



PORTLAND PARKS & RECREATION

Healthy Parks, Healthy Portland

Date January 4, 2016

To: Planning & Sustainability Commission
Bureau of Planning & Sustainability

From: Portland Parks Board

Re: **Central City Plan -- Commercial Uses in Parks**

The Portland Parks Board has been tracking proposals by the Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability (BPS) on regulation of commercial uses in parks as part of the Central City 2035 Plan. We have been briefed by Portland Parks and Recreation (PP&R) staff and have informally shared our considerations with BPS staff.

The Board believes this is an important parks use issue needing Parks Board input and consideration. The Board formed a subcommittee in September and worked closely with PP&R staff and Director to review the proposed Central City Plan changes and if necessary, make a recommendation to BPS on how to proceed and revise the zoning code as it pertains to retail use in the Open Space zone.

A subcommittee of the Parks Board has drafted the following recommendations for the regulation of retail uses within parks zoned for Open Space within the boundaries of the Central City Plan. These recommendations are based on the philosophy that retail uses within parks should be limited and be secondary to and complementary of recreational and open space uses, while recognizing that they also serve to promote park use, safety and diversity. This is especially true within the urban core of cities, and there are numerous national and international examples of controlled retail operations revitalizing and energizing areas within cities. These recommendations also strive to strike a balance between flexibility and restricting the proportion of any park that can be devoted to retail uses. No two parks are equal and flexibility is essential to being able to best match the function, location and potential of an individual park.

Please note that these recommendations apply only to OS-zoned parks within the Central City and there is no intention at this time to replicate these provisions to parks outside the Central City.

Portland Parks Board

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- Commercial activity must be equitable* for all park users, and create a broad spectrum of public benefits, evaluated by stakeholders.
- For any proposed retail use in any park zoned OS irrespective of size, PP&R will evaluate and adhere to the following:
 - a. The retail uses and structure design are complementary to the function and appearance of the park.
 - b. The retail use provides community benefits in the context of park activation, increased visibility, and improved safety by providing 'eyes on the Park'.
 - c. Servicing of the retail use does not conflict with park uses.
- For all parks within the Central City planning area (including Waterfront Park) that are zoned OS:
 - For Central City parks 1 acre or under, maximum retail area is 2,500 sq. ft.
 - For Central City parks over 1 acre, the maximum retail area is limited to either 5% of the park area or 10,000 square feet, whichever is less.
- A conditional use permit is needed for any proposed retail over the limits specified above.
- Retail area square footage calculations shall not include restrooms, park offices, park storage, or other non-leaseable retail area.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment and for your efforts through Central City 2035 to maintain a vibrant and economically and culturally healthy Central City.

Sincerely,



Judy BiteHorse Skelton
Chair, Portland Parks Board

**Equity: when everyone has access to the opportunities necessary to satisfy their essential needs, advance their wellbeing and achieve their full potential. We have a shared fate as individuals within a community and as communities within society. All communities need the ability to shape their own present and future. Equity is both the means to healthy communities and an end that benefit us all (PP&R Five-Year Racial Equity Plan, 2016)*