



Bureau of Planning and Sustainability

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MEMO

DATE: March 18, 2015

TO: Planning and Sustainability Commission

FROM: Nan Stark, City Planner; Deborah Stein, Principal Planner

CC: Susan Anderson, Director; Joe Zehnder, Chief Planner; Eric Engstrom, Principal Planner

SUBJECT: **Open Space Designations on the Comprehensive Plan Map**

Introduction

The City of Portland, Metro and the public school districts in Portland currently own over 700 properties that are in a Comprehensive Plan designation other than Open Space (OS). Many of these properties are in or adjacent to parks and natural areas; the majority are in residential zones.

Through the Comprehensive Plan update process the City has proposed to change the designation of many of these properties to Open Space, to match their existing or intended use. BPS staff met with staff from the Bureaus of Parks and Recreation, Environmental Services, Water, and Transportation to review properties that should potentially be changed from their current designation to Open Space. In addition, staff was in communication with Metro and Portland Public Schools staff about potential changes to their properties.

Background

The Bureau of Planning and Sustainability and other City bureaus recognized, over the past several years, that the Comprehensive Plan update would provide an opportunity to identify and “clean up” irregularities in the Open Space designation on the Comprehensive Plan map. As with much of the work on the update, one of the goals is for the Comprehensive Plan map to better reflect actual or intended land uses. By refining the Open Space map, long-term intended open space uses will be more accurately identified.



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In conjunction with the City bureaus identified above, staff developed a set of criteria for publicly-owned properties that would be proposed to change to the Open Space designation. The properties must meet one or more of these criteria:

1. Land within or abutting an established city park or natural area for which the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning maps were not changed when the land was acquired or developed as a park or other open space. (These lands are generally in PPR ownership, but some are in Metro, Water Bureau or BES ownership.)¹
2. Land within a city park or natural area where the OS zone boundary does not match the property line (these are generally minor clean-ups that result in consistency between property lines and zone lines).
3. Land that has been acquired for the purposes of managing stormwater or reducing flood hazard risk, and/or providing important fish and wildlife habitat.
4. Land that is entirely or primarily in the Environmental Protection overlay zone (p-zone).
5. Land identified in an adopted City plan as future park land (e.g., Thomas Cully Park).

Criteria were also developed to address those properties that would not be proposed to change to the Open Space designation, as follows:

1. Small or single residentially-zoned lots that may be used in the future for purposes other than a park or open space.
2. Plazas and other urban parks that are in zones that allow greater flexibility in uses than the OS zone, and/or allow development that could provide future economic value (such as allowing retail uses to operate in the park). The primary use of these sites as open space is not intended to change.
3. Trails, which are generally zoned the same as the adjacent rights-of-way or property.
4. Sites with an Industrial Sanctuary or Mixed Employment designation that in the long term are envisioned to be developed with an industrial use² or sites proposed for designation as Prime Industrial Land in the Comprehensive Plan, which are difficult to replace in the region and prioritized for industrial retention.
5. Properties in public school district ownership that are in park and/or open space uses that are jointly managed by PPR and the school district, including community gardens.
6. Community gardens, except those within the boundaries of an established City park.
7. Park properties developed with uses not allowed by right in an open space zone (e.g. Dishman Community Center, Firehouse Cultural Center).

¹ Most properties that are proposed to be changed to the Open Space designation under criterion 1 are currently in a Residential designation; however, proposed changes also include lands in Commercial, Industrial and Employment designations.

² Of the 72 properties in the database in the IS, Industrial Sanctuary or ME, Mixed Employment designation in the City's ownership, PPR and BES in collaboration with BPS identified 18 properties to change to OS, which meet the above criteria. There are also Metro-owned properties in these designations that are not proposed to change, as a result of Metro's analysis of these properties. See Metro's response, attached.



8. Lands in rights-of-way because they are generally zoned to the center line, matching the adjacent zone.

Methodology

From the database of publicly-owned land in the City, staff created maps showing the location and current Comprehensive Plan map designations and zoning of each of these properties.

GIS staff identified those properties that were mistakenly in designations other than Open Space, typically small slivers of land that are in a non-OS designation due to minor mapping misalignments.

Staff identified properties that appeared to be part of a park or other type of Open Space but were not mapped that way, and communicated these inconsistencies with City staff from the bureau associated with the particular OS land. From that, a list of proposed changes resolving these inconsistencies was created.

In addition, staff created a list of properties for each bureau for which there were properties naming that bureau as the owner. Staff met with the respective bureaus to determine which properties needed discussion as to whether they should be converted to OS designation, or not.

Staff then developed the criteria for which decisions would be made about whether lands would be changed to the OS designation. Using those criteria, 163 sites in public ownership (often comprised of multiple tax lots) and one site owned by a land trust are proposed to change to the OS designation.

Policy support

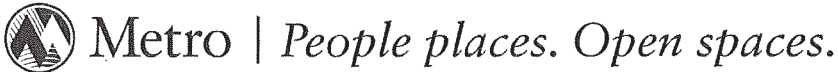
The following goals and policies of the proposed Comprehensive Plan apply to this update project: Goal 8 H. Parks, natural areas, and recreation, and Policies 8.72 through 8.83, Parks and Recreation; Goal 3E, Connected public realm and open space; Goal 3G, Nature in the City; and several other Goals and Policies related to access to and benefits of open space, natural resource protection, environmental equity, and improving environmental quality and preventing environmental degradation.

Summary of testimony

Between the publication of the Proposed Draft Comprehensive Plan and this staff report, the PSC received testimony regarding proposed Open Space changes, as well as desire for more parks and open space, from many individuals, organizations and neighborhood associations. Requests were made by a neighborhood association and an organization to change the designation on specific properties to reflect their desire for a future park on public right-of-way land. Generally testimony is in support of proposed changes to Open Space.

Testimony received regarding golf course conversions from Open Space to Industrial designations was addressed in the staff report for the February 10, 2015 work session on Economic Development.





January 9, 2015

Nan Stark, City Planner
Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability
1900 SW 4th Avenue
Portland, OR

Re: Comprehensive Plan map changes to open space zone
1S1E 26BB 04000, 03900, 08300, 1S1E26BA 16100, 16200, 07100

Dear Ms. Stark,

Please accept this response to your inquiry to Barbara Edwardson of Metro, regarding Metro's desire to leave out the above referenced tax lots owned by Metro from the City's zoning change plan. As mentioned in my letter of September 23rd, we determined that the only properties that warrant a change to open space are those with master plans in place and no known additional considerations.

In addition to the statement that the lots have not yet been through a planning process, there are additional considerations with regard to these properties along the future Springwater Trail, noted below:

- The Natural Areas program is still in the acquisition phase of fulfilling the goal of the Springwater Corridor Target Area, as part of the 2006 Natural Areas bond measure. When that effort is deemed complete, we will undertake an analysis of the Metro property in the area.
- Until the trail connection is built we prefer to not make any changes which limit the potential future use of these sites. Any future use will be consistent with the Natural Areas bond measure guidelines or other policy determined by the Metro Council.

Please feel free to contact me or Barbara Edwardson with any questions. Thank you for respecting Metro's wish to keep the current status of the properties.

Regards,

Kathleen Brennan-Hunter
Director, Natural Areas Program
(503) 797-1948