.6mph
2	Trevor Crawford	Jul 3 2016	18.2mph
3	Jake Richards	Aug 16 2014	17.7mph
3	Spencer Johnson	Jul 17 2015	17.7mph
3	Max Fierek	Jul 3 2016	17.7mph
3	Peter Gustafson	Jul 8 2016	17.7mph

Figure 8-Strava segment Smorgasbord on a Diet, a downhill/freeride trail at Spirit Mountain in Duluth, MN

Learn from Others for Ourselves

There are only a few metropolitan cities in the United States with truly large shared trail systems. That said, there are many extensive recreational trail systems involving a wide range of dedicated- and shared-use trails that may not be administered by cities themselves but are nonetheless located in very close proximity to major urban centers. Here, however, we will focus on some of the major metropolitan trail systems such as:

- Minneapolis/St. Paul Metro, Minnesota - 116 miles of trails
- Duluth, Minnesota – 85 miles of trails (current, to be 103 by 2018)
- Kansas City Metro, Kansas & Missouri – 94 miles of trails (another 10 miles in county land adjacent to the municipal boundary)
- Knoxville, Tennessee – 42 miles of trails
- Bentonville, Arkansas – 28 miles (another 57 connected by a multi-use trail from downtown)
- Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania – 32 miles (another 60 connected by multi-use trail from downtown)

Every one of these cities and locations evolved differently to their own unique circumstances. But slowly, they came to similar conclusions on trail construction, management and sharing.



Figure 9- Typical trail transfer & entrance signage at Knoxville's Urban Wilderness

First, except for the oldest trails in these systems (those that pre-date 2004), all these trails were built to the most modern trails standards available at the time. For the vast majority, that was International Mountain Bicycling Association 2004/United States Forest Service 2007. Some augmented those guidelines with lessons learned from experiences and to meet the unique requirements of their weather and soils. But they all follow this standard for new trails as it is the best guideline to create truly sustainable trails.

Second, on some level these trails use methods to manage how users on those trails interact. That can be as simple as limiting entrances and exits, making the trails one-way or creating clear signage at regular intervals along the trail. Or, all of the above. Some are more rigid than others. Minnesota, for instance, uses one of the most rigid management methods in the country, with defined usage patterns tied to on-trail infrastructure. The basic idea of one or all of these methods is to limit the interactions on the trail to a known set of expectations. That way, on a given trail, hikers know that bikes will always be approaching from the rear, as an example. Many cities back this up with integrated foot, bike and horse patrols that reinforce the user management techniques by being on-trail ambassadors, there to remind, encourage and explain trail etiquette to trail users.

Third, these areas work with mountain bikers, hikers and equestrians in an atmosphere of respect. They don't work against any legitimate trail user group. Also, those cities directly or indirectly ensure that parts

of the governmental structure of the city, from departments within the city to neighborhood associations and volunteer groups, have the same level of respect. These user groups don't get off scot-free, however. They often have Memorandums of Understanding or other methods of user group to city interface that makes them responsible for meeting safety and environmental goals or making sure the concerns of one user group are respected and agreed upon solutions are found.

Fourth, over time, these locations have learned how to build mountain bike trails to fit into their respective locations and situations. Previously, the example of the North Loop Trail at Theodore-Wirth Park in Minneapolis, MN was used. The fact is, that trail is built to fit that location and built to have those user speeds. Even if that trail was given the same vertical descent as Hide and Seek at Sandy Ridge, the resulting speeds would not be that much higher than they are currently. Why? Because the trail is built with choke points, areas of rough surface and highly sinuous turns. This basically "dials in" the speed the trail has now. In many points along the trail it would be impossible to go faster because the trail just won't allow it. All this was done intentionally to make the trail as safe as it could be.

These are all lessons Portland could learn and use on any potential trails at Forest Park. While there is some question of whether the government or citizens of Portland have the required humility to learn these lessons from other cities, at the end of the day they will have to learn them, if only from their own failures and successes.

In Conclusion

In the final analysis, what is the answer to the question asked at the outset: Are 8' wide trails safer than narrower trails?

The answer is a resounding no. Wide trails create higher speeds than narrow trails. Those speeds reduce the likelihood of swift reaction by increasing the distance traveled before action is taken. Those speeds increase the potential stopping distance of bikes to what may be considered a dangerous length. Those speeds are less safe.

The fact of the matter is narrow trails (a maximum of 48", though narrower trails further reduce speeds, sub-42" trails appear to be the norm in other urban trail systems) are slower trails. In lowering the speeds, they reduce kinetic energy, maximize swift reactions and shorten stopping distances.

It doesn't mean that narrow trails are a universal solution in all circumstances. Nor should wide trails be forbidden. However, the claim was that wide trails are safer trails and narrow trails are less safe. As we have seen above, that claim is categorically false.

It is not as if the answer is simply to build narrow trails and be done with it. Other cities that have large amounts of shared narrow trails aren't just dumping those users onto those trails and hoping for the best. On the contrary, they are taking a holistic approach that thinks about the trails not as paths through the woods, but as resources for all members of the community. So instead of thinking about a trail from the viewpoint of a hiker or from the viewpoint of a mountain biker, they think about both. They use this viewpoint to inform them on everything from trail design to signage, all with the goal of making the trail a place where people interact in a positive way. They "dial in" the experience that makes the most sense for that property and for all visitors.

The fact is, the 1995 Forest Park Management Plan is a product of its time. It showed some real vision. It got things wrong too. Choices may have been correct for the time they were made, but turned out to be wrong in the long term. The 8' wide trail minimum just happens to be one of those things that made sense in 1995 but doesn't in 2017. The 1995 Forest Park Management Plan was farsighted in its acknowledgement that "...there is room for many improvements and additions to accommodate present and future levels of use". Also, it realized that these improvements would be needed to prevent the trails from becoming "...crowded and overused...". This overcrowding would make things worse as "...recreational experiences will be less pleasant and natural resources will be impacted". (pg. 178) It placed these expansions in the framework of the ecological health of the park as not just a goal, but a requirement. (pg. 107)

If the discussion about mountain biking at Forest Park is truly about safety, and truly about how to create safe and serene experiences, then other cities have already shown Portland the way. They have been sharing narrow trails for years, decades even, without incident. The city of Portland has long scratched its head over problems already solved. The time for wonder and bewilderment is passed. It's time to recognize and implement best management practices that will benefit the entire community of Forest Park visitors.

THOMAS SCANLON El Cajon, CA 2017-02-10

I am both a cyclist and hiker and I support this petition 100 percent. I've nearly been hit by cyclists going downhill, not totally in control. I also see the ruts that develop from continuous bike tracks, which does not happen with footprints. More erosion and trail deterioration.

MARSDEN GRISWOLD Oro Valley, AZ 2017-02-17

Pedestrians have the natural right of way on any highway, anywhere in the U.S. Everyone else has to yield.

KURT FERRE, Portland, OR 2017-2-18

I love Forest Park, and I want it to remain safe for visitors on foot

MARY BROOKS Portland, OR 2017-02-18

Forest Park was named as an urban wilderness. Such a designation is amazing. We have a treasure that we need to protect. Bikes can already use the Leif Erickson trail. Please please do not make more inroads for single-track cycling in this ecologically delicate forest.

JULIE VORHOLT Beaverton, OR 2017-02-18

I love cycling & I love walking, too! Having both on these narrow trails just doesn't work and ruins the experience for everyone.

J BASSI Oregon city, OR 2017-02-19

Keep the trails for the people

MATT MORRISSEY Alton, IL 2017-02-19

Forest Park needs protection from this sort of damaging use. And I'm an avid cyclist!

WENDY MEDNICK

Portland, OR

2017-02-20

I am signing this because I regularly hike Forest Park and know that there are 30 miles of bicycle riding areas. I realize that adding single track bike lanes is against the law and would cut down on the areas to hike and also I am concerned that the bikes would do havoc to the animals and the environment. So please keep the pedestrian trails only in Forest Park pedestrian trails.

ERIN CODAZZI

Portland, OR

2017-02-21

Forest Park is one of the few emeralds that remain in this city of high rises, overpopulation and eroding quality of life. Let nature be.

SUSAN STANGELAND

Portland, OR

2017-02-21

I have walked hundreds of miles in Forest Park over the years and cherish the 'slow time' enjoying and examining nature. Dodging bicyclists and their efforts to miss pedestrians will not enhance the experience for anyone.

CAMERON BENNETT Portland, OR 2017-02-21

I love this park

MICHAEL DOYLE Portland, OR 2017-02-21

Mountain bikes are a menace and would forever ruin Forest Park.

JENNIFER MCNRATNEY Portland, OR 2017-02-21

I love walking in the park. I don't want to worry about vehicles.

AMY ROSENTHAL Portland, OR 2017-02-21

Forest Park is a gem that both Portlanders and tourists use to enjoy nature in it's natural beauty. It is not a place for off road bikes. I have done long distancing biking and appreciate bicyclists. However we can never replace Forest Park, if you change it. Please vote to keep Forest Park the way it is and the way it was intended to be.

VIRGINIA DALE Portland, OR 2017-02-21

Everything i love about Portland is going away! Now Forest Park is under attack! Leave it alone! Leave portland alone!
You want to screw it all up, move to LA!!

STEPHANIE SHEETS Portland, OR 2017-02-21

I'm concerned about the erosion caused by off road bicycles. I live near Powell Butte Nature Park and when cyclists use the wrong paths they destroy them. The ruts are deep and the rain causes severe erosion.

JEAN DUGAN Portland, OR 2017-02-21

No bikes. Too dangerous. We are all at risk as is the forest. Let the environment of peace and beauty not be relinquished to high speed two wheeled creatures. Forest Park should retain the natural habitat of which I am one

BONNI GOLDBERG Portland, OR 2017-02-21

I love FP!

JUDITHARIELLE FIESTAL Portland, OR 2017-02-21

I hike Forest Park many times of the year. I am 71 and want a safe hiking environment.

F. GORDON ALLEN & JANICE STEWART Portland, OR 2017-02-21

because I believe that bicycling would turn trails into mud tracks, require walkers/hikers to constantly have to step aside, and would destroy the wilderness and solitude to be found in Forest Park.

SARAH THOMAS Portland, OR 2017-02-22

I live walking in Forest Park.

EUGENE MCLEMORE Fairview, OR 2017-02-22

I hike in Forest Park several time a year and have done so for many years. Bicycles have no business on the trails.

PATRICIA LEONARD Portland, OR 2017-02-22

Forest Park is a treasure that needs to be maintained.

RONNIE LAWTON Portland, OR 2017-02-22

Real bikers don't need a nice little paved trail to ride their bike on. If you don't have it in you to ride a bike on unpaved trails then get away from Forest Park. Too many Portlanders are fake outdoorsmen already

LIZ AMES Portland, OR 2017-02-22

bikes don't belong on the trails in the park

BARBARA STROSS portland, OR 2017-02-22

It is critical that we keep Forest Park's trails and habitat true to the original intent.

DIANNE SICHEL Portland, OR 2017-02-22

I am stunned that anyone consider mixing biking trails with hiking trails. The current trails are too narrow, and enlarging the trails at the expense of the wilderness experience is a tragedy.

Bike do much more damage to our fragile trails, especially when they go off trail to "jump down hillsides" causing changes in water runoff patterns and thus undermining portions of walking trails, also crushing underbrush and in some cases nesting birds and animals. This is not good environmental management of one of the greatest resources in the country--our urban forest.

CARMELLA BYERS Portland, OR 2017-02-22

I live by Forest Park and the last year or so i have seen the number of people using the park more than double. With more pedestrian traffic and bike traffic , it no longer is a peaceful hike, especially when you have bikes speeding by you on a narrow path.

LESLIE CENTNER Portland, OR 2017-02-22

Portland P & R has threatened more than once to close Hillside Community Center & other Community Centers in city. Given present budget cuts & concerns, it would be best to take care of what is already used & enjoyed by entire city.

JEANETTE JUSTER Portland, OR 2017-02-22

Has Portland becomes more densely populated and a busier city we need the tranquility and rejuvenation that a Forest Park reserve provides us. Please do not expand mountain biking into the park

SUSAN BRAVERMAN Portland, OR 2017-02-22

My husband runs in the park several times/week and we walk our dog there. Having bike paths in the park will lead to much more activity and dangerous conditions for walkers and runners. Please leave it s it is!

SYLVIA MILNE Portland, OR 2017-02-22

Why would we use public money to destroy a sanctuary of this magnitude to serve the thrills and needs of a few? I am grateful others felt the same about the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area.

SUE SELBIE Portland, OR 2017-02-22

I use Forest Park almost everyday and if cycles were permitted on the pedestrian trails, it would no longer be safe or be the wilderness it was intended to be. Let us preserve nature where we can, otherwise we are just one more invasive species.

RONALD BOURKE Portland, OR 2017-02-22

My family uses Forest Park for hiking on a regular basis. The world is full of developed parks. This park is unique. Let's keep it that way.

CHRISTINE REYNOLDS Portland, OR 2017-02-22

Portland needs safe and quiet places for pedestrians. We do not need to be dodging bicycles, nor should Forest Park be subject to the erosion and degradation of wild life that bicycles will bring. Please save Forest Park!

RICHARD SAULSBURY Milwaukie, OR 2017-02-22

The vast majority of trails should be for hiking, walking, strolling, in a quiet, safe and peaceful atmosphere. Not having to get out of the way of fast moving vehicle driven by a far different mind set.

CHRISTINE EDWARDSEN Portland, OR 2017-02-22

I am on Rapid Response as a volunteer and we need to keep the mountain bikers on their own trails and the Wildwood Trail just for walkers.

KATHARINE SAMMONS Portland, OR 2017-02-22

It's important to have pedestrian only paths for personal peace and pleasure, for the health of the Forest Park Eco-system (already compromised) and the integrity of the trails. Bikes are fast, dangerous and rip up the soil. Existing bike trails are sufficient, especially when there are riders out there who are illegally building trails of their own. Please don't cater to the bike lobby, even if they are your base.

JEFFREY COURION Portland, OR 2017-02-22

Providing access to mountain cycling on hiking trails directly and clearly throws the large number of Forest Park trail users into harm's way. If approved, trail users will sustain injuries from being hit. I am all for cycling, BUT not at the expense of public safety or high speed swarming in Portland's crown jewel of nature and wilderness. Bike travel on trails is not the mission, legacy or purpose for Forest Park's unique existence.

PAMELA TOWER Portland, OR 2017-02-22

I am signing this petition because bicycles have no place in the peace and serenity of Forest Park. Please do not allow this to happen. Keep the pedestrian trails for pedestrians only.
Thank you

MARIE RYAN Portland, OR 2017-02-22

There are numerous other locations that the thrill seekers can use to satisfy their desire for an adrenaline rush.

STANLEY COHAN Portland, OR 2017-02-22

The park is a treasure that need not be compromised to meet the self-indulgent bullying of one group of residents. The cities streets have frequently been made less safe due to bikers' behavior of entitlement, and now we face the same for the park.

GEOFF CARR Portland, OR 2017-02-22

As a hiker nothing is quite as scary as in ones quite reverie being broken by a biker coming full speed at you or on your tail.

PAUL BORTE Portland, OR 2017-02-22

As a Native Oregonian I've enjoyed many of these hikes and would like to see the trailers safe for travelers.

DAN BERNE Portland, OR 2017-02-23

Twice I have been hit by bicycle riders who have gone off trail or ignored hikers as they zoomed down a path. The park is a wildlife sanctuary.

POLLY ALEXANDER Portland, OR 2017-02-23

I want to keep pedestrian-only trails in Forest Park for pedestrians only. Bikes threaten the ecology of the park and the already fragile habitat for wildlife.

NANCY MCFADDEN Seattle, WA 2017-02-23

while I love all that the city does to support bike riding, I find myself intimidated by bikes on trails that were originally designed for hikers/walkers. I find I'm having to jump out of the way - and that cyclists can be aggressive.

I also happen to be a cyclist. I love to bike around the city, and will not feel less loved/represented by the city for having these park trails allocated for foot-only traffic. thank you!

MARIE-CLAIRE WONACOTT Portland, OR 2017-02-23

I treasure Forest Park and take pride in its beauty. For years I have enjoyed trail running with dogs and friends on the trails. Such a shame to potentially lose that! Please protect the trails.

MARK KOENIGSBERG Portland, OR 2017-02-23

Forest Park does not need to be turned into a play ground for speed obsessed bikers. There are no places like this Park anywhere, nothing rivals it for peace, serenity, size, scope. Let's keep it and preserve it and give money to keep it alive and well. Bikers, you have other places for your sport!

BARB GAZELEY Portland, OR 2017-02-23

I walk and run in Forest Park multiple times a week during the milder months of the year, approximately March thru October. I am a single woman, age 61, and I am in the park alone. I need it to be safe.

SHERRY JOHNSTON Portland, OR 2017-02-23

bikes have no place on the hiking trails.

SCOTT R BOWLER Portland, OR 2017-02-23

I use the park daily and witness the trail degradation from bicycles. Segregate them!

JOHN RETTIG Portland, OR 2017-02-23

We need to focus on what this park will look like in 20, 50, or 100 years. Today it is single track cycling. Tomorrow it may be something totally different. We can't be reacting short term to every single special interest group that has a new plan for something big.

CYNTHIA CRANDALL Portland, OR 2017-02-23

I feel like Forest Park should stay the way it is. A treasure and unique to Portland. The single track folks have a wonderful area around Oakridge, Or. to enjoy their sport.

CATHY WATERMAN Portland, OR 2017-02-23

I have used and improved Forest Park since I was a Girl Scout in the 1960's. I have felt safe hiking and biking there, on the approved roads, for many years. We need this close in wilderness area for the use and benefit of all, and not change it's use designation for just a few. There are many areas designated for this type of cycling. Let families and those who already use the trails and designated bike areas continue to do so safely and find another area for the 8% who would significantly impact the safety of all by reallocating the trail use.

KATHERINE FRAHM Portland, OR 2017-02-23

I am very concerned about the proposal to allow mountain bikes.

DIANE PETERS Portland, OR 2017-02-23

We run on the narrow trails within Forest Park every day, sometimes very early in the morning. The trails are narrow and at times covered with ice, snow, branches and similar. Please, do not allow single lane bike paths in Forest Park. It is the one respite runners and hikers have away from traffic where we can enjoy true beauty and all that the park has to offer in safety.

HOLLY WENDELL Portland, OR 2017-02-23

I want my children to safely enjoy local nature

CYNTHIA COHAN Portland, OR 2017-02-23

it is critical to protect the existing ecosystem and not tamper with its natural setting

LARA RIX Seattle, WA 2017-02-23

As a frequent runner on the Wildwood Trails, I would find it highly disruptive and dangerous to add bikes. It's dangerous enough not being able to see people around corners as I'm running. There is no need to add bicycles into this equation.

CATHERINE J. FLICK White Salmon 2017-02-23

This urban park is one of the most lush & semi-native within our contiguous USA where humans, wildlife & plants reside side-by-side. People need to hear and see our natural world & have ready access to this world for their mental health & well-being.

CAROL DILFER Portland, OR 2017-02-23

Cyclists roar down the narrow trails in Forest Park. I've been nearly hit more than once. We need more than signage to prevent serious injuries. We need something chains across the non-cycling trails, with boulders alongside, to keep cyclists from going around the chains.

LESLIE POHL Portland, OR 2017-02-23

The ecology of the park depends on good management. Passive recreation, such as walking on trails is the best. I am a hiker and botanic specialist who wants to keep Forest Park healthy.

GRETCHEN BALLER Portland, OR 2017-02-23

I had the good fortune to grow up with Forest Park as my playground. It is essential that we continue to protect it as a wilderness, not recreational area, so future generations can enjoy it as I did and still do. Please do not turn Forest Park into an amusement park.

JUDY COOKE Portland, OR 2017-02-23

People who are handicapped (blind or sight impaired) will not be able to use the trails.

CHARLES SHUMATE Portland, OR 2017-02-23

I run on those trails and would hate to have to jump out of the way for cyclists. But I would support one-way bike-only single-track trails in Forest Park!

JEANINE BOUCHER-COLBERT Portland, OR 2017-02-23

I want Forest Park accessible to all who are on foot. Peaceful. Preserved forever. Thank you.

ANNIE SCOTT Portland, OR 2017-02-23

Bicycles in Forest Park are frightening and disruptive of the peaceful wilderness experience of walking the trails.

Jennifer Jasaitis

Portland, OR

2017-02-23

I hike the trails in Forest Park regularly. They are narrow, with many curves, and are steep in places. It is not easy to anticipate another hiker around the bend, much less a biker who is focused on speed. I've been surprised by bikers, and have only barely been able to get out of the way. I am 67, want to keep my health, and find the softer trails are easier on my feet than concrete sidewalks. But even a slight accident could impair my health immediate help far away, with the biker disappearing, etc. The park cannot be affordably maintained or policed to protect both the current users and the condition of the trail which currently has ruts and muddy areas from foot traffic. Even if bikes were restricted to the fire lanes, riders will not restrict themselves to them. If I see bikes now -- where they are not permitted -- I can only imagine that the current problem will be magnified exponentially, taking away the peace and calm beauty for the many in favor of the few.

PAMELA GARTEN Aurora, OR 2017-02-24

It's a beautiful, peaceful place that needs to stay that way.

LORNA LYONS Portland, OR 2017-02-24

Quiet is central to what I value about Forest Park

ROBERT BRANDT Portland, OR 2017-02-24

Keep Forest Park just the way it is

CRYSTAL GRANGER Portland, OR 2017-02-24

Because I love the rawness the park offers.

CLAUDIA HOLDEREGGER MCCORMACK Portland, OR 2017-02-24

I agree that allowing bikes on current narrow trails would likely lead to a fair bit of conflict between users. This is why I support this petition, but also support looking into options for establishing separate trails for cycling, so that we can all enjoy the park our own way.

DAVID ALLRED Portland, OR 2017-02-24

a few cyclist bad actors are endangering peds. We need enforcement!!

JULIE GOTCHER Portland, OR 2017-02-25

I walk in Forest Park and want to protect it for future generations of not only people but future generations of wildlife

LYNN FOX Hillside Twp, NJ 2017-02-25

I strongly support the effort to retain a safe and serene hiking-only trail system in Forest Park. Forest Park is a treasure that I have enjoyed for more than 30 years. I highly value the park and do not support any use , such as single-track cycling, that violates Ordinance 168509 of the Forest Park Management Plan.

ABBY MAIER Portland, OR 2017-02-25

I walk regularly in Forest Park. Bicycles make the trails less safe and disturb the plants and animals. Keep the tranquility of Forest Park.

JANE MURPHY Hillsboro, OR 2017-02-25

I'm signing because there is no other city that has this lovely and quiet place so nearby

EDIE MILLAR Portland, OR 2017-02-25

I walk often in Forest Park and want to maintain this jewel for future generations. I support cyclists too on the fire lanes and Leif Ericsson. I love the wildness and tranquillity of this big park so near downtown Portland, so I agree that we don't need to add any more trails.

MARCIA WOOD Portland, OR 2017-02-25

I walk in FP weekly and see this issue played out with negative effects from bikes on paths they shouldn't be

JOAN MILLER Beaverton, OR 2017-02-25

Please keep Forest Park a Wilderness Park

JOAN HOFFMAN Portland, OR 2017-02-26

I want to see the trails remain safe for the majority of walkers who do use them, especially for future generations, young & old & a safe sanctuary in times of stress to unwind peacefully, as I have enjoyed them.

WILLIAM HOLDEN Portland, OR 2017-02-26

Forest Park supporter!

PAT HOUGLAND Portland, OR 2017-02-26

I would like to keep the trails safe for pedestrians.

SHYANA SAINI Portland, OR 2017-02-26

I'm signing because I want Forest Park to be a safe habitat for wildlife first and foremost.

BONNIE RAMES Portland, OR 2017-02-26

We all love Forest Park for what it is. Now, some want to capitalize on it and make it something it isn't. Taking away wilderness is irrevocable. Please protect Forest Park as a wilderness; it has FAR more value in the long term than allowing bicycles (and, eventually, motorbikes, quads, and RV parks - you know how this works). Do the right thing. Leave it alone.

KATHY KELLY Portland, OR 2017-02-26

I believe we need to preserve Forest Park as treasured wilderness park

ROBIN LAAKSO Portland, OR 2017-02-26

We need to preserve the original intent of Forest Park. Save the park from self-serving interests. Facilitate the parks health and well being. We must protect Forest Park!

DEBORAH BERGMAN Portland, OR 2017-02-26

I live in the park. I would sign this petition regardless. Park trails are extremely narrow, often muddy, and often have very steep drops on one side. I would be afraid to walk alone or with my dog if bikes were permitted. There are so many safe bikers out there, but so many unsafe bikers too. I have many friends and allies who are bikers but I'm not sure bikers are entirely aware of the enormity of their impact in wilderness spaces and the fear, stress, and noise that others have no choice but enduring when narrow paths are shared. Also, unfortunately a small but significant minority of bikers become overconfident or overreach and the enforcement resource appears minimal. Is it worth it if one person or animal is seriously injured (or worse) and also if extraordinary wilderness character of our park is lost? Can bikers have their own designated (and proprietary) trail in a safe and separate location with easy and clearly defined street access? Thank you.

DAVID ERVIN Portland, OR 2017-02-26

Keep the Park's uses consistent with the applicable environmental ordinance 168509 and protect public safety.

NANCY KURKINEN Portland, OR 2017-02-26

Forest Park does not have to serve all recreational needs. It does not have a swimming pool, soccer field, or children's playground. It is a unique natural environment within our city that must be preserved as such.

GRETCHEN BALLER Portland, OR 2017-02-27

Thanks Marcy, I am so glad you are on our side. Your article was well written and very articulate. I have printed out copies for friends and encouraged them to sign the petition. Isn't it sad that we STILL have to fight to protect our wilderness. I am officially retired now and would love to meet for lunch and talk more about the issue. Call me, or I will call you.

RALEIGH KORITZ Plymouth, MN 2017-02-27

we need a safe forest park too!

MARCIA GLAS-HOCHSTETTLER Portland,, OR 2017-02-27

I firmly believe that Forest Park should remain a designated wilderness .

SUZANNE GARDNER Portland, OR 2017-02-27

we need to preserve this environment and pedestrian safety

PAULA JONES Scappoose, OR 2017-03-01

I care about preserving this beautiful park

BILL CUNNINGHAM Beaverton, OR 2017-03-01

I have been forced off the trail by careless bicyclists.

MAGDA CHIA NY, NY 2017-03-01

I want to be able to walk the trails without fear of bicyclists.

LUCY D BALDWIN Portland, OR 2017-03-02

We must protect our wild places as they are in danger of shrinking across the nation. Forest Park is a unique "city" park!

SHARI SCHOLZ Oregon City, OR 2017-03-02

Please keep the pedestrian only trails safe for myself and my fellow hikers.

NORA ESKESS Portland, OR 2017-03-03

We need natural places, free from motorized wheels and high impact uses that disturb plant and animal life, and also create hazards for walkers.

CATHERINE & CARL VORHIES Portland, OR 2017-03-03

I agree 100 % with the writer of this article and do not support any changes in usage of Forest Park. I walk these trails when I want a "nature" experience rather than drive an hour or more out of the city. How many people cannot drive to Nature and benefit from easy access any day of the week via city bus to the perimeter. City Council is short sighted on this one.

RICHARD JENKINS Portland, OR 2017-03-03

The park is important to me!

ALEXANDRA CLARKE Lake Oswego, OR 2017-03-04

Honor the founders' mission for Forest Park. Let it remain as a natural wilderness area in our city--we are so very fortunate to enjoy their legacy to us. Forest Park was not intended as a sports arena or an amusement park. Tasteful renovations and maintenance with the founders' wilderness concept in mind is all that is needed.

MEL HINTON Vancouver, WA 2017-03-04

Thanks for the comment. We must preserve the quality of our natural parks. I recently moved to the Portland area from San Diego and have seen the damage mountain bikes can cause on single track trails in the canyons and Mission Trails Park.

Every Thursday is hike day up here and many are in Forest Park - great fun. Say hello to Jim.

RAY JORDAN Portland, OR 2017-03-04

I'm signing because I don't want a high-speed single-track in Forest Park.

AMY LAIRD Portland, OR 2017-03-04

1. We must protect the remaining habitat for the animals and plants of Forest Park! Let's take the long view on this one. It's not all about humans and our needs and wants.
2. On the human side, we have to protect hikers of Forest Park and not let them be run down by bikes on a narrow trail. I am a hiker AND biker, and I would never consider biking on Wildwood if it were legal. This is a ridiculous proposition for many reasons, and I appreciate the efforts to oppose it.
- 3.

PATRICIA SEMINARIO Portland, OR 2017-03-04

I am a hiker and a mountain biker, but we don't need bikes on the walking trails in Forest Park.

DENCIE OLSON Tigard, OR

2017-03-04

We need to protect this park

DEBBIE GOFORTH Oregon City, OR 2017-03-05

I've lived in Oregon for 65 years & have cherished Forest Park for its beauty & wildlife. Walked there as a child, took my kids there etc, now my grandchildren. Pick a different area for extreme biking activities. It will ruin our PDX park!!!! The my bikes need a place where they can ride too, not Forest Park...please stop this now!!

BONNIE SUMMERS Portland, OR 2017-03-06

I am deeply concerned about the damage that will occur to our beautiful, wild Forest Park if single track off-road bicycling is allowed. I am also very worried about the lack of enforcement with regard to off road cycling that already is happening within Forest Park.

CASEY PUTERBAUGH Portland, OR 2017-03-06

Having seen and worked on single-track trails in New Zealand, where they do NOT convert pedestrian trails into bike trails, and growing up in Portland, I would never agree with any decision to negatively impact what remaining wilderness and parks we have left.

CHUCK MCGINNIS Portland, OR 2017-03-06

To keep Forest Park a wilderness park like the people who created it wanted it to be & remain

THOMAS GUSTOVICH Portland, OR 2017-03-07

If it was just bikes, and a reasonable solution was met to make sure I'm not run over on a blind turn, I'd be all for the bikes. The bigger issue is turning the USA's largest urban park into a tourist attraction, littered with garbage and people that don't appreciate what they're ruining.

NANCY OVERPECK Vancouver, WA 2017-03-09

I love hiking in forest park!