

**From:** [Susan Gilbert](#)  
**To:** [Wheeler, Mayor](#)  
**Cc:** [Council Clerk – Testimony](#)  
**Subject:** No to South Park Blocks Plan  
**Date:** Wednesday, June 9, 2021 4:07:16 PM

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Dear Mayor Wheeler/Ted:

I am in favor of park maintenance and rejuvenating parks, but I have several problems with the proposed South Park Blocks Master Plan.

One, is the removal of many large trees that would not otherwise need to be cut down. The elm trees I understand have been injected with fungicide to protect them from Dutch elm disease. Regular pruning and fertilizer will keep them going for years. This city is normally very protective of its trees. You may recall we enlisted your help for American Plaza Towers, which recently had to remove large trees in planters on a 50 year old garage roof and was told, before jumping through many hoops, that the trees had to be certified as “dead, dying or dangerous” by a licensed arborist. Are all the trees the Plan removes “dead, dying or dangerous”?

Two, I understand conifers might replace some of the high canopy deciduous trees, totally changing the look and feel of the blocks.

Three, the blocks strike me as primarily a pedestrian area, which means sidewalks should be preserved and bikes and certainly scooters strictly limited. Find another area to green up for the Green Loop.

Four, the cost of this project, \$22M to \$46M, seems excessive. We have lots of parks that need serious maintenance –to say nothing of our city streetscapes. Do we really need to alter radically the South Park Blocks? How about using some of that money for further rejuvenation of another treasure, the Halprin Sequence, which was done on a budget with private money.

Finally, why not wait until the South Park Blocks Historic Registry Nomination is completed? It is quite a distinction to be on the National Historic Registry (as is the Halprin Sequence) and would be good for Portland.

Susan Gilbert  
Downtown Resident  
(I visit the SP Blocks at least weekly)