

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. **Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

1. Name of Property

historic name South Park Blocks

other names/site number N/A

Name of Multiple Property Listing N/A

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. Location

street & number 1003 SW Park Avenue not for publication

city or town Portland vicinity

state Oregon code OR county Multnomah code 051 zip code 97205

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this X nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance: national statewide X local

Applicable National Register Criteria: X A B X C D

Signature of certifying official/Title: Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer Date _____

Oregon State Historic Preservation Office
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official Date _____

Title _____ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register removed from the National Register
- other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action _____

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5. Classification

Ownership of Property
 (Check as many boxes as apply.)

- private
- public - Local
- public - State
- public - Federal

Category of Property
 (Check only **one** box.)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property
 (Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

		<u>Contributing</u>	<u>Noncontributing</u>	
				buildings
		1		site
		1	4	structure
		4	9	object
		6	13	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

LANDSCAPE: park
RECREATION AND CULTURE: outdoor
recreation

Current Functions
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

LANDSCAPE: park
RECREATION AND CULTURE: outdoor
recreation

7. Description

Architectural Classification
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

Late 19th and 20th Century Revivals
Modern Movement

Materials
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: N/A
 walls: N/A
 roof: N/A
 other: Earth, Brick, Concrete

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Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity).

Summary Paragraph

The South Park Blocks (SPB) is an 8.76-acre city-owned park located in downtown Portland, Multnomah County, Oregon (see Figure 1). The twelve-block historic district, officially addressed as 1003 SW Park Avenue, is a linear north-south contiguous greenspace set amidst a mix of dense, mid-rise buildings and immediately bounded by cultural venues, apartments, Portland State University (PSU) campus buildings, and historic churches. The SPB extends 1,560 feet from SW Salmon Street (north) to SW Jackson Street (south) and is bounded by SW Park Avenue E (east) and SW Park Avenue W (west).¹ The park serves as the anchor of downtown's cultural and educational districts, with the six northern blocks designated as part of the Cultural District in 1999, while the six southernmost blocks are known as the University District and act as a shared public space for the PSU campus.² The SPB reflects an evolutionary designed landscape developed from 1852 to 1973 that illustrates larger changes in public recreation, community development, and park design. Landscape character defining features of the park include its continuous overarching canopy of mature deciduous trees (see Figure 2), gradual south-to-north sloping topography, symmetrical and asymmetrical spatial relationships of its walkways, integration into Portland's narrow block development scheme, and its axial north-south viewsheds framed by the linear arrangement of trees. Additional character defining features include the park's circulation pattern that reflects the SPB's evolution over time and 1973 pedestrian mall at the southern portion, featuring alterations completed in 1973 that integrated the park into the PSU campus. The park is also characterized by its functionally diverse mixture of plazas—including an amphitheater, public artwork, sitting areas, and playground—interspersed by blocks that feature raised and level planting beds, and mowed grass ground planes. While some of these features—like some of the park furniture, light system, hardscape and play equipment—are less than fifty years old and don't contribute to the park's historical significance, they tend to be consistently and harmoniously integrated into its overall design. Alterations within the SPB that have occurred either during or after the period of significance (and do not convey significance unto themselves) include the redesign of circulation systems in the blocks between Jefferson and Market streets (Block Nos. 7-9), and repaving plaza and pathway surfaces in Block Nos. 7–12 in the 1980s; changes to the Simon Benson Memorial and regrading of Shemanski Square (Block No. 12) in 1987; addition of two streetcar shelters in 2007 and the Portland Loo in 2012; realignment and replacement of the 1960s children's playground (Block No. 1) with a new play structure in the 1990s; introduction of native and ornamental plantings; upgrades to park benches and light fixtures; and installation of additional public art, plaques, and commemorative markers. The SPB continues to serve its original function and retains its historic integrity and ability to convey its significance under National Register Criteria A and C, and Criterion Consideration G.

¹ The eastern and western perimeter streets are variously named as SW Park Avenue, SW 9th Avenue, SW Park Avenue E, SW Park Avenue W, SW Park Avenue East and SW Park Avenue West.

² Although there is a distinction between the "Cultural District" and "University District," they represent a single, unified entity that share the same historical context and period of significance. Further, the recommended draft of the SPB Master Plan describes the park as encompassing these two distinct areas. MIG, Inc., *South Park Blocks Master Plan Update*, "Existing Conditions, Issues, and Opportunities Report," Final Draft (prepared for Portland Parks and Recreation, August 2019), vii.

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There are six contributing and 13 non-contributing resources within the SPB.³ Contributing resources include one site, four objects, and one structure: the SPB designed landscape and its constituent elements (site); Shemanski Fountain and *Rebecca at the Well* sculpture, 1926 (object); single-bowl Benson Bubbler, 1917 (object); four-bowl Benson Bubbler, 1917, 1959 (object)⁴; *Farewell to Orpheus* statue, 1973 (object); and Smith Center Amphitheater and Stage, 1973 (structure). These resources all date within the park's period of significance (1852-1973) and contribute to its significance. Non-contributing objects are as follows: 1) Theodore Roosevelt *Rough Rider* statue granite pedestal base, 1922; 2) Abraham Lincoln statue granite pedestal base, 1928⁵; 3) Pedestal Clock, undated; 4) *Peace Chant* sculpture, 1984; 5) *In the Shadow of the Elm* art installation, 1984; 6) *Holon* sculpture, 2001; 7-8) "Portland State University" granite monument signs, 1988; and 9) Simon Benson Memorial, 1959, altered 1987⁶. Four non-contributing structures include: 1) Portland Loo, 2012; 2-3) two streetcar shelters, 2007; and 4) 1990s children's play structure. These non-contributing resources fall outside the park's period of significance and/or lack sufficient integrity and, therefore, do not contribute to its significance.

Narrative Description

The narrative description of the SPB is guided by *National Register Bulletin 18: How to Evaluate and Nominate Designed Historic Landscapes*.⁷ As a type of cultural landscape, designed historic landscapes are typically "consciously designed or laid out by a landscape architect, master gardener, architect, or horticulturist according to design principles" and "may be associated with a significant person(s), trend, or event in landscape architecture" and can include parks and campuses.⁸

Originally conceived in 1852 by Daniel H. Lowndale, the park was first depicted on an 1852 plat map and the Brady Map.⁹ Envisioned as "one long, uninterrupted promenade park," it was one of three city parks first dedicated for public open space.¹⁰ It was the city's action in 1877 that established the park's formal landscape design, under the guidance of horticulturist Louis G. Pfunder. Pfunder's original design

³ Numerous plaques and commemorative markers are found throughout the SPB. They are not substantial in size and scale, and do not have a direct relationship to the park's overall significance. They are considered minor objects and, therefore, not included in the resource count.

⁴ These drinking fountains, or "Benson Bubblers," were designed by architect A.E. Doyle in 1912 and gifted to the city in 1917. This four-bowl bubbler was incorporated into the Simon Benson Memorial, located at the park's northern terminus, in 1959. Donald R. Nelson, *The South Park Blocks...A Neighborhood History* (Portland, OR: Don Nelson Books, 2008), 104.

⁵ The Roosevelt and Lincoln statues were removed by Portland Parks & Recreation (PP&R) as of October 2020; all that remains are the granite bases. Both resources are considered non-contributing since they lack integrity.

⁶ The Simon Benson Memorial was altered significantly in 1987 and no longer retains sufficient integrity to convey its historical significance.

⁷ J. Timothy Keller and Genevieve P. Keller, *National Register Bulletin 18: How to Evaluate and Nominate Designed Historic Landscapes* (Washington, DC: U.S Department of Interior, 1994).

⁸ Charles A. Birnbaum, *Preservation Briefs 36: Protecting Cultural Landscapes: Planning, Treatment and Management of Historic Landscapes* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Interior, 1994), 1-2.

⁹ The 1852 donation of the park blocks is recorded in the early maps and surveys of the townsite, beginning in 1845 with the Pettygrove/Stark "Plan of Portland" map (OHS #82329), which did not include the parks blocks. The ca 1846 "Plan of Portland" depicts eleven narrow blocks from SW Clay to SW Stark streets, as well as the two Plaza Blocks (OHS Negative #82328). Lowndale's donation of land for public use was further recorded in the ca 1850 "Brady Map" showing the addition of eight narrow park blocks at the south end. The Brady Map was recognized as a record of the land grant by the Common Council on April 9, 1852. Portland City Auditor Archives, Map A217.020, on file at the Oregon Historical Society.

¹⁰ Junior League of Portland, *A Guide to Portland's Historic Parks and Gardens* (Portland, OR: Junior League of Portland, 1985).

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intent is still clearly visible for the entire length of the park in the expansive ground plane, axial tree-planting plan, and continuous overarching tree canopy that promotes linear vistas. These represent some of the basic design characteristics of a “promenade,” a distinctive park type that emerged in American cities in the mid-nineteenth century.¹¹

The park’s most distinctive feature from this early period is its linear alignment of deciduous trees, including fully-matured American elms (*Ulmus americana*), elm hybrids (*Ulmus spp.*), northern red oaks (*Quercus rubra*), sugar maple (*Acer saccharum*) and other species. Over time, the fencing that inhibited movement within the park was removed and more “interior” uses were introduced between 1908 and 1920s with the insertion of plazas, seating areas, and public monuments. By the early 1970s, the southern portion of the park was modified into a “pedestrian mall,” which itself became a distinctive park type in American cities in the 1960s and 1970s.¹² Part of a federally-funded urban redevelopment project that integrated the SPB into the PSU campus, it overlaid a modernist aesthetic design while retaining the park’s essential characteristics—namely the axial alignment of mature deciduous trees and the mowed grassy ground plane.¹³

The well-defined boundaries are reinforced by the park’s development along a narrow, rectangular block grid; unifying tree canopy; perimeter pedestrian promenades; and street rights-of-way. Further, each block is framed by perimeter curbing or embedded brickwork, which delineates the park’s physical boundaries.

The SPB’s transition over time is captured through a descriptive assessment of the park’s various design expressions and natural features, including its existing topography; surrounding land uses; circulation system; spatial relationships; views and vistas; vegetation; landscape dividers; site furnishings; uses of water; lighting; and public art, statues, and commemorative markers. After reviewing these features, the narrative provides a block-by-block description of the extant park features while also identifying contributing and non-contributing resources within the historic district. For reference, the contributing and non-contributing resources in the SPB appear in Table 1.

Table 1: Contributing and Non-Contributing Resources in South Park Blocks

CONTRIBUTING RESOURCES	NON-CONTRIBUTING RESOURCES
South Park Blocks Landscape (site)	Pedestal Clock, n.d. (object) <i>Block No. 5, p. 17</i>
Shemanski Fountain and <i>Rebecca at the Well</i> Sculpture, 1926 (object) <i>Block No. 12, p. 25</i>	Theodore Roosevelt <i>Rough Rider</i> Statue Granite Pedestal Base, 1922 (object) <i>Block No. 10, p. 22</i>
Single-bowl Benson Bubbler, 1917 (object) <i>Block No. 8, p. 20</i>	Abraham Lincoln Statue Granite Pedestal Base, 1928 (object)

¹¹ Wendy R. Jacobson, “The Nineteenth Century American Promenade: Precedent and Form,” *The Journal of Public Space*, vol. 2, no. 4, 2017, 37.

¹² The American pedestrian mall, originally introduced from European cities in the post-WWII period, were conceived as a way to address the urban crisis in U.S. cities during this period. Samantha Matuke, Stephen Schmidt, and Wenzheng Li, “The Rise and Fall of the American Pedestrian Mall,” *Journal of Urbanism: International Research on Placemaking and Urban Sustainability*, July 2020, 2.

¹³ A December 5, 1970 memorandum from PSU’s Building and Planning Manager describes the plan’s main features, including preserving the park’s grass and tree areas, along with restoring the adjacent streets to pedestrian use as originally intended. Efforts were made to ensure that all of the large elms were left intact and the root systems were protected. Memorandum from Malcolm McMinn, PSU Building and Planning Manager, to Mark Howard, December 15, 1970.

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	<i>Block No. 11, p. 24</i>
<i>Farewell to Orpheus Statue, 1973 (object)</i> <i>Block No. 5, p. 17</i>	<i>Peace Chant Sculpture, 1984 (object)</i> <i>Block No. 9, p. 20</i>
<i>Smith Center Amphitheater and Stage, 1973 (structure)</i> <i>Block No. 4, p. 16</i>	<i>In the Shadow of the Elm Art Installation, 1984 (object)</i> <i>Block No. 7, p. 19</i>
<i>Four-bowl Benson Bubbler, 1917, 1959 (object)</i> <i>Block No. 12, p. 25</i>	<i>Holon Sculpture, 2001 (object)</i> <i>Block No. 3, p. 16</i>
	<i>“Portland State University” Granite Monument Sign, 1988 (object)</i> <i>Block No. 1, p. 13</i>
	<i>“Portland State University” Granite Monument Sign, 1988 (object)</i> <i>Block No. 6, p. 18</i>
	<i>Simon Benson Memorial, 1959, altered 1987 (object)</i> <i>Block No. 12, p. 25</i>
	<i>Children’s Play Structure, n.d. (structure)</i> <i>Block No. 1, p. 13</i>
	<i>Portland Loo, 2012 (structure)</i> <i>Block No. 9, p. 21</i>
	<i>Streetcar Shelter, 2007 (structure)</i> <i>Block No. 6, p. 18</i>
	<i>Streetcar Shelter, 2007 (structure)</i> <i>Block No. 7, p. 19</i>

SETTING

The SPB is a linear north-south green space in the heart of Portland, Multnomah County, Oregon. Encompassing an 8.76-acre site immediately southwest of the downtown core, the urban park is set on a gently north-sloping site that extends approximately 3,100 feet from SW Jackson Street (Block No. 1) to SW Salmon (Block No. 12), along an NNE-SSW axis, parallel to the Willamette River frontage to the east. The twelve-block sequence is bounded by SW Jackson Street to the south; SW Salmon Street to the north; SW Park Avenue to the east and west. To the east is Portland City Hall and other government buildings, as well as two of the city’s earliest public squares (now known as Chapman and Lownsdale Squares). The areas to west and south include the Interstate 405 right-of-way; Goose Hollow multi-family residential neighborhood; and the West Hills single-family neighborhood. In general, the surrounding context is urban and dense (see Figure 6).

The park’s immediate setting has evolved as the heart of Portland’s cultural and educational districts, including a mix of cultural, religious, educational and institutional buildings that serve as framing architecture. These include the Portland Art Museum (PAM), Oregon Historical Society (OHS), PSU, and four historic churches—St. James Lutheran Church, First Congregational Church, First Christian Church and the 6th Church of Christ Scientist. The six southernmost park blocks serve as a shared public space for the PSU campus.

A unique characteristic of the park is its siting within the active city street grid, with open vehicular road traffic extending around and through the park blocks. The southern portion (Block Nos. 1–6) is largely

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closed to vehicular traffic along the SW Park Avenue East and West streets, allowing increased pedestrian-only circulation through the PSU campus (see Figure 15). The northern portion (Block Nos. 7-12) accommodates one-way vehicular traffic along these perimeter streets. East-west cross streets extend through the park to allow one-way vehicular traffic. Two of the streets are used as the Portland Streetcar right-of-way, including SW Mill Street (westbound line) and SW Market Street (eastbound line). Three cross streets within the PSU blocks are closed to vehicles, including SW Hall, SW Harrison, and SW Montgomery streets.

Landscape Characteristics

Topography

Overall, the topography of the SPB descends from south to north approximately 100 feet over its twelve-block stretch; descending from about 185 feet above sea level (asl) at SW Jackson Street to about 88 feet asl at SW Salmon Street. The high point is located in the southern six blocks, known as the University District, and the low point in the northern six blocks, designated as the Cultural District. The park's gradual north-south rise in elevation terminates a few hundred feet short of the West Hills, which rise sharply south of the Stadium Freeway up to nearly 1,000 feet asl.¹⁴ Changes in elevation from the east and west are fairly moderate with slopes of about 5 feet to 10 feet over the width of most blocks. The most notable topographic changes occur in the block between SW Main and SW Salmon streets where the center of the park is notably crowned to the east and west with a curved concrete retaining wall that forms a seating niche for the **Simon Benson Memorial** (non-contributing object) and a broad concrete stair along the slope at the corner of SW Park Avenue E and SW Salmon streets, added in 1987. The topography of the SPB has not been dramatically altered from its period of significance.

Surrounding Land Uses

Land use within the park primarily consists of recreational uses that include pedestrian walkways, a playground, the **Smith Center Amphitheater** (contributing structure), gathering spaces, public art, bench seating, and lawn areas for informal recreational opportunities. To the east and west of the park and across SW Park Avenue E and W are a variety of building types and property uses. The six-block stretch south of SW Market Street contains a mix of educational and residential buildings, including Parkway Manor, Jeanne Manor, Vue Apartments, Park Plaza Apartments, Simon Benson residence, Blackstone Apartments, Lincoln Hall, Cramer Hall, Smith Memorial Student Union, Maseeh Hall, Millar Library, Shattuck Hall, and Stott Center. The area between SW Jefferson and SW Market streets is mostly residential, including Cumberland Apartments, Gallery Park Apartments, Southpark Square Apartments, and University Park Condos. Several of the apartment buildings feature a mixture of uses with storefronts situated on the first floor. Buildings to the north of SW Jefferson Street are primarily institutional, including PAM, former Portland Masonic Temple, OHS, Portland 5 Centers for the Arts, and Arlene Schnitzer Concert Hall. Several notable churches are located on either side of the SPB including the St. James Lutheran Church, Sixth Church of Christ Scientist, First Christian Church, First Congregational United Church of Christ.

There are three neighborhoods within the vicinity of the SPB. The six blocks of the SPB's Cultural District between SW Salmon and SW Market streets are part of the Downtown district neighborhood, while the

¹⁴ This change of elevation reflects how the SPB sits within the area that slopes from Portland's West Hills to the Willamette River. MIG, Inc., *South Park Blocks Master Plan Update*, "Existing Conditions, Issues, and Opportunities Report," 45.

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six blocks between SW Market and Jackson streets are located in the University District/South Downtown district neighborhood. Adjacent lots along the west side of Park Avenue W between SW Salmon and SW Market streets fall within the West End district neighborhood.¹⁵

Circulation System

The SPB's circulation system has evolved over three distinct chronological periods, but largely respects Portland's 1846 grid plan.¹⁶ Consistent with the first period of development and initial planting in 1877, Block Nos. 7 through 12 feature perimeter sidewalks that circumnavigate the respective blocks with pedestrians separated from vehicular traffic by a raised concrete curb. Block Nos. 6 and 7 are partially curbed for perimeter pedestrian circulation on SW Market Street, SW Mill Street, and SW Park Avenue W, while SW Park Avenue E is restricted for non-vehicular use, as a part of the 1970s PSU pedestrian mall redevelopment. The streets between SW College to SW Montgomery streets (Block Nos. 2–4) were also vacated and converted to pedestrian walkways with the 1970s pedestrian mall redesign. Block No. 5 incorporates a pedestrian walkway along the east side, with one-way vehicular traffic along the west side. The pedestrian mall terminates at SW College Street with Block No. 1 entirely curbed with the reintroduction of vehicular traffic around its perimeter. Block No. 1 features a sidewalk and seating area on its north side along SW College Street and an off-center walkway that leads to the playground. Block No. 1 also features a radial perimeter due to changes in the street network (see Figure 19).

In addition to the original perimeter circulation pattern, pedestrian traffic within the park was improved during the second period of park development in the early twentieth century. The removal of perimeter fencing promoted interior uses and created opportunities for commemorative and public art in centrally-located plazas. Historic photographs (dated 1911-1915 and 1949) of the park blocks indicate the presence of both diagonal (X-pattern) and north-south oriented walkways, with some converging on a central plaza.¹⁷ In the 1980s, the walkway systems between Jefferson and Market streets (Block Nos. 7–9) were redesigned in a cruciform pattern featuring hexagonal asphalt pavers and concrete borders.¹⁸ Block Nos. 7 through 11, for instance, presently are defined by a cruciform plan system consisting of two parallel north-south and two parallel east-west paved paths separated by vegetated panels. This

¹⁵ The surrounding east side is zoned primarily Central Commercial (CX), allowing high-density development. The west side is a mix of CX and Central Residential (RX), allowing medium to high-rise apartments and condos, as well as retail, institutional, and service-oriented uses. MIG, Inc., *South Park Blocks Master Plan Update*, "Existing Conditions, Issues, and Opportunities Report," 19.

¹⁶ Portland's townsite was laid out in 1845 along a sixteen-block grid with each block measuring 200' square and containing eight 50' x 100' lots. One 80' wide main street ran parallel to the Willamette River and was crossed by seven streets, each 60' wide. The plat was enlarged in 1846 by the addition of a row of blocks to the west and by six blocks to the north. The north blocks were separated from the original plat by a four-block reserve tract that was later subdivided. Hilary Mackenzie, "The Portland Park Blocks: Their Origin and Development" (Master of Architecture diss., University of Washington, 1988), 3.

¹⁷ See for instance photos contained in MIG, Inc., *South Park Blocks Master Plan Update*, "Existing Conditions, Issues, and Opportunities Report," 37 (Block No. 2) and 41 (Block No. 12).

¹⁸ The redevelopment of the Cultural District in 1984 and 1987 by Walker Macy landscape architects added dual cross blocks oriented along an east-west axis, creating the cruciform-shape pattern that exists today. James Mayer, "Central City Plan," *The Oregonian*, March 25, 1988; Janet Goetze, "Simplicity Key Word for Park Blocks Plan," *The Oregonian*, September 20, 1983; Herbert Beals, "Park Blocks" NRHP Nomination Form, Draft (Portland: City of Portland, Bureau of Parks and Recreation, 1995), 15-16; MIG, Inc., *South Park Blocks Master Plan Update*, "Existing Conditions, Issues, and Opportunities Report," 39.

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cruciform circulation is offset in Block No. 12 due to the installation of the **Shemanski Fountain and Rebecca at the Well Sculpture** (contributing object) (see Photo 1; Figure 17).

The third period of development, introduced with the pedestrian mall redevelopment in the early 1970s at PSU, included redesigning the interior circulation system within Block Nos. 2 through 6. Movement was directed through diagonal walkways to the pedestrian mall or to the perimeter sidewalk along SW Park Avenue W along the west side of Block Nos. 5 and 6. While Block No. 5 features a symmetrically placed set of intersecting diagonal walkways, Block Nos. 2, 3, 4, and 6 feature asymmetrically placed diagonal walkways that direct pedestrians between PSU campus buildings while also providing access to the **Smith Center Amphitheater** (contributing structure) (see Photo 21). A narrow centrally located walkway extends from SW College Avenue and terminates at the playground located on Block No. 1.

Vehicular traffic is currently restricted within the PSU campus within the pedestrian mall, as well as along SW Montgomery, SW Harrison, and SW Hall streets to accommodate the Portland Streetcar line. SW Mill Street is partially restricted east of SW Park Ave W due to the Portland Streetcar line. Low, round concrete planters are placed to inhibit vehicular access.

A combination of hexagonal and square asphalt pavers, brick pavers, and exposed-aggregate concrete paving are used throughout the park along the pathways, central plazas, and at the base of benches. The restrained material palette serves to further unify the space. Perimeter pathways are paved in a mix of exposed-aggregate concrete with brick curbing or hexagonal asphalt pavers with concrete curbing. Walkways in the PSU blocks (Block Nos. 1–6) feature the paving installed in the early 1970s and consists of exposed-aggregate concrete with earth-tone brick borders, while the northern portion (Block Nos. 7–12) features hexagonal asphalt pavers with concrete curbing. Plaza areas feature hexagonal and square asphalt pavers, and exposed-aggregate concrete paving with brick curbing.¹⁹ The hexagonal and square asphalt pavers appear to date from the 1980s alterations. Some of the bench seating (Block Nos. 7–12) is set on recessed pads of hexagonal pavers with concrete edging, placing them apart as areas for rest.

Spatial Relationships

The spatial organization of each block is primarily defined by its circulation, vegetation, and small-scale features which is reflective of three broad patterns of development. The first is defined by its linear processional aspect, which originated from the park's initial design by Pfunder as a "promenade-style" park, and generally followed since that period. The second period is characterized by the interior linear placement of pedestrian circulation and plazas that likely occurred in the early twentieth century, which created a sense of enclosure and seclusion from the surrounding buildings and streets. The third period of spatial relationships include the diagonal walkways, amphitheater, and public art placement in the 1970s pedestrian mall.

A spatial attribute that physically distinguishes the SPB from its surrounding cityscape, illustrating a major character defining feature, is that each block is based on a 124' x 200' rectangular module, in contrast to the city's standardized 200' square block grid.²⁰ The park's initial planting in 1877 included five rows of trees across its width and accommodated plank boardwalks along the east and west perimeter.²¹ With

¹⁹ Between 1920 and 1930, street improvements were carried out in the form of interior and perimeter walkways with hexagonal concrete pavers. According to Beals' research, documentation is lacking about the exact dates and location of these walkway improvements. Beals, "Park Blocks" NRHP Nomination Form, Draft, 13.

²⁰ The nominal block dimensions of 100' x 200' are referenced as the basis for the City of Portland planning grid.

²¹ The 1862 city ordinance defined street widths, including the SPB, as 60 feet wide; however, the 1877 park layout paid no attention to this and made the park wider. This made the street more or less align with the block to the north

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the SPB Urban Renewal Development Project in the 1970s, the southernmost blocks (Block Nos. 2–6) were expanded to accommodate pedestrian walkways in the neighboring rights-of-way.²²

One of the park's most distinctive spatial features is its canopy of deciduous trees arranged within an ordered grid, extending throughout the linear block sequence (see Photos 6–9). Pfunder's original landscape design, still evident today, was defined by an axial grid of five north-south rows and nine east-west rows (see Figure 9). An 1878 aerial photograph depicts the park's initial planting of elms and Lombardy poplars between SW Salmon and SW Hall streets, with the trees planted in five rows of nine trees spaced 20' to 22' apart on the north-south axis and 20' apart on the east-west axis.²³ A fanciful lithograph, c. 1882, shows the park development from the corner of SW Park and SW Montgomery streets (see Figure 11).²⁴ The symmetrical alignment and overarching tree canopy create a sense of order, formality, and uniformity. The tree trunks further reinforce the linearity and axial symmetry. The overall spatial experience is of generous open space and long horizontal viewsheds that encourage movement and contemplation.

Gathering Spaces

The SPB is characterized by its linear movement through the twelve-block open space sequence, providing both formal and informal gathering spaces. Central plazas within the park blocks were added starting in the 1920s to provide places to gather. These include Lincoln Square, Roosevelt Square, Joseph Shemanski Square, Smith Plaza, Peace Plaza, Holon Gathering Place, and PSU children's playground. These plaza areas typically feature a focal point, such as a sculpture, fountain, public artwork, or amphitheater space. The 1987 redevelopment of the Cultural District resulted in alterations to the blocks between SW Salmon and SW Market streets, with the expansion and repaving of the central plaza areas. The more activated blocks are host to seasonal events, such as the Wednesday Farmer's Market (Shemanski Square); Saturday Portland Market (University District); and the Party in the Park (Smith Plaza).²⁵

Views and Vistas

Views within the SPB are varied with the northern park blocks featuring vegetation patterns that tend to limit some views both inward and outward. The linear arrangements of trees, however, tend to focus viewsheds in a linear north-south fashion. Due to the comparable lack of intervening vegetation, views tend to be open in the southern portion of the SPB in line with modernist approaches to site design that emphasized easier maintenance and surveillance/safety.²⁶ During the late fall, winter, and early spring,

of SW Salmon Street, where the Arlington Club is located, which incorporates a 50 foot right-of-way. This block provides an example of the typical 124 foot width that measures 100 feet center-to-center and accommodates roughly 12-foot wide sidewalks along the east and west rights-of-way. The original plank sidewalk was replaced with concrete sidewalks which were improved over time; however, the basic concept in terms of alignment was more or less consistent. The SPB is physically delineated by a raised concrete curb along the northern six blocks, which disintegrates along the southern portion due to the 1970s pedestrian mall alterations. William J. Hawkins III, personal communication with Brooke Best, June 12, 2021.

²² The streets between SW Market and SW College streets were closed to vehicular traffic and converted to paved pedestrian walks. These changes increased the park area from 2.9 to 7.2 acres. Walli Schneider, "City Streets Yield to Park Blocks Plan," *The Oregonian*, August 23, 1971, 7; Tom Ferschweiler, "Mall Plan for PSU Approved" *The Oregonian*, March 10, 1971, 4.

²³ Oregon Historical Society, Image 23454.

²⁴ Oregon Historical Society, Catalog Number OrHi 734.

²⁵ MIG, Inc., *South Park Blocks Master Plan Update*, "Existing Conditions, Issues, and Opportunities Report," 19.

²⁶ Galen Cranz, *The Politics of Park Design: A History of Urban Parks in America* (Boston, MA: MIT, 1982), 152.

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the park's viewsheds become more expansive with the trees, walkways, and neighboring buildings channeling perspectives to longer distances.

Vegetation

Vegetation in the SPB includes trees, tree canopy, grassy areas, and a variety of raised and level planting areas featuring native and ornamental trees, shrubs, roses, and perennials. As stated under "Spatial Relationships," the park's most prominent feature is its deciduous trees arranged within an ordered grid, extending throughout the linear block sequence (see Photos 6–9). Pfunder's original landscape plan featured a block-by-block perimeter ring of more than 240 American elms, with each block infilled with other deciduous species to create a formal, symmetrical layout of five north-south rows and nine east-west rows.

Since its original planting, the park has garnered an array of deciduous tree species due to tree losses from storms and disease. While some fully-matured American elms (*Ulmus americana*) remain, the park also includes elm hybrids (*Ulmus spp.*), northern red oaks (*Quercus rubra*), sugar maple (*Acer saccharum*) and other species (see Photos 19 and 20).²⁷ Pfunder's intentional choice of broadleaf deciduous tree species creates a physical impact on a user's experience in different seasons—offering changing fall color, sunlight from increased canopy transparency in winter (allowing the visitor visual access to the surrounding architecture), and shade in the summer.²⁸ The symmetrical alignment and tree canopy unifies the pedestrian's park experience and visually defines the park boundaries amidst its dense urban surroundings.²⁹ The tree canopy also includes linden (*Tilix cordata*) and hawthorn trees.

In addition to the tree cover, each park block features a ground plane dominated by large areas of grassy mowed lawn, added in 1908 under the direction of parks superintendent Emanuel T. Mische (see Photo 7).³⁰ Several blocks feature raised or level planter beds, added in the early twentieth century, that help to frame walkways and/or a central plaza (see Photos 9 and 10).³¹ Three of the flowerbeds flanking the central plaza feature formal rose gardens, while the others include ornamental plantings. The raised beds further accentuate the block's symmetry and axial alignment.

Landscape Dividers

When first planted in 1877, the SPB was fenced with a two-rail wood fence placed around the perimeter of each block (See Figure 9). The fencing provided protection for the trees from street traffic, prevented

²⁷ American elms (*Ulmus americana*) and elm hybrids (*Ulmus spp.*) account for roughly 52% of the trees in the SPB. MIG, Inc., *South Park Blocks Master Plan Update*, "Existing Conditions, Issues, and Opportunities Report," 47.

²⁸ More recently, the City's tree succession plans have incorporated a broader range of decorative and native deciduous species including disease-resistant species of Elm (*Ulmus Americana*), Linden (*Tilix cordata*), Oregon White (Garry) Oak (*Quercus garryana*) and European Beech (*Fagus sylvatica*).

²⁹ It is likely Pfunder anticipated the grid of deciduous tree crowns maturing over time to create a visually-consistent structure and singular identity. The choice of deciduous trees, which occupy a small footprint at their base, allows open space that accommodates multiple uses below the canopy.

³⁰ The 1901 Parks Report recommended a number of park improvements, including plans to "grade and crosswalk the Park Blocks as fast as means are provided; to make smooth lawns and judiciously cull inferior trees which can be replaced by others." It also recommended planting some of the blocks in "flowering shrubs and central beds of flowers." Portland Parks Commission, *Park Commission's Report 1901*, 8; Henry Kunowski, Nicholas Starin, Liza Mickle, Richard Engeman, and Chet Orloff, *Open Space & Park Development 1851-1965* (Portland, OR: Portland Parks and Recreation, January 2010), 13.

³¹ According to Chet Orloff, flowerbeds were added under Mische, following the Olmsted Plan. Historical photos indicate that additional planting beds were added by the 1920s. Chet Orloff, "Portland Park Blocks," accessed July 29, 2020, https://oregonencyclopedia.org/articles/portland_park_blocks/#.XyRIAC2Znp8.

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pedestrian crossings of the park space, and served as an initial divider; these fences were subsequently removed. Raised curb planting beds added within some of the northern blocks in the early twentieth century were enclosed with low chains supported by short bollards to protect the plantings. Photos of the park indicate that these chains and bollards were removed by the 1950s.

The blocks were differentiated from street level by continuous concrete curbs around each block that were first installed by the late-nineteenth century. Some of the curbing along the southern park blocks was removed when the University District pedestrian mall was installed in the early 1970s.

Site Furnishings

The SPB features bench seating throughout the park, positioned along the walkways and central plazas. Seating in the northern blocks (Block Nos. 7–12) consists of wood-slat benches with metal frames.³² These benches are similar—in materials, style, and general location—to the benches shown in historic photographs from the 1920s. As part of the 1980s Cultural District redevelopment plan, hardscape alcoves featuring hexagonal asphalt pavers were incorporated along the north-south walkways to serve as recessed pads for bench seating.³³ Block Nos. 1–6 feature niche bench seating areas and concrete board game tables, installed in the 1970s as part of PSU’s redevelopment plan, offering places to sit and gather (see Photos 11, 23 and 24). Seating consists of wood-slat benches mounted on a continuous low brick base, or seatwall. The benches vary in size between 6’ and 8’ long. Most of the benches are backless, while some have angled, wood-slat backs. Seating areas are positioned along the block edges, interior pathways, and central plazas. Some of the seating areas are grouped around exposed-aggregate concrete game tables with checkerboard tile tops. The **Smith Center Amphitheater** (contributing structure) in Block No. 4 features four tiers of low bench seating, angled to face an elevated stage at the northeast side. Other site furnishings include round, exposed-aggregate concrete and metal-slat trash receptacles. The concrete receptacles, located in the University District, date from the 1970s redevelopment. A two-faced **pedestal clock** (non-contributing object) is also located in Block No. 5.³⁴

Uses of Water

There are currently several fountains located within the SBP and they include the Shemanski Fountain, *Farewell to Orpheus* (fountain added in the 1980s) and two Benson bubblers – a single-bowl bubbler and a four-bowl bubbler.³⁵

Lighting

Light fixtures in Block Nos. 7–12 are fabricated of cast-iron and feature a fluted, tapered standard with a bell-shaped flare at the base (see Photos 8 and 16). The urn-shaped globes have a decorative metal band detail and metal finials. Light fixtures in the PSU blocks (Block Nos. 1–6) differ slightly and consist of cast aluminum, shallow-ribbed standards with a simple banding detail and coved base at the top (see

³² Park benches, donated by the Portland Junior League, were installed in 1985 along Block Nos. 7–9. Junior League of Portland, *A Guide to Portland’s Historic Parks and Gardens*.

³³ MIG, Inc., *South Park Blocks Master Plan Update*, “Existing Conditions, Issues, and Opportunities Report,” 39.

³⁴ It appears that another clock may have been installed at the north end of Block No. 2; all that remains is the concrete plinth and metal standard.

³⁵ Wealthy lumberman Simon Benson donated \$10,000 to the city for twenty drinking fountains to be installed throughout the downtown. Designed by prominent architect A.E. Doyle, these “Benson bubblers” provided public drinking water. It led to the installation of 50 four-bowl fountains. The four-bowl bubbler is part of the Simon Benson Memorial located at the park’s northern terminus. Dr. William Willingham, Henry Kunowski, Nicholas Starin, Liza Mickle, Richard Engeman, and Chet Orloff, *City of Portland Civic Planning, Development, & Public Works, 1851-1965: A Historic Context*, prepared for the City of Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability, March 2009, 31.

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Photo 7). They consist of a mix of glass and acrylic globes, with some exhibiting the band detail and metal finials.

Historic photographs of the park from the 1870s to the 1960s do not depict lighting within the SPB. With the urban redevelopment of the park's southern portion, modern acrylic globe lights were introduced as part of a unified design aesthetic found elsewhere in the redevelopment area, including the Halprin Open Space Sequence. The 1970s lights were subsequently replaced, as the light poles and luminaires throughout the SPB appear to date from the 1980s.³⁶

Public Art, Statues, and Commemorative Markers

Introduction of the statues and public art into the SBP started in the 1920s with the 1922 Theodore Roosevelt *Rough Rider* statue (pedestal remaining), 1926 Shemanski Fountain and *Rebecca at the Well* sculpture, and 1928 Abraham Lincoln statue (pedestal remaining). Additional public art was introduced starting in the 1950s with the Simon Benson Memorial (1959; altered 1987), *Farewell to Orpheus* statue (1973), *Peace Chant* sculpture (1984), *In the Shadow of the Elm* art installation (1984), and *Holon* sculpture (2001). PSU granite monument signs were added in 1988 to delineate the northern and southern terminus of the college campus along the SPB. The SPB has provided opportunities for adding commemorative markers throughout its history, which serve as memorials. These objects are diminutive in size and scale, and do not have a direct tie to the park's significance; therefore, they were not considered in the resource count.³⁷

BLOCK-BY-BLOCK PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

A block-by-block description of the SPB (as of May 2021) is summarized below, starting at Block No. 1 on the southern terminus and continuing north to Block No. 12. Figures 19–30 include a detailed plan of each block, depicting its tree canopy, circulation pattern, landscape features, contributing and non-contributing resources, and other physical characteristics.

South Park Block No. 1: Bounded by SW Jackson St. (S) and SW College St. (N), between Park Ave. E (E) and Park Ave. W (W)

Block No. 1 is the southernmost terminus of the SPB, situated north of the Interstate 405 right-of-way (see Figure 19). Like the northernmost block (Block No. 12), it terminates in a curved boundary at its southern edge. The block occupies a gently sloping site that descends in elevation towards the north. The block is framed by a play court to the east and the 1951 Park Plaza Apartments to the west. All of the perimeter streets accommodate one-way vehicular traffic.

The block is characterized by an open grassy area with a **children's play structure** (non-contributing structure) near the midsection (see Photo 15).³⁸ A low brick wall with a wire mesh safety fence encloses the irregularly shaped playground area, covered with a bark-mulch play surface. A polished granite **"Portland State University" granite monument sign** (non-contributing object, 1988) is positioned at

³⁶ Mayer, "Central City Plan."

³⁷ Commemorative plaques and markers include the Portland Junior League plaque (1985), Cultural District granite plaque (1999), Lincoln Bicentennial granite marker (2009), "In Loving Memory of the Artist Francisco Omier" memorial plaque (2016), memorial plaque from Arab-American Community Center of Oregon and PSU (1995), David and Wynne Spiegel memorial plaque (undated), Garry Oak plaques (undated), Terence O'Donnell pink granite marker (undated), and Julie S. Vigeland bronze memorial plaque (undated).

³⁸ The play structure was installed sometime in the 1990s, according to site managers. Photos from the 1960s show the play area sited closer to SW College Street than the current location. MIG, Inc., *South Park Blocks Master Plan Update*, "Existing Conditions, Issues, and Opportunities Report," 25.

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the block's southeast corner. The gateway monument delineates the southern entrance to the PSU campus.³⁹ The eastern edge is lined with fifteen basalt boulders, defining the park's perimeter.

At the north end, a niche seating area, added in the 1970s as part of PSU's redevelopment plan, is located mid-block and set back from the street. Similar to the other PSU blocks (Blocks Nos. 1–6), the low seating features four 8' long wood-slat backless benches mounted on a 12" high continuous brick base.

Pedestrian circulation consists of a single concrete pathway that extends from the northeast corner to the play area to the south. Unlike the other PSU blocks, Block No. 1 does not include perimeter sidewalks, and is defined by a raised exposed aggregate concrete curbing. A 12' x 12' concrete slab is located at the block's northeast side, near SW College Street, which formerly served as a picnic table area but no longer contains the picnic table. Exposed aggregate concrete step pavers are installed at the south end of the play area and lead to the block's southern edge.

The block retains some of the tree planting plan's axial alignment and includes fourteen historic trees and eight replacement trees.⁴⁰ Three mature trees are aligned along the north end. The southern radiused perimeter is planted with a grove of locusts.⁴¹ Other tree species include a mix of elm and oak.

Ten light fixtures are situated along the block's perimeter, including four on the east and west sides and two at the north end. Similar to other PSU blocks (Block Nos. 1–6), these fixtures, that post-date the period of significance, feature slender cast aluminum standards with urn-shaped globes.⁴² A single, contemporary cobra-style streetlight is positioned at the south end that is not consistent with the majority of lighting in the SBP.

South Park Block No. 2: Bounded by SW College St. (S) and SW Hall St. (N), between Park Ave. E (E) and Park Ave. W (W)

Block No. 2 is a gently sloping site that descends towards the north and is characterized by two triangular grass-covered ground planes bisected by a diagonal pathway (see Figure 20). The block is framed by the 1915 Shattuck Elementary School to the east and Stott Center/Viking Pavilion to the west. The north, east and west perimeter streets serve as pedestrian-only access and consist of exposed-aggregate

³⁹ The gold lettered granite monument sign replaced wooden signage installed in 1977, hand carved by former Smith operations manager, Jim Sells. Bryce Henry, email correspondence to Leslie Hutchinson, June 9, 2021.

⁴⁰ Tree age data was derived from City and PSU Maps and Surveys and from Purdue University Landscape Report (dated April 10, 2018) as calculated by tree age determination at breast height method. Tree caliper measurements and species depicted on the Block Detail Plans (Figures 19–30) are from Portland Parks and Recreation and PSU "South Park Blocks: Benefits of Trees" brochure with current data updates from field surveys. Measured diameter in inches for each tree was multiplied by the Purdue University Specie Growth Factor to yield their approximate age in years. Lindsey Purcell, "How Old Is My Tree?" Purdue University Landscape Report, April 10, 2018, <https://www.purduelandscape.com/article/how-old-is-my-tree/>. For the purposes of this nomination, references to "historic tree" relates to the tree's likely presence in the SBP during the park's period of significance. Portland Parks and Recreation, "South Park Blocks: Benefits of Trees" brochure, published with excerpts from Professor Joseph Poracsky, PSU Dept of Geology, *Wild in the City, A Guide to Portland's Natural Areas*, March 2005.

⁴¹ The radiused perimeter of Block No. 1 was created between 1970 and 1981. See 1970 and 1981 aerials for Portland, Oregon in www.historicaerials.com, accessed August 4, 2021.

⁴² The light fixtures in the PSU blocks follow a design specification used throughout campus and are similar to other city-specified light fixtures. They are distinguished by their shallow-ribbed standards with a simple banding detail and coved base at the top. Some of the globes feature metal banding and metal finials. These fixtures appear newer than those in the northern portion (Block Nos. 7–12).

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concrete with a brick border detail.⁴³ The south cross street (SW College Street) accommodates one-way vehicular access through the park blocks.

Niche seating areas are positioned along the south, west, and east edges. Similar to the other PSU blocks (Block Nos. 1–6), the low seating contains wood-slat benches mounted on a continuous brick base. On the south end, the seating area is mid-block and contains four 8' long wood-slat benches with angled backs. Seating on the east side is centered on the block and contains three 8' long benches, flanked by two 5' diameter concrete planters. On the west side, the seating area is at the north end and contains three 8' long benches.

The block is bisected by a single diagonal walkway that extends from the southeast to the northwest corner (see Photo 24). The walkway features exposed-aggregate concrete paving with a brick border. At the midsection, niche seating areas are on each side of the pathway, containing two 8' long wood-slat benches mounted on a low brick base. A concrete plinth with a metal standard is located at the block's north end. It appears to be a similar design to the pedestal clock located on Block No. 5 but is missing the clock face.

The tree canopy on this block retains some of its axial alignment of five north-south rows and includes fifteen historic trees and three replacement trees. Three mature elm trees at the south end are set in circular brick pavers. Tree species include a mix of elm and linden.

Seven light fixtures are situated along the block's perimeter, including three on the east and four on the west sides. Similar to other PSU blocks (Block Nos. 1–6), the fixtures, that post-date the period of significance, feature slender cast aluminum standards with urn-shaped globes.

South Park Block No. 3: Bounded by SW Hall St. (S) and SW Harrison St. (N), between Park Ave. E (E) and Park Ave. W (W)

Block No. 3 is a relatively flat site with four triangular grassy areas defining the ground plane. The grass perimeter is edged with brick detailing (see Figure 21). The block is framed by PSU's Maseeh Hall (formerly Neuberger Hall) to the east and Millar Library to the west. All the perimeter streets serve as pedestrian-only access, featuring exposed-aggregate concrete paving with a brick border detail (see Photo 14).

Niche seating areas are positioned on the block's north, south, and east edges. Similar to other PSU blocks (Block Nos. 1–6), the low seating contains wood-slat benches mounted on a continuous brick base. The south end features a grouping of four 6' long backless benches and two exposed-aggregate concrete game tables with checkerboard tile tops. The north end contains two groupings at the east and west sides. The east side, fronting Maseeh Hall, contains two benches with angled backs. Round exposed-aggregate concrete trash receptacles are placed near the seating areas.

Interior pedestrian circulation includes intersecting diagonal walkways, creating an offset "X" pattern. The walkways converge on a central gathering space, known as Holon Gathering Place, added in the 1970s redesign of the University District. The walkways and plaza area are paved in exposed-aggregate concrete hardscape edged with a brick border in a soldier course pattern. The plaza is positioned off-

⁴³ SW Hall and SW Harrison streets, along with the east and west perimeter streets, were closed to vehicular traffic as part of the 1970s PSU redevelopment plan. This circulation change helped unify the block sequence within the PSU campus.

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center, slightly to the west and south, and contains three 8' long wood-slat benches aligned along the east and west sides. The benches are mounted on a continuous brick base.

The focal point of the plaza is the **Holon sculpture** (non-contributing object), an abstract artwork by sculptor Donald Wilson, installed in 2001 (see Photo 13). Named for the Greek word "whole," the granite sculpture sits on a raised brick plinth block, with a plaque that recognizes the establishment of social work education at PSU in 1961 and honors Dr. Gordon Hearn, the school's founder and first dean.⁴⁴

The tree canopy on this block retains some of its axial alignment of five north-south rows and includes fifteen historic trees and eight replacement trees. A mature tree at the northeast corner is encircled by a raised brick surround. Tree species feature a mix of oak, elm, and maple.

Nine light fixtures are situated along the block's perimeter, including four on the east and five on the west sides. Similar to other PSU blocks (Block Nos. 1–6), these fixtures, that post-date the period of significance, have slender cast aluminum standards with urn-shaped globes.

South Park Block No. 4: Bounded by SW Harrison St. (S) and SW Montgomery St. (N), between Park Ave. E (E) and Park Ave. W (W)

Block No. 4 occupies a gently sloping site that is largely paved, with a triangular grassy area at the northwest side and a rectangular grassy area at the south end (see Figure 22). The block is framed by PSU's Smith Memorial Student Union to the east and the five-story Blackstone Apartments to the west. All of the perimeter streets are used for pedestrian-only access, featuring exposed-aggregate concrete paving with a brick border detail.

The turf area at the south end is defined by a low brick wall, oriented along an east-west axis, that contains five wood-slat backless benches. A low, angled brick wall delineates the grassy area to the northwest. Niche seating with exposed-aggregate game tables with checkerboard tile tops is positioned at the northwest corner. Round concrete trash receptacles are placed near the seating area.

The block is dominated by the **Smith Center Amphitheater** (contributing structure), added by 1973 as part of the PSU redevelopment plan, situated immediately west of the Smith Memorial Student Union (see Photo 21).⁴⁵ The amphitheater features an elevated brick stage at the northeast side and four tiers of low seating, angled along gentle terraces to face the stage. Continuous brick stairs and three circular raised brick planters are incorporated into the stage area. Amphitheater seating consists of wood-slat backless benches mounted on metal frames or low brick walls. Additional features of this gathering space include concrete bollards with internal lights and circular (raised and inset) brick tree surrounds.

Interior circulation includes an off-set diagonal walkway extending from the southwest to and a smaller diagonal pathway from the northwest corner to the amphitheater.⁴⁶ The pathways and amphitheater plaza feature exposed-aggregate concrete paving edged with multi-tone brick in a soldier course pattern.

The tree planting's axial grid of deciduous trees is partially intact and includes seventeen historic and four replacement trees. The grass-covered southern border retains a row of three mature trees. A mature tree

⁴⁴ The original sculpture, which was installed in 1979 and fabricated from white Indiana limestone, was destroyed by an act of vandalism in 2001 and replaced with this granite sculpture in 2004. Nelson, *The South Park Blocks...A Neighborhood History*, 110.

⁴⁵ This represents the largest gathering space in the SPB and is activated throughout the year with the weekly Farmer's Market and Party in the Park. MIG, Inc., *South Park Blocks Master Plan Update*, "Existing Conditions, Issues, and Opportunities Report," 20, 24.

⁴⁶ Harrison and Montgomery streets are closed to vehicular traffic, except for the Portland Streetcar.

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at the southwest side is enclosed in a raised, circular brick planter; some of the trees are ringed with circular brick surrounds set into the concrete paving, integrating it into the 1970s amphitheater design. Tree species include a mix of elm, linden, and maple.

Three light fixtures are situated along the block's perimeter, including one at the north end and two at the west side. The fixture at the southeast corner is missing. Similar to other PSU blocks (Block Nos. 1–6), these fixtures, that post-date the period of significance, feature slender cast aluminum standards with urn-shaped globes.

South Park Block No. 5: Bounded by SW Montgomery St. (S) and SW Mill St. (N), between Park Ave. E (E) and Park Ave. W (W)

Block No. 5 is a gently sloping site with four triangular, grass-covered areas defining the ground plane (see Figure 23; Photo 12). The south and east perimeter streets are used for pedestrian-only access and are paved with exposed-aggregate concrete with a brick border detail. The west perimeter streets is open to one-way vehicular traffic. To the north, the westbound Portland Streetcar runs on a single track between Block Nos. 5 and 6 in the SW Mill Street right-of-way.⁴⁷ Crosswalks are positioned on the east and west sides of the street.

The southern terminus of this block has a small plaza area featuring a cast bronze sculpture entitled ***Farewell to Orpheus*** (contributing object), designed by PSU art professor emeritus Frederic Littman (see Photo 22). The sculpture, which was added in 1972-1973 as part of the PSU Urban Renewal Development Project, was sculpted by Littman in 1968 of a female nude on a floating mount above a reflecting pool and fountain. The figure depicts Eurydice, wife of the mythical Greek prophet Orpheus, who was forced to return to the underworld.⁴⁸ A plaque at the edge of the pool states, "Provided for your enjoyment by private citizens through the PSU Foundation and the City of Portland urban renewal program." Surrounding the reflecting pool on the north and west sides is a low brick seating wall with three 8' long wood-slat backless benches. A large, sloping triangular planting area to the north, which frames the sculpture and reflecting pool, is planted in native trees, shrubs and other plantings.⁴⁹

At the north end of the block is an operational **12' tall, two-faced pedestal clock** (non-contributing object). The clock, which was made in Italy, is mounted on a stone base secured to a concrete plinth.

Interior circulation is defined by 8' wide diagonal pathways featuring exposed-aggregate concrete paving with brick edge detailing. The walkways extend from the block's outer edges to converge on a central plaza, forming an offset "X" pattern. A niche seating area on the plaza's east side contains four wood-slat benches mounted on continuous brick base. Two 6' long metal benches are positioned on the plaza's west side.

The tree planting's axial grid of deciduous trees is partially intact and includes thirteen historic trees and eleven replacement trees. Tree species include a mix of oak, beech, and maple.

⁴⁷ The sidewalk at the north end has been replaced with dirt and mulch; the raised concrete curbing is still intact. Two metal posts are installed along this strip to serve as supports for the streetcar overhead line.

⁴⁸ The sculpture was installed and dedicated as a gift to the university in 1973. The water feature is not original to the sculpture and was added in the early 1990s as one of four fountains on PSU campus' "Walk of Heroines." Portland State University, "Walk of the Heroines," accessed June 28, 2021, <https://www.pdx.edu/heroines/>.

⁴⁹ The native plantings were added in sometime in the 2000s. A photo from the 1990s shows the area planted in turf. MIG, Inc., *South Park Blocks Master Plan Update*, "Existing Conditions, Issues, and Opportunities Report," 24.

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Nine light fixtures are situated along the block's perimeter, including four at the east and west sides, and one at the southwest corner. Similar to other PSU blocks (Block Nos. 1–6), these fixtures, that post-date the period of significance, feature slender cast aluminum standards with urn-shaped glass and/or acrylic globes .

South Park Block No. 6: Bounded by Mill St. (S) and SW Market St. (N), between Park Ave. E (E) and Park Ave. W (W)

Block No. 6 is a sloped site descending downwards towards the north with a predominantly grass-covered ground plane (see Figure 24). This block delineates the northern edge of the University District and shift to the Cultural District (Block Nos. 7–12).⁵⁰ It is framed by PSU's Lincoln Performance Hall (former Lincoln High School) to the east and a five-story Art Deco style apartment building and Parkmill building to the west. The western perimeter street is used for one-way vehicular traffic, while the eastern perimeter street is used for pedestrian-only circulation. At the south end, the westbound Portland Streetcar runs on a single track between Block Nos. 5 and 6 in the SW Mill Street right-of-way. A raised platform along the south end of the block has a **streetcar shelter** (non-contributing structure) located mid-block. The metal-frame, curved-roof structure with glass panels was added in 2007.⁵¹ To the north, the eastbound streetcar runs on a single track along the SW Market Street right-of-way. ADA crosswalks are positioned on the east and west sides of both street crossings.

Interior circulation is limited to two short diagonal pathways at the north end, extending from mid-block to the outer edges along the east and west sides. The walkways are paved in exposed-aggregate concrete with a brick border.

Niche seating areas are centered on the east and west sides of the block (see Photo 11). The east side, fronting PSU's Lincoln Hall, contains a recessed paved area with three 8' long benches. The west side has a recessed paved area with two 8' long benches. Similar to other PSU blocks (Block Nos. 1–6), the low seating contains wood-slat benches with angled backs mounted on a continuous brick base.

The tree canopy on this block retains much of its five north-south axial rows and includes sixteen historic deciduous trees and eighteen replacement trees. Tree species include a mix of elm, maple, linden and ash.

Eight light fixtures are situated along the block's perimeter, including three at the east and west sides, and two at the north end. Similar to other PSU blocks (Block Nos. 1–6), these fixtures, that post-date the period of significance, feature slender cast aluminum standards with urn-shaped glass and/or acrylic globes. A polished granite "**Portland State University**" **granite monument sign** (non-contributing object, 1988) is centered at the block's north end, delineating the northernmost entrance to the PSU campus.⁵²

South Park Block No. 7: Bounded by SW Market St. (S) and SW Clay St. (N), between Park Ave. E (E) and Park Ave. W (W)

Block No. 7 occupies a low-sloped site featuring three rectangular grassy areas and a paved main plaza (see Figure 25; Photo 7). One-way vehicular traffic is oriented on the east and west perimeter streets. To the south, the eastbound Portland Streetcar runs on a single track along the SW Market Street right-of-

⁵⁰ The six northernmost blocks of the SPB were designated as a "Cultural District" in 1999.

⁵¹ MIG, Inc., *South Park Blocks Master Plan Update*, "Existing Conditions, Issues, and Opportunities Report," 20.

⁵² Similar to Block No. 1, the gold lettered granite monument sign replaced wooden signage installed in 1977. Henry, email correspondence to Leslie Hutchinson, June 9, 2021.

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way. A **streetcar shelter** (non-contributing object) is located mid-block at the southern perimeter. The metal-frame, curved-roof structure with glass panels was added in 2007.⁵³ The cross street at the north end (SW Clay Street) accommodates one-way vehicular traffic.

The block includes a continuous perimeter promenade featuring hexagonal asphalt pavers with concrete curbing. The east and west promenades measure 4' wide, while the north and south measure 8' wide. Interior circulation is defined by a cruciform pattern system with hexagonal asphalt pavers.⁵⁴ It consists of two parallel north-south walkways flanking a central grassy area, and two narrower, perpendicular (east-west) walkways. The intersecting walkways converge on a paved central plaza. The walkways and plaza feature hexagonal asphalt pavers with concrete curbing.

A public artwork, entitled ***In the Shadow of the Elm*** (non-contributing object), was added to the plaza in 1984 as part of the Phase 1 redevelopment of the Cultural District. Designed by Oregon artist Paul Sutinen, it consists of 169 pieces of individually-cut white granite, embedded into the hardscape. Measuring 45' x 40', the memorial work is a depiction of the shadow of a tree "that ostensibly once existed within the grid of trees in the block."⁵⁵ The sculpture includes two inscriptions: one on a limb (northwest corner) that reads "Paul Sutinen 1984" and another on a circular granite piece (south end) that includes the name of the artwork and artist's signature. In 1995, a tree was planted immediately south of the art installation to commemorate lives lost in the Oklahoma City bombing. A memorial plaque from the Arab-American Community Center of Oregon and PSU is inset in the turf.

The tree canopy on this block retains much of its axial alignment of five north-south rows, including seventeen historic trees and nineteen replacement trees. Tree species include a mix of primarily oak, elm, maple and ash.

Fifteen park benches are arranged in pairs along the north-south central pathways and central plaza.⁵⁶ The benches are set on recessed hexagonal concrete-paved pads and consist of 6' long metal-frame and wood-slat benches. Sixteen light fixtures are situated along the block's perimeter, including four positioned at each corner of the plaza. Similar to Block Nos. 7–12, these fixtures post-date the period of significance and differ slightly from those in the PSU blocks (Block Nos. 1–6), featuring a fluted, tapered standard with a bell-shaped flare at the base and urn-shaped globe.

South Park Block No. 8: Bounded by SW Clay St. (S) and SW Columbia St. (N), between Park Ave. E (E) and Park Ave. W (W)

Block No. 8 is a relatively flat site featuring rectangular grassy areas and a paved central plaza (see Figure 26; Photo 8). The block is framed by Gallery Park Apartments to the east and the seven-story Jeanne Manor to the west. All four perimeter streets are used for one-way vehicular traffic.

This block features a similar circulation pattern to Block Nos. 7–11, including a continuous perimeter promenade on all four sides and interior cruciform pattern pathways. The east and west promenades measure 4' wide, while the north and south measure 8' wide. Interior circulation includes two parallel

⁵³ MIG, Inc., *South Park Blocks Master Plan Update*, "Existing Conditions, Issues, and Opportunities Report," 20.

⁵⁴ The cruciform pattern hardscape, added in the 1980s, is distinguished from the older diagonal pathway and features dual north-south walkways and cross-block connections with hexagonal asphalt pavers and concrete curbing. Goetze, "Simplicity Key Word for Park Blocks Plan."

⁵⁵ Portland Parks and Recreation, "South Park Blocks," accessed July 28, 2020, <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/parks/finder/index.cfm?action=ViewPark&PropertyID=674&searchtext=south%20park%20blocks%20>

⁵⁶ One park bench is missing at the southwest side.

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north-south walkways flanking a central grassy area and third rows of trees, and two perpendicular (east-west) walkways, which converge on a paved central plaza. The walkways and plaza feature hexagonal asphalt pavers with concrete curbing.

At the north end of the plaza is a **single-bowl Benson Bubbler** (contributing object). Lumberman Simon Benson gifted twenty drinking fountains, known as 'Benson Bubblers,' designed by architect A.E. Doyle in 1912.⁵⁷

The tree canopy on this block retains some of its axial alignment including twelve historic trees and thirty replacement trees. Tree species include a mix of oak, elm and maple.

Eighteen park benches are positioned along the north-south pathways and plaza area.⁵⁸ The benches are set on recessed hexagonal concrete-paved pads and consist of 6' long metal-frame and wood-slat benches. A Portland Junior League plaque (1985) embedded in the hardscape at the block's north end commemorates the League's seventy-five years in Portland with a donation of fifty-two park benches in three blocks (Block Nos. 7–9).

Sixteen light fixtures are situated along the block's perimeter, including four on the north and south ends; two on the east and west sides, flanking the walkways; and one at each corner of the plaza. These fixtures, that post-date the period of significance, feature tapered cast iron standards with urn-shaped globes.

South Park Block No. 9: Bounded by and SW Columbia St. (S) and SW Jefferson St. (N), between Park Ave. E (E) and Park Ave. W (W)

Block No. 9 is a gently sloping site featuring six open grassy areas and a paved central plaza (see Figure 27). The block is framed by First Christian Church to the east and two churches (St. James Lutheran Church and Sixth Church of Christ, Scientist) to the west. All four perimeter streets are used for one-way vehicular traffic.

This block features a similar circulation pattern to Block Nos. 7–11, including a continuous perimeter promenade on all four sides and interior cruciform pattern pathways. The east and west perimeter promenades measure 4' wide, while the north and south measure 8' wide. Interior circulation includes two parallel north-south walkways flanking a central grassy area and center row of trees, and two perpendicular (east-west) walkways, which converge on a paved central plaza. The walkways and plaza feature hexagonal asphalt pavers with concrete curbing.

The block was included in the 1984 Phase 1 redevelopment of the Cultural District with the installation of the **Peace Chant sculpture** (non-contributing object) in the plaza. Designed by Eugene sculptor Steve Gillman, the non-representational piece is composed of several large, carved white granite blocks.⁵⁹ A bronze plaque on the plaza's south end describes the artwork as "the first known peace memorial in the State of Oregon." Portland City Council designated this block "Peace Plaza" on May 15, 1985.⁶⁰ On the

⁵⁷ Nelson, *The South Park Blocks...A Neighborhood History*, 104.

⁵⁸ One park bench is missing at the southeast side.

⁵⁹ Gillman designed the sculpture to "create a space where people could sit and have quiet time. In his work, he uses the nature of the stone to create a feeling of space and time, juxtaposing natural, manmade, and architectural elements to remind us of man's place in nature." Cyclotram, "Peace Chant," last modified October 5, 2013, <https://cyclotram.blogspot.com/2013/10/peace-chant.html>.

⁶⁰ The Peace Plaza used to contain a War Memorial Board with the names of persons killed in World War II and the Korean War, which remained in place until 1961. *The Oregonian*, May 16, 1985, 33; *The Oregonian*, September 21, 1984, 33.

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west side of Park Avenue in front of St. James Lutheran Church, there is a large bronze plaque for the Peace Plaza, along with another piece by Gillman entitled *From Within, Shalom*. The plaque and sculpture are situated outside of the historic district boundaries.⁶¹ Set in a grassy area at the plaza's east side is a 20" x 40" pink granite marker dedicated to Terence O'Donnell, who died in 2001. The marker reads: "In honor of historian Terence O'Donnell, consummate storyteller and friend of Persians."⁶²

The tree canopy on this block retains some of its axial alignment, including thirteen historic trees and twenty-one replacement trees. Tree species include a mix of oak, elm, maple, beech and sycamore.

A "**Portland Loo**" (non-contributing object) was added in 2012 at the south end of the block.⁶³ The public restroom is an oval-shaped metal structure. Eleven park benches are positioned along the north-south pathways and plaza area. The 6' long wood-slat benches are set on recessed hexagonal concrete-paved pads.

Sixteen light fixtures are situated along the block's perimeter, including four on the north and south ends; two on the east and west sides, flanking the walkways; and one at each corner of the plaza. These fixtures, that post-date the period of significance, feature tapered cast-iron standards with urn-shaped globes. Three high-intensity lights are installed in the central plaza to illuminate the Peace Chant sculpture; they are non-character-defining.

South Park Block No. 10: Bounded by SW Jefferson St. (S) and SW Madison St. (N), between Park Ave. E (E) and Park Ave. W (W)

Block No. 10 is a gently sloping site featuring four rectangular grassy areas and a central plaza. Raised concrete planter beds are positioned along the central north-south axis and mid-block at the east and west sides (see Figure 28). The block is framed by OHS to the east and PAM to the west (see Photo 17). All four perimeter streets are used for one-way vehicular traffic.

This block features a similar circulation pattern to Block Nos. 7–11, including a continuous perimeter promenade on all four sides and interior cruciform pattern pathways (see Photos 9 and 10).⁶⁴ The east and west promenades measure 4' wide, while the north and south measure 8' wide. Interior circulation includes two parallel north-south walkways flanking a central grassy area, and two perpendicular (east-west) walkways. The intersecting walkways converge on a paved central plaza. The walkways feature hexagonal asphalt pavers with concrete curbing, while the plaza is distinguished by its square asphalt pavers.

⁶¹ St. James Lutheran Church owns the sculpture, which is part of Peace Plaza and a companion piece to Gillman's *Peace Chant*. The bronze plaque includes a poem by Cora Lee Beard Whiteneck, titled *Harmony and Peace*. *From Within, Shalom* was dedicated by Rabbi Joshua Stampher of Congregation Neveh Shalom, in memory of Whiteneck. Portland Public Art, "Peace Plaza," last modified August 28, 2006, <https://portlandpublicart.wordpress.com/2006/08/28/peace-plaza/>.

⁶² O'Donnell is the author of several definitive Oregon state history books, including *That Balance So Rare, The Story of Oregon, An Arrow in The Earth*, and many other books, essays and letters to *The Oregonian*. Portland Public Art, "Terence O'Donnell," last modified August 28, 2006, <https://portlandpublicart.wordpress.com/category/terence-odonnell/>.

⁶³ *The Oregonian*, June 30, 2012.

⁶⁴ Renovations were undertaken in 1987 on the three northern blocks (Salmon to Jefferson) following the same circulation pattern and design elements as the 1984 renovations, including cruciform pattern walkways with hexagonal asphalt pavers. MIG, Inc., *South Park Blocks Master Plan Update*, "Existing Conditions, Issues, and Opportunities Report," 12.

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A **granite pedestal base** (non-contributing object) is located in the central plaza (see Photo 5).⁶⁵ The raised base contains a bronze plaque stating: "Presented to the City of Portland By Dr. Henry Waldo Coe, Lifelong Friend of Theodore Roosevelt, Dedicated to the Children of America." The block was renamed "Roosevelt Square" by the city.⁶⁶ A 16" x 18" granite plaque is embedded in the hardscape at the statue's north side, commemorating the area's designation as a "Cultural District" in 1999.

The tree canopy on this block retains some of its axial alignment of five north-south rows of trees, including eight historic trees and fifteen replacement trees. A row of linden and hawthorn trees are aligned along the east and west edges.⁶⁷ Other tree species include a mix of oak, elm, and maple.

A unique character-defining feature of this block are the six raised planting beds that frame the central plaza.⁶⁸ Likely added sometime in the early 1900s under the direction of parks superintendent Mische, they include two rectangular beds at the north and south ends, and one rectangular bed flanking the east and west sides. Three of the flowerbeds contain award-winning roses such as Julia Childs, Crimson Bouquet, Singin' the Blues, Passionate Kisses, Whisper, Mardi Gras. Other planting beds include a mix of ornamental plantings.

A stone marker near SW Jefferson Street and SW Park Avenue contains "The Great Plank Road" plaque. The bronze marker, installed by the Lang Syne Society in 1960, commemorates the construction of a wooden plank roadway that provided a transportation route between Portland and the agriculturally rich Tualatin Valley to the west.⁶⁹ The bronze plaque states, "As a community effort it brought farm produce to our docks and established Portland as the first market and shipping point for the original old Oregon Country."

⁶⁵ An 18' tall bronze equestrian Theodore Roosevelt *Rough Rider* statue originally stood on the pedestal base. The public monument was dedicated in 1922 as a gift to the city from Dr. Henry Waldo Coe, a physician who operated the Morningside psychiatric hospital in East Portland. Coe is remembered as a philanthropist who donated four expensive statues, including Roosevelt and Lincoln in the SPB, Joan of Arc in Laurelhurst, and George Washington in Rose City Park. Less known is his active role institutionalizing Native Alaskans in order to assimilate them into white culture. American sculptor Alexander Phimister Proctor designed the statue, depicting Roosevelt in his Spanish-American War uniform mounted on his horse, leading his cavalry regiment called the 'Rough Riders.' The statue, along with the nearby statue of Abraham Lincoln, was toppled on October 11, 2020 during the "Indigenous Peoples Day of Rage." Roosevelt was an avid conservationist best known for his expansion of the national park system; however, these conservation efforts came at the expense of Native American tribes. He also believed in white superiority and vocally supported eugenics. The statue was removed as of October 2020. Junior League of Portland, *A Guide to Portland's Historic Parks and Gardens*; Nelson, *The South Park Blocks...A Neighborhood History*, 107; Shane Dixon Kavanaugh, "Portland Protesters Topple Statues of Theodore Roosevelt, Abraham Lincoln in 'Day of Rage'; Police Declare Riot," *OregonLive*, updated October 12, 2020; Aaron Mesh, "Father's Day Off: Portland Protesters Tore Down Statues of Presidents. New Rules May Keep Them Grounded," *Willamette Week*, June 23, 2001, 6.

⁶⁶ City of Portland, Historic Resource Inventory; Junior League of Portland, *A Guide to Portland's Historic Parks and Gardens*; Nelson, *The South Park Blocks...A Neighborhood History*, 107.

⁶⁷ Hawthorns are deciduous, flowering trees that are members of the large rose family and can reach a height of 25' to 35' with a similar spread. Lindens are medium- to large-sized deciduous shade trees with strong horizontal branches that form a pyramidal or rounded structure.

⁶⁸ Flowerbeds, shrubs, and colorful ornamentals were added in the early twentieth century under Mische, following the Olmsted Plan. Orloff, "Portland Park Blocks."

⁶⁹ The plank road was inspired by the pioneer tanner Daniel H. Lownsdale, who scouted the route and received a state charter from the Oregon Territorial Legislature in 1851 permitting construction. Although the plaque dates from the park's period of significance, it does not have a direct tie to the resource's significance. *The Oregonian*, May 15, 1960, 1, 9; Tyler Wayne, "Great Plank Road," *The Oregon Encyclopedia*, accessed July 28, 2020, https://oregonencyclopedia.org/articles/great_plank_road/#.XySEnC2ZNp8.

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Four memorial plaques have been added near the plaza area. These include the David and Wynne Spiegel memorial bronze plaque, installed at the east side of the north-south pathway; "In Loving Memory of the Artist Francisco Omier 2016" memorial plaque, located at the plaza's north side of the plaza; and two Garry Oak plaques, installed at the plaza's southwest corner. One is a pink granite plaque that reads, "Garry Oak Tree planted in 1877 by Alice Henderson Strong, 1852–1946." The other is inscribed with this message: "This tree was planted in May 2001 to commemorate the original Garry Oak planted by A.H. Strong. It was moved in 1993. Among Portland's first families the Strongs made major contributions to early civic life."

This block contains twenty-one park benches aligned along the interior north-south pathways and plaza area. The 6' long wood-slat benches are arranged in pairs and set on recessed hexagonal concrete-paved pads.

Sixteen light fixtures are situated along the block's perimeter and central plaza, including four on the north and south ends; two mid-block on the east and west sides; and one at each corner of the plaza. These fixtures, that post-date the period of significance, feature tapered cast-iron standards with urn-shaped globes. One high-intensity light fixture is installed in the northeast corner of the central plaza to illuminate the statue.⁷⁰

South Park Block No. 11: Bounded by SW Madison St. (S) and SW Main St. (N), between Park Ave. E (E) and Park Ave. W (W)

Block No. 11 is a sloped site featuring six grassy areas and a paved central plaza (see Figure 29). The block is framed by First Congregational Church to the east and the Mark Building (former Portland Masonic Temple) to the west (see Photo 18). All four perimeter streets are used for one-way vehicular traffic.

This block features a similar circulation pattern to Block Nos. 7–11, including a continuous perimeter promenade on all four sides and interior cruciform pattern pathways. The east and west promenades measure 4' wide, while the north and south measure 8' wide. Interior circulation includes two parallel north-south walkways flanking a central planting strip and two perpendicular (east-west) walkways, which converge on a paved central plaza. (see Photo 4). The walkways and plaza feature hexagonal asphalt pavers with concrete curbing.

⁷⁰ The base for another fixture is intact at the southwest corner of the plaza, but the lamp pole has been removed.

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A **granite pedestal base** (non-contributing object) is located in the central plaza (see Photo 3).⁷¹ The block was designated “Lincoln Square” in July 1928.⁷² A 24” x 24” Lincoln Bicentennial granite marker was installed in 2009 at the north side of the statue’s base. Another marker, Julie S. Vigeland bronze memorial plaque, is embedded in the hardscape at the east side of the plaza, commemorating Vigeland’s service on the Portland Park Board from 2009 to 2016.

The tree canopy on this block retains much of its axial alignment of five north-south rows and includes eighteen historic trees and eighteen replacement trees. Tree species include a mix of oak, elm, maple, and beech. The central planting beds are planted with a mix of small trees and low shrubbery, including daylilies, sword ferns, hellebore, hydrangeas and heuchera.

This block contains eighteen park benches aligned along the interior north-south pathways and plaza area. The 6’ long wood-slat benches are set on recessed hexagonal concrete-paved pads.

Sixteen light fixtures are situated along the block’s perimeter and central plaza, including four on the north and south ends; two mid-block on the east and west sides; and one at each corner of the plaza. These fixtures, that post-date the period of significance, feature tapered cast-iron standards with urn-shaped globes. Two high-intensity light fixtures are installed at the northeast and northwest corners of the central plaza to illuminate the statue.

South Park Block No. 12: Bounded by SW Main St. (S) and SW Salmon St. (N), between Park Ave. E (E) and Park Ave. W (W)

Block No. 12 is the northernmost terminus of the SPB, bounded by SW Salmon Street (see Figure 30). The block is a relatively flat site containing a large paved central plaza surrounded by sloped perimeter turf areas (see Photo 16). The north end, which is elevated from the streetscape (SW Salmon Street), is accessed by a set of curved concrete steps at the northeast corner and a sloped, 12’ wide pathway at the northwest corner.⁷³ The block is framed by the Center for Performing Arts (formerly Portland Publix Theater) to the east and Roosevelt Hotel to the west. The four-story Arlington Club, completed in 1910, is located across the street at the block’s northern terminus. The Arlington Club’s classically proportioned front entry lies directly on axis with the middle of the park blocks, serving as a northern focal point.

⁷¹ A 10’ tall bronze Abraham Lincoln statue originally stood on the pedestal base. Dedicated on October 5, 1928, it represented one of four statues (along with the Roosevelt statue that stood at Block No. 10) given to the city by Dr. Henry Waldo Coe, installed one year after his death. Designed by sculptor George Fite Waters, it depicted the Lincoln of the Civil War years: “He is standing in the familiar pose, with head bowed and shoulders drooped, a sad but kindly expression on his face.” The statue, along with the nearby statue of Theodore Roosevelt, was toppled on October 11, 2020 during the “Indigenous Peoples Day of Rage.” Though Lincoln is chiefly remembered for the Emancipation Proclamation, he held racist views of Black people and presided over the removal of Native Americans from their land. The statue was removed as of October 2020. Norma Catherine Gleason and Chet Orloff, *Portland’s Public Art: A Guide and History* (Portland, OR: Oregon Historical Society, 1986), 43; Nelson, *The South Park Blocks...A Neighborhood History*, 106; Kavanaugh, “Portland Protesters Topple Statues of Theodore Roosevelt, Abraham Lincoln in ‘Day of Rage’; Police Declare Riot”; Mesh, “Father’s Day Off: Portland Protesters Tore Down Statues of Presidents. New Rules May Keep Them Grounded,” 6.

⁷² A 1949 photograph shows the statue was placed along the centerline of a walkway lined with a continuous row of benches. The square was enlarged with the 1987 Cultural District redevelopment. MIG, Inc., *South Park Blocks Master Plan Update*, “Existing Conditions, Issues, and Opportunities Report,” 21, 23.

⁷³ The block was redesigned in 1987 to create a level gathering space and renamed Shemanski Square. It included installing the retaining wall and staircase/sloped walkway along SW Salmon Street. MIG, Inc., *South Park Blocks Master Plan Update*, “Existing Conditions, Issues, and Opportunities Report,” 12.

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All of the perimeter streets accommodate one-way vehicular traffic. This block features a continuous perimeter promenade on all four sides. The east and west promenades measure 4' wide, while the north and south measure 8' wide. Interior circulation includes cruciform pattern pathways at the south end, with diagonal pathways at the northeast and northwest corners. The south end includes two sloped north-south walkways and two sloped walkways, oriented on an east-west axis. The pathways at the elevated north portion lead to a large gathering place, known as Joseph Shemanski Square. Like Block No. 10, the walkways feature hexagonal asphalt pavers with concrete curbing, while the plaza is distinguished by its square asphalt pavers. Unlike other park blocks, this plaza is defined by a 15" high concrete wall along the perimeter of the plaza that serves as a seating area. The low, curved wall at the radiused northern terminus was intended as a low-profile stage along the street frontage.

At the plaza's south end is the **Shemanski Fountain and Rebecca at the Well Sculpture** (contributing object), added in 1926. Commissioned by architect Carl L. Linde and designed by Thayer Logan, the fountain consists of a triangular, three-columned (Corinthian order) structure built of Oregon sandstone (see Photo 1). The cupola features a red cast stone roof. At its center is the bronze statue by sculptor Oliver Laurence Barrett, depicting an urn-carrying maiden and three water basins for dogs.⁷⁴ The fountain was installed on a new concrete base in 1987, when it was restored; the fountain's mid-block location remained unchanged.

The **Simon Benson Memorial** (non-contributing object) delineates the park's northern terminus. It is positioned within a curved, recessed niche that faces the SW Salmon streetscape directly on axis with the main entrance of the 1910 Arlington Club (see Photo 2). A planting area above the Benson Memorial provides a backdrop to Shemanski Square. The 1959 memorial designed by architect A.E. Doyle was composed of a **four-bowl Benson Bubbler** (contributing object) mounted on a single post.⁷⁵

A round bronze plaque with a *bas relief* of Simon Benson, designed and cast by Benson High School teachers and students, is set in the curved concrete wall and dedicated to his memory. The memorial was redesigned in 1987 when the original 3' tall freestanding, arched brick wall was replaced with the concrete retaining wall. All that remains from its original design is the bubbler, bronze plaque, and landing steps. The Benson Memorial no longer retains sufficient integrity to convey its period of significance and, therefore, is non-contributing.⁷⁶

The tree canopy on this block retains two of its five axial rows and includes sixteen historic trees and two replacement trees.⁷⁷ Tree species include a mix of oak, elm, beech, and red bud. A small central planting bed, flanked by the parallel interior pathways, is located at the south end of the block.

⁷⁴ The fountain and sculpture were given to the city in 1926 by Portland businessman Joseph Shemanski, a Polish Jewish immigrant who founded the Eastern Outfitting Co. Linde's original sculpture was originally set amidst trees, shrubs, and grass. Its design depicted a bowl of flowers, which was later changed to include the urn-carrying maiden. City of Portland, Historic Resource Inventory; Gleason and Orloff, *Portland's Public Art: A Guide and History*, 43; Nelson, *The South Park Blocks...A Neighborhood History*, 105.

⁷⁵ These drinking fountains, known as 'Benson Bubblers,' were gifted to the city by Lumberman Simon Benson. They were designed by architect A.E. Doyle in 1912. This four-bowl bubbler was incorporated into the Simon Benson Memorial in 1959. Nelson, *The South Park Blocks...A Neighborhood History*, 104.

⁷⁶ City of Portland, Historic Resource Inventory; Nelson, *The South Park Blocks...A Neighborhood History*, 104.

⁷⁷ A topographic survey (dated April 1986) shows a smaller, Y-shaped paved area with the remainder of the site as turf sloping down toward SW Salmon Street and planted with rows of trees. The square's 1987 alterations included removing turf along the north side and changing the sloped topography. MIG, Inc., *South Park Blocks Master Plan Update*, "Existing Conditions, Issues, and Opportunities Report," 23.

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This block contains twelve park benches aligned in pairs along the interior pathways and plaza area (facing towards the Shemanski Fountain). The 6' long wood-slat benches are set on recessed hexagonal concrete-paved pads.

Sixteen light fixtures are situated along the block's perimeter and central plaza, including four on the north and south ends; two mid-block on the east and west sides; and four along the plaza. These fixtures, that post-date the period of significance, feature tapered cast-iron standards with urn-shaped globes. Two high-intensity light fixtures are installed at the plaza's southeast and southwest corners to illuminate the Shemanski Fountain.

HISTORICAL INTEGRITY

The SPB retains sufficient integrity of its important features to convey its historic significance under National Register Criteria A and C. Designed historic landscapes have unique attributes that often complicate the evaluation of integrity, since they are living landscapes that are more susceptible to change. Alterations within the SPB that don't relate to the period of significance have been confined primarily to changes to some of the interior circulation systems and hardscaping; introduction of native plantings and plant maintenance; and upgrades to park benches and light fixtures. While some original materials have been replaced and updated, the changes were part of regular maintenance or improvement programs and were generally necessary to preserve the overall design. The SPB, which survives as one of the city's earliest public parks dedicated in 1852, retains integrity of location, setting, design, feeling, and association. Changes to the park's historic fabric have slightly diminished its integrity of materials and workmanship. Specific to the seven aspects of integrity:

Location: The park remains in its original location with minimal changes to its historic boundaries and alignment. Changes in 1964 with the construction of the I-405 Freeway (also called the Foothills Loop Freeway) resulted in the removal of the park's two southern most blocks, between SW Clifton and Jackson streets. The realignment along the park's southern portion, along the PSU campus, occurred under the 1970s pedestrian mall redevelopment, which is part of the period of significance and covered under Criterion Consideration G.

Design: The overall SPB linear park sequence is largely intact from its original dedication in 1852 and initial planting plan from 1877, and is illustrative of evolving landscape design trends over the past 150 years. The park continues to convey its original "promenade" plan, carried out by horticulturist Louis Pfunder, featuring an expansive ground plane; formal, symmetrical layout; grid of five north-south rows of deciduous trees in axial alignment, or allées, creating long horizontal sight lines; and perimeter pathways, or promendae. Early-twentieth century improvements included the addition of internal circulation systems and central plazas. The last major period of development, which took place during the 1970s urban renewal era, incorporated a Modernist "pedestrian mall" concept that includes asymmetrically placed diagonal walkways, an amphitheater (Block No. 4), and other modest design elements to its southern portion. The design modifications to the SPB through 1973 are significant as they convey the park's evolution of design.

Design changes since 1973 include modifications to the blocks between SW Market and SW Jefferson streets in 1984, including the introduction of dual north-south walkways and cross-block connections and single luminaire light standards, as well as repaving walkways, sidewalks, and plazas with hexagonal asphalt pavers. In 1987, similar changes were made to the blocks between SW Salmon and SW Jefferson streets. That same year, the Shemanski Square (Block No. 12) was modified to establish a

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larger level gathering space, elevated stage area, and retaining wall and staircase added along SW Salmon Street. New square and hexagonal pavers were installed and a new concrete base was created for the Joseph Shemanski Fountain. The Simon Benson Memorial, located at the northern terminus of Block No. 12, was also modified with the replacement of the original brick retaining wall with a curved concrete wall. In 2001, the Portland Streetcar platforms and tracks were installed along SW Market and SW Mill streets and included the addition of two streetcar shelters. The SPB continues to communicate its original design intent and essential character of a simple ground plane with an overarching canopy of deciduous trees; restrained planting and materials palette; and framing architecture of civic, institutional, residential, and educational buildings.

Setting: The park retains integrity of setting as a twelve-block linear park in the heart of downtown Portland, set amidst a dense urban context. Buildings that lie across the street from the park reflect the neighborhood's architectural evolution, ranging from multi-story apartment buildings to museums, churches, former schools, and PSU academic buildings. Its function as a respite from urban life and as a public open space amenity endures today, as it is surrounded by the rapidly-increasing density and development.

Feeling: The SPB retains a high degree of integrity of feeling and continues to convey its original linear promenade function along with the historical evolution over time. The formality and restrained nature of the linear urban park is seen in the axial alignment of trees and is further reinforced by the linear north-south promenade paths, internal plazas, seasonal variations of the deciduous tree canopy, opportunities for seated repose and communal gathering spaces, and axial viewsheds.

Association: The SPB retains integrity of association due to its direct ties to the city's initial community development and subsequent parks development. These associations are conveyed by the discernable evolution of the SPB's promenade design and modifications over time that directly relate to larger local trends in landscape design and urban planning and development. Subsequent modifications in the 1980s have not significantly diminished its integrity of association.

Materials and Workmanship: Alterations within the park during the period of significance generally contribute the SPB's significance, but some modifications have reduced the SPB's integrity of materials and workmanship. The planting plan has been altered in recent years to respond to overgrowth, while respecting the design intent. Over time, some of the park's deciduous trees have outgrown their original footprint, causing overcrowding, and others have been lost to age or disease or damaged due to wind or ice storms. The City's tree succession plan was updated in recent years to incorporate greater biodiversity through a broader range of decorative and native deciduous species, including disease-resistant species of Elm (*Ulmus Americana*), Linden (*Tilia cordata*), Oregon White (Garry) Oak (*Quercus garryana*), and European Beech (*Fagus sylvatica*). Some of the large deciduous trees were replaced with slower-growing or smaller species.

Other changes in the 1980s include the walkways along Block Nos. 7, 8 and 9, which were replaced with cruciform-shaped paths and distinguish them from the older diagonal layout. The three northern blocks (Block Nos. 10–12) were altered in 1987 when the pathways and plazas were repaved with hexagonal asphalt pavers. Shemanski Square (Block No. 12) was redesigned into a level gathering space and elevated stage area, which included installing a retaining wall, staircase, and sloped walkway along the north end. More recent changes include the installation of public monuments, fountains, sculptures, plaques, and other public art; upgrades to light fixtures; and replacement of park benches. The materials and workmanship related to those park blocks modified during the urban renewal era (Block Nos. 1–6)

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appears to be largely intact with the exception of the lighting replacements and realignment of the 1960s playground on SW College Street (Block No. 10), and the replacement of its play equipment, in the 1990s.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Community Planning and Development

Landscape Architecture

Period of Significance

1852-1973

Significant Dates

1852: Dedication of South Park Blocks

1877: Original landscape plan by Louis G. Pfunder

1903: Olmsted Brothers Plan

1908: Landscape improvements under Mische

1970: PSU Vietnam War protest

1973: SPB Urban Renewal Development Project complete

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation (if applicable)

N/A

Architect/Builder

Pfunder, Louis Gustav (Horticulturist)

Mische, Emanuel T. (Park Superintendent)

Campbell, Yost, Grube & Partners (Architects)

Hideo Sasaki (Landscape Architect)

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Period of Significance (justification)

The period of significance for the SPB begins in 1852, when the string of blocks between Stark and Clay streets was dedicated for public use, and continues through 1973, which marks the completion of the federally-funded SPB Urban Renewal Development Project; a re-envisioning of the six southernmost blocks (Block Nos. 1–6) as a “pedestrian mall” that integrated the park into the PSU campus, and ends with the installation of the *Farewell to Orpheus* sculpture (Block No. 5). Since the end date falls just outside the fifty-year threshold, Criterion Consideration G applies (see below). The SPB’s modifications in the early 1970s directly relate to the city’s large-scale urban renewal efforts that reshaped the urban fabric of downtown Portland. The redevelopment of PSU actively considered public views in urban planning that led to a balanced design, respectful of Pfunder’s original axial, formal design and linear tree alignment while applying an overlay of modern landscape design movements. This was achieved through a collaborative design process overseen by the Portland Development Commission, PSU, and City of Portland and initiated by nationally known landscape architect Hideo Sasaki and implemented by the architectural firm of Campbell, Yost, Grube & Partners with contractor Donald M. Drake Company.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

Since the end date of the period of significance falls outside the conventional fifty-year threshold, Criterion Consideration G is addressed in the nomination as the park’s 1973 modifications are directly associated with trends in Portland’s planning and urban renewal history which are an important part of the SPB’s design evolution. The landscape design and urban renewal project design work began in 1969 but did not complete construction until 1973 and was significant within the context of Portland’s urban development. Furthermore the retention of historical integrity of the southern portion of the SPB illustrates a surviving example of an urban pedestrian mall within the City of Portland and reflects the collaborative and publicly-informed design process that involved nationally renowned landscape architect Hideo Sasaki as well as Campbell, Yost, Grube, & Partners, as well as the PDC’s prominent group of design-review consultants including Walter Gordon, George Rockrise, Pietro Belluschi, and Paul Hayden Kirk.

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations).

The SPB is historically significant at the local level under Criterion A, in the area of Community Planning and Development, due to its direct association with events and trends that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local history. The park is especially important for the community vision it embodies, illustrating the evolution of park planning and urban development in downtown Portland from its initial dedication in 1852 to 1973, coinciding with the completion of the urban renewal project of the SPB’s southern portion.⁷⁸ Initially reserved as parkland in 1852, the park gradually evolved into a linear public promenade in the heart of rapidly developing nineteenth and twentieth century downtown Portland. Unlike any other downtown resource, the SPB is the best representation of the city’s development history that has endured

⁷⁸ While there is an NRHP Multiple Property Documentation (MPD) Form entitled “The City Beautiful Movement and Civic Planning in Portland, Oregon 1897-1921” that provides an appropriate historic context for understanding the importance of its early development, the SPB is not being listed under that document as the park’s period of significance predates and postdates the time period for that document. Despite not evaluating the SPB within the MPD, it demonstrates that the park is individually eligible for listing in the NRHP. Cielo Lutino, Blaine Merker, and Robin Green, “The City Beautiful Movement and Civic Planning in Portland, Oregon 1897-1921” NRHP MPD, prepared for the City of Portland Bureau of Planning, 2000.

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throughout the city's changing urban context. Figuring prominently in numerous plans including John C. Olmsted's *1903 Portland Park Plan*, Edward Bennett's Greater Portland Plan of 1912, and Max Loeb's 1932 proposal for Memorial Park and Civic Center for the Hill South of the Park Blocks in Portland, the park's physical evolution mirrored the changing urban context around it; from being surrounded by large single-family mansions to becoming an area that attracted churches, museums, schools, entertainment venues, and large apartment buildings. At the end of its period of significance in the early 1970s, the park became the center for the SPB Urban Renewal Development Project that illustrated the viability of urban renewal as a policy tool and for its influence in defining Portland's urban spaces. Further, it showed how the PDC, PSU, and City of Portland implemented a large-scale park redevelopment, while balancing public concerns about the park's sylvan character.⁷⁹

The SPB is also locally significant under Criterion C, in the area of Landscape Architecture, as a designed historic landscape embodying the distinctive characteristics of its type, period of construction and method of construction. The twelve-block long park reflects evolving landscape design trends over the past 150 years, that began as a fenced "promenade," or linear park type, in the mid-nineteenth century that was improved during the City Beautiful Movement in the early-twentieth century to promote internal pedestrian movement and provide focal points for commemorative public sculptures and artwork. During Portland's 1970s urban renewal era, the park's southern portion was integrated into a "pedestrian mall," reflecting a Modernist aesthetic as a part of the SPB Urban Renewal Development Project. The park also derives significance as reflective of the work of master horticulturist Louis G. Pfunder (original 1877 design), as well as City Superintendent of Parks Emmanuel T. Mische, who were significant individuals associated with the park's early evolution.

In terms of Criterion Consideration G, the park's period of significance continues through 1973 with the re-envisioning of the six southernmost blocks as a "pedestrian mall" under the federally-funded SPB Urban Renewal Development Project. These early 1970s changes have a direct tie to Portland's planning trends and large-scale urban renewal efforts that reshaped the downtown's urban fabric. The resulting design of the University District blocks respected Pfunder's original design intent, specifically its linear alignment of five rows of trees, while incorporating a modern landscape aesthetic. Further, the collaborative and publicly-informed design process involved nationally renowned landscape architect Hideo Sasaki and Campbell, Yost, Grube, & Partners, along with Walter Gordon, George Rockrise, Pietro Belluschi, and Paul Hayden Kirk as the PDC's design-review consultants. As the description and narrative statement of significance relates, the SPB district possesses a significant concentration, linkage, or continuity of a site, structure, and objects united historically and aesthetically by plan and physical development.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least one paragraph for each area of significance.)

PRE-EUROPEAN HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Although the period of significance for the SPB begins in 1852, the area was inhabited long before white settlers arrived in the area and have a rich and complicated history tied to Native American habitation. To acknowledge the past experiences of marginalized communities, this nomination provides broader pre-European historical narrative that is intended to reveal a more accurate and inclusive understanding of this place and recognizes the important under-represented history of the Pacific Northwest Indigenous community.

⁷⁹ It should be noted that the SPB Urban Renewal Development Project is named in a variety of different ways in period sources. This includes "Park Blocks Development," "South Park Blocks Improvement," and "South Park Blocks Mall Development" among others. For the purposes of this nomination and to be consistent with the SPB Master Plan, it is referred to as the "SPB Urban Renewal Development Project."

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Indigenous tribes have populated the Portland Basin since roughly the time of the Missoula Floods approximately 12,000 years ago.⁸⁰ The Portland Metro area rests on traditional village sites of the Chinook, Clackamas, Cowlitz, Kathlamet, Kalapuya, Molalla, Multnomah, Tualatin, and Wasco, among other peoples, who made their homes along the Columbia and Willamette Rivers.⁸¹

The territory surrounding the SPB was likely inhabited and shared by the Upper Chinookan-speaking Multnomah and Clackamas people.⁸² The Multnomah and Clackamas people, along with the Cathlamet and Lower Chinook people, were part of the same linguistic and geographical group collectively known as the Chinookan people. The Chinookan people resided from the mouth of the Columbia River to Willamette Falls, a point on the Willamette River at the present-day location of Oregon City. Chinookan villages were primarily located along the floodplain and main channel of the Columbia River, along its major tributaries and channels, and along sloughs, lakes, and ponds.⁸³ Clackamas territory was upriver from the Multnomah territory, along both sides of the Willamette River, from approximately present-day downtown Portland to present-day Oregon City.⁸⁴ The Clackamas also occupied and lived extensively along the Clackamas and Sandy Rivers and along the southern bank of the lower Columbia River, overlapping the Multnomah, and east of the Willamette River to the Cascade Mountains.⁸⁵

In spite of well-known use of this area, no specific ethnographic village locations are known to overlap the SPB.⁸⁶ An indigenous village was located south of downtown near the current streets of SW Jefferson and Front Avenue, according to the recollection of pioneer W.S. Powell.⁸⁷ The village of "*Nemalquinner*" occupied the eastern side of the Willamette River, near present-day community of St. Johns, approximately five miles downriver from the SPB, and had a population of 100 to 200 at the time of Lewis and Clark's passage through

⁸⁰ The Portland Basin, also referred to as the Wapato Basin, is a topographic and structural depression that marks the northern terminus of the Willamette Lowland in Oregon, stretching from Vancouver southward to Oregon City and is bisected by the lowermost reaches of the Columbia River. Virginia Butler, 2021 SALC Donor Recognition Event, accessed April 5, 2021, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OzfPiELHS8M>.

⁸¹ See also S.D. Beckham, *Oregon Voices: Voices From Two Centuries* (Corvallis, OR: Oregon State University Press, 2006); S.D. Beckham, *The Indians of Western Oregon: This Land Was Theirs* (Coos Bay, OR: Arago Books, 1977); Yvonne Hadja, *The Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde Community of Oregon: The First Oregonians*. (Portland, OR: Council for the Humanities, 1992); and Boyd, Robert, Kenneth Ames and Tony A. Johnson, ed. *Chinookan Peoples of the Lower Columbia*. Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 2013. Claudia Welala Long, "Urban Indians in Oregon," *The Oregon Encyclopedia*, accessed April 5, 2021, https://www.oregonencyclopedia.org/articles/urban_indians/#.YGtX2S1h1p9.

⁸² The archaeological record in the Portland Basin (including documented sites on Sauvie Island, in the vicinity of Portland Airport, Portland proper, Lake Oswego, and Oregon City) reveals a rich record of human activity, but is not well-studied. Butler, 2021 SALC Donor Recognition Event.

⁸³ Robert Boyd and Yvonne Hadja, "Seasonal Population Movement along the Lower Columbia River: The Social and Ecological Context," *American Ethnologist* 14 (2), 1987, 309-328; David V. Ellis, Judith S. Chapman, and John L. Fagan, *Cultural Resources Reconnaissance Survey and Inventory of the Portland Segment of Level 3's Proposed Fiber Optic Line from Portland, Oregon to Seattle, Washington* (Portland, OR: Archaeological Investigations Northwest, Inc., 1999).

⁸⁴ Michael Silverstein, "Chinookans of the Lower Columbia," in Northwest Coast, edited by W. Suttles. *Handbook of North American Indians*, vol. 7. W.C. Sturtevant, general editor (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution, 1990), 534.

⁸⁵ Robert H. Ruby and John A. Brown, *A Guide to the Indian Tribe of the Pacific Northwest* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1992), 25.

⁸⁶ Robert Boyd and Henry Zenk, "Portland Basin Chinookan Villages in the early 1800s," *The Oregon Encyclopedia*, accessed April 5, 2021, https://oregonencyclopedia.org/articles/wappato_valley_villages/#.Wc1MbVXytpg; Robert Boyd, Yvonne P. Hajda, and Henry B. Zenk, "Chinookan Villages of the Lower Columbia," *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, Vol. 117, No. 1, 2016, 6-37.

⁸⁷ Powell recounted that smallpox ravaged the community and people "were buried in burial grounds where is now Montgomery and Third streets." *The Oregonian*, Oct. 5, 1905, 14.

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the area in 1805-1806.⁸⁸ The area that became Goose Hollow included Native American encampments “in the hollow near today’s Alder Street, and Native women sold baskets, kindling, and berries to nearby households.”⁸⁹

During Lewis and Clark’s explorations of the area in 1805 -1806, they visited the Multnomah village situated on the upriver end of Sauvie Island, also known as “Wappato Island” for its abundance of the edible wapato root that indigenous people cultivated there. Lewis and Clark estimated the population to be roughly 200 people, but changed that to 800 after seeing it in late March 1806 on their return upriver.⁹⁰ Ethnohistorian Robert Boyd estimated the population at 15,545 from Willamette Falls to the Pacific Ocean, with “twice as many Native people gathering on the Lower Columbia during fishing season.”⁹¹

Decades before the influx of pioneers started arriving in the Oregon Territory, Congress passed a law ostensibly aimed at respecting the land and rights of indigenous peoples:

The utmost good faith shall always be observed towards the Indians; their lands and property shall never be taken from them without their consent; and, in their property, rights, and liberty, they shall never be invaded or disturbed, unless in just and lawful wars authorized by Congress; but laws founded in justice and humanity, shall from time to time be made for preventing wrongs being done to them, and for preserving peace and friendship with them.⁹²

Unfortunately, the aspirations laid out in the Northwest Ordinance of 1787 were largely eliminated by race-based legislation involving land rights and education practices aimed at minimizing native culture and religion.⁹³

The arrival of white explorers, fur traders, and ultimately settlers brought diseases that ravaged Native populations. In the early 1830s, a devastating epidemic of malaria hit the Wappato Valley especially hard, leaving behind few survivors on Sauvie Island. From the 1840s to 1860, additional population declines resulted

⁸⁸ Boyd and Hadja, “Seasonal Population Movement along the Lower Columbia River: The Social and Ecological Context”; Ellis, Chapman, and Fagan, *Cultural Resources Reconnaissance Survey and Inventory of the Portland Segment of Level 3’s Proposed Fiber Optic Line from Portland, Oregon to Seattle, Washington*; Robert Boyd and Yvonne Hadja, “Ethnohistory of the Wappato Valley,” in *An Inventory of Cultural Resources and an Evaluation of the Effects of the Proposed North Coast Feeder Gas Pipeline, Located between Deer Island and Sauvie Island, Lower Columbia River Valley, in Oregon*, by Charles Hibbs, Jr., and David V. Ellis, Section D (Portland, Oregon: Charles Hibbs and Associates, Inc., 1988), 7.

⁸⁹ Tracy J. Prince, “Goose Hollow,” *The Oregon Encyclopedia*, accessed April 5, 2021, https://www.oregonencyclopedia.org/articles/goose_hollow/#.YGyz5C1h1p8.

⁹⁰ Robert Boyd, Yvonne Hadja, and Henry Zenk, “Multnomah (Sauvie Island Indian Village).” *The Oregon Encyclopedia*, accessed April 12, 2021, https://www.oregonencyclopedia.org/articles/multnomah_indians/#.YHTAVS1h1p8.

⁹¹ Andrea Janda, “A Lower Columbia Chinook Historical Timeline,” *Publichistorypdx.org*, accessed April 12, 2021, <http://publichistorypdx.org/projects/chinook/lower-columbia-chinook-historical-timeline/>.

⁹² Northwest Ordinance, July 13, 1787, Documents Illustrative of the Formation of the Union of the American States, U.S. Government Printing Office, 1927, House Document No. 398.

⁹³ The federal Boarding School Era policies, which lasted from the mid-1800s through the 1960s, marked the beginning of a long campaign to integrate indigenous people into the Western culture. More than 60 of their Tribes in Oregon were terminated by the federal government in 1953, and Oregon denied voting rights until the Voting Rights Act of 1965. Their faith traditions were outlawed until 1993. Long, “Urban Indians in Oregon”; Coalition of Communities of Color and Portland State University, *The Native American Community in Multnomah County: An Unsettling Profile*, accessed April 5, 2021, <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/civic/article/505489>; University of Portland, *Leading with Tradition: Native American Community in the Portland Metropolitan Area*, accessed April 5, 2021, <https://www.up.edu/inclusion/files/leading-with-tradition.pdf>.

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from skirmishes and wars with white settlers and miners. By 1845, American settlers, missionaries and traders began to outnumber indigenous populations in the Willamette Valley.⁹⁴

By this date, Tribes ceded their homelands through negotiated treaties or executive agreements with the United States.⁹⁵ Decisions by the Oregon Provisional Government in 1843 and U.S. Congress in the 1850 Oregon Donation Land Law restricted land acquisition to white men and their wives, essentially extinguishing Native title to land and leaving “the whole of the most desirable portion open to white settlers.”⁹⁶ In 1851, Congress passed the Indian Appropriations Act, which created the Indian reservation system and provided funds to relocate tribes onto farming reservations. Between 1852 and 1853, white volunteer forces ruthlessly drove local tribes from their traditional hunting and gathering grounds.⁹⁷

The Willamette Valley Treaty, signed in 1855, was intended to remove the tribes from western Oregon, from lands desired by American settlers.⁹⁸ The U.S. government removed most of the surviving tribes and bands in 1856 to the newly-established Grand Ronde Reservation in the southern Yamhill valley, thus freeing the land for American pioneer settlement and alleviating the mounting conflicts among the tribes and settlers, miners, and ranchers.⁹⁹ As a result, 2.5 million acres of land in the Oregon Territory, including all of Portland, were opened to white settlement.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁴ These introduced diseases are thought to have included smallpox, malaria, dysentery, and measles which killed 90% of the entire population. American explorer David Douglas recorded “villages in western Oregon with no inhabitants, possibly because of diseases.” David Lewis, “Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde,” *The Oregon Encyclopedia*, accessed April 5, 2021, https://www.oregonencyclopedia.org/articles/confederated_tribes_of_grand_ronde/#.YGyqiy1h1p8; Boyd, Hadja, and Zenk, “Multnomah (Sauvie Island Indian Village)”; Janda, “A Lower Columbia Chinook Historical Timeline”; Lewis, “Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde.”

⁹⁵ Most tribes were party to seven treaties ratified by the U.S. Congress including the Rogue Rivers (1853, 1854), the Cow Creek Umpqua Band (1853), the Chasta Costa (1854), the Yoncalla and Molala (1854), the Kalapuya (1855), and the Molala (1855). Lewis, “Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde.”

⁹⁶ Dr. Virginia Butler described how Euro-Americans saw indigenous people as “passively” living off the land and justified this land-taking based on moral value of agriculture. In 1868, Gilbert Malcom Sproat from the Commission on the Joint Committee on Indian Reserves wrote, “...we might justify our occupation of Vancouver Island by the fact of all the land lying waste without prospect of improvement.” Butler, 2021 SALC Donor Recognition Event; William G. Robbins, “Oregon Donation Land Law,” *The Oregon Encyclopedia*, accessed April 5, 2021,

https://www.oregonencyclopedia.org/articles/oregon_donation_land_act/#.YGtv6C1h1p.

⁹⁷ Robbins, “Oregon Donation Land Law.”

⁹⁸ Lewis points out that the chiefs realized that if they remained, they would only survive a few more years as tribal populations “were collapsed from diseases, and being worn away through multiple acts of aggression by settlers engaged in the colonization of Oregon.” David G. Lewis, “The Willamette Valley Treaty (Treaty with the Kalapuya, Etc.) Signed January 22 and Ratified March 3, 1855,” *Quartux Journal*, accessed April 28, 2021,

<https://ndnhistoryresearch.com/2018/01/16/the-willamette-valley-treaty-treaty-with-the-kalapuya-etc-signed-january-22-ratified-march-3-1855/>.

⁹⁹ Prior to removal to the reservation, there were roughly 60 different tribes from six different language groups in western Oregon. The U.S. military forced at least 27 of those tribes to resettle at the Grand Ronde Agency, including the Kalapuyans; Chinookans; Molala Northern, Santiam, and Southern; the southwestern Oregon tribes; Chastacosta; and a few people from other tribes including the Shasta, Klamath, and Klickitat. The 61,440-acre reservation consisted of former Donation Land Claim allotments that had been settled by pioneer families and purchased by the U.S. Army to create a temporary reservation away from most white settlements. P.B. Sincott, the Indian agent at Grand Ronde in 1877, described conditions on the reservation: “The Indians of this agency are kept in a state of constant uneasiness and insecurity by reports of whites with whom they come in contact to the effect that they are soon to be removed from their present homes, and that the deeds to their lands are valueless, and may at any time be annulled or canceled.” Lewis, “Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde.”

¹⁰⁰ Robbins, “Oregon Donation Land Law.”

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In 1887, Congress passed the General Allotment Act, known as the Dawes Act, which sought to divide the communal land base of Tribes and extinguish tribal sovereignty through assimilation.¹⁰¹ Subsequent race-based laws concerning land distribution and ownership seriously damaged the legal standing of indigenous tribes in the Portland Basin and the Pacific Northwest.¹⁰²

INITIAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE SPB AS A PROMENADE: 1852–1910s

Portland's Early Public Parks and Initial Development of the SPB

The platting of Portland began in 1845, when Asa Lovejoy and Francis Pettygrove acquired land claims and hired a land surveyor to lay out the townsite along a grid of sixteen blocks 200' square and divided into eight 50' x 100' lots. Between the blocks were strips of 60' wide cross streets and 80' wide north-south streets, which were dedicated as public right-of-way to accommodate streets, curbing, and sidewalks. These sixteen blocks ran along the Willamette River in two parallel rows of eight blocks from SW Washington Street (north) to SW Jefferson Street (south). The next year, another row of blocks was added; in 1850, the city grid had grown by two more rows.¹⁰³

Portland's public parks had a difficult time getting established in the last half of the nineteenth century. The city's first parks were dedicated as public open space in 1852, including the Park Blocks and the Plaza Blocks (today's Chapman and Lownsdale Squares).¹⁰⁴ At the time, the municipal government "struggled to provide basic public services such as streets and sidewalks, police and fire protection, and sanitation, and the foundation was laid for other developments related to art, architecture, engineering, and landscape architecture."¹⁰⁵ The establishment of the SPB as a public resource reflects Portland's early patterns of growth and civic goals. Despite legal difficulties regarding Lownsdale's legal title to the SPB land, its designation as a linear park set an important example for subsequent efforts to plan and develop parks and open spaces elsewhere in the city.¹⁰⁶

The promise of Portland's growth was due primarily to its being one of few deep-water ports in the Pacific Northwest; however, future success as a port city was not certain since the city initially faced competition from others along the Lower Columbia. Few were willing to risk their wealth in early land speculation, as the budding

¹⁰¹ In 1891, 270 tribal members at Grand Ronde Indian Reservation, mainly men and unmarried women, gained allotments. "By July 1901, 33,468 acres were allotted to 274 Indians, leaving 25,791 acres unallotted and 440 acres reserved for government purposes. Because much of the reservation went unclaimed, the Indian Office negotiated a sale of surplus lands for a flat sum of \$28,500, or about \$1.10 an acre. Each tribal member was given \$72 per capita for his or her part of the sale." Lewis, "Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde."

¹⁰² PSU created the Indigenous Nations Studies and the American Indian Teacher Program and the Native American Student & Community Center, where groups such as the United Indian Students in Higher Education (UISHE) continue to gather. Long, "Urban Indians in Oregon."

¹⁰³ Mackenzie, "The Portland Park Blocks: Their Origin and Development," 3; Willingham, Kunowski, Starin, Mickle, Engeman, and Orloff, *City of Portland Civic Planning, Development, & Public Works, 1851-1965: A Historic Context*, 3; John Tess, "Historic Resources in Downtown Portland, 1906-1914, Historic Resources in Downtown Portland, 1915-1931," National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Interior, National Park Service, October 2007), E2.

¹⁰⁴ The Plaza Blocks occupied a two-block site in central downtown east of the SPB. Although Daniel Lownsdale had set aside eleven blocks in the 1848 plat, he did not actually deed it to the city, giving them clear title to the land. Junior League of Portland, *A Guide to Portland's Historic Parks and Gardens*; E. Kimbark MacColl and Harry H. Stein, *Merchants, Money, and Power: The Portland Establishment, 1843-1913* (Portland, OR: The Georgian Press Co., 1988), 169; Willingham, Kunowski, Starin, Mickle, Engeman, and Orloff, *City of Portland Civic Planning, Development, & Public Works, 1851-1965: A Historic Context*, 20.

¹⁰⁵ Willingham, Kunowski, Starin, Mickle, Engeman, and Orloff, *City of Portland Civic Planning, Development, & Public Works, 1851-1965: A Historic Context*, 1.

¹⁰⁶ Kunowski, Starin, Mickle, Engeman, and Orloff, *Open Space & Park Development 1851-1965*, 1.

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city's future growth depended on maritime commerce and related industries to sustain economic growth and land values. As a result, there was little to spend on public amenities like parks, especially larger tracts of newly-dedicated public lands such as the Park Blocks and those along the Willamette riverfront.¹⁰⁷

Early businessmen like Asa Lovejoy and Benjamin Stark were soon joined by Daniel Lownsdale, William Chapman, Stephen Coffin and Captain John Couch. Lownsdale, a native of Kentucky, arrived in Portland in 1845 where he established a tanning business on his 640-acre claim adjoining that of Lovejoy and Pettygrove, to the south and west of the original townsite. His business was advertised as "situated in the midst of plenty of hemlock, the only good tanbark which can be procured in the Territory."¹⁰⁸ In 1848, Lownsdale bought out Pettygrove's 320-acre interest. The plat from this year shows an expansion of the existing 200' block grid that depicts a string of narrow park blocks along the western edge.

By March 1849, Lownsdale took on two new partners, Stephen Coffin and William Williams Chapman. Chapman, an attorney and politician, was needed to help sort out the various land claims and sales: "Oregon had not yet been admitted to the Union, and already the land at the Portland townsite had changed hands several times. Lots had been subdivided and sold. The land was held jointly by the partners so that each transfer of property carried all of their names."¹⁰⁹ In 1850, Lownsdale and Stark agreed to simplify the development rights to the townsite with Stark retaining ownership of a roughly 48-acre triangular segment bounded by Burnside Street (N) and Stark Street (S) and the remaining 600-acre undeveloped portion held jointly by Lownsdale, Coffin, and Chapman.¹¹⁰

Lownsdale and his partners devoted their energies to promoting the development of Portland. In 1850, they commissioned a new survey of an expanded townsite encompassing an additional 100 blocks. As the leading promoter, Lownsdale "reserved 22 blocks for parks and set aside two blocks for a public market and customs house."¹¹¹ Drawn by John Brady and known as the "Brady Map," it depicted a series of linear blocks running from Stark Street approximately half as wide as the standard 200' grid. A plat map, prepared in December 1852, dedicated a string of contiguous, narrow blocks between Stark and Clay streets, labeled "Park Street." These maps laid out the intent for these blocks as open space for public use and enjoyment. That same year, Portland's Common Council adopted the Brady Map as "the plan of the Streets, Blocks and Public Property of the City of Portland."¹¹²

¹⁰⁷ Early land ownership claims were often dubious around the 1846 acquisition of the Oregon Country. E. Kimbark MacColl, *The Growth of a City: Power and Politics in Portland, Oregon 1915-1950* (Portland, OR: The Georgian Press Co., 1979), 5.

¹⁰⁸ Brian Booth, "Portland's Park Blocks: A Chronology," draft, 1999; MacColl and Stein, *Merchants, Money, and Power: The Portland Establishment, 1843-1913*, 169.

¹⁰⁹ Mackenzie, "The Portland Park Blocks: Their Origin and Development," 6.

¹¹⁰ Stark's triangular portion of property, depicted on an 1853 map, delineates the park continuing through it as a connective park block; however, by 1859, his property is shown as outlots. Stark sold the property in 1865 to Patrick Raleigh, who platted it without a public park and, thus, made it difficult to line up with Couch's property as it was laid out True North, while Lownsdale's was to Magnetic North. Mackenzie, "The Portland Park Blocks: Their Origin and Development," 3; Nelson, *The South Park Blocks...A Neighborhood History*, 4; Willingham, Kunowski, Starin, Mickle, Engeman, and Orloff, *City of Portland Civic Planning, Development, & Public Works, 1851-1965: A Historic Context*, 3.

¹¹¹ Willingham, Kunowski, Starin, Mickle, Engeman, and Orloff, *City of Portland Civic Planning, Development, & Public Works, 1851-1965: A Historic Context*, 3.

¹¹² Brady Map, ca 1850, on file at the Oregon Historical Society; Lownsdale Plat Map, December 3, 1852, on file at the Oregon Historical Society; Howard McKinley Corning, *Dictionary of Oregon History* (Hillsboro, OR: Binford & Mort, 1956), 152-3; Eugene E. Snyder, *We Claimed this Land: Portland's Pioneer Settlers* (Hillsboro, OR: Binford & Mort, 1984), 64.

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ca1850 Brady Map. The South Park Blocks are illustrated as shaded rectangles that extend from left to right.
Image courtesy of City of Portland Archives [A2017-020]



1852 City Record Map December 9, 1852
Image courtesy of City of Portland Archives [A2011-033]

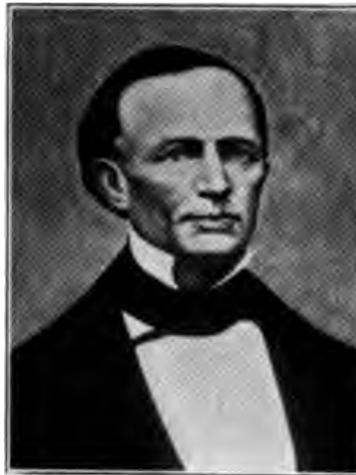
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At the time of its dedication as park blocks, the Portland townsite consisted of a few scattered log cabins and a “stump-strewn muddy rise”¹¹³ (see Figure 8). The city’s rapid growth in the 1840s was “partly fueled by the demand for food and lumber in the California goldfields and also by the construction of a plank road to the Tualatin Plains called Canyon Road.”¹¹⁴ While Lownsdale’s motivations behind the dedication were never explicit, his education and travels to Europe exposed him to European-influenced civic design ideas.¹¹⁵ His first European trip was followed by his marriage to his first wife in 1830, who died soon thereafter. Between 1842 and 1844, Lownsdale returned to Europe where he visited various countries.¹¹⁶ During this time, Lownsdale likely became “familiar with the boulevards, squares, and public spaces of European cities” and experienced “how much people enjoyed open public spaces within the city and how planned open spaces could enhance development.”¹¹⁷ Lownsdale must have realized the need for public greenspace in the heart of the city, and his vision “ensured, if nothing else, as the city grew, open space would be preserved at its core where high land values would otherwise have eventually precluded it.”¹¹⁸ It would take another twenty years for the City to execute any park expansion or improvements.¹¹⁹



Portrait of Daniel Lownsdale

Image courtesy of Oregon Historical Society [72569]

Promenades in Nineteenth Century American Landscape Architecture Design

The initial landscape design of the SPB was characterized by its formal axial layout along a twelve-block stretch, illustrative of a “promenade” park, or linear park, that gained popularity during the mid-nineteenth century. This distinctive type of park design often featured a long ribbon of greenspace linked together by a common design scheme within a relatively dense environment. During this period, American cities were

¹¹³ Mackenzie, “The Portland Park Blocks: Their Origin and Development,” 6.

¹¹⁴ This wagon road linked the rich agricultural lands to the west with the growing city, assuring its future. Willingham, Kunowski, Starin, Mickle, Engeman, and Orloff, *City of Portland Civic Planning, Development, & Public Works, 1851-1965: A Historic Context*, 4.

¹¹⁵ Harvey W. Scott, ed., *History of Portland, Oregon* (Portland, OR: D. Mason & Co., Publishers, 1890), 97.

¹¹⁶ Lownsdale was in poor health and this trip was recommended by his doctor. Access Genealogy, “Biography of Daniel H. Lownsdale,” accessed April 5, 2021, <https://accessgenealogy.com/dataset/history-of-the-pacific-northwest-oregon-and-washington-1889>.

¹¹⁷ Mackenzie, “The Portland Park Blocks: Their Origin and Development,” 6.

¹¹⁸ Beals, “Park Blocks” National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form, 17.

¹¹⁹ Lutino, Merker, and Green, “The City Beautiful Movement and Civic Planning in Portland, Oregon 1897-1921” NRHP MPD, 11; Tong, *South Park Blocks Historical Study*, 37.

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considering the role of parks and public spaces within the broader urban planning process. One of the oldest forms of dedicated open space was the public square, which played a primary role in the planning and design of many European towns and cities, emerging as an important component of America's built environment.¹²⁰ From the mid to late 1800s, the urban park vision centered on providing natural settings in an urban environment, or so-called "pleasure gardens." Either as a part of a pleasure garden, popular streets or parkways, and reservoirs or as a discrete park type set within an urban street grid, promenades played an important part in the history of designed historic landscapes in the U.S., Oregon, and Portland. The term 'promenade' referred to "an area of ground suitable for walking and riding" and was generally applied to urban public spaces. Derived from the French 'promener' (to walk), it took on a distinctive meaning in the mid to late nineteenth century to connote "the act of walking leisurely in a social setting." It grew as a venue for social representation and fashion replete with prescribed rules of decorum.¹²¹ Promenades were found in cemeteries, along busy streets or boulevards, as well as besides water reservoirs and embankments, and eventually in urban parks. In the case of the SPB, the promenade park was flanked by narrow roadways that served to diminish urban traffic and create a more comfortable central mall in the middle. Many places designated as promenades were also referred to by other terms that described either their accessibility to the public, such as public square or ground, or their association with entertainment, such as park or pleasure ground. Examples include the State House Yard in Philadelphia, the Battery Park in New York, Boston Common, and the National Mall in Washington, DC, all of which were also called promenades.¹²² While promenades could be formally landscaped places, they could also be informal areas, such as those described in a 1786 account of Savannah, South Carolina's "sand bank called the Bluff that remains partly dry in the winter and serves as a public promenade."¹²³

The act of promenading was initially an orchestration of genteel urban society; however, the landscaped promenades (in its noun form) where this activity occurred were often "frequented by all classes of people...to observe and engage the public life of the city" and often featured shaded linear or curvilinear pathways in urban, park-like settings.¹²⁴ One of the earliest public promenades in the U.S. was contained in Pierre L'Enfant's 1791 plan for the Washington, DC capitol, featuring a "grand tree-lined central public walkway that came to be known as 'The Mall'."¹²⁵ By the late 1700s, Boston had created a half-mile long tree-lined promenade, known as the "Mall," along the eastern frontage of the Boston Common.¹²⁶ Influential public figures, including Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr., who had traveled to Europe in 1850 and toured Britain's Birkenhead Park, believed that parks should provide a natural, somewhat pastoral environment where city

¹²⁰ Like Portland, San Francisco laid out a city-wide design for streets and parks that included two public squares (now known as Union and Washington squares). Lutino, Merker, and Green, "The City Beautiful Movement and Civic Planning in Portland, Oregon 1897-1921" NRHP MPD, 27; "History of Union Square Park," San Francisco Park Alliance, accessed June 15, 2021, <https://www.sfparkalliance.org/iur-parks/parks/union-square>.

¹²¹ Jacobson, "The Nineteenth Century American Promenade: Precedent and Form," 44; "Promenade," History of Early American Landscape Design, a project of the Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts, National Gallery of Art, accessed July 30, 2021, <https://heald.nga.gov/mediawiki/index.php/Promenade>.

¹²² Jacobson, "The Nineteenth Century American Promenade: Precedent and Form," 48; "Promenade," History of Early American Landscape Design.

¹²³ Carl R. Lounsbury, *An Illustrated Glossary of Early Southern Architecture & Landscape* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 292.

¹²⁴ Jacobson, "The Nineteenth Century American Promenade: Precedent and Form," 44-45.

¹²⁵ L'Enfant envisioned this active public space as "a national promenade to promote democratic engagement among citizens of the new republic." Jacobson, "The Nineteenth Century American Promenade: Precedent and Form," 42.

¹²⁶ A smaller walkway lined with shade trees was developed along Boston Common's Park Street boundary. "Within a couple of decades these promenades were extended to encompass the entire perimeter of the Common." Jacobson, "The Nineteenth Century American Promenade: Precedent and Form," 42.

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residents could escape the hustle and bustle of city life.¹²⁷ Olmsted wrote “eloquently of the virtues of European promenades that they had visited, urging creation of more public pedestrian concourses in American cities.”¹²⁸ Olmsted also touted city squares, claiming they are “much used by people [and are] distinctly ornamental incidents of city life.”¹²⁹

Soon, pedestrian promenades and “parkways” accommodating both carriages and pedestrians appeared, offering respite from the crowded, unhealthy conditions that characterized rapidly industrializing cities. As importantly, they fulfilled a range of social and recreational goals, in a variety of social contexts. For the affluent upper class, it offered an alternative setting to the formal parlor or structured social event. Further, these outdoor settings provided a means for its citizens to “engage in the social practice of ‘seeing and being seen,’ while enjoying a casual stroll along comfortably scaled, shaded pathways.”¹³⁰ For some, part of the motivation for setting aside public space was “to recruit and retain workers with the offer of pleasant and healthful settings to enjoy on Sundays, their sole day of leisure.” Olmsted viewed the promenade as a “gregarious” space that would “attract large numbers of people of all classes to observe and engage the public life of the city.”¹³¹ For Central Park, Frederick Law Olmsted and Calvert Vaux designed a half-mile long formal promenade with benches that offered both “opportunities for respite and observation of the energetic flow of pedestrians.” The Mall was also planted with double rows of elm trees, which were specifically chosen for their “lofty stature and spreading canopy at maturity, which had the dual effects of not only providing shade, but as importantly, defining the spatial volume of the promenade corridor at a scale appropriate to its breadth.”¹³² Boston’s elm-lined Commonwealth Avenue mall, developed in the mid-nineteenth century, shared these characteristics. Within a couple of decades, these promenades were extended to encompass the entire perimeter of Boston Common, offering “fine views of the bay and adjacent Common.”¹³³

Olmsted also was responsible for the introduction of the street-related promenade, modelled after Parisian boulevards. By the 1870s, his Eastern Parkway in Brooklyn stretched from Prospect Park to Ralph Avenue. Olmsted’s intent with these scenic routes was to connect the various local parks to form a larger network. This was indeed the case with Olmsted’s Plan for Portland’s park system.¹³⁴

The endurance of the promenade suggests that certain physical and spatial characteristics common across the type may account for its success:

For example, a promenade that was well connected to local streets would benefit by enhanced accessibility to neighboring populations, while connections to through routes could negatively impact the tranquility of the setting. The nature of adjacent land uses could influence the number and type of residents or visitors who were likely to populate the promenade, while

¹²⁷ “Olmsted Designed New York City Parks,” New York City Department of Parks & Recreation, accessed June 15, 2021, <https://www.nycgovparks.org/about/history/olmsted-parks>; National Association of Olmsted Parks, <http://www.olmsted.org/>.

¹²⁸ Jacobson, “The Nineteenth Century American Promenade: Precedent and Form,” 43.

¹²⁹ Lutino, Merker, and Green, “The City Beautiful Movement and Civic Planning in Portland, Oregon 1897-1921” NRHP MPD, 27.

¹³⁰ Jacobson, “The Nineteenth Century American Promenade: Precedent and Form,” 38.

¹³¹ Olmsted proposed a similar concept for Brooklyn’s Prospect Park: “Men must come together, and must be seen coming together, in carriages, on horseback and on foot, and the concourse of animated life which will thus be formed, mist in itself be made, if possible, an attractive and diverting spectacle.” Jacobson, “The Nineteenth Century American Promenade: Precedent and Form,” 43-44.

¹³² The concourse for Central Park was sited well within the park boundaries in order to separate it from the urban context and “embed it more effectively in the naturalized landscape that characterized the park.” Jacobson, “The Nineteenth Century American Promenade: Precedent and Form,” 54.

¹³³ Jacobson, “The Nineteenth Century American Promenade: Precedent and Form,” 43.

¹³⁴ Jacobson, “The Nineteenth Century American Promenade: Precedent and Form,” 45.

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alignment, dimensions, scale and amenity features could affect the continuity, comfort, and pleasure of the promenade experience.¹³⁵

From the promenade's earliest design iterations, shade tree plantings were an important amenity feature "that not only defined the spatial boundaries of the promenade and moderated the microclimate, in addition the closely spaced plantings delineated the various functional corridors." Additionally, building facades that lined street promenades "yielded consistent spatial enclosure that supported linear movement along the corridors."¹³⁶ Benches, lighting, and park furniture were also integral elements of these promenades to enhance comfort and safety, as well as to encourage lingering. Interestingly, these amenities didn't appear to be implemented at the SPB until the early twentieth century.

In many cities, like the SPB, promenades would eventually become more than recreational and social gathering spaces, but places for parades, public celebrations, demonstrations, and other expressions of political sentiment.¹³⁷ They remained important public spaces in many American cities up to the twentieth century, "when changes in social mores and the withdrawal of middle classes to domestic suburban realms diminished the popularity of public promenading as a social pursuit."¹³⁸

Portland's Promenade and the Role of Horticulturist Louis G. Pfunder

Following Lownsdale's death in 1862, nearly one-third of the property known as "Park Row" reverted to private ownership through a faulty deed. Lownsdale's former spousal heirs entered into a tortuous, decades-long legal battle with the city, contesting the validity of the Lownsdales' land transactions. His wife Nancy had not signed any documents transferring ownership and six of the northernmost parcels (Stark to Salmon streets) were lost to development in 1873, because the City Council was unwilling to purchase them from Lownsdale's heirs. This effectively subdivided the park land in two, forming the South and North Park Blocks.¹³⁹ The Portland Parks Commission noted this loss in their 1901 report:

This failure of title deprives the public of continuous Park Blocks through the heart of the city, and is greatly to be deplored. A repurchase at this day, exclusive of improvement, would cost a quarter million. The time may come when the city will be glad to condemn and repossess them at even double the price.¹⁴⁰

By 1869, a string of Park Blocks had been platted north of Ankeny Street to the river. The following year, the City Council authorized the purchase of the park blocks from SW Ankeny to Salmon streets at \$3,000 per block. The owners wanted \$6,000 per block and the deal was never closed. Other proposals were presented over the next year but the August 31, 1871 issue of *The Oregonian* emphasized the civic importance of the park blocks: "There is a settled feeling among the citizens of Portland that the interest of the people, the future, and character of our city and the health and comfort of the inhabitants all depend greatly on the opening and ornamentation of this grand avenue and thoroughfare through the center of the City, north and south."¹⁴¹

¹³⁵ Jacobson, "The Nineteenth Century American Promenade: Precedent and Form," 46.

¹³⁶ These trees "were highly valued for the welcome shade they cast on walkways in the spring and summer months, and for conveying a restorative natural quality that distinguished the settings from their urban surroundings." Jacobson, "The Nineteenth Century American Promenade: Precedent and Form," 58.

¹³⁷ Jacobson, "The Nineteenth Century American Promenade: Precedent and Form," 46.

¹³⁸ Jacobson, "The Nineteenth Century American Promenade: Precedent and Form," 38.

¹³⁹ The NPB passed to city ownership under less contentious circumstances than their counterparts to the south, with Couch dedicating the five park blocks between Ankeny and NW Glisan streets to the public on January 25, 1865, deeding them to the city as an outright gift. Corning, *Dictionary of Oregon History*, 152-3; Snyder, *We Claimed this Land: Portland's Pioneer Settlers*, 64.

¹⁴⁰ Portland Parks Commission, *Park Commission's Report 1901*, on file at the Portland Archives and Records Center.

¹⁴¹ Mackenzie, "The Portland Park Blocks: Their Origin and Development," 10.

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Chapman and his wife, Margaret, sold to the city the seven park blocks between SW Salmon and Mill streets for \$6,250. In 1871, Coffin deeded the blocks between Mill and Jackson streets to the city for \$2,500. Despite the sale, it was not until 1876 that the City had clear title to the SPB.¹⁴²

The gently northeast-sloping park blocks site was cleared of its native conifer tree cover sometime in the 1860s, probably for much-needed timber for an expanding city. True to Portland's early moniker 'Stumptown,' the park blocks parcel remained undeveloped and littered with tree stumps (see Figure 7).¹⁴³ Between 1852 and 1876, the land was used by the public as a roadway for wagons and carriages, and were "park-like" in name only. The town had developed as a strip several blocks deep along the Willamette River, with the park blocks sited on the outskirts of town with "scattered, white-washed frame houses on either side of the dedicated area. There were no true streets, only dirt paths which turned to mud in rainy weather. The land had been cleared and the parkway was filled with stumps. At the southern tip of the south park blocks dedication, the land was fenced and used as pasture. Beyond that was a baseball field."¹⁴⁴

Period accounts in *The Oregonian* described the park's setting in 1871 as "ungraded and ornamented only with stumps and logs."¹⁴⁵ Although unimproved, the residents of Portland held aspirations for the area as a public amenity to be proud of. This included one Portland resident who wrote in an 1871 letter to the *Oregonian*:

We want the blocks in the Park improved and ornamented by trees, walks, fountains and shrubbery. We want the opportunity of accruing health, virtuous pleasure and the recreation of our families in beautiful parks – the like of which we have no means to provide ourselves.¹⁴⁶

It wasn't until the 1870s that the city began to consider development of the Park Blocks. In February 1877, the Portland Common Council passed an ordinance authorizing the Committee on Streets and Public Property to receive bids for supplying and planting 600 shade trees for the ten blocks between SW Salmon and Hall streets.¹⁴⁷ "Trees considered suitable were White Elm, Silver leafed and Lombardy Poplars, Locust, Linden, Rosewood, European Ash, Box Elder, Cork Elm and Oregon and Red Maples." Evidently, the committee "did not receive a satisfactory bid for the proposed 600 trees, for they signed a contract for only 104 trees."¹⁴⁸ Another ordinance (No. 1933) was approved on March 7, seeking bids for the construction of fences around the blocks.¹⁴⁹ According to Herbert Beals' 1995 research on the Park Blocks, the only indication otherwise was a resolution dated May 11, 1869, to the City's Common Council from William Cree and John M. Buck of the Committee on Streets and Public Property, calling for the planting of some small trees in 'public squares' and installation of "suitable racks to guard them from injury."¹⁵⁰ It is not clear, however, whether this applied to the SPB or just included the two "Plaza Blocks" squares.

¹⁴² Booth, "Portland's Park Blocks: A Chronology"; Mackenzie, "The Portland Park Blocks: Their Origin and Development," 7; Nelson, *The South Park Blocks...A Neighborhood History*, 4.

¹⁴³ The SPB tract remained in this state for twenty-four years while the extent of Lownsdale's gift remained in dispute. It was not until 1876 that the transfer of the land to the city was resolved by then Associate Justice Matthew Paul Deady of the Oregon Supreme Court. in *Lownsdale vs. the City of Portland* Volume 1, Deady's Reports, 4. The witness, Short, referred to in the report was R.V. Short, Member of the Constitutional Convention of Oregon, 1857.

¹⁴⁴ Mackenzie, "The Portland Park Blocks: Their Origin and Development," 12.

¹⁴⁵ Tong, *South Park Blocks Historical Study*, 2.

¹⁴⁶ Tong, *South Park Blocks Historical Study*, 4.

¹⁴⁷ Ordinance No. 1929 authorized the solicitation of bids for "setting out shade trees on Park Blocks 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 and 16 (as they were then identified) on the streets adjacent thereto, or on so much thereof as they may deem expedient." Beals, "Park Blocks" NRHP Nomination Form, 12.

¹⁴⁸ Tong, *South Park Blocks Historical Study*, 37.

¹⁴⁹ Beals, "Park Blocks" NRHP MPD Nomination Form, 12.

¹⁵⁰ Beals, "Park Blocks" NRHP Nomination Form, 12.

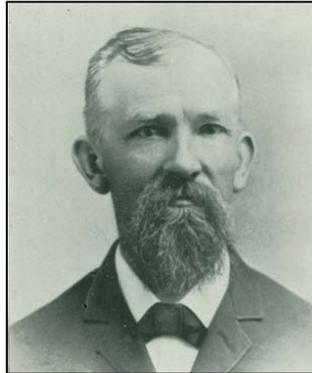
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The city contracted Louis Gustav Pfunder to execute the planting plan for ten of the park blocks between SW Salmon and SW Hall streets. Pfunder is one of the representative florists of the City of Portland, born in Mülheim, Germany, in 1845.¹⁵¹ At fourteen years of age, Pfunder began an apprenticeship in gardening and horticulture at three of the most celebrated palace gardens in Germany, Alsace and Switzerland dating from the late-seventeenth century.¹⁵²



Portrait of Louis Gustav Pfunder

Image courtesy of City of Portland Archives [A 2004-002.3151]

By the mid-nineteenth century, European garden design had matured from playgrounds of royalty into grand-scale civic amenities executed in an ordered, compartmentalized, often bi-axial style. They imposed an order and geometry that seemed to extend as far as the eye could see. Pfunder was first exposed to the garden design and plant sciences during his apprenticeship training under master Swiss florist and horticulturist, A.L. Heitz. "Heitz's aesthetically pleasing and revolutionary greenhouses were considered engineering marvels of their time, and were celebrated throughout Europe."¹⁵³ He spent three and a half years studying under Heitz before leaving for Bulweil, Alsace, in 1862 to continue his apprenticeship under the celebrated botanists at Banman and Company, where he "learned the process of budding and grafting and the care and treatment of shrubbery and trees."¹⁵⁴ Upon completion of his two-year apprenticeship, Pfunder returned to Germany, where he was offered employment tending the expansive palace gardens at Schlosspark Nymphenburg in Munich. In the mid-1860s Pfunder's training was briefly interrupted by a year's conscription into the German Army. Following his discharge, he reestablished his career moving to Frankfurt to landscape and replant the city's public gardens that had been damaged by recent civil strife. In March 1866, Pfunder decided to take his talents to America. On his arrival in New York City, he was brought on to work on one of America's greatest landscapes, New York's Central Park, the work of master landscape designer, Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr.¹⁵⁵ In 1868, he embarked for San Francisco, where he worked for a year as a florist at Golden Gate Park. "It was in San Francisco that Pfunder's work ethic and imagination caught the attention of Portland's foremost banker and merchant, William S. Ladd."¹⁵⁶ Ladd summoned him to Portland to lay out and improve the grounds of his

¹⁵¹ In 1845, Mulheim was part of the Grand Duchy of Baden. Long known for its academic and merchant life, the region passed briefly to Prussian hands before ultimately being absorbed by the expanding German Empire. Matthew Hayes, "Louis Pfunder House" NRHP Nomination Form (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Interior, National Park Service, 2005), 11.

¹⁵² By this period, the master-apprenticeship system was adopted as the formal education process for employment in specialized and skilled occupations.

¹⁵³ Hayes, "Louis Pfunder House" NRHP Nomination Form, 11.

¹⁵⁴ H.K. Hines, *An Illustrated History of the State of Oregon* (Chicago, IL: Lewis Publishing Co., 1893), 599.

¹⁵⁵ One source cites that his first engagement was with a florist in Union Hill, NJ, with whom he worked for a year. Hines, *An Illustrated History of the State of Oregon*, 599.

¹⁵⁶ Hayes, "Louis Pfunder House" NRHP Nomination Form, 12.

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family estate in Dunthorpe, Oregon, as well as serve as superintendent of Ladd's conservatory, which "boasted the first and finest greenhouse constructed in the Pacific Northwest."¹⁵⁷

Pfunder went into business in 1870 at the corner of Clay and 3rd streets. In 1878, he purchased one-half block cornering 9th and Washington Streets, establishing his garden known as "Oregon Homestead." It was here that he erected a series of greenhouses, "heated by hot water and arranged for the forcing of roses and other flowering plants for the florist business, and also choice semi-tropical plants for decoration purposes."¹⁵⁸

Pfunder married Rosa Zeigler, a native of Germany, in 1874. Together, they made their first trip to their native country in 1883 and upon their return a year later, they built a residence and garden, which he called "City Park" and used for florist purposes. In 1890, he acquired a four-acre property in the Mt. Tabor neighborhood. It was during this time that he became widely known as a horticulturist.¹⁵⁹

For the SPB, Pfunder was tasked with the planting of 104 Lombardy poplars and elms along the park's ten-block stretch between SW Salmon and SW Hall streets. Pfunder's landscape concept would eventually feature a block-by-block perimeter ring of more than 240 American elms, with each block infilled with other deciduous species. Trees were planted in five rows of nine trees spaced 20' to 22' apart on the north-south axis and 20' apart on the east-west axis. A historic photograph from 1878 shows 45 American elms and Lombardy poplars per block (see Figure 9). An etching from c. 1882 and additional photographs from the 1880s depict the Park Blocks' initial tree plantings, along with the plank sidewalks along the outer row for pedestrians, wooden barriers to protect the trees on the outermost perimeter, and split-rail wood post fence to protect the inner three rows of trees (see Figure 11).¹⁶⁰

The Nineteenth Century Urban Context of the SPB

By the end of the 1870s, the SPB had assumed a more ordered appearance and served as a significant improvement to the established prestigious residential district, lined with Italianate mansions owned by some of the city's leading families. Through the end of the nineteenth century, residents from all parts of the city enjoyed the park blocks, which developed as a 'promenade ground' and, briefly, a racetrack:

The blocks were fenced, thickly planted groves of trees. People promenaded around the perimeter of the blocks on the plank sidewalks... Strolling or driving along the park blocks on a Sunday was also the perfect place to see and be seen. The streets on each side of the park blocks were used as a pleasure drive for horses and carriages.¹⁶¹

In 1879 and 1880, four grand Italianate houses were built on the park's west side between SW Harrison and SW Mill streets for Judge John W. Whalley, M.W. Ferchheimer, and Ralph and Isaac Jacobs. The first two are attributed to architect Albert H. Jordan, and the latter pair to Warren W. Williams, who was perhaps the city's most notable architect of the era. "The two houses, along with their neighbors to the north, the Jacobs' mansions, brought Portland to the highest design standards in the Italianate style, and had they survived would remain among the finest architectural achievements ever built on the Pacific Coast."¹⁶² Many immigrant families settled in the neighborhood to the east and west of the park blocks. "With the exception of a carriage

¹⁵⁷ Hayes, "Louis Pfunder House" NRHP Nomination Form, 11-12.

¹⁵⁸ Hines, *An Illustrated History of the State of Oregon*, 599.

¹⁵⁹ Pfunder was captivated by Oregon's distinctive botanical environment, remaining in Portland and pursuing his work for the next fifty years. Hayes, "Louis Pfunder House" NRHP Nomination Form, 12; Junior League of Portland, *A Guide to Portland's Historic Parks and Gardens*.

¹⁶⁰ Nelson, *The South Park Blocks...A Neighborhood History*, 5.

¹⁶¹ Mackenzie, "The Portland Park Blocks: Their Origin and Development," 19-20.

¹⁶² William J. Hawkins III and William Willingham, *Classic Houses of Portland, Oregon, 1850-1950* (Portland, OR: Timber Press, 1999), 121-22.

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house and an adjacent paint shop, there were no buildings along the south park blocks that were not residential or institutional. The park blocks were still five or six blocks from the commercial heart of the city.”¹⁶³

The SPB also was home to a number of educational institutions, including Lincoln High School (now Lincoln Performance Hall), Portland Academy, Park School, and the Shattuck Elementary School (now part of the PSU campus). The Portland Academy, which faced SW Broadway, established itself in 1851 and used the Park Blocks as its backyard until closing in 1878. The Park School opened in 1879 between Jefferson and Madison, serving as an elementary school and, later, used for high school students.¹⁶⁴

The First Congregational United Church of Christ was the first of four churches that ultimately would be erected facing the park blocks. Construction on the church edifice began in 1890 at 1126 SW Park Ave., but wasn't completed until 1895. Designed by architect Henry J. Hefty, it featured a 185' Italian Gothic tower that for many years was visible from almost anywhere in the city. “It is altogether a pleasant and varied addition to the South Park Blocks.”¹⁶⁵ St. James Lutheran Church was also constructed to abut the park in this early period, with the congregation erecting its first building in 1891 on the western side. The early building was followed by a more substantial church in 1907 that remains today at 1315 SW Park Ave.



1890 Aerial Map

Image courtesy of the Library of Congress [G4294.P6A3 1890 .C6]

By the 1890s, Portland was a prosperous trade port, rich in lumber and agriculture with trade links through the Willamette Valley. At the start of the decade, the city's population stood at 46,385; by the end, it had nearly doubled.¹⁶⁶ In July 1892, the City of Portland consolidated with East Portland and Albina, two cities on the east side of the Willamette River, doubling the city's size. The west side remained the commercial and financial core

¹⁶³ Mackenzie, “The Portland Park Blocks: Their Origin and Development,” 19.

¹⁶⁴ Nelson, *The South Park Blocks...A Neighborhood History*, 6, 23.

¹⁶⁵ Thomas Vaughan and George McMath, *A Century of Portland Architecture* (Portland, OR: Oregon Historical Society, 1967), 68.

¹⁶⁶ Tess, “Historic Resources in Downtown Portland, 1906-1914, Historic Resources in Downtown Portland, 1915-1931,” E3.

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of the city, while the residential middle class moved across the river. The population shift followed the growth of the streetcar lines and availability of buildable lots.¹⁶⁷

Yet, still any additions to Portland's park system "came chiefly by haphazard, private donations and remained largely undeveloped."¹⁶⁸ Early budgetary issues still plagued the city. Planning and spending for basic city services remained a priority, with park development furthest down the list.¹⁶⁹

During this period, the City of Portland inherited Holladay Park as part of the consolidation and bought a 40-acre site from Amos N. King, which became the nucleus of City Park (present-day Washington Park). This was the first property purchased specifically for park purposes by the city government. In 1894, the Pennoyer family donated Governor's Park to the city, becoming the first outright gift for park purposes. Other park acquisitions included the Ladd's Addition parks, Columbia Park, Macleay Park, which started a concerted park drive. Before 1900, the Park Blocks and City Park formed the core of the city's park system.¹⁷⁰

Progressive Era Planning and City Beautiful Movement 1900-1920

Portland underwent tremendous growth between 1870 and 1900, with the city's population increasing from 8,293 to 90,426 residents. Between 1900 and 1910, the population increased by 117,000 new residents.¹⁷¹ During this period, transportation improvements enabled Portland to capture much of the Pacific Northwest trade and became a leading exporter of grain. The arrival of the transcontinental railroad in 1883 and the development of an improved ship canal were key to the city's economic expansion. Portland's downtown expanded as well: "Three- and four-story 19th century business blocks were being supplanted by twelve- and fourteen-story skyscrapers on 5th and 6th Avenue and by six-story blocks scattered between 3rd and Broadway."¹⁷² Hotels prospered during this boom period, along with a rise of civic buildings including a new central library, county courthouse, and police headquarters. In 1905, the city celebrated with the Lewis and Clark Exposition, which attracted substantial outside capital.¹⁷³

The Progressive Era, which coincided with the City Beautiful Movement, was characterized as filled with a "buoyancy of spirit" and had an important effect on Portland parks during the first two decades of the twentieth century.¹⁷⁴ The City Beautiful Movement can be traced to Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr., who believed that public

¹⁶⁷ Mackenzie, "The Portland Park Blocks: Their Origin and Development," 24; Portland Parks Commission, *Park Commission's Report 1901*, on file at the Portland Archives and Records Center.

¹⁶⁸ Portland Parks and Recreation, *Cultural Resource Management Plan: Planning Framework and Implementation*, July 2007, accessed April 5, 2021, <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/parks/article/165571>. 21.

¹⁶⁹ According to John Reys, "Western cities lighted streets, supplied water and gas, regulated the disposal of sewage, collected garbage, constructed and maintained streets and sidewalks, operated markets, fought crime, furnished mass transportation, cared for the sick, buried the dead, extinguished fires, controlled nuisances, educated their youth, and provided recreational facilities." John Reys, *The Forgotten Frontier: Urban Planning in the American West Before 1890* (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 1981), 3.

¹⁷⁰ Junior League of Portland, *A Guide to Portland's Historic Parks and Gardens*; "Explore Washington Park," accessed June 10, 2020, <http://explorewashingtonpark.org/about/history-of-the-park>; Mackenzie, "The Portland Park Blocks: Their Origin and Development," 24; Portland Parks and Recreation, *Cultural Resource Management Plan: Planning Framework and Implementation*, 22.

¹⁷¹ Many of these new residents arrived between 1905-1910, when the population experienced an 87% growth increase. Tess, "Historic Resources in Downtown Portland, 1906-1914, Historic Resources in Downtown Portland, 1915-1931," E5.

¹⁷² Tess, "Historic Resources in Downtown Portland, 1906-1914, Historic Resources in Downtown Portland, 1915-1931," E6.

¹⁷³ By 1907, the city had over 55 out-of-state companies worth over \$1 million. Tess, "Historic Resources in Downtown Portland, 1906-1914, Historic Resources in Downtown Portland, 1915-1931," E7; Willingham, Kunowski, Starin, Mickle, Engeman, and Orloff, *City of Portland Civic Planning, Development, & Public Works, 1851-1965: A Historic Context*, 9, 11, 13, 15.

¹⁷⁴ As stated in the Section 8 Summary Paragraph, the NRHP MPD nomination for "The City Beautiful Movement and Civic Planning in Portland, Oregon 1897-1921" provides an appropriate historic context for the SPB's early development

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parks “not only add to the beauty of a city and to the pleasure of living in it, but are exceedingly important factors in developing the healthfulness, morality, intelligence, and business prosperity of its residents.”¹⁷⁵ It promoted the planned city, recognizing cities as “physical entities that could be shaped to reflect beauty, harmony, system, and order.” For Portland, the two major outcomes from this national movement were the Olmsted Plan of 1903 and Edward Bennett’s Greater Portland Plan of 1912. These plans represented the City’s first attempts to create a comprehensive and integrated plan for its park system, transportation, and land uses.¹⁷⁶ The SPB directly benefited from these early comprehensive plans and became a central component of the city’s larger vision of interconnected public open spaces.

Portland’s civic leaders embraced the tenets of the City Beautiful Movement in its park system, following the national trend of city planning that was transforming cities across the country. During this period, the city expanded and developed its public parks in earnest. Prior to the creation of the Olmsted Plan, Portland voters approved the creation of an independent city park commission that could levy an annual property tax for purchasing and improving parks property. At their first meeting on October 20, 1900, the Board of Park Commissioners transferred control over parklands from the Water Board to the new Park Board. The next month, they formed three subcommittees: Committee on the Judiciary, Finance, and Rules and Regulations; Committee on Engineering, Landscape Gardening, Zoology, Botany, and Forestry; and Committee on Equipment of Parks, Purchasing Supplies, and Employment of Men. Charles M. Myers was hired as the first Superintendent of Parks.¹⁷⁷ The 1901 Parks Commission’s Report recognized the importance of setting aside land for public open space for future generations:

The beautifying of the city as a whole, the increased healthfulness of the people, the higher values to all property, the opening of beautiful suburbs and the true expansion of the commonwealth itself are involved. For these reasons we urge the consideration of all our citizens to the subject. The annual tax for maintenance should be liberal...Whether the work is continued in the present form, or shall be undertaken as a more integral part of city government, its importance should be magnified and the type should be set which coming generations will be grateful to acknowledge and fulfill. A city like Portland, to which nature had been more prodigal in climate, diversity and grandeur of surroundings than any other country, should provide itself the name of having been worthy of its heritage. A park system embracing riverside, mountains and plains, and connected by wide boulevards, would go far to make the most beautiful city in the world.¹⁷⁸

Also highlighted in the 1901 report were the Commission’s plans to “grade and crosswalk the Park Blocks as fast as means are provided; to make smooth lawns and judiciously cull inferior trees which can be replaced by others.” It goes on to recommend that some of the blocks be planted in “flowering shrubs and central beds of flowers.”¹⁷⁹

and identifies the park as an important historic resource; however, this nomination does not rely on the MPD since the period of significance both precedes and extends well past the time period discussed in the MPD. Lutino, Merker, and Green, “The City Beautiful Movement and Civic Planning in Portland, Oregon 1897-1921” NRHP MPD.

¹⁷⁵ Lutino, Merker, and Green, “The City Beautiful Movement and Park Planning in Portland, Oregon 1897-1928” NRHP MPD, 12-16.

¹⁷⁶ Lutino, Merker, and Green, “The City Beautiful Movement and Park Planning in Portland, Oregon 1897-1921” NRHP MPD, 1.

¹⁷⁷ Portland Parks and Recreation, *Cultural Resource Management Plan: Planning Framework and Implementation*, 21, 23.

¹⁷⁸ Portland Parks Commission, *Park Commission’s Report 1901*, 11-12.

¹⁷⁹ Portland Parks Commission, *Park Commission’s Report 1901*, 8.

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John C. Olmsted's 1903 Portland Park Plan and Parks Superintendent Emanuel T. Mische

In 1903, the city chartered a formal park board to replace the Park Commission and hired the renowned Olmsted Brothers landscape architecture firm to prepare a long-range park plan for Portland.¹⁸⁰ At the time, Portland owned less than 200 acres of parklands, with most of it undeveloped.¹⁸¹ This was substantially less than the cities of Tacoma and Seattle in Washington State. That same year, John C. Olmsted visited Portland and Seattle to prepare parks and parkways plans for both cities, which represented his first public commissions in the Pacific Northwest. Published in the 1903 Park Board report, Olmsted's plan highlighted a system of parks and parkways on the city's west hillsides and east side river bluffs to take advantage of mountain and river views, along with a number of formal boulevards, playgrounds, city squares, and waterfront parks. The report also recommended several park acquisitions including Forest Park, Sellwood, Mt. Tabor Park, the Columbia Sloughs, Ross and Swan Islands, and Rocky Butte Park.¹⁸² The Olmsted plan, which was very similar to those developed for other cities, was based on the concept that connected parks and parkways are more useful than isolated parks.¹⁸³

Recognizing the importance of Lownsdale's linear open space contributions, Olmsted incorporated both the Plaza Blocks and the Park Blocks as integral elements into his comprehensive vision. His 1903 report stated that, although it was probably too costly to acquire the blocks between SW Ankeny and SW Salmon streets, a "handsome terminus is needed as a matter of dignity and propriety" at the south end.¹⁸⁴ By the time Olmsted arrived in Portland, the trees planted by Pfunder in 1877 had matured significantly and the narrow park blocks, plus buildings ringing its perimeter, limited opportunities for expansion. Olmsted's report is recognized as a key document in the history of the city's parks.¹⁸⁵

By 1904, the Park Blocks were shown as part of a larger, inter-connected park system under the Olmsted Plan.¹⁸⁶ By this period, many of the large mansions surrounding the SPB had been replaced by apartment houses. In 1907, voters approved allocation of \$1 million for park development under the Olmsted Plan. The following year, Emanuel T. Mische, a Harvard-educated, former employee of the Olmsted Brothers firm, was

¹⁸⁰ Olmsted Brothers was established in 1898 by John Charles Olmsted and his younger half-brother, Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., son of the eminent landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted. John C. was a senior partner until his death in 1920; the firm continued until 1950. "John Charles Olmsted," National Association for Olmsted Parks, accessed June 15, 2021, <https://www.olmsted.org/the-olmsted-legacy/john-charles-olmsted>; Kunowski, Starin, Mickle, Engeman, and Orloff, *Open Space & Park Development 1851-1965*, 9-10.

¹⁸¹ Prior to 1900, The Park Blocks and City Park formed the core of the city's park system, with residential districts growing up around both parks. Willingham, Kunowski, Starin, Mickle, Engeman, and Orloff, *City of Portland Civic Planning, Development, & Public Works, 1851-1965: A Historic Context*, 2009, 30.

¹⁸² The report included 18 guidelines, ranging from "#1 The Importance of Municipal Parks," to "#16 Park Systems Should be Governed by Qualified Individuals" and "#18 Parks Should be Managed Independently of City Governments. Anthony Monaco, "Portland's Great Plans," PDXPlanning, accessed June 15, 2021, <https://pdxplanning.weebly.com/portlands-great-plans.html>.

¹⁸³ No map was drawn as part of this plan. Mackenzie, "The Portland Park Blocks: Their Origin and Development," 22.

¹⁸⁴ Mackenzie, "The Portland Park Blocks: Their Origin and Development," 23.

¹⁸⁵ Junior League of Portland, *A Guide to Portland's Historic Parks and Gardens*; Gordon Oliver, "Dueling Histories Vex Blocks," *The Oregonian*, June 9, 2002, C1.

¹⁸⁶ The Portland Parks Commission's plans for the 1905 Lewis and Clark Exposition progressed under Olmsted's guidance with the planting of 200 miles of rose-bordered streets to draw attention to the Centennial Celebration, which was dubbed the "City of Roses." Mackenzie, "The Portland Park Blocks: Their Origin and Development," 23-24; Portland Parks and Recreation, *Cultural Resource Management Plan: Planning Framework and Implementation*, 23; "South Park Blocks," Portland Parks and Recreation, accessed July 29, 2020, <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/parks/finder/index.cfm?action=ViewPark&PropertyID=674>.

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hired as Park Superintendent. Mische played an active role in every aspect of park administration and planning, namely translating “the Olmsted elements of landscape design to Portland’s setting.”¹⁸⁷

Unfortunately, funds allocated for park development got tied up in legal wrangling. By the time money was available in 1909, there was only enough to fully implement the Olmsted Plan. As a result, the Terwilliger Parkway was the only element of the plan carried out on the west side. The Parks Board redirected its focus to the construction and development of previously designated parks and parkways, along with extending existing playgrounds and developing new ones.¹⁸⁸

Mische directed his attention toward smaller neighborhood parks with recreational amenities such as tennis courts, baseball diamonds, and school playgrounds. These parks not only offered better investments of public funds than the large, semi-rural preserves such as Washington Park, but enhanced the quality of urban life and stabilized inner-city property values as Portland’s suburbs were growing. Following the Olmsted principle of facilitating diverse activities within a park, Mische sought to incorporate both passive and active recreation in these new parks.¹⁸⁹ Portland’s first playgrounds were added in 1906, including the first installation of play equipment in the NPB between NW Couch and Davis and in the SPB near SW Jefferson. A ballfield was installed at Columbia Park in NE Portland.¹⁹⁰

It was during this period that Mische carried out a major redesign of the SPB, including reseeding each block with turf and adding plants in alternating blocks.¹⁹¹ These changes transformed the park into a “showplace for shrubs and flowerbeds, planting colorful ornamentals and roses and improving the walkways and benches.”¹⁹² At the time, these planting upgrades were met with public criticism, but Mische justified such formality and color as appropriate for the sophisticated park surroundings that edged the city’s downtown core. He further noted that the “park blocks in their present state, though not exactly nondescript, fail to fulfill their highest office as an ornamental accent in the street system of the city or as a purely local park ornament.”¹⁹³

In 1909, Mische shifted his attention to the Hillside Parkway proposed in Olmsted’s 1903 report. His plan differed slightly from Olmsted’s, siting it on higher ground, to be built on land given by the Terwilliger heirs and the Oregon Railway and Navigation Company. The 1912 preliminary plan shows the parkway beginning at the southernmost end of the park blocks, including the acquisition of 14.7 acres of the SPB. As Hilary Mackenzie states, “it is unclear if this was to be the ‘handsome terminus’ that John Olmsted had stated was needed at the

¹⁸⁷ Mische served as Portland’s Park Superintendent from 1908 to 1914. Kunowski, Starin, Mickle, Engeman, and Orloff, *Open Space & Park Development 1851-1965*, 13.

¹⁸⁸ The 1909 Parks Board annual report encouraged people to donate land for parks, claiming it would increase land value. Mackenzie, “The Portland Park Blocks: Their Origin and Development,” 23-24; Portland Parks and Recreation, *Cultural Resource Management Plan: Planning Framework and Implementation*, 23; Portland Parks and Recreation, “South Park Blocks.”

¹⁸⁹ Orloff, “Portland Park Blocks”; Portland Parks and Recreation, *Cultural Resource Management Plan: Planning Framework and Implementation*, 23; Portland Parks and Recreation, “South Park Blocks.”

¹⁹⁰ By 1910, a number of new playgrounds were constructed at City, Sellwood, Peninsula and Columbia Parks. A new swimming tank was built in Sellwood to replace the public baths in the Willamette River. E.F. Lawrence, a prominent Oregon architect and dean of the University of Oregon School of Architecture, was hired to design an assembly building for Sellwood Park and its pool, as well as some comfort stations for Columbia Park. Portland Parks and Recreation, *Cultural Resource Management Plan: Planning Framework and Implementation*, 23; Kunowski, Starin, Mickle, Engeman, and Orloff, *Open Space & Park Development 1851-1965*, 10; Portland Parks and Recreation, “South Park Blocks.”

¹⁹¹ Between 1885 and 1912, additional tree species were added to the park’s design, including maple, walnut, oak and flowering cherry. Nelson, *The South Park Blocks...A Neighborhood History*, 5.

¹⁹² Orloff, “Portland Park Blocks.”

¹⁹³ Kunowski, Starin, Mickle, Engeman, and Orloff, *Open Space & Park Development 1851-1965*, 13.

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end of the park blocks.” It was, however, an effort to provide a linkage between the park blocks and the new parkway, and “its presence initiated a system of parks and connecting parkways for the city.”¹⁹⁴

Also, in 1909, a Civic Improvement League was founded to create a comprehensive plan to build a Civic Center. The nationwide City Beautiful Movement “was in full bloom and Portland’s civic elite was hardly immune to its influence.”¹⁹⁵ They hired architect Edward H. Bennett, a British-born classically trained architect, to develop the “Greater Portland Plan” of 1912.¹⁹⁶ A quote by Chicago architect Daniel Burnham at the beginning of the plan sets the tone:

Make no little plans; they have no magic to stir men’s blood and probably themselves will not be realized. Make big plans; aim high and hope and work remembering that a noble logical diagram once recorded will never die, but long after we are gone will be a living thing asserting itself with ever-growing consistency.¹⁹⁷

Bennett followed this credo, with the assumption that city’s population would grow to over 2,000,000 with industry concentrated near the river and railroad lines. His ideas were heavily influenced by European models, featuring diagonal boulevards extending through the city and terminating at various public centers. The proposed plan showed the Park Blocks as “Park Street Boulevard” with a huge traffic circle and monument at Park Avenue and Burnside and five boulevards radiating from this point. Bennett’s plan for the Park Blocks was never realized, due in part to increased demands for parks on the booming eastside.¹⁹⁸

In 1913, a new city charter established Portland’s commission form of government, in which the mayor and four council members all shared legislative authority and the commissioners assumed administrative duties as assigned by the mayor. The park board was abolished and parks fell under the Department of Public Affairs.¹⁹⁹

Several major parks were completed during this period including Laurelhurst Park (NR-listed) and Terwilliger Parkway (NR-listed). The International Rose Test Garden was also developed on a 5.12-acre garden within Washington Park (NR-listed;) in 1917. During Mische’s last year as superintendent, he spent a month touring cities in the U.S. and Canada to evaluate their park systems and “learn about new techniques, equipment, rules, and botanical features.”²⁰⁰

In 1919, the city passed a bond issue for land acquisition and park improvements that allowed them to begin efforts to procure eight new sites, including Rose City Golf Course, Wallace Park, Dawson Park, Belmont Park (Colonel Summers Park), and Montavilla Park. These parks eventually were developed with varying multiple uses, including playgrounds, ball fields, tennis courts, picnic areas and public restrooms.²⁰¹

¹⁹⁴ Mackenzie, “The Portland Park Blocks: Their Origin and Development,” 28.

¹⁹⁵ Lutino, Merker, and Green, “The City Beautiful Movement and Park Planning in Portland, Oregon 1897-1928” NRHP MPD, 17.

¹⁹⁶ Bennett received his architectural training under the École des Beaux-Arts and was a protégé of Chicago architect Daniel H. Burnham. Lutino, Merker, and Green, “The City Beautiful Movement and Park Planning in Portland, Oregon 1897-1928” NRHP MPD, 17.

¹⁹⁷ Mackenzie, “The Portland Park Blocks: Their Origin and Development,” 33.

¹⁹⁸ Mackenzie, “The Portland Park Blocks: Their Origin and Development,” 33-36; Oliver, “Dueling Histories Vex Blocks.”

¹⁹⁹ Willingham, Kunowski, Starin, Mickle, Engeman, and Orloff, *City of Portland Civic Planning, Development, & Public Works, 1851-1965: A Historic Context*, 2009, 32.

²⁰⁰ Mische was succeeded by James O. Conville, followed by Charles Paul Keyser in 1917. Portland Parks and Recreation, *Cultural Resource Management Plan: Planning Framework and Implementation*, 25.

²⁰¹ Later acquisitions during the 1920s included Other acquisitions included Hoyt Arboretum (1922/1930), Crystal Springs Rhododendron Garden (1923/1930), and Powell Butte Nature Park (1925). Portland Parks and Recreation, *Cultural Resource Management Plan: Planning Framework and Implementation*, 22-26.

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Further changes were made to the SPB during this period of development, including the addition of diagonal walkways crossing at the center of several blocks.²⁰² These landscape improvements incorporated Olmsted's design principles and further reinforced Pfunder's formal design, while increasing opportunities for social interaction, commemoration, and repose.²⁰³

Development abutting the park reflected the fast growth and increasing density of the city.²⁰⁴ The Arlington Club, a private association composed of many of the city's most prominent businessmen, built a new clubhouse at the north end of the park across SW Salmon Street. It was designed by Whidden and Lewis, the city's most prominent architectural firm in the early twentieth century. On the park's eastern edge, Portland Public Schools built Lincoln High School in 1912 designed by the firm of Whitehouse and Fouilhoux, on the full block between Market and Mill streets, and Shattuck School, an elementary school at 1914 SW Park Ave.²⁰⁵

1920s Improvements to the SPB: Interior Circulation, Plazas, and Destinations for Public Art

The 1920s era is generally recognized as one of Portland's most active, with critical growth years between 1915 and 1931, following a brief five-year period surrounding World War I. In these years, the downtown added roughly 200 new buildings.²⁰⁶ The area surrounding the park blocks had evolved into an ethnically diverse neighborhood, including "Italian, Russian, and Jewish communities, as well as some African-American families. The northern edge of the district, meanwhile, became a cluster of second-tier hotels that served itinerant workers."²⁰⁷ Many of the remaining single-family residences were converted into flats, boarding houses, apartments, and housekeeping rooms. Three synagogues and the Jewish Community Center served the area's large Jewish population.²⁰⁸

Developmental growth continued on the blocks facing the SPB, reinforcing the green spaces as valued areas of respite amidst the increasingly dense urban neighborhood.²⁰⁹ Construction of the eight-story Roosevelt

²⁰² At the nexus of these paths, the City introduced public monuments and other artwork to provide a focal point for the plazas. The diagonal paths are visible in historic photographs starting in 1912 (near Salmon and Main) and near Shattuck Elementary School (near College and Hall) and c. 1919 (near Jackson and Hall). See images in MIG, *South Park Blocks Master Plan*, Appendix A, 11.

²⁰³ Photos taken in the 1920s indicate that the park was improved with additional planting beds. Portland Parks and Recreation, *Cultural Resource Management Plan: Planning Framework and Implementation*, 22-26.

²⁰⁴ Starting in the 1910s, Rose Festival celebrations were held in the two blocks bounded by Salmon and Madison streets. For 70 years, between 1936 and 2007, the Portland Rose Festival took place in and around the park blocks with the parade's route traversing "Fourteenth to Jefferson to West Park, to Madison, to Tenth, to Main Street..." Events included exhibitions and band concerts at the "Victory Rose Festival Lane O'Laughter." Nelson, *The South Park Blocks...A Neighborhood History*, 5; Portland Parks and Recreation, *Cultural Resource Management Plan: Planning Framework and Implementation*, 22-26.

²⁰⁵ By the late 1960s, these buildings had become part of the PSU campus, which became the dominant tenant on both sides of the southern-most six blocks of the SPB. These schools and the university brought thousands of students to enjoy the park's greenery. Tong, *South Park Blocks Historical Study*, 38.

²⁰⁶ Portland's economic conditions began to slide in 1913 as the war produced a recession as a result of the drop in trade, with foreign lumber exports declining by 63%. The unemployment rate doubled for unskilled and seasonal workers and finally, the U.S. entered the war in April 1917. This downturn led to a severe halt in construction activities. Tess, "Historic Resources in Downtown Portland, 1906-1914, Historic Resources in Downtown Portland, 1915-1931," E12, E14.

²⁰⁷ Val Ballestrom and Alexander Benjamin Craghead, "The Long Shadow of Urban Renewal" exhibit, Architectural Heritage Center, June 2021.

²⁰⁸ Portland State University, "Viking 1973," *The Viking (Yearbooks)*, Book 29. Portland City Archives, <https://pdxscholar.library.pdx.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1028&context=viking>.

²⁰⁹ Activities within the SPB continued to play an important role during this period of growth. "In 1923, in a display of air power, the army held a maneuver in which small paper sack flowers were dropped from their airplanes upon the South Park Blocks. Machine gunners also held placements on nearby buildings." In the mid-1930s, the Works Progress Administration held band concerts in the park block adjoining Antoinette Hatfield Hall. Nelson, *The South Park Blocks...A Neighborhood History*, 4-5.

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Hotel in 1924 on the northeast corner of SW Salmon Street and Ninth Avenue signaled the introduction of larger, bulkier buildings along the park's perimeter. It was built with 107 rooms and later was remodeled into apartments for low-income residents. The First Christian Church, completed in 1925 on the east side of the SPB at SW Columbia Street, included a welcoming stairway that widened as it neared the corner. This was followed in 1927 by a larger structure, the Portland Publix Theater (later Paramount Theater, and later Portland Center for Performing Arts). The theater's main entrance fronted onto SW Broadway and featured a secondary marquee entry along the Park Avenue side, between SW Salmon and Main streets.

On the park's west side, the Portland Masonic Temple, an imposing brick edifice rising nearly five stories tall was completed in 1927 between Main and Madison streets. This building eventually would be acquired and united with the Portland Art Museum to help form what came to be called the Cultural District. The art museum, erected between 1932 and 1939, occupied a prominent location abutting the park blocks, between Madison and Jefferson streets. It was designed in a style called Pioneer Modern by Pietro Belluschi, an internationally renowned architect who worked for many years in Portland before heading the architecture school at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Further south along the park's western edge, three apartment buildings were completed in 1931, including the seven-story Jeanne Manor (1471 SW Park Ave.), four-story Parkway Manor (1609 SW Park Ave.), and the five-story Blackstone Apartments (1831 SW Park Ave.). The Sixth Church of Christ, Scientist, was completed the following year, adding another imposing brick façade facing the park at SW Ninth Ave. and Columbia St.²¹⁰ These buildings not only added to the neighborhood's growing density, but served as framing architecture to the park's open green space in the heart of the city.

Major public expenditures during the 1920s and 1930s were dedicated to street improvements, but the City also implemented improvements at the SPB in 1921 as *The Sunday Oregonian* reported that the park was "improved extensively....the broad center walk treatment, used in the lower blocks, has been extended and four blocks have been seeded to grass. The extension of this plan of central walks in gradually converting the South Park Blocks into an attractive mall will serve Portland somewhat as the Capitol mall served Washington, DC."²¹¹

Soon after the 1921 improvements and perhaps as a response to the construction of larger apartment buildings, a new church, as well as public institutions along its fringes, the SPB became a "destination for civic adornment" in the form of public monuments. These included the Theodore Roosevelt *Rough Rider* statue (**non-contributing object**), the Shemanski Fountain and *Rebecca at the Well* sculpture (**contributing object**), and the Abraham Lincoln statue (**non-contributing object**).²¹² These public monuments signaled the transition of the SPB from a park meant to be viewed from the street and sidewalks to one that provided an opportunity for public experiences and use within the park. Two of the statues that would become visual focal points at that time, Roosevelt *Rough Rider* and Abraham Lincoln, were given to the city by the same patron, Dr. Henry Waldo Coe, between 1922 and 1928. Coe, who was a friend of Roosevelt's, was possibly "catalyzed by general nationalist pride."²¹³ The Roosevelt statue was designed by New York sculptor Alexander Phimister Proctor, who was known for his western art. The imposing 18-foot-tall bronze and granite statue was situated

²¹⁰ Tong, *South Park Blocks Historical Study*, 6.

²¹¹ *The Sunday Oregonian*, June 18, 1922.

²¹² As stated in Section 7, both statues were removed as of 2020 and only the granite pedestal bases remain intact as of August 2021. As a result, they no longer possess integrity and are considered non-contributing.

²¹³ Henry Waldo Coe donated these sculptures as "representatives of the grand narrative of American exceptionalism. He wanted to confirm Oregon's identity as part of that narrative, so that Portland too would have images of national heroes like other major cities." Laurel Reed Pavic, "Another One Bites the Dust," *Oregon Artswatch*, October 26, 2020, www.orartswatch.org/another-one-bites-the-dust.

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between SW Madison and Jefferson streets, across from the Portland Art Museum, and depicted the colonel “in his Spanish American War uniform, mounted upon his trusty steed.” Calvin Coolidge broke ground for the statue in August 1922 and it was unveiled on November 11. The block was renamed “Roosevelt Square” by the city.²¹⁴ A historic photograph from 1922 shows the square with walkways of packed earth. The Lincoln statue, installed in the park between SW Main and Madison streets in 1928, was designed by sculptor George Fite Waters depicting the Lincoln of the Civil War years: “He is standing in the familiar pose, with head bowed and shoulders drooped, a sad but kindly expression on his face.” The block was designated “Lincoln Square” by the City in July 1928.²¹⁵ A 1949 photograph shows the statue placed along the centerline of a single central walkway lined with a continuous row of park benches. Both statues were removed by the Portland Parks Bureau in 2020; all that remains are the granite pedestal bases.²¹⁶

In 1926, Joseph Shemanski donated a sandstone fountain to the city “in appreciation of his time in Portland (38 years), his many friendships and for the success he attained.”²¹⁷ Shemanski was a Polish immigrant who started out as a traveling salesman before founding the Eastern Outfitting Co. and became a successful businessman. Situated on the block between Salmon and Main streets, the Shemanski Fountain was designed by architect Carl Linde and sculptor Oliver Laurence Barrett, featuring a bronze statue of *Rebecca at the Well* and three water basins for dogs.²¹⁸ The fountain is enclosed by a triangular, three-columned (Corinthian order) cupola built of cast Oregon sandstone with a red tile roof. It was originally set amidst trees, shrubs, and grass.²¹⁹ A photograph from 1929 indicates that the gathering space around the fountain’s base was packed earth. A later photo, dated 1967, shows the fountain surrounded by aggregate paving. As the changes to the park during this period demonstrate, the SPB took on a more inwardly focused purpose. The modifications facilitated interior public uses of the park by creating focal points around public statues and artwork, developing interior circulation networks, and creating opportunities for contemplation and repose through the addition of benches. These changes appeared to correspond to the urban changes around the park which included a greater density of residents within the area as well as the construction of cultural and religious institutions along its edges.

Portland State University and Portland’s Urban Renewal Era (1930-1970s)

With the onset of the Great Depression, Portland’s urban core experienced a general decline due to diminished economic and employment opportunities. Of the four largest West Coast cities, Portland had the worst employment record as of 1930.²²⁰ Towards the end of the 1930s, the housing stock of the city undoubtedly suffered for by the end of the 1930s, the area around the SPB was viewed as “Definitely Declining” by the Home Owners’ Lending Corporation (HOLC), a federal agency notorious for their research products that justified “redlining” practices by banks and other financial institutions. Redlining led to the denial of mortgages based on the perceived financial risk of areas occupied by Blacks, Indigenous communities, and immigrant

²¹⁴ Nelson, *The South Park Blocks...A Neighborhood History*, 107.

²¹⁵ In the late 1930s a proposal was made by an individual, with the backing of several patriotic organizations, to place the statue on a higher base that would have made it four feet taller. Portland’s Art Commission denied the request saying that completed works of art should not be altered. Nelson, *The South Park Blocks...A Neighborhood History*, 106.

²¹⁶ The Lincoln and Roosevelt statues were toppled on October 11, 2020 during the “Indigenous Peoples Day of Rage.” The Lincoln sculpture pedestal was spray painted with “Dakota 38” in reference to the execution of 38 Dakota men that Lincoln approved in 1862 in the aftermath of the Dakota War. Pavic, “Another One Bites the Dust”; Kavanaugh, “Portland Protesters Topple Statues of Theodore Roosevelt, Abraham Lincoln in ‘Day of Rage’; Police Declare Riot.”

²¹⁷ Nelson, *The South Park Blocks...A Neighborhood History*, 105.

²¹⁸ The original design by Linde depicted a bowl of flowers, which was later changed to include the urn-carrying maiden. Gleason and Orloff, *Portland’s Public Art: A Guide and History*, 43.

²¹⁹ City of Portland, Historic Resource Inventory; Gleason and Orloff, *Portland’s Public Art: A Guide and History*, 43.

²²⁰ William H. Mullins, “‘I’ll Wreck the Town if it Will Give Employment’: Portland in the Hoover years of the Depression,” *Pacific Northwest Quarterly*, Vol. 79, No. 3 (July 1988), 109.

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groups.²²¹ According to Portland's HOLC map, the SPB were located immediately west of an area that was redlined by the HOLC. Called the "Southwest River District", this area was noted as containing 35% foreign-born families (mostly consisting of Chinese, Japanese, and Filipinos) with an additional 30% of the population consisting of Black residents.²²² Given the subsequent disinvestment in the areas around the South Park Blocks and in the "Southwest River District", the physical infrastructure and housing quality (and needless to say the residents) undoubtedly suffered thus making these areas prime candidates for urban renewal projects following World War II that led to the displacement of thousands of Portland residents.



Pittmon's Map of Portland, Oregon and Vicinity (1938). This "Residential Security Map" illustrated the results of research conducted by the federal Home Owners' Loan Corporation. The South Park Blocks were located in a yellow or "Definitely Declining" area.²²³

Portland underwent further changes in the late 1940s, with new industries emerging that were spurred by cheap electricity and an abundant labor force. The city experienced a decade of economic stagnation in the 1950s. "The lack of sustained economic expansion stymied the effort of planning advocates and social reformers to mobilize city government on behalf of new commercial development and modernization of infrastructure."²²⁴

²²¹ Richard Rothstein, *The Color of Law: A Forgotten History of How Our Government Segregated America* (New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Company, 2017), 63-64.

²²² "Mapping Inequality: Redlining in New Deal America", accessed August 4, 2021, <https://dsl.richmond.edu/panorama/redlining/#loc=12/45.513/-122.773&city=portland-or>

²²³ "Mapping Inequality: Redlining in New Deal America."

²²⁴ Willingham, Kunowski, Starin, Mickle, Engeman, and Orloff, *City of Portland Civic Planning, Development, & Public Works, 1851-1965: A Historic Context*, 2009, 52.

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Throughout the 1930s and during World War II and its immediate aftermath, the SPB and its setting experienced very few changes. Only one building was added in the area in the 1940s, the Rose Marie Court Apartments on SW Market Street. After World War II, the State Board of Higher Education purchased the former Shattuck Elementary School building at the south end of the park to serve as the new home of Vanport College and Portland Extension Center.²²⁵ This marked the starting point for the present-day Portland State University (PSU) campus. In 1952, the school acquired the former Lincoln High School, around the same time that it was reauthorized as the Portland State Extension Center.²²⁶ On February 14, 1955, a bill was signed creating the four-year Portland State College.²²⁷

The attractiveness of the SPB as an urban residential area appeared to resume in the 1950s with the addition of two major buildings along the western edge; the eleven-story Park Plaza Apartments (1969 SW Park Ave.) and the fifteen-story Lone Plaza (1717 SW Park Ave.).²²⁸ These taller multi-family buildings created some of the densest residential areas in the city. Many of the older single-family residences had been demolished and replaced by commercial development and auto garage/service stations: "On Broadway the AAA and the car dealer have built their offices. The Lone Plaza has just been completed...Jennings house on the corner of Park and Montgomery has become the Registrar's office and Portland State begins to build and expand. By the end of the 50's State Hall (Cramer) is on its way and the two-story College Center/Library is building up to its present four floors."²²⁹

In 1952, the City took the first step in a long-range plan to modernize and relandscape the SPB. Landscape architect Edward L. Erickson prepared plans for the Portland Parks Bureau to remove roughly 157 trees, mostly elms along the edges, to be replaced with flowering cherry trees. The reasons cited for this change were that the original trees were planted too close together and their root systems extended under the street pavement.²³⁰ In an *Oregonian* article entitled "Removal of Old Park Block Elms Brings Protest by Irate Woman," Keith Hansen reported how park bureau workmen prematurely removed the "venerable elm trees" on the west side of the park block in front of the Portland Art Museum, between Jefferson and Madison streets.²³¹ Nationally significant Portland architect John Yeon, in a letter dated December 1952, expressed his outrage to the city's action:

²²⁵ The school started out as a temporary extension center after WWII and was located in the City of Vanport, north of Portland. Bryce Henry, "Portland State University," *The Oregon Encyclopedia*, accessed April 21, 2021, https://www.oregonencyclopedia.org/articles/portland_state_university/#.YK09ei1h1p9.

²²⁶ The Lincoln High School building, affectionately known as 'Old Main,' was used for a variety of classes. In November 1961, its auditorium "was filled to overflowing with students who heard the noted integration leader, The Rev. Martin Luther King Jr, assert, 'if democracy is to live, segregation must die'." Nelson, *The South Park Blocks...A Neighborhood History*, 6, 66.

²²⁷ The legislature, which envisioned Portland State as a "downtown city college...not of the campus type," established its boundaries as Market Street to the north, Hall to the south, Broadway to the east, and Park Avenue to the west. By 1961, the student body had grown to 4,500 students, and the campus included "two new classroom buildings, a library, a student union center, and another five pre-existing buildings repurposed as classrooms and offices." Henry, "Portland State University."

²²⁸ *The Oregonian*, January 14, 1950, 16.

²²⁹ Portland State University, "Viking 1973."

²³⁰ Don Nelson pointed out the ongoing problem of parking in Portland that gave rise to a plan in the 1950s proposing to elevate several park blocks, creating "a park above and a park below, which of course was turned down." The plan, however, was never executed. In 1958, the neighboring area bounded by SW Market, Front, Arthur, and Clay streets was approved for urban renewal, which resulted in the displacement of roughly 2,300 residents. Nelson, *The South Park Blocks...A Neighborhood History*, 5.

²³¹ The article showed the proposed planting plan for this block, indicating that the elm trees along the outer perimeter would be removed and replaced with "flowering trees, set back at least eight feet from the street." Keith Hansen, "Removal of Old Park Block Elms Brings Protest by Irate Woman," *The Oregonian*, 1952.

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Before this plan was publicly announced and before there was any opportunity for public discussion, nine elm trees were felled in this one block. Only four trees remain. Previous removal of trees in this block has caused previous controversy and protest. The Board of Trustees of the Portland Art Association wishes on this occasion to protest to responsible authority both the procedure and plan...for the full extent of the Park Blocks which pass the Museum and constitute a major civic asset of Portland's west side...

The reasons stated in the press for this remodelling program do not seem to justify the cost, the damage, or the ultimate appearance of this project. The reasons are those which might be more logically expected from a bureau in charge of widening streets than from the bureau in custody of the city's parks...

If this is a valid reasoning for removing these trees, then all the trees in parking strips should be removed, not only in Portland but in cities elsewhere...It is easy to imagine the mass indignation which would meet a proposal to remove the elms along the streets of Washington, D.C., or the chestnuts from the streets of Paris...

The destruction of a monumental avenue of elms to accommodate briefly blooming trees and bushes is an ill conceived project for an inappropriate situation. The year-round beauty of the stately aisle of mature trees could have no compensating substitute in fussy and trivial flower beds suitable for cottage gardens or informal parks. The maintenance costs would far exceed those required by the original simple plan. This money would be better spent in the feeding, spraying and trimming of the existing trees, which have been sadly neglected in the past...

The proposal, and the unannounced commencement of the project, instills lack of confidence in the counsel of the Park Bureau.²³²

Erickson's plan also envisioned installing diagonal walkways (in the form of a St. Andrew's Cross) on several blocks, now known as Block Nos. 3-7 and 11. His plan met a storm of protest and the Parks Bureau eventually abandoned much of it.²³³

Additional public artwork was added to the SPB including the bronze Simon Benson Memorial (**non-contributing**) designed by architect A.E. Doyle and dedicated in 1959.²³⁴ By the 1960s, several major civic institutions established a presence along the SPB including the Portland Art Museum (PAM) and Oregon Historical Society (OHS).²³⁵ Completed in 1964, the OHS museum and library fronted onto the park blocks along SW Jefferson Street and SW Park Avenue W.²³⁶

²³² John Yeon, Letter to City of Portland Parks Bureau, December 1952.

²³³ Similar walkways had existed on five blocks (now known as Block Nos. 5 through 9), which may have dated to the 1920s street improvements. Under Erickson's plan, diagonal walkways were installed in Block Nos. 15 and 16, but were later removed). Erickson's plan resulted in relatively little change in the SPB's landscaping. Beals, "Park Blocks" NRHP Nomination Form, Draft, 13-14; Tong, *South Park Blocks Historical Study*, 6.

²³⁴ The memorial consisted of a four-head Benson Bubbler mounted on a single post. It was redesigned in 1987 when the original 3' tall, freestanding arched brick wall was replaced with a curved concrete retaining wall. A round bronze plaque with a bas relief of Simon Benson installed on the wall is dedicated to his memory. The Benson Memorial no longer retains sufficient integrity to convey its period of significance and, therefore, is non-contributing. City of Portland, Historic Resource Inventory; Nelson, *The South Park Blocks...A Neighborhood History*, 2008, 104.

²³⁵ That portion of the park blocks between Market and Salmon would become known as the Cultural District

²³⁶ The building was designed by the prominent Portland firm of Wolff, Zimmer, Gunsul & Frasca with Pietro Belluschi acting as design consultant. The historical society later moved into the lower floors of the adjacent Sovereign Hotel that faces on SW Broadway, providing space behind it for an open plaza adjacent to the SPB.

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In 1964, the so-called “Foothills Loop Freeway” (now designated I-405) threatened the southern blocks of the SPB. The proposal was part of the Robert Moses plan to connect the Marquam Bridge by diverting I-5 traffic around the downtown core. In the end, the highway’s route cut through the two most southerly blocks between SW Clifton and Jackson streets, and resulted in the demolition of hundreds of single-family homes and apartments in the area, including St. Helen’s Hall, and the Jewish Community Center. The freeway excavation in 1964 bulldozed the elm trees on the park blocks between these streets (See Figure 18).²³⁷

During the late 1960s, the City of Portland undertook street lighting improvements to the SPB, largely to help curb a rising crime rate. An *Oregonian* article explained that the plans included the installation of “70 tapered 18-foot terrazzo poles with mercury vapor lamps enclosed in opal acrylic plastic globes.” However, the city planning commission’s design review committee objected to the proposal citing that “the location and design of the proposals are inappropriate to the character of the Park Blocks.”²³⁸ Despite these objections, eighteen of these light fixtures were added to three of the northern blocks (then known as Blocks No 7, 8, and 9). At some subsequent time, the terrazzo poles and fixtures were removed and replaced with the traditional slender cast-iron poles with urn-shaped glass globes.²³⁹

The year 1972 also marked the completion of the Downtown Plan, which resulted from a multi-year effort by citizen groups in the downtown area.²⁴⁰ The plan was focused on public spaces and the downtown central business district, and “combined a desire to reinforce the dominant position of downtown Portland with quality of life issues such as urban design, historic preservation and mixed land use.”²⁴¹ The Downtown Plan gave special attention to the idea that PSU be treated as an “urban university,” placing emphasis on its role as a “center for cultural and research activities which serve the entire community.”²⁴²

During this period, the park was the site of numerous protests and marches. In May 1970, the park blocks near the PSU campus were at the center of a robust Vietnam War protest movement, in response to President Richard Nixon sending troops into Cambodia and the Kent State Shootings. Between 1969 and 1970, PSU students organized four large “Moratorium Marches Against the Vietnam War” with up to 12,000 participants and PSU was regarded as “the most active protest campus in the Pacific Northwest.” On May 11, 1970, PSU students held a campus demonstration in the wake of Kent State riot, where students were confronted by hundreds of Portland police officers in what became known as the “Battle of the Park Blocks.” Faculty

²³⁷ On October 12, 1962, a major windstorm took down a substantial number of mature trees. As Beals pointed out, “the Park Blocks’ distinctive arboreal grandeur seemed more threatened by nature than man, but over two decades later much of it has been recovered.” Beals, “Park Blocks” NRHP Nomination Form, Draft, 14.

²³⁸ *The Oregonian*, July 1, 1969.

²³⁹ Beals, “Park Blocks” NPHP Nomination Form, Draft, 15.

²⁴⁰ An 18-member Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) was formed to guide the goals and objectives of downtown redevelopment, known as the Downtown Plan. The CAC was responsible for generating community interest in the plan; solicit citizen recommendations; and advise in the setting of goals and priorities, and selection of alternatives. A notable specific goal was establishing a way to ensure that downtown residents had a voice in decisions affecting the downtown areas vitality. Portland League of Women Voters, “A Look at Downtown Portland,” Portland City Archives, 1972, 1.

²⁴¹ A major element of the Downtown Plan was the creation of a massive urban renewal project along the waterfront in April 1974, named after Governor Tom McCall. According to Bello, the Downtown Plan was both visionary and pro-growth, but failed to address housing and social problems north of Burnside Street, entice the middle-class back downtown, or improve the parking and air quality issues. Mark Richard Bello, “Urban Regimes and Downtown Planning in Portland, Oregon and Seattle, Washington, 1972-1992,” (Portland: Portland State University, 1993), 32-34.

²⁴² The plan, which was later adopted into the 1988 Central City Plan, represented the most comprehensive planning document for Portland’s downtown. Portland League of Women Voters, “A Look at Downtown Portland,” 7; Monaco, “Portland’s Great Plans.”

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members joined the strike and PSU's president, Dr. Gregory Wolfe, was forced to close the school from May 6 to 11. The area, known as the 'Liberated Zone,' was guarded around the clock by the students.²⁴³

Portland's Urban Renewal Redevelopment Plan

Like many inner cities, downtown Portland had fallen into decline in the late 1940s and early 1950s. The city's stagnant population stood at roughly 375,000 with many residents fleeing to the new suburbs. Portland's downtown core "was dissolving into surface parking lots and, like so many cities across the United States, decaying from disinvestment."²⁴⁴ Lloyd Center, which opened in 1959, along with the completion of Memorial Coliseum on the city's eastside further shifted development away from downtown.²⁴⁵

By the end of the decade, change came in the form of urban renewal. Congress passed the Housing Act of 1949 as a remedy to the serious housing shortage, authorizing more than \$1.5 billion in federal grants and loans for urban redevelopment.²⁴⁶ Cities like Portland saw this as a bold solution to its problem. In 1955, a Mayor's Advisory Committee identified the blocks at the southeast end of downtown as suitable for a land clearance and redevelopment project.²⁴⁷ The Portland Development Commission (PDC), created in 1958, oversaw the city's urban renewal program.²⁴⁸

The South Auditorium District, a 110-acre site located on the periphery of the city center, was selected as Portland's first major urban renewal project.²⁴⁹ City Council approved the South Auditorium project on June 18, 1958 over the objections of 85 residents, who expressed concerns over displacement.²⁵⁰ "To many that lived

²⁴³ Doug Weiskopf, "PSU was an epicenter of war protests," *The Oregonian*, May 13, 2020; Douglas Perry, "Battle of the Park Blocks at 50: How a shocking burst of violence defined Portland -- and panicked Nixon's White House," *The Oregonian*, May 4, 2020.

²⁴⁴ John Tess, "Halprin Open Space Sequence," NRHP Nomination Form (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Interior, National Park Service, 2012), 17-18.

²⁴⁵ Bello, "Urban Regimes and Downtown Planning in Portland, Oregon and Seattle, Washington, 1972-1992," 31.

²⁴⁶ The Housing Act provided targeted funds for infrastructure, public spaces, and the renovation or construction of buildings to meet the economic, housing, and social needs of the community. In 1954, the program was expanded to include FHA-backed mortgages and by the end of the decade, these funds were tied with funding through the Federal-Aid Highway Act that spurred interstate highway construction. Tess, "Halprin Open Space Sequence," NRHP Nomination Form, 18; Craig Wollner, John Provo, and Julie Schablisky, *Brief History of Urban Renewal in Portland, Oregon* (Portland, OR: Prosper Portland, 2019), 1; City Club of Portland, "Report on Urban Renewal in Portland," (Portland, OR: Portland State University, 1971), accessed June 15, 2021,

https://pdxscholar.library.pdx.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1335&context=oscdl_cityclub.

²⁴⁷ Federal funds were only available for the redevelopment of slums and "blighted" areas, and few places in Portland qualified. Congress had provided no definition for "blight" and there was disagreement about its meaning. Portland planners came up with their own way to define blight. The committee's report cited decrepit structures, lack of code enforcement, and "apathy" by those living in the areas as reasons to raze the neighborhoods and spend federal funds to reinvent them. Ballestrom and Craghead, "The Long Shadow of Urban Renewal" exhibit; Carl Abbott, "South Portland/South Auditorium Urban Renewal Project," *The Oregon Encyclopedia*, accessed June 15, 2021,

https://www.oregonencyclopedia.org/articles/south_portland_south_auditorium_urban_renewal_project/#.YJ2OBy1h1p8

²⁴⁸ PDC board members were recruited from the city's business establishment and were given "freedom of action" with the expectation of "tangible results." John Kenward served as PDC Executive Director and Ira Keller was the first Commission chair. Bello, "Urban Regimes and Downtown Planning in Portland, Oregon and Seattle, Washington, 1972-1992," 27.

²⁴⁹ The South Auditorium District encompassed 54 condemned blocks south of SW Columbia St., north of Lair Hill, west of the Willamette River, and east of PSU. One of the city's most vibrant ethnic neighborhoods, this South Portland neighborhood had changed significantly by the postwar era "where money for maintenance was hard to come by and where property values were low." "Portland Open Space Sequence," The Halprin Landscape Conservancy, accessed May 4, 2021, <https://www.halprinconservancy.org/history>; Ballestrom and Craghead, "The Long Shadow of Urban Renewal" exhibit.

²⁵⁰ "Despite sympathetic portrayals by the *Oregon Journal* and sporadic resistance, the 68 business firms and 470 families had no support from Council. The community came to associate urban renewal with government power and insensitivity." Bello, "Urban Regimes and Downtown Planning in Portland, Oregon and Seattle, Washington, 1972-1992," 28.

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there, it was a neighborhood and a community. To city leaders, with their middle-class Anglo-Saxon perspective, it was ‘a blighted and economically isolated neighborhood’.”²⁵¹

With \$12 million in federal funds, the PDC cleared the 54-block area and put the project out to bid. The State Highway Commission acquired land to the south end for construction of the “Foothills Loop Freeway” (present-day I-405); however, there were no takers for its “city within a city” concept. To assist with a new vision, the PDC hired the prominent Chicago-based architectural firm Skidmore Owings Merrill (SOM) to serve as the lead planning consultant. “SOM was responsible for the core elements of the redevelopment plan, including the architectural framework. It was SOM who largely created the underlying concepts for the project like soaring office and luxury apartment towers, generous green spaces and parks, and large ‘superblocks’ meant to speed up auto traffic while insulating pedestrians from cars.”²⁵²

In 1962, SOM resigned its consultant role in order to enter competitive bids on specific redevelopment projects and ended up teaming with a consortium of local and California investors, known as the Portland Center Redevelopment Corporation (PCRC), in its bid to acquire three superblocks.²⁵³ The PDC brought on Water Gordon, retiring University of Oregon dean of architecture, as a replacement. In 1963, Gordon assembled the PDC’s Design Advisory Committee, consisting of architects George Rockrise (San Francisco), Paul Hayden Kirk (Seattle), and Portland’s own Pietro Belluschi.²⁵⁴

What set it apart was PDC’s decision to hire landscape architect Lawrence Halprin to design the public areas. His task was daunting: “To make the South Auditorium site ‘a beautiful place in which to live’ and one of the nation’s ‘outstanding’ urban renewal projects.”²⁵⁵ Completed in phases, Halprin’s open space sequence included the “north park” and “south park” situated in the middle of their respective superblocks and connected by pedestrian malls.²⁵⁶

At the time of its completion, the South Auditorium project was seen as the image of urban renewal in Portland, dominated by Portland Center apartments’ three high-rise towers surrounded by shops, restaurants, office buildings and two small parks.²⁵⁷ William Roberts, a prominent business leader and downtown investor, argued that “South Auditorium – not the planning innovations of the 1970s – was responsible for saving the withering

²⁵¹ Tess, “Halprin Open Space Sequence,” NRHP Nomination Form, 18.

²⁵² Ballestrom and Craghead, “The Long Shadow of Urban Renewal” exhibit.

²⁵³ The PCRC coalition included four investment firms: William J. Moran Investment Company (New York), the Fluor Corporation (Wisconsin), Paul Murphy, and David B. Simpson. Tess, “Halprin Open Space Sequence,” NPHP Nomination Form, 19.

²⁵⁴ At the time, Belluschi was serving as dean of the School of Architecture and Planning at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Rockrise was an American architect and landscape architect of Japanese descent. Among his many honors, Rockrise was appointed by Robert Weaver, Secretary of the newly-formed HUD, to be the first Special Advisor for Design during President Johnson’s Great Society initiative. Seattle architect Paul Hayden Kirk was known for adaptation of modern architecture into a Pacific Northwest regional style; he was elected into the National Academy of Design in 1976. The committee’s role was to “vet proposals from developers to ensure that every addition to the South Auditorium area was of the highest aesthetic caliber. This was the first time in the city’s history that private projects were subject to public design review.” Ballestrom and Craghead, “The Long Shadow of Urban Renewal” exhibit.

²⁵⁵ Tess, “Halprin Open Space Sequence,” NPHP Nomination Form, 19.

²⁵⁶ Halprin conceived the south park of the Halprin Open Space Sequence to be “active” and “hard,” while the north park was “quiet” and “soft.” New York Times architecture critic Ada Louise Huxtable described Halprin’s Forecourt Fountain as “one of the most important open spaces since the Renaissance.” The Halprin Open Space Sequence was listed on the NRHP in 2013. Tess, “Halprin Open Space Sequence,” NRHP Nomination Form, 19; Halprin Landscape Conservancy, “Portland Open Space Sequence.”

²⁵⁷ SOM’s design was cited as outstanding by the Tenth World Congress of the International Union of Architects. City Club of Portland, “Report on Urban Renewal in Portland,” accessed June 15, 2021, https://pdxscholar.library.pdx.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1335&context=oscdl_cityclub.

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downtown.”²⁵⁸ More importantly, South Auditorium “represented a strategic shift in urban planning in Portland. No longer was it the city’s policy to passively respond to private development. In its place came a new and proactive approach to development.”²⁵⁹

Yet, in practice, the results of the urban renewal effort were mixed. The South Portland project “destroyed small businesses, pushed people out of long-time family homes, and dislodged a large group of residents – mostly older, single men – who had been living in the cheap walk-up apartments that dotted the district.”²⁶⁰ In 1966, the city extended the project boundaries north to include 26 acres between Market and Jefferson streets. The PDC justified the expansion, which displaced 392 residents, as a way to clear out “Portland’s worst vice district.”²⁶¹

SPB Urban Renewal Development Project and the “Pedestrian Mall”

During the latter stages of the redevelopment of the South Auditorium District, the SPB, located on the district’s periphery, underwent its last major redevelopment in the 1970s. This redevelopment project represented the culmination of planning efforts that began in the 1950s when Portland State formulated a plan to acquire all land within its present boundaries. It was not until the University collaborated with the PDC that the plan came to fruition.²⁶² In 1965, following federal Housing and Urban Development (HUD) approval, the college began acquiring land and clearing all non-academic structures to make way for new university buildings, including parking facilities.²⁶³ The federally approved grant allowed the University to move forward with the demolition of all non-academic structures, as well as provide for the “relocation of 117 families, 835 individuals (mostly single, elderly persons), 52 businesses and institutions, as well as the closure of streets, site improvements and landscaping of the South Park Blocks.”²⁶⁴ Acquisition of land was completed in the fall of 1969.²⁶⁵

The State Board of Higher Education approved development of a pedestrian mall system in the SPB with the PSU campus, re-envisioning the southern portion of the park as its ‘outdoor living room.’ Photographs from the 1950s and 1960s show this area of the SPB being actively used by students to recreate, attend classes outdoors, study, and even attend concerts. The purpose of the pedestrian mall system was to acknowledge these active uses and “to create a plan which relates to, and interacts with, the surrounding city in terms of vehicular traffic, pedestrian movement, use of the Park Blocks, utility systems, and planning considerations.”²⁶⁶ John Kenward, Chairman of the PDC, led the process and commissioned the Portland-based architectural firm of Campbell, Yost and Associates (CYA), to execute its plan.²⁶⁷ Founded in 1964, the firm’s partners–Roger

²⁵⁸ Abbott, “South Portland/South Auditorium Urban Renewal Project.”

²⁵⁹ Ballestrom and Craghead, “The Long Shadow of Urban Renewal” exhibit.

²⁶⁰ John Killen, “Throwback Thursday: 60 years ago, Portland began urban renewal plan for South Auditorium district,” *Oregon Live*, January 9, 2019, accessed June 15, 2021, https://www.oregonlive.com/history/2015/02/throwback_thursday_60_years_ag.html.

²⁶¹ Abbott, “South Portland/South Auditorium Urban Renewal Project.”

²⁶² This encompassed nearly all of the property south along the Stadium Freeway (I-405), west to SW 13th Ave., and east to SW 6th Ave. as an Urban Renewal zone for Portland State redevelopment.

²⁶³ Henry, “Portland State University.”

²⁶⁴ City Club of Portland, “Report on Urban Renewal in Portland.”

²⁶⁵ The college became PSU in 1969. The lone Plaza and Park Plaza apartments, the Campus Christian Center (Koinonia House), and the Division of Continuing Education were the only non-PSU parcels not acquired within the project boundaries. City Club of Portland, “Report on Urban Renewal in Portland.”

²⁶⁶ Michael Campbell, Yost Architects & Planners, *Portland State College Development Plan* (Portland, OR: Portland State College, October 1966), 9; Katja N. Irvin, “The University Campus & The Urban Fabric: Mending the University District,” Masters diss. (San Jose State University, May 2007).

²⁶⁷ David Waldron and Fred C. Gast, Jr. are identified as representatives from Campbell, Yost and Associates in a PSU memorandum. “PSU Park and Mall Development, Pre-Construction and EEO Conference,” August 17, 1971, Portland

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Yost, Richard Campbell, and Joachim Grube—all spent time at SOM. CYA's work included extensive collaborations with Northwest pioneer of modernism Pietro Belluschi, as well as inspired wood sculptor Leroy Setziol.²⁶⁸ The firm's focus on creative 'problem seeking' led to significant projects for the State of Oregon and the Oregon Board of Education. Between 1970 and 1985, the firm developed three major campus plans for PSU, whose focus was "creating a unique, unified urban character for the University, and building a flexible campus 'armature' adaptable to changing academic needs."²⁶⁹

As a part of the PSU Urban redevelopment project, CYA retained Hideo Sasaki, one of the country's prominent landscape architects, as a consultant to help inform "the University's future landscaping in relation to building and programming efforts." At the time, Sasaki's Boston-based firm was working on the Master Plan for the University at Buffalo.²⁷⁰

Hideo Sasaki was an internationally known landscape architect, planner, teacher, and mentor who pioneered the concept of interdisciplinary planning and design. He was born in 1919 in Reedley, California, just southeast of Fresno, in the San Joaquin Valley. As the son of a farmer, he acquired an interest in plants and natural sciences at an early age. Shortly after receiving an associate of arts degree from Reedley Junior College in 1939, he pursued further studies at the University of California, Berkeley and the University of Illinois, as well as at Harvard. At the beginning of World War II, he was sent to an internment camp in California, as a result of being of Japanese descent. Sasaki began teaching and practicing landscape architecture following the war, at the beginning of a boom in land development and urban renewal. He continued to teach and practice until the student uprisings of the late 1960s and the rise of the environmental movement.²⁷¹

In 1953, he founded his Boston-based landscape architecture firm. That same year, he joined the faculty of the Harvard Graduate School of Design, where he served as chairman of the landscape architecture department from 1958 until 1968. In 1957, the firm was renamed Sasaki, Walker and Associates when he made one of his former students, Peter Walker, a partner. During this time, the office assumed a greater role in urban renewal, mixed-use developments, and campus planning and design. According to Peter Walker and Melanie Simo in their book, *Invisible Gardens: The Search for Modernism in the American Landscape*, the firm's ideological roots can be traced to the Bauhaus, which had been set up to demonstrate "how a multitude of individuals,

State University Library Special Collections and University Archives; Andy Rocchia, "'Urban Spring' Project Revived," *The Oregonian*, June 20, 1969, 15.

²⁶⁸ The firm worked with Belluschi on his last seven churches following the legendary architect's return from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Yost Grube Hall website, <https://www.ygh.com/history>; Brian Libby, "Penn Station to PDX: Tracing One Continuous Line of Portland Architects," accessed June 13, 2021, <https://chatterbox.typepad.com/portlandarchitecture/history/>.

²⁶⁹ The firm was previously known as Campbell, Michael and Yost and renamed Campbell Yost & Associates, Campbell Yost & Partners, and Campbell Yost Grube Architecture. Yost Grube Hall (YGH) Architecture became the successor firm. They maintained their headquarters in Portland, OR. In 1995, YGH occupied the Suite 2700 at 1211 SW 5th Avenue. Alan Michaelson, Portland Coast Architecture Database (PCAD), "Yost Grube Hall Architecture (Partnership)," <http://pcad.lib.washington.edu/firm/5352/>; Yost Grube Hall website, 50 Years of YGH Booklet, <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5cbe25a7fb182017d6a18c78/t/5d56f030112fe5000150630b/1565978687491/YGH+50th+Anniversary+Exhibit+Booklet.pdf>.

²⁷⁰ Portland State University, "University Reappraises Long-term Building Plans," *Portland State Perspective*; January 1970, Vol. 2, No. 1.

²⁷¹ Sasaki started at UC Berkeley in their city planning program, but transferred to the landscape architecture department, which was more appealing. In 1940-41, the war intervened and "the internment of Japanese-Americans abruptly ended his studies in California." He spent two years at the University of Illinois from 1944 to 1946, where "Beaux arts methods of design were competently taught, unchallenged by modernist design ideas." After receiving his M.L.A. degree from Harvard in 1948, he spent that summer in the site planning division of SOM in New York. Peter Walker and Melanie Simo, *Invisible Gardens: The Search for Modernism in the American Landscape* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1994), 210-211.

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willing to work concertedly but without losing their identity, could evolve a kinship of expression in their response to the challenges of the day.”²⁷²

Sasaki was strongly influenced by the Olmstedian pastoral tradition, as well as a concern for the cultural and spiritual aspects of the landscape. He worked to create “landscapes that did not call attention to themselves but rather served as quiet, dignified settings for modern buildings and sculpture.” The ultimate goal was a “harmonious, integrated environment in which building and landscape were complementary yet distinct, each element fulfilling its own functions and expressing its own purposes.”²⁷³

Despite Sasaki’s national reputation, the results of his work on the project received criticism soon after the initial plans were considered by the PDC. In a confidential letter dated December 24, 1969 to the PSU campus planner Malcolm McMinn, PSU’s president Gregory B. Wolfe related:

I gathered from a conversation I have had with Ira Keller that the Sasaki plan for the Park blocks will not receive sympathetic consideration by PDC. Under these conditions it seems to me unwise and probably unfeasible to lend more than token support of the institution.

As a matter of fact, I strongly urge that we explore some alternatives that suggest simplicity with modernization, of the Park blocks, and get on with the renovation and redesign of our general architectural plan.²⁷⁴

In a letter dated December 26, 1969, PDC’s resident design consultant Walter Gordon (and former dean of the University of Oregon’s School of Architecture and Allied Arts provided some additional detail to these initial criticisms by explaining:

...I have specific reservations about these early studies. I had the first impression, seeing some of the studies, that the spaces were over-designed—that there were too many ideas, too much ‘interesting’ detail. And I felt some doubt that the elm trees in the proposed paved open space for student gatherings in the student union, would ever be happy with their bases entirely surrounded by brick paving. Some of the details of public seating, along with some aspects of the handling of the proposed waterway, etc., seemed to me too busy and self-consciously designed. There is always a danger in overly elaborate design, of failure to achieve unity and tranquillity[sic] in the total form.²⁷⁵

Like Portland’s other urban renewal projects, the large-scale planning that involved the SPB sought to introduce a modernist aesthetic. The initial Mall plan concept proposed new college buildings on each side of the park with massive 30-foot wide concrete pedestrian overpasses, along with significant new infrastructure and dramatically reducing the amount of lawn and trees.²⁷⁶ The public policy implications of these design decisions were not lost upon the PDC or PSU for as the PDC’s resident design consultant Walter Gordon expressed some alarm when he explained that there is a “great danger of violently adverse public reaction to

²⁷² Walker and Simo, *Invisible Gardens: The Search for Modernism in the American Landscape*, 202-203, 210-211, 227-228.

²⁷³ Walker and Simo, *Invisible Gardens: The Search for Modernism in the American Landscape*, 202.

²⁷⁴ Memorandum from Gregory B. Wolfe (President of PSU) to Malcolm McMinn (PSU Building and Planning Manager), December 24, 1969, Portland State University Library Special Collections and University Archives.

²⁷⁵ Memorandum from Walter Gordon (Resident Design Consultant) to John Kenward, Chairman of the PDC, December 26, 1969, Portland State University Library Special Collections and University Archives.

²⁷⁶ PSU President Gregory Wolfe criticized the plan, saying that he “does not think the ‘university city’ approach is the one to take.” Rocchia, “‘Urban Spring’ Project Revived,” *The Oregonian*, June 20, 1969, 15.

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such a 'free' manipulation of the public Park Blocks—which have special historic and sentimental importance in Portland."²⁷⁷

Following these criticisms and several months of additional design reviews, which included a review by the PDCs design review team of Rockrise, Kirk, and Belluschi, design critiques and cost constraints gradually led to a more restrained design. PSU President Gregory B. Wolfe wrote to the PDC, stating the university's position in support of the design:

In several reviews over the last several months we have seen the plan evolve from the extremes of an exciting atmosphere and the generous use of water, through four changes to a design concept employing the natural beauty of the existing trees, rejuvenating the grade-level to be very much in character with that which was intended in the original Park Blocks...

The Park Blocks, in relation to the present and future campus will become the single unifying element in this dense urban setting, functionally, visually, and aesthetically. I cannot overstate the value of this completed work in terms of success of the University as a whole, not only architecturally, but in the improvement of learning skills and in the enhancement of human relations within the campus community...

It is necessary to the City to restore to the public that which has become impossible to maintain. It is also necessary as an important visual link with the business community of which we are a part. For the University, it is mandatory that we separate the human from the machines which now dominate the Park Blocks and that we offer the student a reasonable open space sanctuary from the 18,000-car-per-day traffic that binds us on each of Portland State's three sides.²⁷⁸

In a letter to Kenward (dated July 22, 1970), PSU Acting President Robert J. Low laid out five "essential elements" of the proposal under review:

1. The preservation – including the protection from disease – of the magnificent Elm trees which do so much for the character of the Blocks.
2. Planting to lawn of as much of the total available space as is practicable.
3. Use of the Park Blocks area primarily by pedestrians, as originally intended.
4. The integration of the surrounding University property into the proposed expanded "green belt" of the Blocks.
5. In all these ways, and through other appropriate design solutions, the development of the Blocks as a pleasant haven in the heart of the metropolis, which appeals to and is used by so many publics.²⁷⁹

A December 15, 1970 memorandum from PSU Building and Planning Manager, Malcolm McMinn, describes the main features of the plan, including preserving the park's grass and tree areas, in addition to restoring the adjacent streets to pedestrian use "as was originally intended when the Park Blocks were dedicated";

²⁷⁷ Memorandum from Walter Gordon (resident design consultant) to John Kenward, December 26, 1969, Portland State University Library Special Collections and University Archives.

²⁷⁸ Letter from Gregory B. Wolfe, PSU President, to John Kenward, Chairman of the PDC, March 12, 1970.

²⁷⁹ Low's letter further notes that further simplification may be needed due to the substantially higher project cost. Letter from Robert J. Low, PSU Acting President, to John Kenward, Chairman of the PDC, July 22, 1970.

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expansion of the park area; and keeping 100% of the large elms intact. He further articulates that “there will be no changes at grade level or any other physical change to impair the root system.”²⁸⁰

Between 1970 and 1972, the streets between SW Market and College streets were vacated to establish 22'-wide pedestrian malls. Four cross-streets—including SW Montgomery, SW Mill, SW Hall, and SW Harrison – were also closed to vehicular traffic between Broadway and W Park Avenue. An August 23, 1971 article in *The Oregonian* reported on the project's progress:

Entire streets of asphalt were whacked up as neatly as giant pans of fudge near Portland State University Monday, signaling the beginning of the \$678,000 South Park Blocks redevelopment...streets formerly open to automobile traffic and parking are being converted into “landscaped pedestrian malls complete with benches, new lighting standards, more grass and 107 additional trees...

Pedestrian traffic which formerly criss-crossed the center park blocks will be rerouted to east and west pedestrian ways, allowing “grass to grow and be maintained...to be enjoyed for sitting or relaxing.” All hard surfaces will be of “seeded colored concrete bordered with brick.”

The new park is expected to cause less friction between motorist and pedestrian, rather than more, officials say.²⁸¹

Interior circulation was also introduced to improve pedestrian cross-flow.²⁸² The resulting plan included redesigning walkway systems with earth-tone bricks and exposed aggregate concrete; installing new streetlights; and constructing a plaza meeting place adjacent to the PSU college center.²⁸³ The pedestrian mall increased the park area from 2.9 to 7.2 acres and all existing trees were preserved, along with the planting of additional trees.²⁸⁴

A focus of the redevelopment was the addition of the Smith Plaza Amphitheater, which transformed Block No. 4 into an open plaza with an elevated brick stage and low, angled rows of backless bench seating. Another integral element was the *Farewell to Orpheus* sculpture (**contributing object**), installed in 1972-1973 at the south end of Block No. 5 (SW Park Avenue and SW Montgomery Street).²⁸⁵ The cast bronze artwork was sculpted in 1968 by Frederic Littman, who was a PSU Professor Emeritus of Fine Art. Featuring a female nude on a floating mount above a reflecting pool and fountain, it depicts Eurydice, wife of the mythical Greek profit

²⁸⁰ Memorandum from Malcolm McMinn, PSU Building and Planning Manager, to Mark Howard, December 15, 1970.

²⁸¹ The article mentions Campbell, Yost, Grube & Partners as architect and Donald M. Drake Co. as general contractor. Walli Schneider, “City Streets Yield to Park Blocks Plan,” *The Oregonian*, August 23, 1971, 7.

²⁸² Beals, “Park Blocks” NRHP Nomination Form, Draft, 15.

²⁸³ Since the completion of PSU's redevelopment plan, there has been some resentment in the community. This was partially based on the fact that many did not see the PSU campus “as a community facility, but rather as a separate entity, an intruder which contributes only to the traffic and parking congestion downtown and the squeeze on low-cost housing in the area.” Portland League of Women Voters, “A Look at Downtown Portland,” Portland City Archives, 1972, 7; Monaco, “Portland's Great Plans.”

²⁸⁴ Schneider, “City Streets Yield to Park Blocks Plan,” *The Oregonian*, August 23, 1971, 7; Tom Ferschweiler, “Mall Plan for PSU Approved,” *The Oregonian*, March 10, 1971, 4.

²⁸⁵ In a 1971 correspondence to PSU President Robert J. Low, Malcom McMinn suggests the options of adding a clock, sculpture, or fountain: “If a fountain is now desired, let's ask Fred Littman or another artist to submit sketches, then go about a series of informal reviews, etc.” Memorandum from Malcom McMinn, PSU Building and Planning Manager, to Robert J. Low, PSU President, October 4, 1971.

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Orpheus, who was forced to return to the underworld.²⁸⁶ The water feature was added in the early 1990s as one of four fountains on PSU campus' "Walk of Heroines."²⁸⁷

Following the completion of the SPB Urban Renewal Development Project, the new design was recognized by several professional groups. In 1973, the Oregon Architectural Barriers Council, for instance, gave the project a recognition certificate "for providing accessibility to physically disabled persons and those in wheelchairs."²⁸⁸ That same year, the Oregon Association of Nurserymen gave a landscape award to landscape architect Michael Parker for his efforts on the project.²⁸⁹

As this period of development illustrates, the coordination between the PDC and PSU for the redevelopment of the SPB, as informed by strong public opinions and a nationally recognized group of design professionals and reviewers, created a design that integrated the southern portion of the SPB into the PSU campus while retaining the individual blocks, grassy ground plane, and linear arrangement of trees within the park. This period also illustrates the important role that federally-sponsored urban renewal programs played in Portland's development and the planning processes that those programs spawned in the 1960s and early 1970s.

The selection of the pedestrian mall concept, implemented through the vacating and closure of roads to accommodate pedestrians between University buildings, became an increasingly important urban landscape component in American cities and college campuses starting in the 1960s.²⁹⁰ Over the next three decades, American planners embraced the urban pedestrian mall concept with great enthusiasm as part of the center city revival movement.²⁹¹ These downtown pedestrian-oriented commercial landscapes were somewhat unique to the period and thought to be the panacea for downtown areas. Introduced from European cities in the post-war period, they were envisioned as a way to revitalize downtowns and "stem the tide of white flight, urban decline and depopulation, and the fleeing of business and commercial activity to the suburbs."²⁹² They often had a specific economic development focus and rarely referenced European counterparts.²⁹³

Governmental support followed in the form of tax laws, zoning ordinances, funding opportunities, and legislation. One source of funding came from the federal government in the form of urban renewal. Although the most visible federal-funded projects were in big cities, most urban renewal funds went to smaller cities. In

²⁸⁶ Littman was a European-trained sculptor who fled Nazi oppression with his wife, sculptor Marianne Gold, and settled in Portland in 1941. During the 1940s and 1950s, he collaborated with architects on major commissions. One of his commissions included the doors for Portland's Zion Lutheran Church in 1960. Over the next four decades until his death in 1979, he established an impressive artistic legacy in Oregon. "Frederic Littman (1907-1979)," *The Oregon Encyclopedia*, accessed November 25, 2020,

https://www.oregonencyclopedia.org/articles/littman_frederic_1907_1979_/#.X768ni1h1p9.

²⁸⁷ Portland State University, "Walk of the Heroines."

²⁸⁸ *The Oregonian*, June 20, 1973.

²⁸⁹ *The Oregonian*, December 14, 1973.

²⁹⁰ Pogani, "Downtown Pedestrian Malls Including a Case Study of Santa Monica's Third Street Promenade", 35-39. See also Matuke, Schmidt, and Li, "The Rise and Fall of the American Pedestrian Mall."

²⁹¹ Pedestrian malls sprang up in places like Cumberland, Maryland; New Brunswick, New Jersey; Chester, Pennsylvania; and Burlington, Vermont. They gained popularity because they directly addressed the problem of declining retail sales in downtown; could be implemented quickly and easily; and there was money available to fund their construction. Dorina Pojani, "Downtown Pedestrian Malls Including a Case Study of Santa Monica's Third Street Promenade," Masters of Community Planning thesis, University of Cincinnati, May 2005; Dave Amos, "Understanding the Legacy of Pedestrian Mall," *Journal of the American Planning Association*, 86:1, 2019, 13.

²⁹² Matuke, Schmidt, and Li, "The Rise and Fall of the American Pedestrian Mall."

²⁹³ Early examples were exclusively commercial with no residential uses, essentially replicating suburban shopping centers. For this reason, the typical term used to describe downtown pedestrian zones in the U.S. is 'downtown pedestrian malls.' Pojani, "American Downtown Pedestrian 'Malls': Rise, Fall, and Rebirth," 173.

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1960, California adopted the Pedestrian Mall Law, which authorized cities to restrict and improve main streets for pedestrian use.²⁹⁴

By the 1970s pedestrian malls became social and communal centers incorporating transportation, housing, and open space. These traffic-free zones helped “change the American attitude towards city life as people were feeling a new sense of spatial freedom and participation” and were seen as “instruments for a more humane and responsive environment.”²⁹⁵

Planners in the 1970s not only had a “genuine and fervent confidence in pedestrianization, but also the support of the public and merchants, who were willing to pay higher taxes in order to accommodate downtown pedestrian malls.”²⁹⁶

For these urban pedestrian malls, a number of locational and contextual factors accounted for their ultimate success or failure. Most successful malls tended to be located in small to medium-sized cities, due to a more suitable scale and less congested traffic patterns. Another commonly cited factor is proximity to a college campus.²⁹⁷ Site-specific factors included “creating a sense of enclosure or containment by ensuring that building heights along the mall are at least three stories tall, with taller buildings at the corner to increase visibility...requiring awnings or tree cover along the mall to provide some protection from the elements, providing a variety of seating options along the mall, increasing visual stimulation through the use of planters, vegetation, and paving material to create contrast with the surrounding sidewalk, and finally to install adequate lighting to illuminate the mall at night.”²⁹⁸

Urban renewal ended in 1974 and pedestrian malls fell out of favor by the 1980s, being portrayed as “the urban planner’s failed attempt to revitalize Main Streets.” Very few of these mid-century pedestrian malls remain.²⁹⁹ For many, the expected benefits had not materialized and, instead, had the opposite effect of downtown revitalization. With the rise of suburban malls and shopping plazas, these center city areas were outcompeted and essentially died. These suburban counterparts offered ample free parking and a climate-controlled environment. In addition, declining residential and office populations in the central cities meant there were insufficient shoppers and pedestrians to utilize the malls.³⁰⁰

Comparative Analysis

The significance of the SPB is directly tied to Portland’s patterns of growth and parks planning throughout the mid-nineteenth and twentieth centuries—from its initial development as a promenade park through the redevelopment of the southern portion as a pedestrian mall. There are few direct comparisons, other than the

²⁹⁴ Matuke, Schmidt, and Li, “The Rise and Fall of the American Pedestrian Mall.”

²⁹⁵ Pojani, “Downtown Pedestrian Malls Including a Case Study of Santa Monica’s Third Street Promenade.”

²⁹⁶ Pojani, “American Downtown Pedestrian ‘Malls’: Rise, Fall, and Rebirth,” 175.

²⁹⁷ The continuing presence of pedestrian malls in college towns such as Boulder, Colorado; Burlington, Vermont; Charlottesville, Virginia; and Ithaca, New York are often cited as evidence. Pojani, “American Downtown Pedestrian ‘Malls’: Rise, Fall, and Rebirth,” 178.

²⁹⁸ By the mid 1990s, over one hundred cities had removed their pedestrian malls. Several cities, including upstate New York, Chicago, Minneapolis, Baltimore, and Philadelphia, reverted back to an integrated traffic grid to allow car access. Pedestrian malls witnessed a revival of sorts in the early 2000s, as public attitudes toward urban living shifted and population growth increased in cities, along with a decline in crime rates. Matuke, Schmidt, and Li, “The Rise and Fall of the American Pedestrian Mall.”

²⁹⁹ Between 1959 and 1985, 140 pedestrian malls were built in cities. Of those, only 32% remain. Amos, “Understanding the Legacy of Pedestrian Mall,” 11, 22.

³⁰⁰ Often these urban pedestrian malls were designed “without reference to an appropriate scale, resulting in streets which were too wide, buildings too tall, and spaces which made pedestrians feel uncomfortable” and were characterized as ‘long, redundant pedestrian streets with no visual or physical barriers to break up the space.’ Matuke, Schmidt, and Li, “The Rise and Fall of the American Pedestrian Mall.”

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North Park Blocks (NPB), that span the same historic context (1852-1973) and makes the SPB a unique resource that is illustrative of the city's transformation from its founding to present day. There are, however, other comparative examples that intersect with the timeline and share comparisons in terms of the "promenade" and "pedestrian mall" concept.

The Linear "Promenade Park"

This distinctive park type and/or parkway was popularized in the mid-nineteenth century. Boston's Commonwealth Avenue Mall (NR-listed 1990, 2003) is perhaps one of the better known promenades and shares many similarities to the SPB, namely the axial arrangement of elms along a linear series of park blocks. Both parks were developed around the same time—and the fact that Louis Pfunder, the horticulturist for the SPB's initial landscape plan, had connections with Olmsted likely influenced the planting regime.³⁰¹ It was during its initial development that the park was largely fenced off with perimeter paths along the edges of the block with few if any discernable interior paths. Designed in the French Boulevard style, Commonwealth Avenue featured an overall width of approximately 200' (from building face to building face) with a 100'-wide pedestrian mall for strolling and sitting, and a 17'-wide central pathway. Bordering the Avenue's mall are three- to five-story mostly brick façade residential buildings. This linear promenade park, totals 32 acres in size "with the original idea to have it lined along its length with matching deciduous trees that were spaced at set intervals." Also known for its iconic American elms, Boston's Mall features a mix of tree species including Sweetgum, green ash, maple, linden, Zelkova, and Japanese pagoda. Like the modifications made to the SPB in the 1920s, public monuments and memorials have been added to its expansive central promenade.³⁰²

At the local level, Portland's NPB bears the most direct comparison to the SPB. In terms of Criterion A, both were part of the same dedication of a row of narrow blocks creating a continuous greenspace through the city. Yet, they evolved as separate physical entities. This was largely due to the removal of the central blocks in 1865, essentially subdividing it into "two islands of green to be engulfed by the rapidly-growing city."³⁰³ Almost from the beginning, the NPB and SPB developed as separate physical entities. Both parks were further distinguished by their socio-economic development patterns. Unlike the SPB, city ownership of the NPB was a more straightforward transaction with the five northern park blocks deeded to the city in 1865 and officially platted as a municipal park in 1869. Title to Lownsdale's SPB blocks was legally challenged and it was not until 1876 that the city had clear title to the property.³⁰⁴

Early on, the SPB was established as a prestigious residential district located on a gradually sloping hillside, while the NPB became home to more modest, working-class residential development due to its proximity to the waterfront, main commercial area, and railroad station. By the 1880s, some of the city's leading families built Italianate mansions facing onto the SPB, along with a number of educational and religious institutions who established a presence along the park. Portland's immigrant population settled in the surrounding neighborhoods to the east and west.³⁰⁵ Improvements in the early twentieth century under the Olmsted Plan,

³⁰¹ Commonwealth Avenue Mall was designed in 1856 as part of Arthur D. Gillman's plan for the Back Bay neighborhood. Today, the greenspace serves as the crucial green link between the Public Garden and Charlesgate connecting to Olmsted's 'Emerald Necklace' Park System. "The Landscape Architect's Guide to Boston: Commonwealth Avenue Mall," American Society of Landscape Architecture (ASLA), accessed May 14, 2021, https://www.asla.org/uploadedFiles/Guide/Boston/Neighborhoods/Emerald_Necklace/Commonwealth_Avenue_Mall.pdf.

³⁰² Nine monuments have been added to Boston's Commonwealth Mall since the first sculpture, William Rimmer's Alexander Hamilton, was installed in 1865. ASLA, "The Landscape Architect's Guide to Boston: Commonwealth Avenue Mall."

³⁰³ Portland Parks and Recreation, "South Park Blocks: Benefits of Trees" brochure.

³⁰⁴ Orloff, "Portland Park Blocks"; Booth, "Portland's Park Blocks: A Chronology."

³⁰⁵ Booth, "Portland's Park Blocks: A Chronology"; Nelson, *The South Park Blocks...A Neighborhood History*, 5; Scott, *History of Portland, Oregon*.

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carried out by parks superintendent Mische, incorporated both parks as integral elements of a larger, connected park system despite the intervening development. Influenced by the national park playground movement, Mische also worked to introduce children's playgrounds into Portland's parks with the city's first play equipment installed in the NPB (between NW Couch and Davis) in 1906 and in the SPB (near SW Jefferson) two years later. By this period, the SPB's residential character shifted to higher-density apartment houses, while the NPB was supplanted with adjacent commercial and light industrial uses, along with the railroad at the northern end. As the NPB's use transitioned towards commercial/industrial development and away from its earlier residential character, it experienced less usage as a place for public gatherings.³⁰⁶

As a designed historic landscape (Criterion C), both Park Blocks survive as cohesive, intact examples of urban promenade parks that retains its formal allée layout and components of subsequent City Beautiful design principles.³⁰⁷ As described in the City Beautiful MPD, the SPB and NPB, along with the Plaza Blocks, survive as the "best and earliest examples" of the city square. As a property typology, they are characterized by their urban context, linkage to a street system, three-dimensionality, and centrality of location.³⁰⁸ Shared attributes include the expansive ground plane, pedestrian walkways, and axial rows of deciduous tree canopy with uninterrupted vistas. One distinction between the two parks is their scale, with the NPB property covering less than half the acreage of its counterpart to the south. The 3.11-acre greenspace consists of a five-block linear sequence between SW Ankeny and NW Glisan streets, just north of the downtown core. The SPB, on the other hand, encompasses 8.76 acres along a twelve-block stretch at the south side of downtown.

While the NPB and Plaza Blocks retain the closest historical relationship to the SPB, no other City park reflects a similar multi-block linear arrangement, internal circulation pattern, and/or evolution of formal design. During Portland's growth in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, several developers created more modest, linear, tree-lined medians/parkways into their developments including Eastmoreland (SE Reed College Place, 1910s, NRHP-eligible), Firland Subdivision/ Firland Parkway (1903), N Omaha Avenue (c. 1890s), and Roseway Parkway (early twentieth century).³⁰⁹

Eastmoreland, established as an early-twentieth century planned suburban subdivision, is characterized by its "grid-and-meander" street plan consisting of a series of east-west meandering streets; axial north-south avenues; and a slightly offset, north-south tree-lined boulevard.³¹⁰

³⁰⁶ Orloff, "Portland Park Blocks"; Portland Parks and Recreation, *Cultural Resource Management Plan: Planning Framework and Implementation*, 23; Portland Parks and Recreation, "South Park Blocks"; Willingham, Kunowski, Starin, Mickle, Engeman, and Orloff, *City of Portland Civic Planning, Development, & Public Works, 1851-1965: A Historic Context*, 2009, 30; Kunowski, Starin, Mickle, Engeman, and Orloff, *Open Space & Park Development 1851-1965*, 7.

³⁰⁷ As espoused by Frederick Law Olmsted, design principles included unified composition, orchestration of movement and use, sustainable design and environmental conservation, and comprehensive approach. Willingham, Kunowski, Starin, Mickle, Engeman, and Orloff, *City of Portland Civic Planning, Development, & Public Works, 1851-1965: A Historic Context*, 30; Kunowski, Starin, Mickle, Engeman, and Orloff, *Open Space & Park Development 1851-1965*, 13.

³⁰⁸ Unlike the NPB and SPB, the nearby Plaza Blocks are diminutive in scale (less than one acre) and do not offer a similar promenade experience. Lutino, Merker, and Green, "The City Beautiful Movement and Civic Planning in Portland, Oregon 1897-1921" NRHP MPD Form, 26-27.

³⁰⁹ Ainsworth Parkway (also known as the Ainsworth Linear Arboretum) is an unusually long, narrow series of blocks between NE Grand Avenue and NE 37th streets created in the late nineteenth to early twentieth century when the area was developed with single-family residential dwellings. NE Ainsworth consists of a linear series of grassy blocks, or wide median, featuring a single, centrally planted alignment of trees flanked by narrow one-way roads. While it shares some similarities to the SPB, the comparably slender central planting medians were never developed into more formal parks with gardens probably due to their diminutive widths. Robert W. Hadlow, Foster Streetscapes Project: ODOT Region 1 Geo-Environmental Unit Historic Resources Baseline Report, June 19, 2017, accessed June 30, 2021, https://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/GeoEnvironmental/Docs_CulturalResource/BaselineExample.docx.

³¹⁰ The neighborhood was surveyed by Robert S. Greenleaf, the same survey engineer who laid out Ladd's Addition and Laurelhurst. "Eastmoreland Historic District" NRHP nomination, accessed June 20, 2021,

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The mile-long SE Reed College Place within Eastmoreland is a designed boulevard that features a 90' right-of-way and 30'-wide planting strip, serving as a "central park flanked by narrow drives." The boulevard was planted with an allée of linden trees, while the east-west streets were historically planted with elms and maples established on the north-south avenues. Further distinguishing it from the SPB, Reed College Place is set amidst a residential neighborhood with Reed College at its northern terminus. While Reed College Place was slated for integration into Edward Herbert Bennet's plan for Portland's park and boulevard system, the comparably slender central planting strip was never substantially improved beyond the installation of the linearly arranged Linden trees and still lacks formal pedestrian walkways and/or planting beds.³¹¹

The Pedestrian Mall

The SPB is also illustrative of the pedestrian mall concept which became a popular urban redevelopment scheme in the United States starting in the 1950s and through the 1970s. One local example of the pedestrian mall is the Halprin Open Space Sequence (NR-listed 2013), whose design by renowned landscape architect Lawrence Halprin created an entirely new urban park setting within the newly-established superblocks of the South Auditorium District redevelopment. While Halprin's design did not necessarily have to work around legacy landscape design features and consisted of uniquely expressive Modernist urban designs, the SPB Urban Renewal Development Project involved redeveloping portions of an existing park into a "pedestrian mall" concept, integrating PSU's campus pedestrian circulation, while adding modest Modernist landscape design elements to facilitate its use by PSU's students as well as the general public.³¹²

Both parks offer a number of similarities, including a unified design scheme; restrained material expression (including exposed-aggregate concrete and earth-tone brick hardscape); low bench seating; and plaza meeting places. The SPB's Urban Renewal Development Project was based on five "essential elements" (articulated in a July 22, 1970 letter by PSU Acting President Robert J. Low), resulting in a design that introduced a modernist aesthetic in keeping with the park's historic character. Halprin's Open Space Sequence was designed as four public parks connected by a system of pedestrian malls. Each park featured a fountain or pool. The series of promenades, which provide access from the public streets into the interior, follow a similar fundamental design with specific variations to accommodate geographic conditions. The building setback is consistent with the line of trees and plantings to balance view with enclosure, and to control the vista at the point of entries. Pathways throughout the open space sequence are scored concrete with a slightly raised concrete curb. Wood-slat and metal benches are positioned along the pathways, set back from the path on concrete or Belgian block paving.³¹³

The distinctions between the two parks provide a juxtaposition in landscape design approaches for the period; between a distinctively Modernist design context and a context that required sensitivity to a pre-existing historic park design. As examples of Portland's urban renewal efforts, the Halprin Open Space Sequence is representative of a "city within a city" while the SPB is illustrative of a more nuanced design approach that integrated a pedestrian mall concept into an existing park design. Despite the differences between the Halprin

https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5f99bc414eddf3607bc85b85/t/5faf0e82844f9e409e6b37ed/1605308035373/Eastmoreland_Historical_Context_Section_NPSnom.pdf.

³¹¹ The boulevard's north terminus was aligned with the main entrance of the newly-established Reed College. "Eastmoreland Historic District" NRHP nomination.

³¹² Tess, "Halprin Open Space Sequence," NRHP Nomination Form, 19; The Halprin Landscape Conservancy, "Portland Open Space Sequence."

³¹³ The Halprin Open Space Sequence was praised by New York Times architecture critic Ada Louise Huxtable, who described Halprin's Forecourt Fountain as "one of the most important open spaces since the Renaissance." The Halprin Landscape Conservancy, "Portland Open Space Sequence."

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and SPB landscape designs, the 1970s improvements of the SPB utilized similar exposed aggregate walks and similar lighting schemes to aesthetically link the two compositions.

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
 - Other State agency
 - Federal agency
 - Local government
 - University
 - Other
- Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): N/A

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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 8.76 acres

(Do not include previously listed resource acreage; enter "Less than one" if the acreage is .99 or less)

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: N/A
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1	<u>45.517723°</u> Latitude	<u>-122.682182°</u> Longitude	3	<u>45.509625°</u> Latitude	<u>-122.686034°</u> Longitude
2	<u>45.517597°</u> Latitude	<u>-122.681718°</u> Longitude	4	<u>45.509582°</u> Latitude	<u>-122.686350°</u> Longitude

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The 8.76-acre park encompasses a linear sequence of twelve blocks (referenced herein as Blocks No. 1-12) in downtown Portland, Multnomah County, Oregon, on land variously described as Blocks 7 to 18, Portland Park Blocks, in Section 4, Township 1 South, Range 1 East WM. Officially addressed as 1003 SW Park Avenue, the park extends approximately 3,150 feet from SW Salmon Street (N) to SW Jackson Street (S), along an NNE-SSW axis. For the purposes of consistency, the width of the park is approximately 124 feet which is the width of the park from inside curb to curb as measured at Block No. 12. This width is carried the full distance for each individual block from SW Salmon to SW Jackson streets. While the concrete curbing physically delineates the park's boundaries on the northern park blocks, the curbs in several of the southern park blocks have been removed as a part of the 1970s SPB Urban Renewal Development Project. In these areas, the width of the park remains 124 feet as projected from the curbs present in the northern blocks. The lone exception is Block No. 1 which features a curved shape on its southern edge. For Block No. 1, the boundary is marked by the perimeter curbline. The SPB historic district includes the east-west crossing rights-of-way (SW Salmon, SW Main, SW Madison, SW Jefferson, SW Columbia, SW Clay, SW Market, SW Montgomery, SW Harrison, SW Hall, SW College and SW Jackson Streets). The boundary does not include SW Park Avenue (E or W).

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundaries of the SPB were selected because they represent the boundaries of the park within its period of significance (1852-1973) and includes all of the contributing resources that relate to that period. The park area has been consistently defined since its original platting in 1852. With the exception of minor curb line alignment for on-street parking on SW Park Avenue West in 1963 and the rounding of the south end of Block No. 1, there have been few changes to the park's historic boundaries. While the SPB Urban Renewal Development Project removed many of the curbs on the southern portion of the park, the width of the district boundary remains 124 feet to remain consistent with the lower blocks. While the boundary excludes portions of the larger Urban Renewal Development Project associated with the University in the 1970s that included additional buildings and other pedestrian improvements, the historic district boundary only includes the urban renewal project's 1970s modifications to the SPB that lie within the original extent of the park. Additionally, the Verbal Boundary Description describes the park as a contiguous district encompassing the east-west crossing

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rights-of-way; these roadways create a spatial rhythm for each park block, contribute to its form, and convey how the park was integrated into the City's street grid system. While SW Park East and West serve a similar function, for the purposes of this nomination, they are not included within the boundary of the SPB historic district.

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11. Form Prepared By

Brooke Best, Kirk Ranzetta, Story Swett, Roberta Cation, Leslie

name/title Hutchinson, and Fred Leeson date 8/1/2021

organization Downtown Neighborhood Association telephone _____

street & number _____ email _____

city or town Portland state OR zip code 97205

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Regional Location Map**
- **Local Location Map**
- **Tax Lot Map**
- **Site Plan**
- **Floor Plans (As Applicable)**
- **Photo Location Map** (Include for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map and insert immediately after the photo log and before the list of figures).

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Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 3000x2000 pixels, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: South Park Blocks
City or Vicinity: Portland
County: Multnomah **State:** OR
Photographer: Richard (Dick) Kaiser, Ronald Cooper
Date Photographed: February 2020, March 2020, June 2020

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

- Photo 1 of 24:** *OR_MultnomahCounty_SouthParkBlocks_0001*
"Rebecca at the Well", 1926 Sculptor: Oliver L. Barrett; Shemanski Fountain by Carl L. Linde, Block 12, View SW, South Park Blocks
Photographer: Richard (Dick) Kaiser, February 20, 2020
- Photo 2 of 24:** *OR_MultnomahCounty_SouthParkBlocks_0002*
Detail: Benson Bubblers, Linde, Block 12, View S, South Park Blocks
Photographer: Richard (Dick) Kaiser, February 20, 2020
- Photo 3 of 24:** *OR_MultnomahCounty_SouthParkBlocks_0003*
Lincoln Square, Abraham Lincoln Sculpture Granite Pedestal, Block 11, View SE, South Park Blocks
Photographer: Richard (Dick) Kaiser, May 19, 2021
- Photo 4 of 24:** *OR_MultnomahCounty_SouthParkBlocks_0004*
Traditional Park Benches, Block 11, View S, South Park Blocks,
Photographer: Richard (Dick) Kaiser, May 19, 2021
- Photo 5 of 24:** *OR_MultnomahCounty_SouthParkBlocks_0005*
Roosevelt Square, "Rough Rider" Sculpture Granite Pedestal, Block 10, View W, South Park Blocks
Photographer: Richard (Dick) Kaiser, May 19, 2021
- Photo 6 of 24:** *OR_MultnomahCounty_SouthParkBlocks_0006*
Axial View with Street Car, Block 6, View S, South Park Blocks
Photographer: Richard (Dick) Kaiser, February 20, 2020
- Photo 7 of 24:** *OR_MultnomahCounty_SouthParkBlocks_0007*
Axial View, Block 7, View N, South Park Blocks
Photographer: Richard (Dick) Kaiser, February 17, 2020
- Photo 8 of 24:** *OR_MultnomahCounty_SouthParkBlocks_0008*
Axial View, Block 8, View S, South Park Blocks
Photographer: Richard (Dick) Kaiser, February 20, 2020
- Photo 9 of 24:** *OR_MultnomahCounty_SouthParkBlocks_0009*

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Axial View, Block 10, View N, South Park Blocks
Photographer: Richard (Dick) Kaiser, May 19, 2021

Photo 10 of 24: *OR_MultnomahCounty_SouthParkBlocks_0010*
Axial View, Block 10, View SE, South Park Blocks
Photographer: Richard (Dick) Kaiser, May 19, 2021

Photo 11 of 24: *OR_MultnomahCounty_SouthParkBlocks_0011*
Axial View, Block 6, View S, South Park Blocks
Photographer: Richard (Dick) Kaiser, February 27, 2020

Photo 12 of 24: *OR_MultnomahCounty_SouthParkBlocks_0012*
Public Market, Block 5, View S, South Park Blocks
Photographer: Richard (Dick) Kaiser, February 27, 2020

Photo 13 of 24: *OR_MultnomahCounty_SouthParkBlocks_0013*
"Holon" Sculpture, Block 3, View S, South Park Blocks
Photographer: Richard (Dick) Kaiser, February 27, 2020

Photo 14 of 24: *OR_MultnomahCounty_SouthParkBlocks_0014*
Axial View, Block 3, View S, South Park Blocks
Photographer: Richard (Dick) Kaiser, February 27, 2020

Photo 15 of 24: *OR_MultnomahCounty_SouthParkBlocks_0015*
Children's Play Structure, Block 1, View N, South Park Blocks,
Photographer: Richard (Dick) Kaiser, February 27, 2020

Photo 16 of 24: *OR_MultnomahCounty_SouthParkBlocks_0016*
Evening View, Block 12, View S, South Park Blocks
Photographer: Richard (Dick) Kaiser, March 5, 2020

Photo 17 of 24: *OR_MultnomahCounty_SouthParkBlocks_0017*
Roosevelt Square, Block 10, View E, South Park Blocks
Photographer: Richard (Dick) Kaiser, May 19, 2021

Photo 18 of 20: *OR_MultnomahCounty_SouthParkBlocks_0018*
Lincoln Square, Block 11, View W, South Park Blocks
Photographer: Richard (Dick) Kaiser, May 19, 2021

Photo 19 of 24: *OR_MultnomahCounty_SouthParkBlocks_0019*
Aerial Panoramic, View N, South Park Blocks
Photographer: Ronald Cooper, June 30, 2020

Photo 20 of 24: *OR_MultnomahCounty_SouthParkBlocks_0020*
Aerial Panoramic, Block 6, View N, South Park Blocks
Photographer: Ronald Cooper, June 30, 2020

Photo 21 of 24: *OR_MultnomahCounty_SouthParkBlocks_0021*
Smith Center Amphitheater, Block 4, View SW, South Park Blocks
Photographer: Richard (Dick) Kaiser, May 19, 2021

Photo 22 of 24: *OR_MultnomahCounty_SouthParkBlocks_0022*
Farewell to Orpheus Statue, Block 5, View NW, South Park Blocks

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Photographer: Richard (Dick) Kaiser, May 19, 2021

Photo 23 of 24: *OR_MultnomahCounty_SouthParkBlocks_0023*
PSU Benches and Game Tables, Block 3, View S, South Park Blocks
Photographer: Richard (Dick) Kaiser, May 19, 2021

Photo 24 of 24: *OR_MultnomahCounty_SouthParkBlocks_0024*
PSU Diagonal Walkway and Bench Seating, Block 2, View SE, South Park Blocks
Photographer: Richard (Dick) Kaiser, May 19, 2021

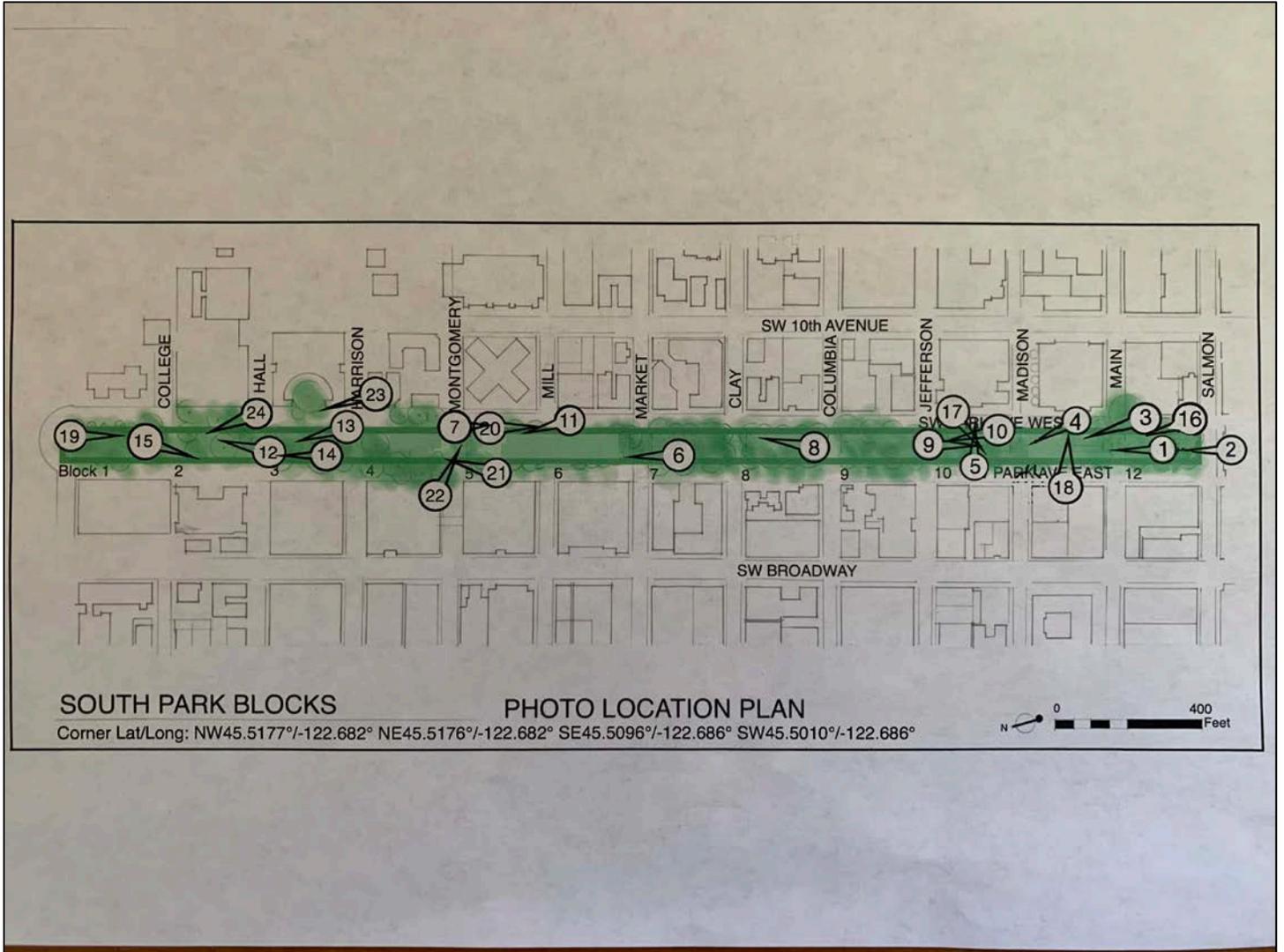
Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

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Photo Location Map



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List of Figures

(Resize, compact, and paste images of maps and historic documents in this section. Place captions, with figure numbers above each image. Orient maps so that north is at the top of the page, all document should be inserted with the top toward the top of the page.

- Figure 1:** Regional Location Map
- Figure 2:** Local Location Map
- Figure 3:** Tax Lot Map - Multnomah County Assessor MTL 1SE3BB-06100
- Figure 4:** Tax Lot Map - Multnomah County Assessor MTL 1SE3BB-06500
- Figure 5:** Tax Lot Map - Multnomah County Assessor MTL 1SE3BB-04100
- Figure 6:** Site Plan
- Figure 7:** Lownsdale Map, 1852
- Figure 8:** HISTORIC PHOTO: Early Portland Panoramic Photograph, near South Park Blocks, nd
- Figure 9:** HISTORIC PHOTO: Aerial Photograph of South Park Blocks, view northeast, showing initial planting of Elms and Lombardy poplars between Salmon and Hall St, 1878
- Figure 10:** HISTORIC PHOTO: South Park Blocks, 1880s photograph.
- Figure 11:** HISTORIC PHOTO: Fanciful lithograph of South Park Blocks, corner of SW Park and Montgomery, c. 1882.
- Figure 12:** HISTORIC PHOTO: South Park Blocks Rose Festival, June 1925
- Figure 13:** HISTORIC PHOTO: South Park Blocks Rose Festival, June 1925
- Figure 14:** Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps that illustrate the evolution of the built environment around the South Park Blocks, 1889-1950 (Compare with Figure 11).
- Figure 15:** HISTORIC PHOTO: Photo of PSU Students, South Park Blocks, Facing south, 1976
- Figure 16:** HISTORIC PHOTO: Photo of new amphitheater in South Park Blocks near PSU in 1972.
- Figure 17:** HISTORIC PHOTO: Photo of Shemanski Fountain, November 15, 1967
- Figure 18:** HISTORIC PHOTO: Aerial Photo of Foothill Freeway R.O.W., as proposed, ca 1938
- Figures 19- 30:** South Park Blocks, Block by Block Detail Plans
- Figure 31:** Additional Historical Documentation

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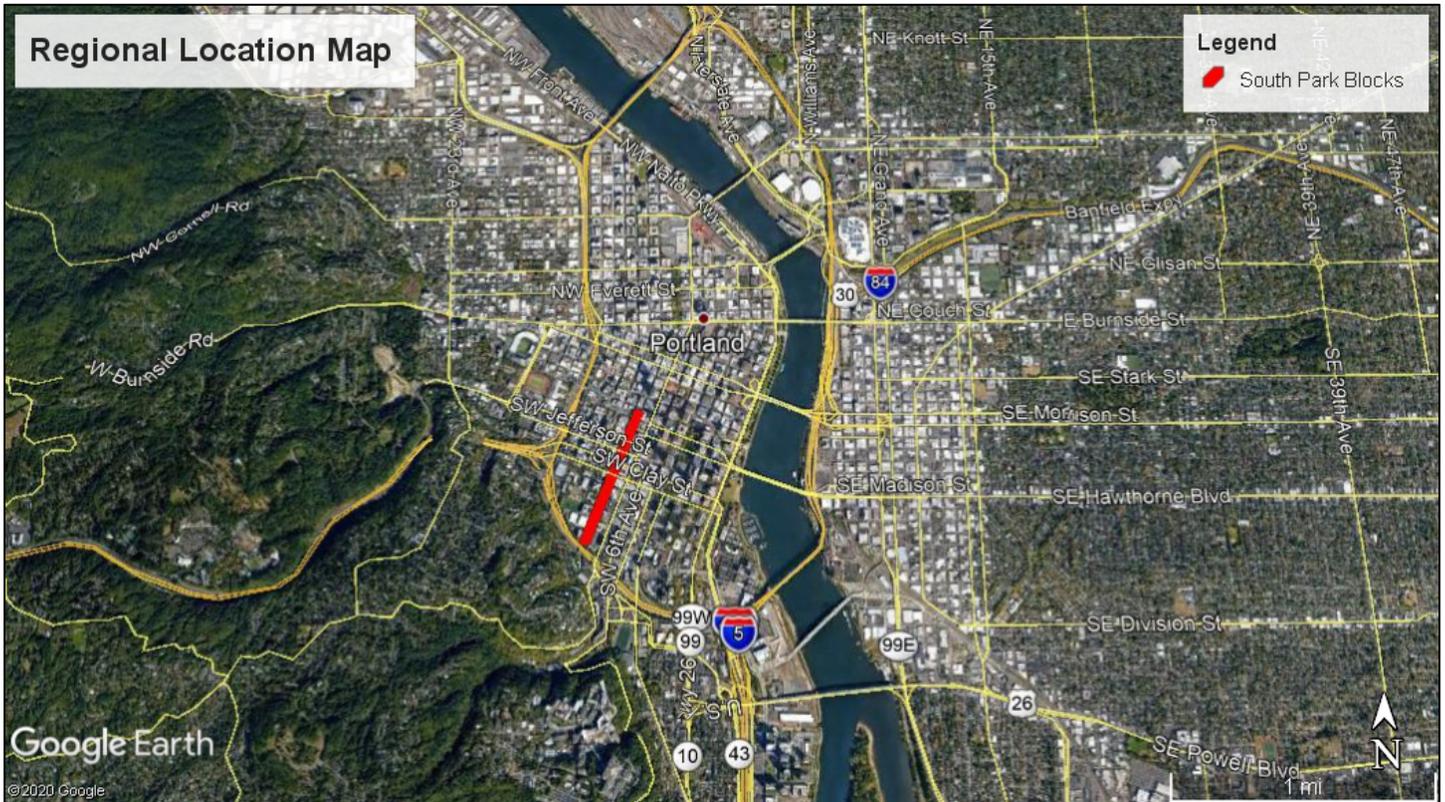
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Figure 1: Regional Location Map



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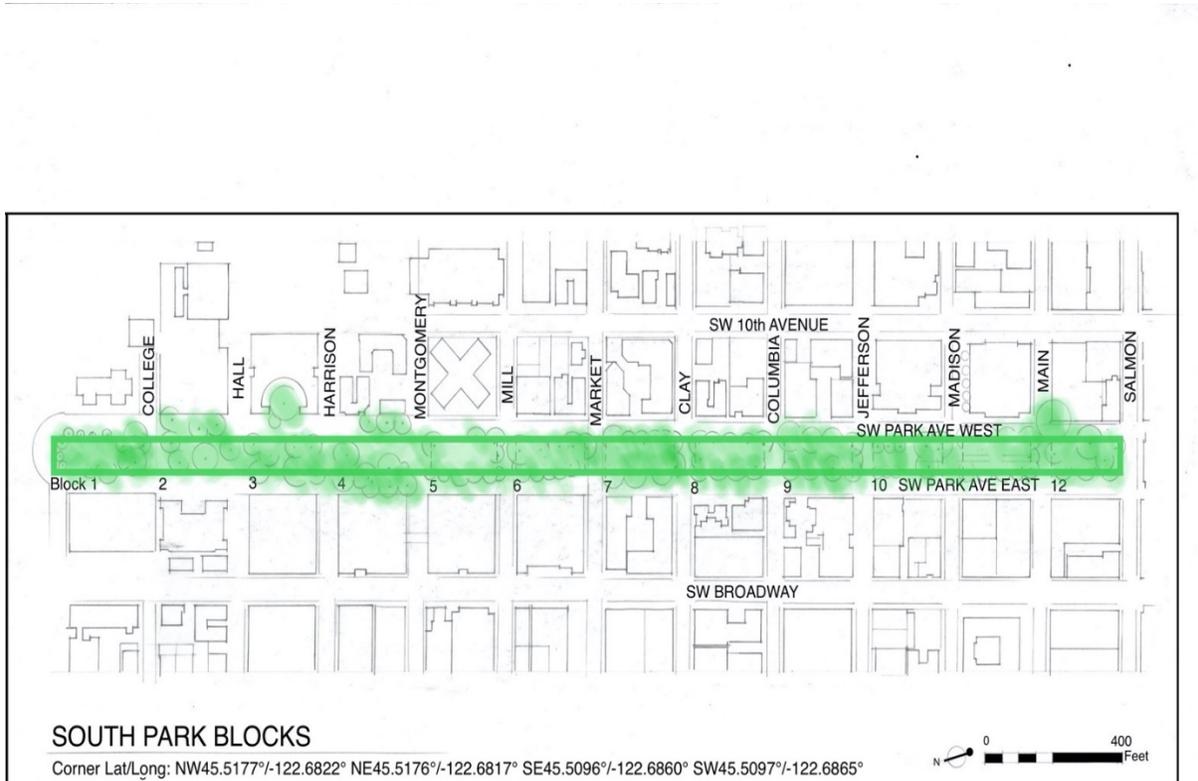
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Figure 2: Local Location Map



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Figure 3: Tax Lot Map



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Figure 4: Tax Lot Map



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Figure 5: Tax Lot Map



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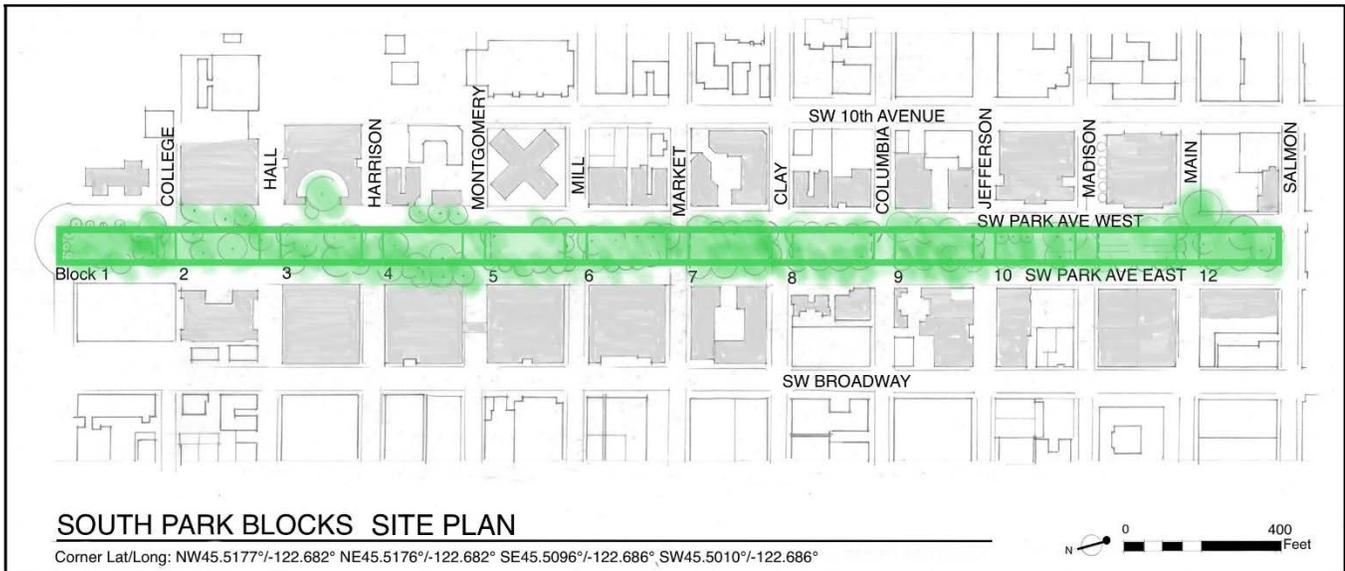
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Figure 6: Site Plan



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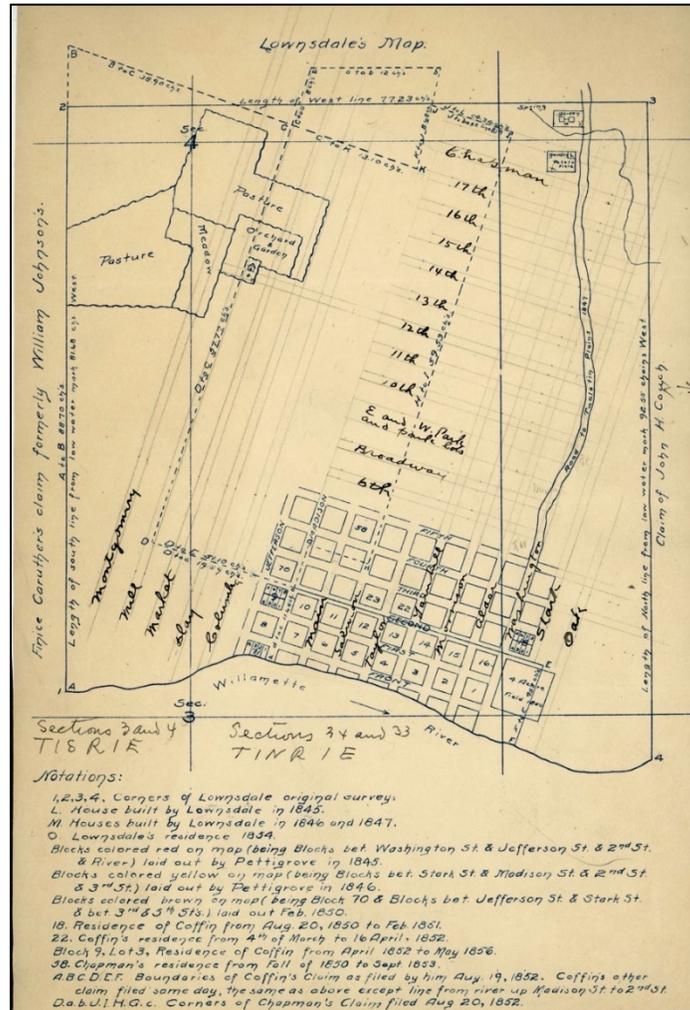
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Figure 7: 1852 Lownsdale's Map
Image courtesy Oregon Historical Society [G494.P6G46.1852.T619.G2]



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Figure 8: Undated Early Portland panoramic photograph near South Park Blocks
Image courtesy of Oregon Historical Society [019143]



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Figure 9: 1878 aerial photograph of South Park Blocks, looking northeast, showing initial planting of elms and Lombardy poplars between Salmon and Hall St
Image courtesy of Oregon Historical Society [23454]



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Figure 10: South Park Blocks, 1880s photograph.
Image Courtesy of Library of Congress.



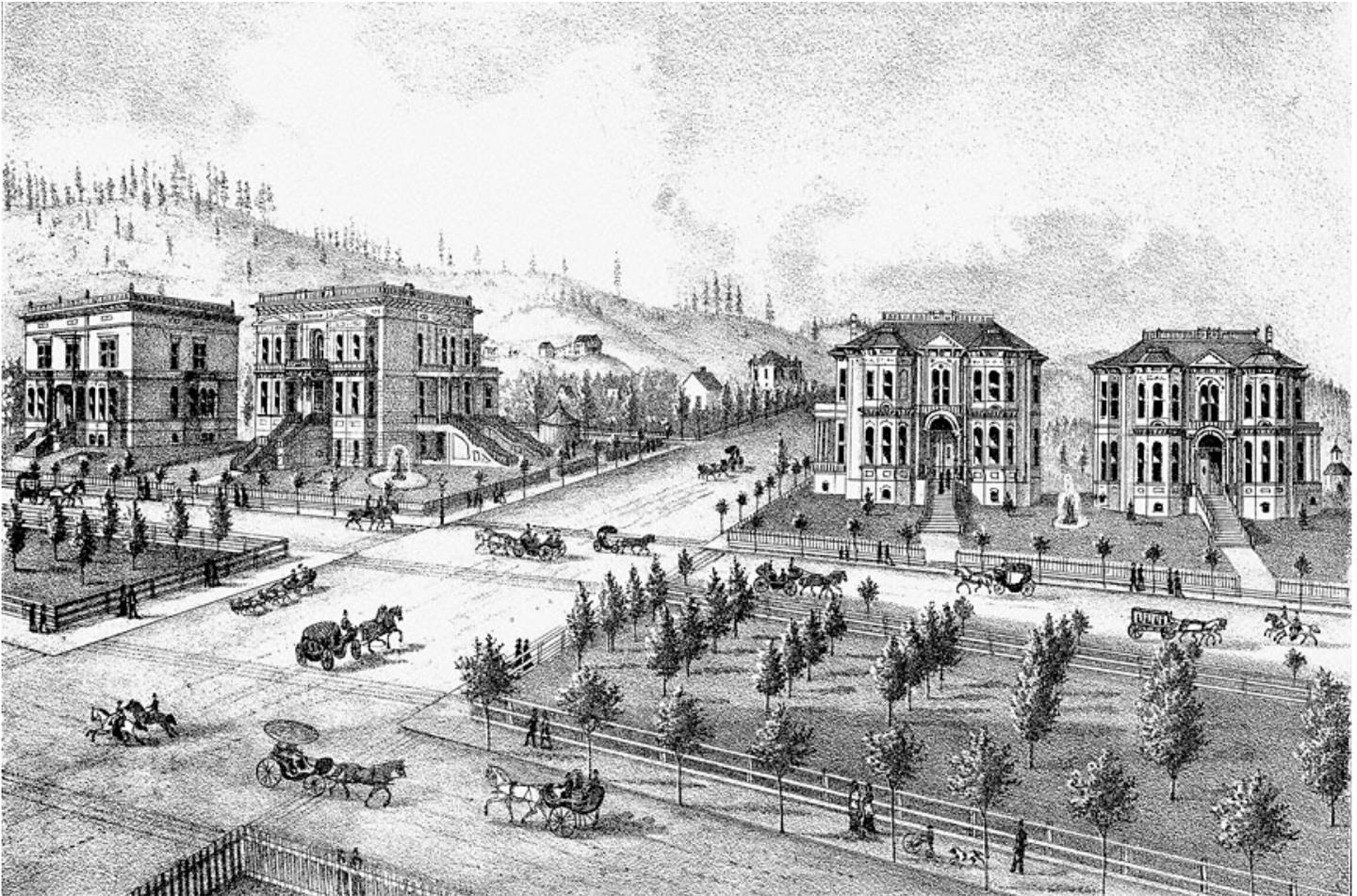
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Figure 11: Fanciful lithograph of South Park Blocks, corner of SW Park and Montgomery, c. 1882.
Image Courtesy of Oregon Historical Society, Catalog Number OrHi 734.



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Figure 12: South Park Blocks Rose Festival, June 1925
Image courtesy of Portland Archives



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Figure 13: South Park Blocks Rose Festival, June 1925
Image courtesy of Portland Archives



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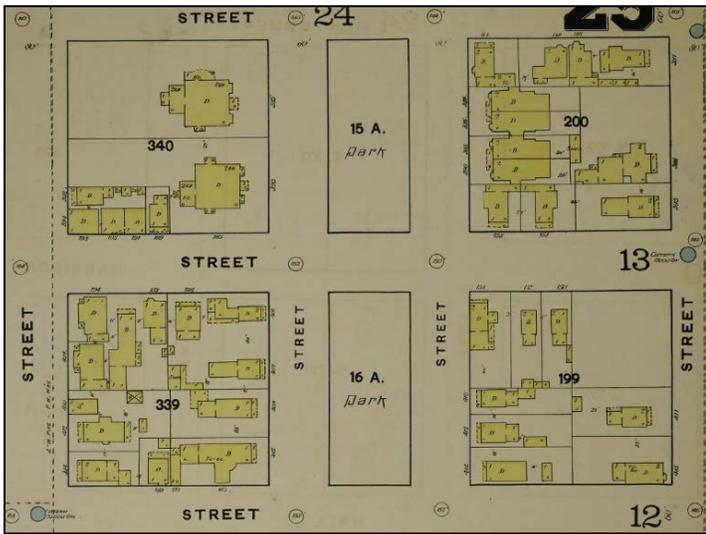
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Figure 14: Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps that illustrate the evolution of the built environment around the South Park Blocks, 1889-1950 (Compare with Figure 11).

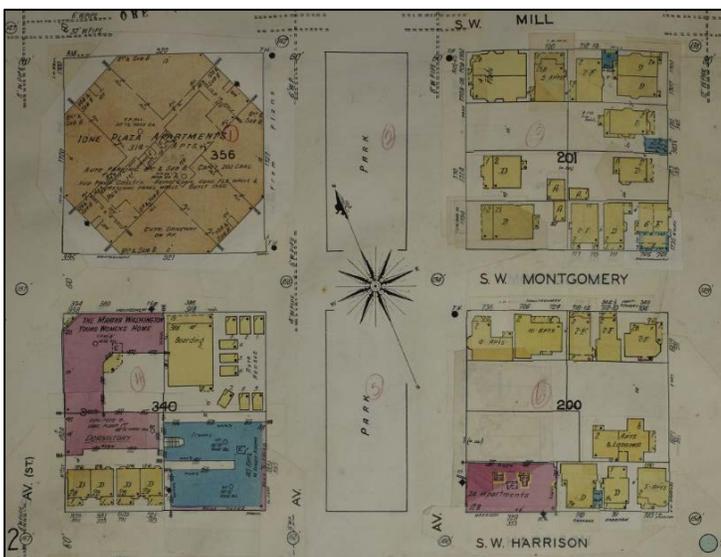
Images courtesy of the Library of Congress



1889 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, Vol. 1, p.25.



1909 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, Vol. 2, p.143.



1909-1950 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, Vol. 2, Map 143.

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Figure 15: 1976 photo of students in the South Park Blocks, facing south
Image courtesy of PSU Library University Archives [RS7911]



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Figure 16: Photo of new amphitheater in South Park Blocks near PSU in 1972.
Image courtesy of Oregon Historical Society Research Library, Oregonian, photo file 1857.



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Figure 17: Photo of Shemanski Fountain, November 15, 1967
Image courtesy of Portland Archives [A2001-066.219]



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Figure 18: Aerial photo of proposed Foothill Freeway R.O.W. ca 1938
Image courtesy of Portland Archives [a2010-001.92]



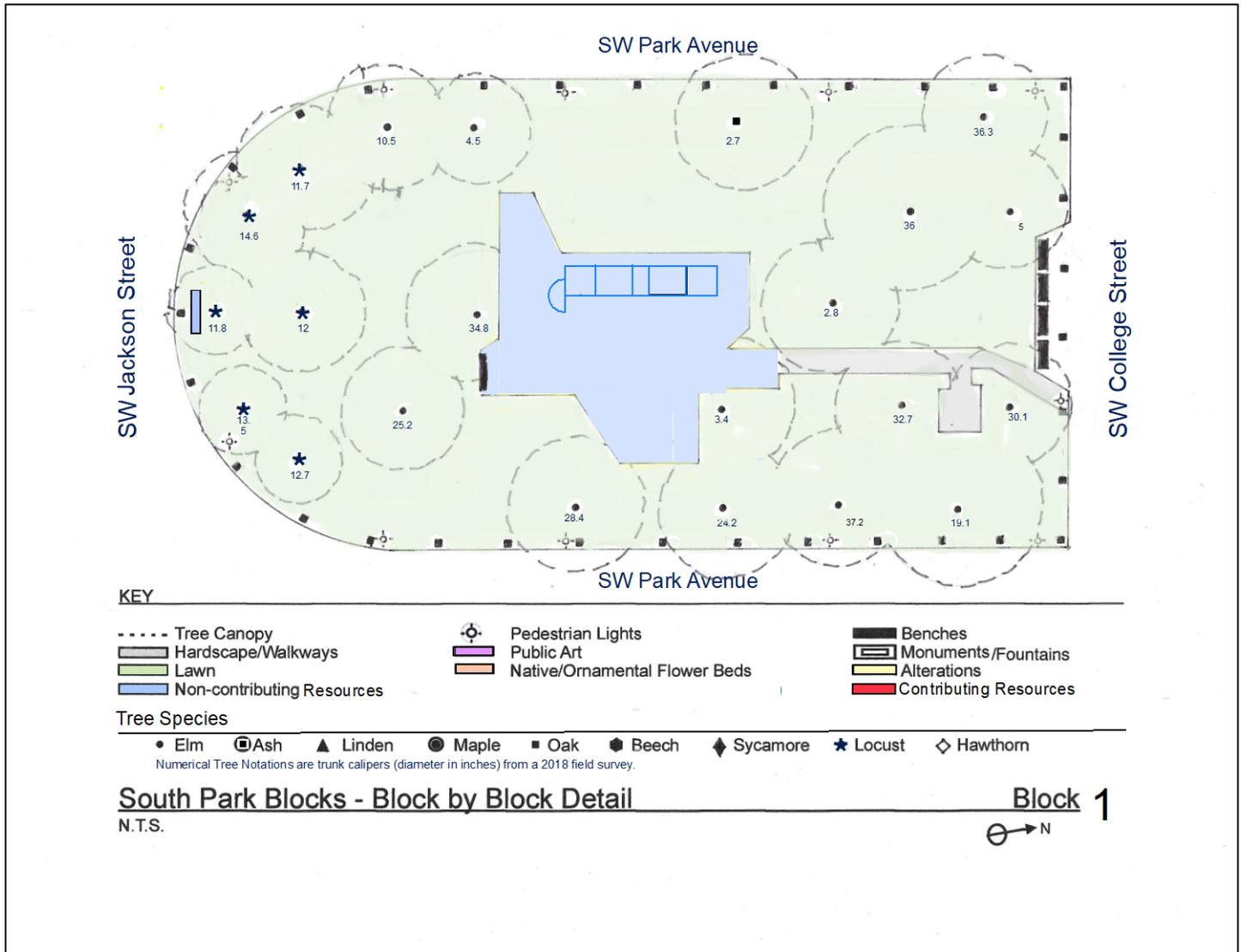
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Figure 19: South Park Blocks, Block 1 Detail Plan



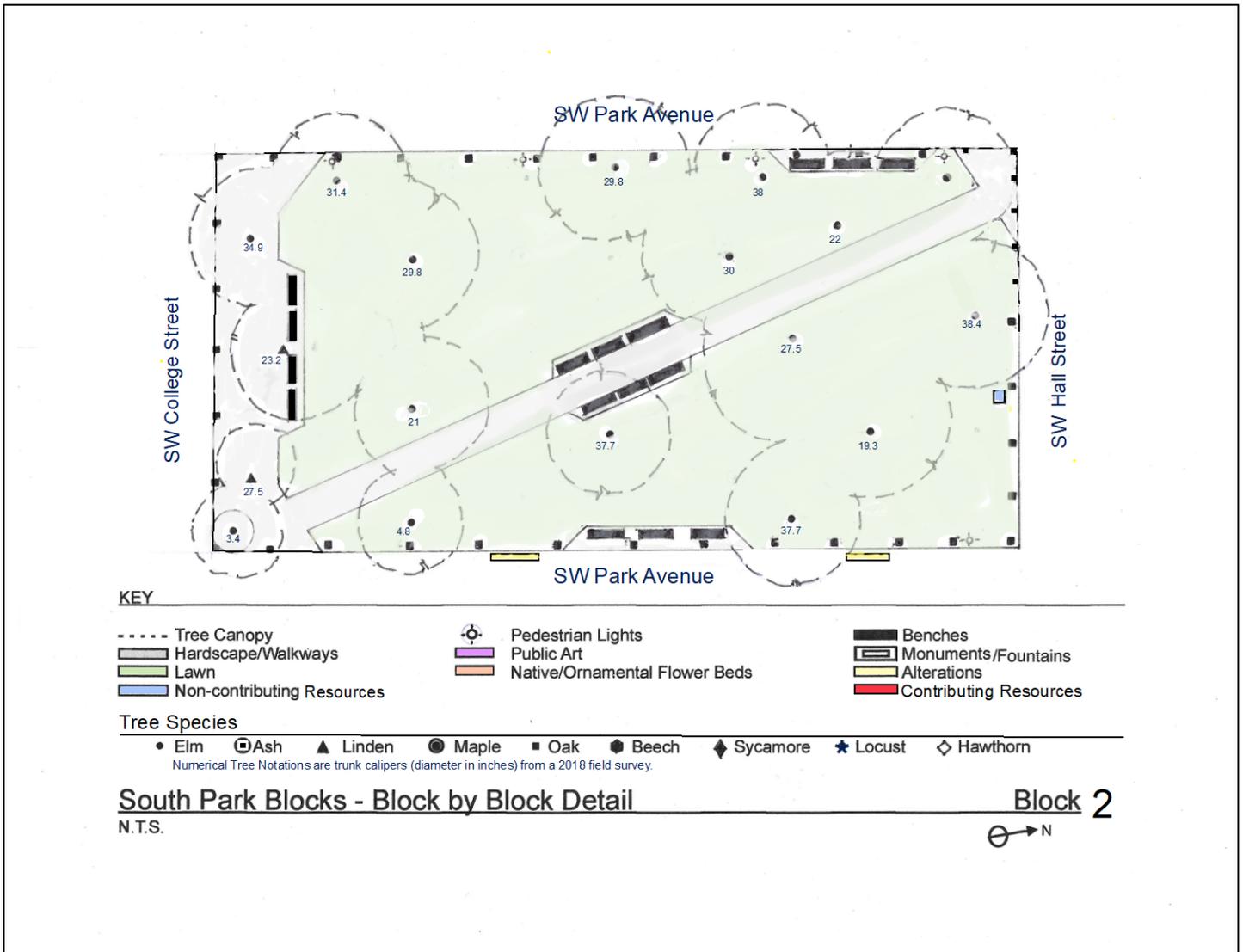
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Figure 20: South Park Blocks, Block 2 Detail Plan



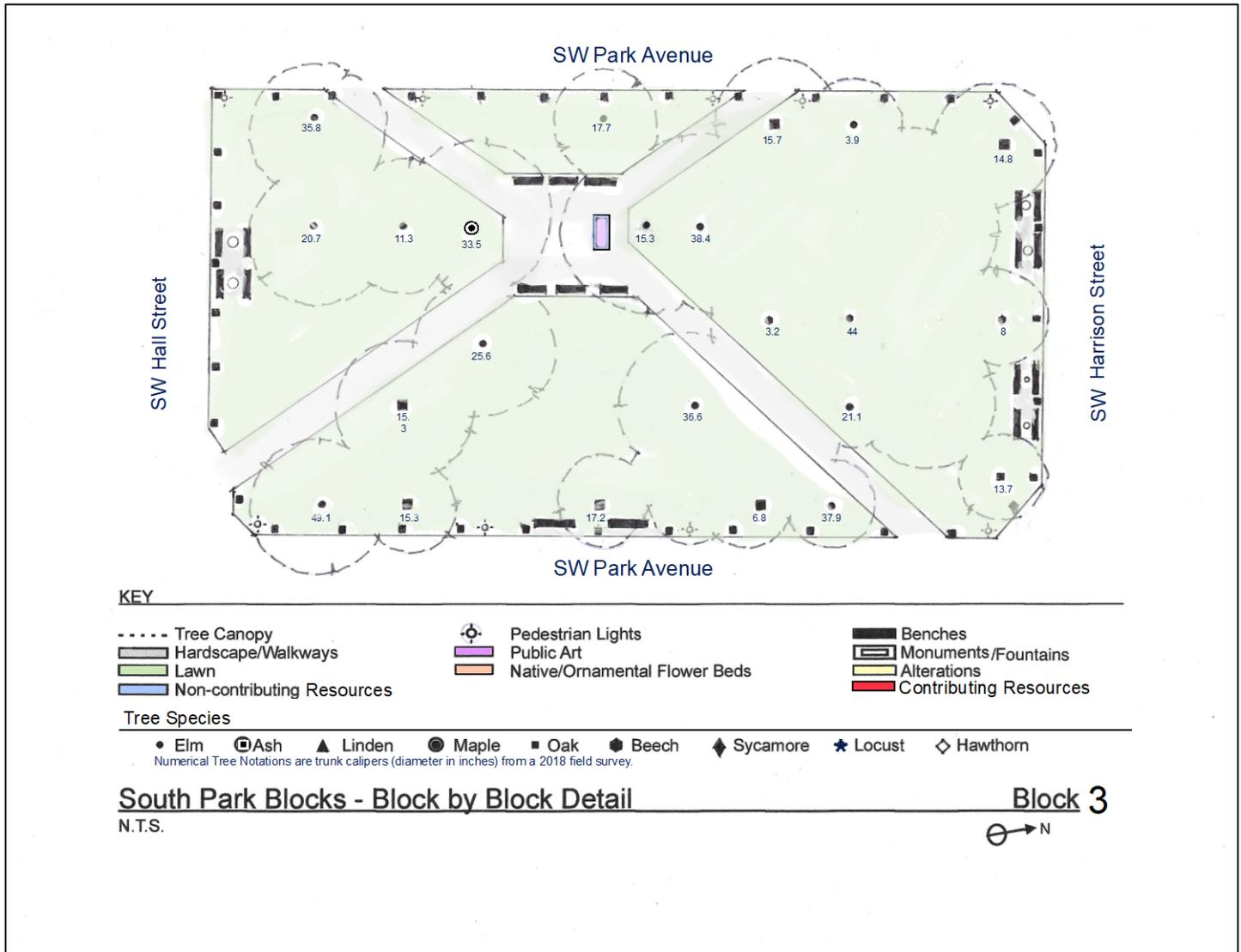
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Figure 21: South Park Blocks, Block 3 Detail Plan



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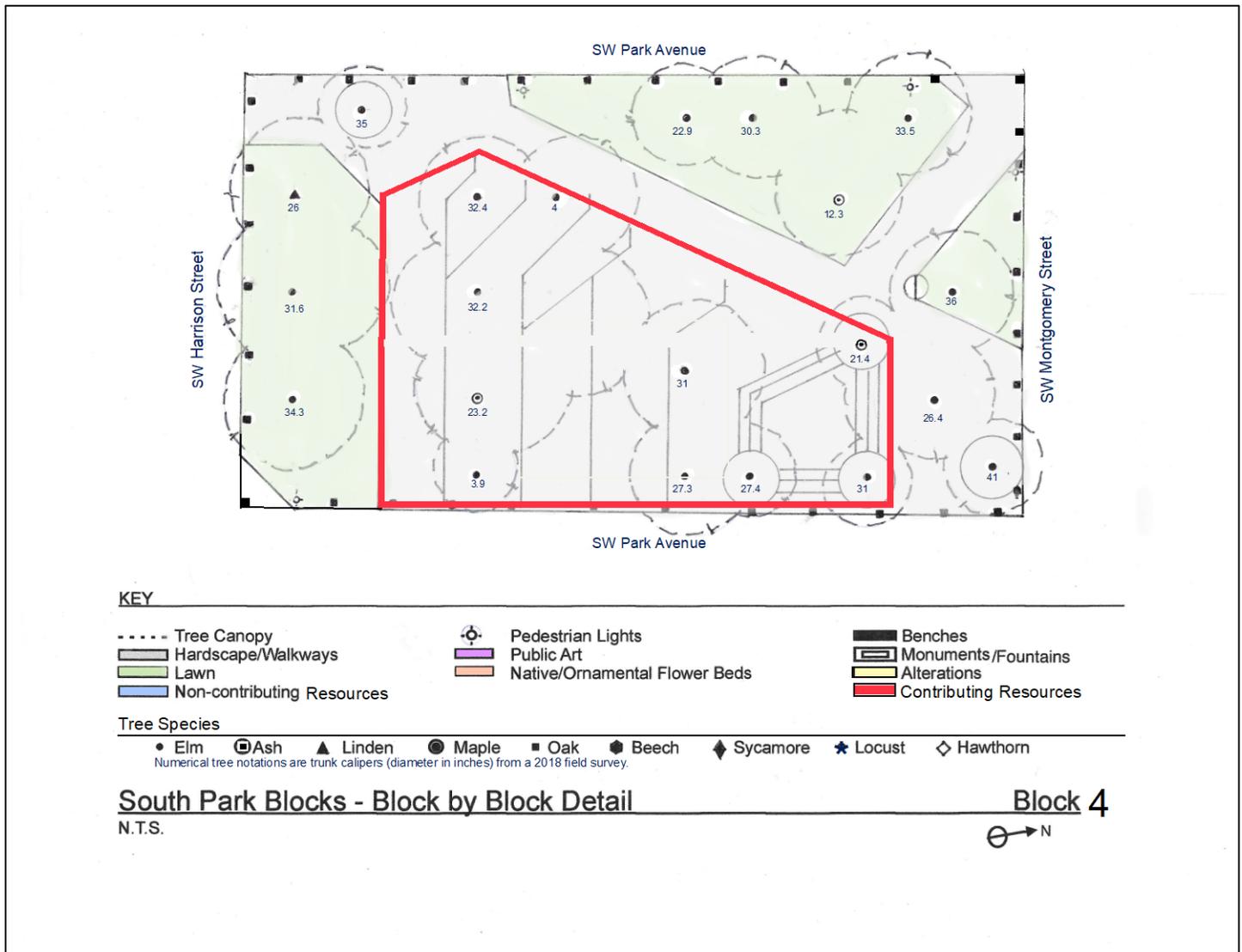
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Figure 22: South Park Blocks, Block 4 Detail Plan



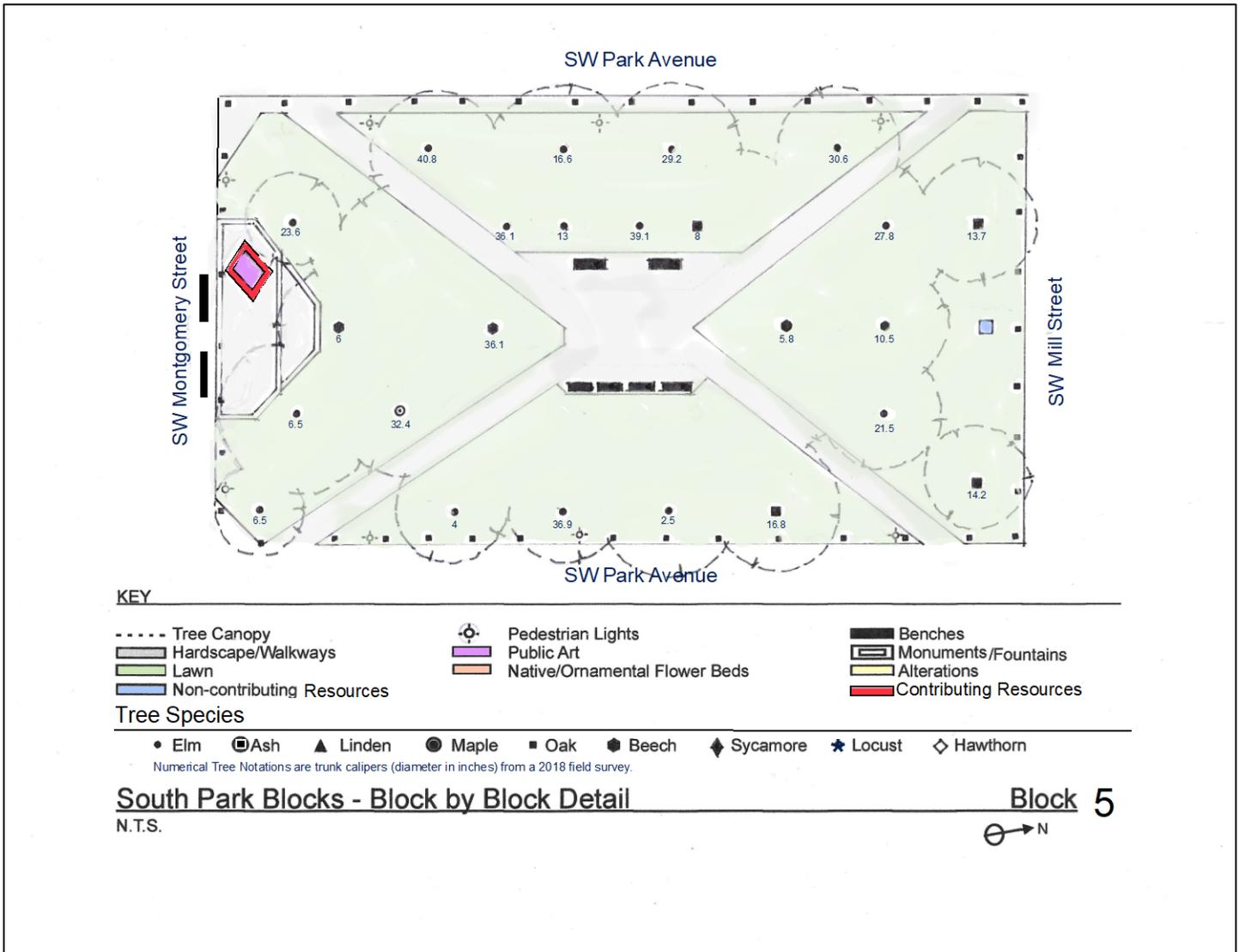
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Figure 23: South Park Blocks, Block 5 Detail Plan



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Figure 24: South Park Blocks, Block 6 Detail Plan



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Continuation Sheet

South Park Blocks

Name of Property
Multnomah Co., OR

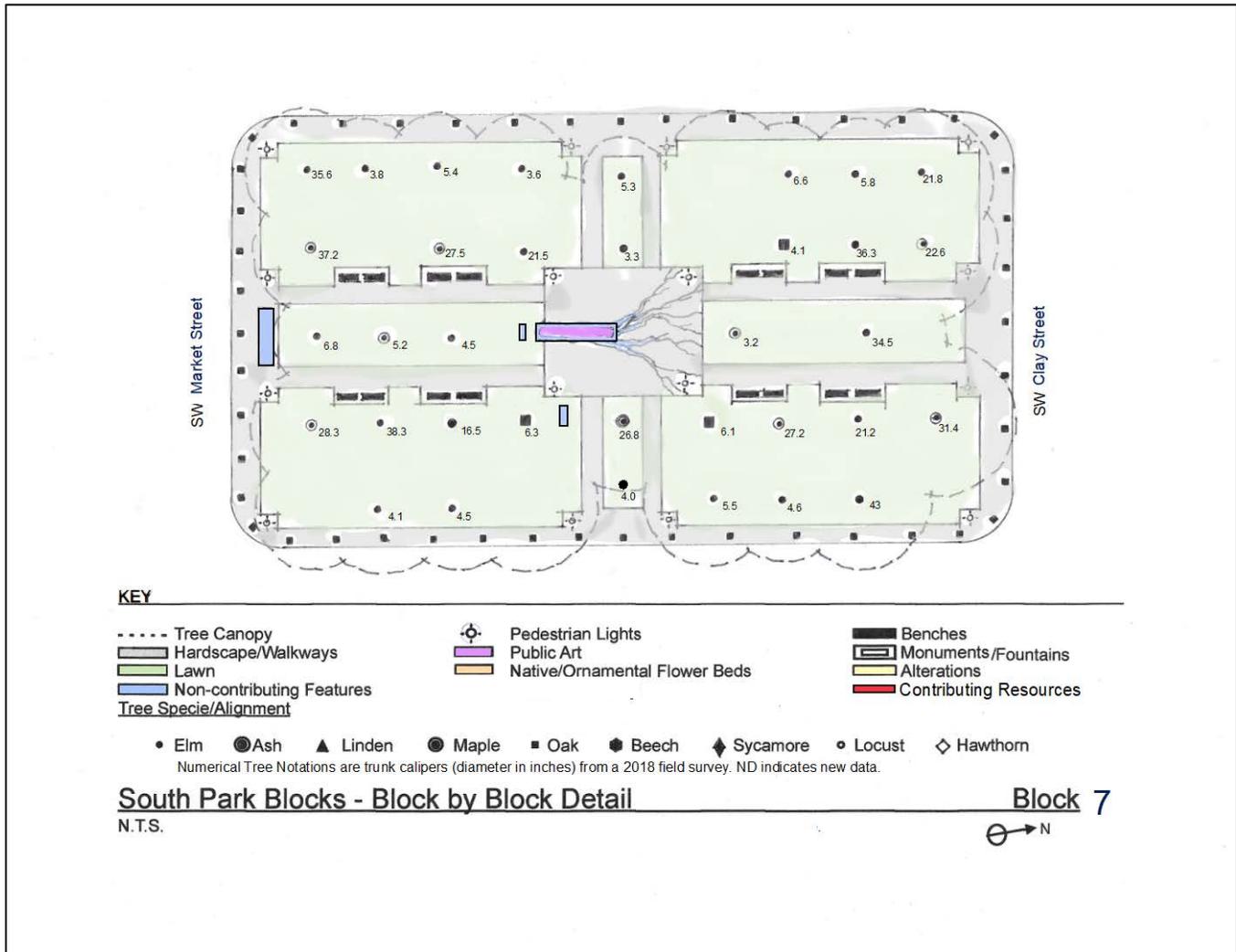
County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Documentation Page 112

Figure 25: South Park Blocks, Block 7 Detail Plan



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

South Park Blocks

Name of Property
Multnomah Co., OR

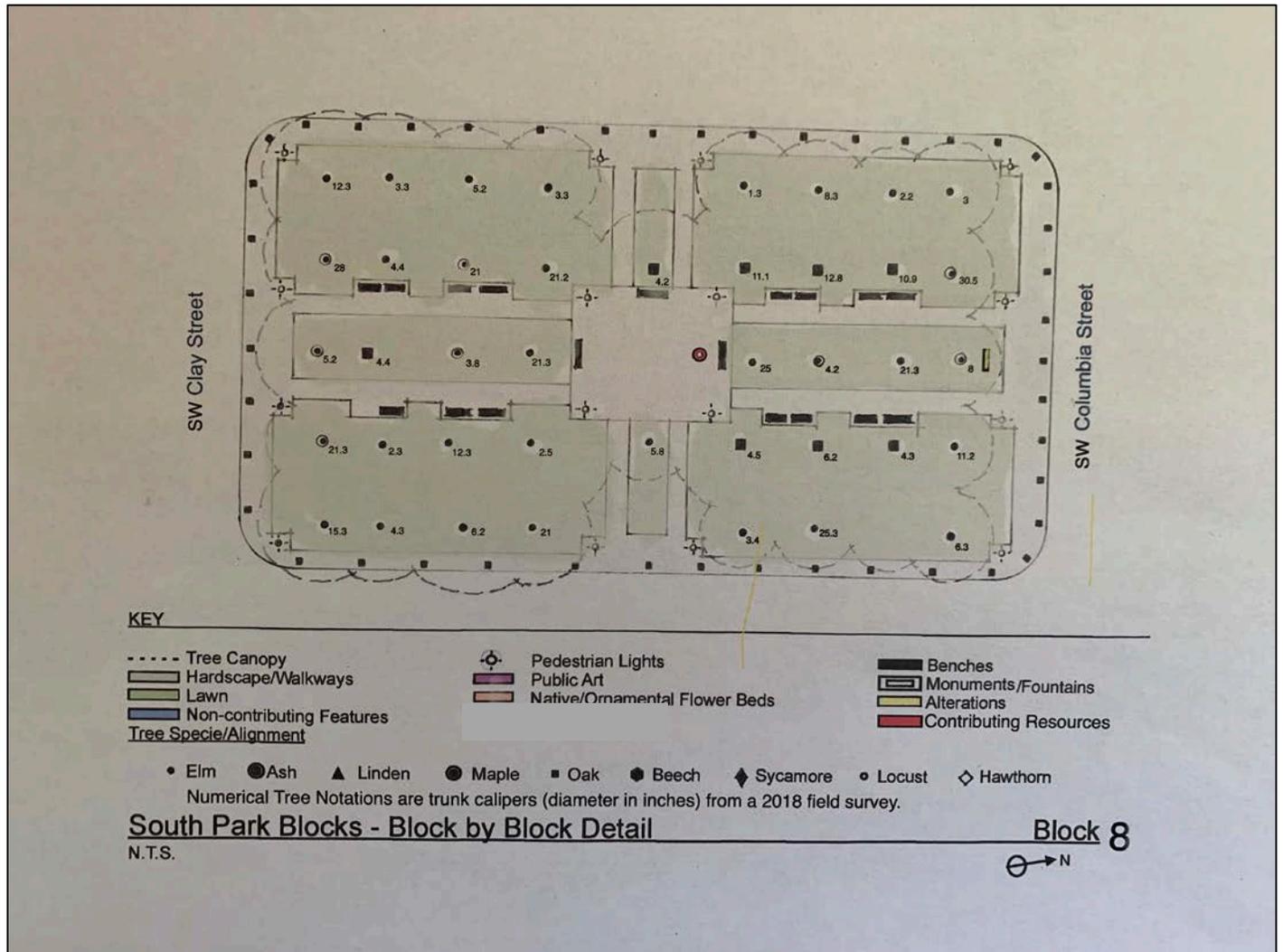
County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Documentation Page 113

Figure 26: South Park Blocks, Block 8 Detail Plan



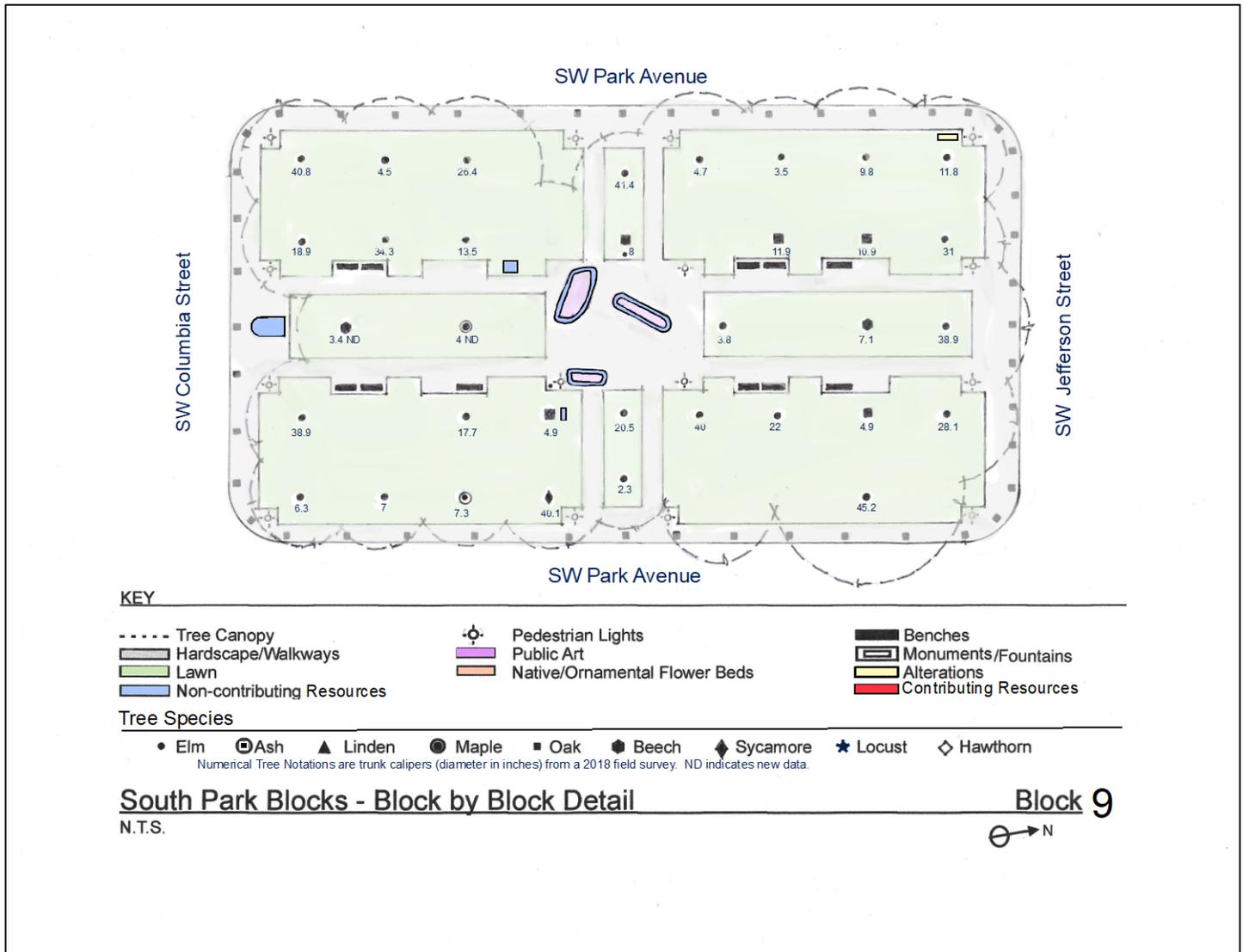
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

South Park Blocks
Name of Property
Multnomah Co., OR
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Documentation Page 114

Figure 27: South Park Blocks, Block 9 Detail Plan



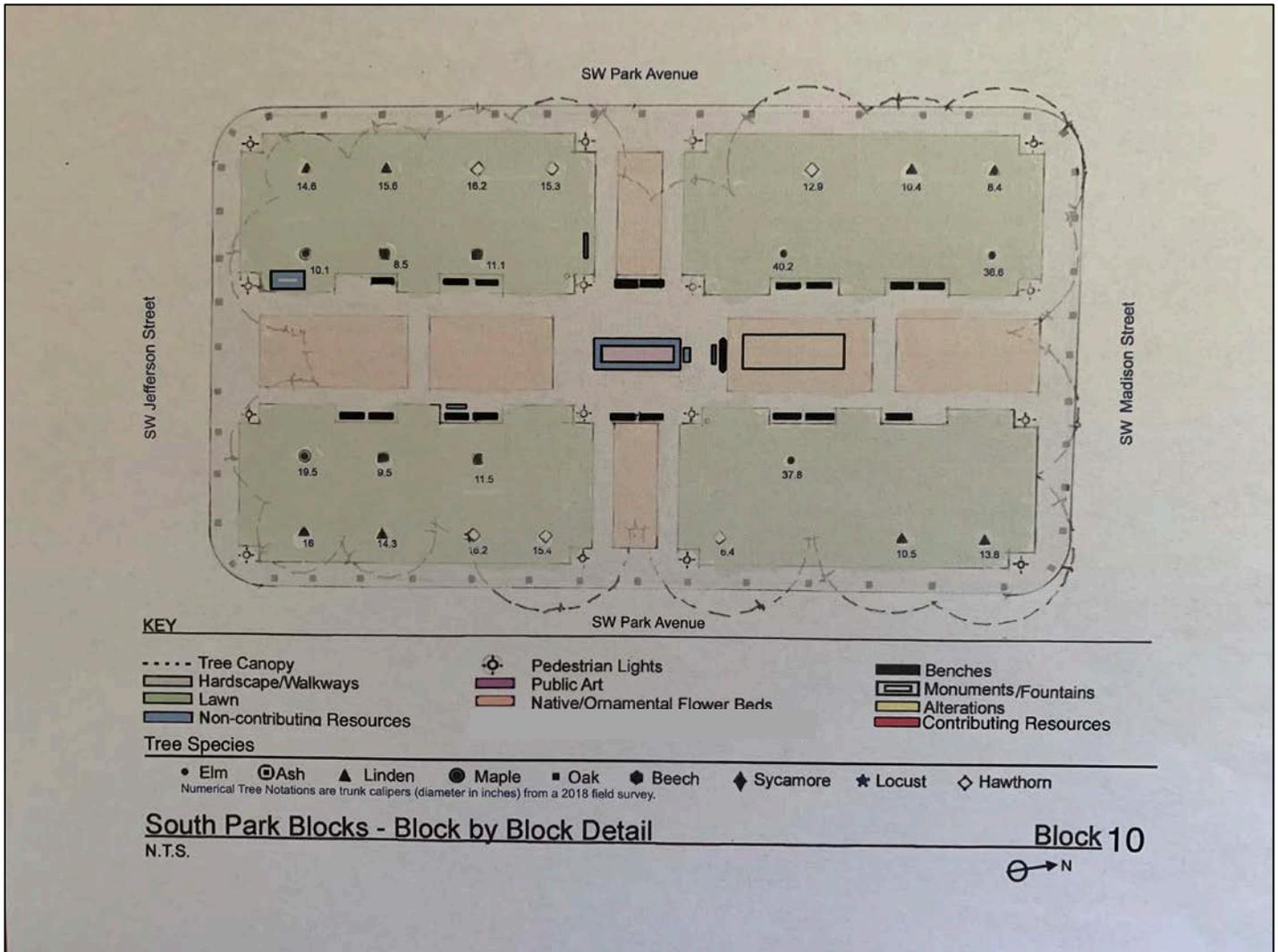
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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Continuation Sheet

South Park Blocks
Name of Property
Multnomah Co., OR
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

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Figure 28: South Park Blocks, Block 10 Detail Plan



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Multnomah Co., OR

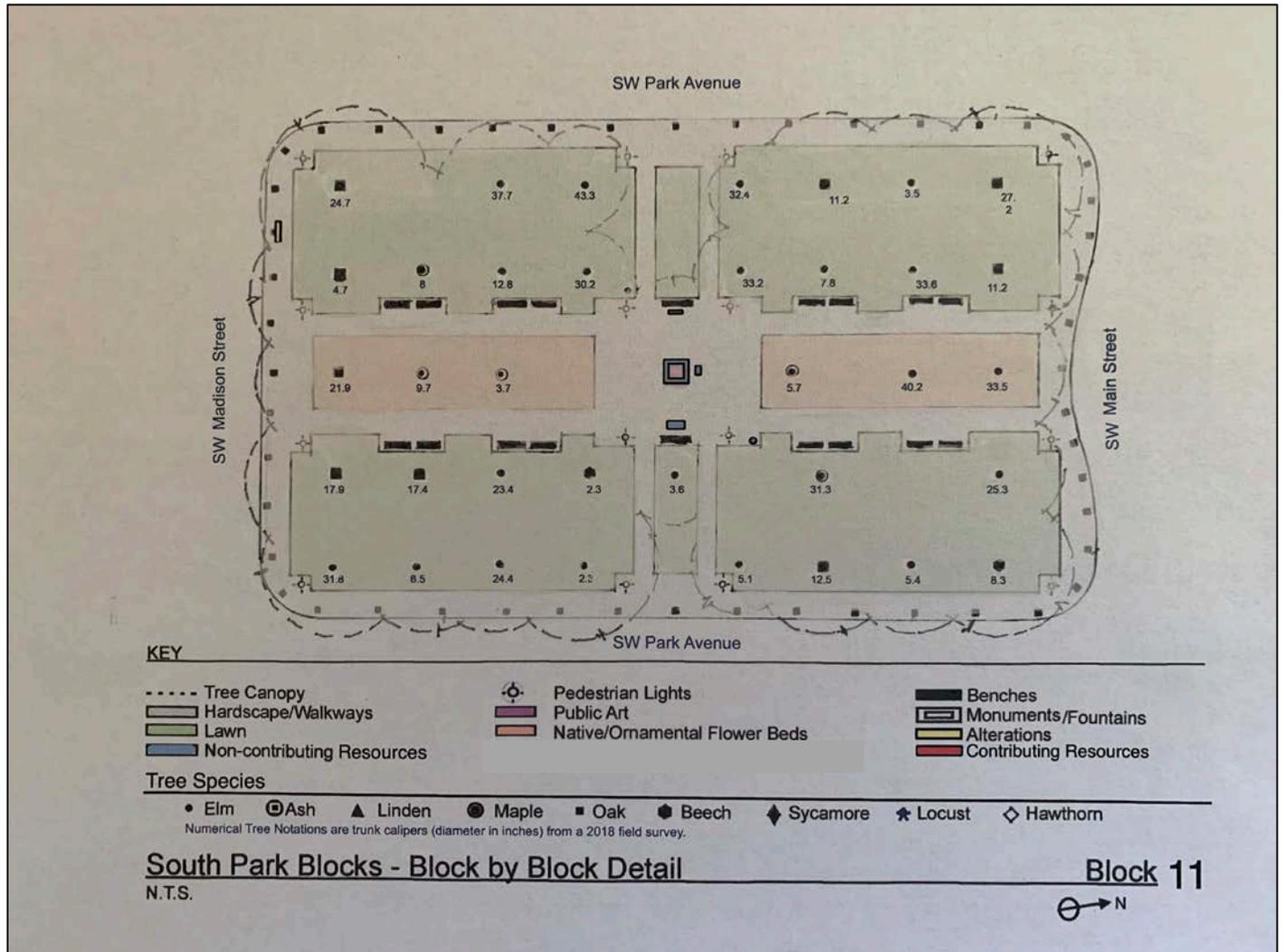
County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Documentation Page 116

Figure 29: South Park Blocks, Block 11 Detail Plan



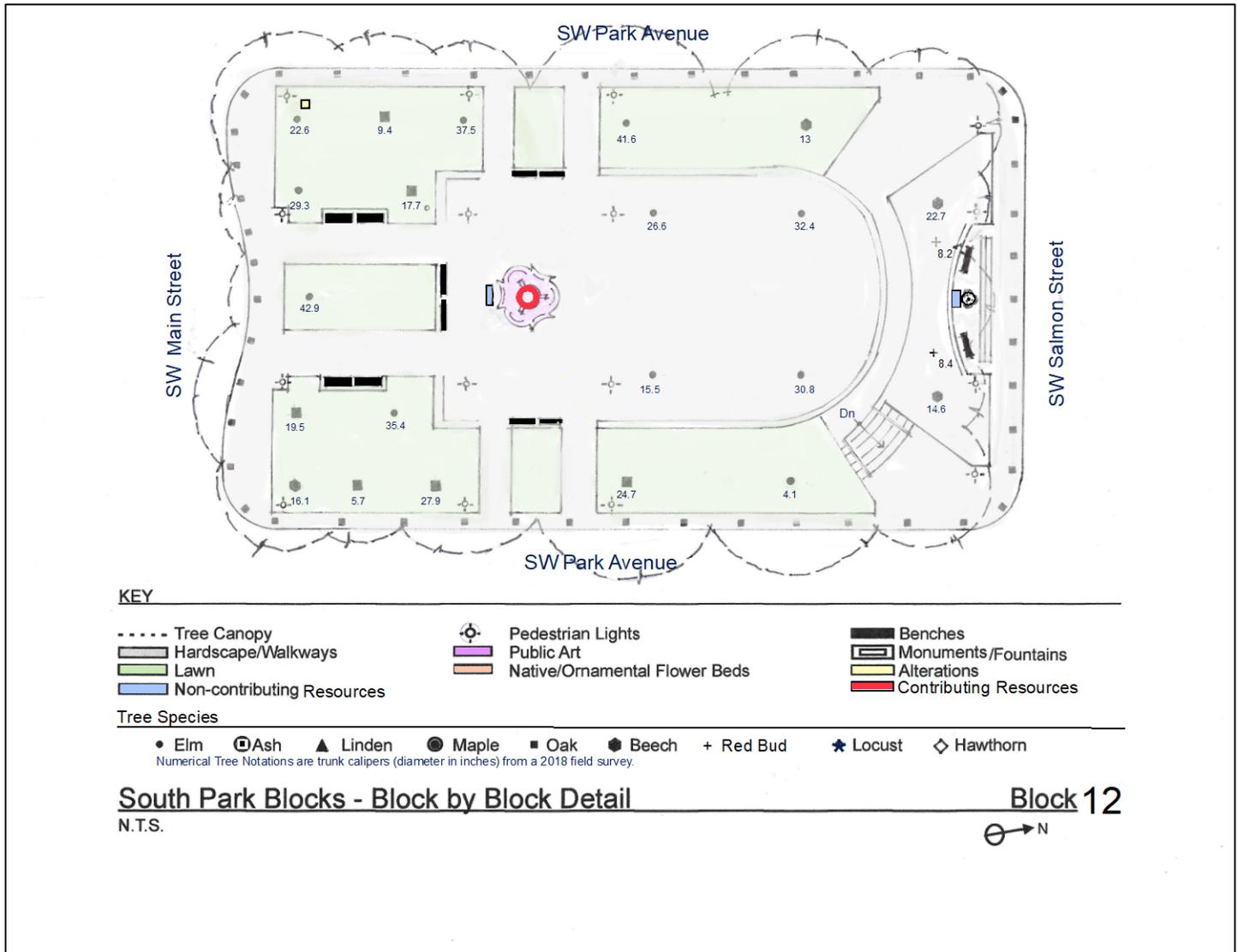
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

South Park Blocks
Name of Property
Multnomah Co., OR
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Documentation Page 117

Figure 30: South Park Blocks, Block 12 Detail Plan



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South Park Blocks

Name of Property

Multnomah Co., OR

County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Documentation Page 118

Figure 31: Additional Historical Documentation

Several local repositories contain an extensive collection of historic photographs and graphic documentation related to the South Park Blocks, including the Oregon Historical Society Digital Archives, City of Portland Archives and Record Management, and Portland State University Special Collections & University Archives.

Due to our volunteer citizens group effort with no budget and during the Covid crisis, we were limited in acquiring these digital images for the purposes of this National Register nomination. While there is a lot of archival material that could be referenced for future research, any additional information revealed in these resources would not radically change the significance and/or integrity argument for this nomination. Further, the following images identified during our research efforts that assisted the preparation of this nomination included:

- Plan of Portland, ca 1845 [OHS No 82329]
- Plan of Portland showing the Park Blocks and Plaza Blocks, ca 1846 [OHS No 82328]
- 1848 Plat Map showing the dedicated row of park blocks [OHS]
- Panoramic view of Portland showing the vacant land of the South Park Blocks in the distance, 1867 [OHS No. 21590]
- 1873 Engraving of the west side of Portland with the South Park Blocks depicted along the upper edge [OHS]
- Photo of South Park Blocks with diagonal walkways, benches, and closely planted trees, ca 1910 [OHS No. 72437]
- Photo of South Park Blocks, ca 1910 [OHS No. 68009]
- Preliminary plan of Hillside Parkway by E.T. Mische, showing South Park Blocks at far right, 1912 [OHS Map Collection, Dr. 64, F2]
- Greater Portland Plan of 1912 by Edward Bennett [OHS No. 44334]
- Toddler with miniature baby carriage on walk in the South Park Blocks, with First Congregational Church in background [OHS No. 015793]
- 1965 photo of college students basking in spring sun in the South Park Blocks [OHS No. 007594]
- Photo of PSU students in campus blocks [PSU Library University Archives]
- Photo of PSU students in South Park Blocks [PSU Library University Archives]
- Photo of South Park Blocks decorated for Rose Festival with special lighting and bedding plants, ca 1918 [OHS, Stout, No. 253]
- 1925 photo of military men standing at ease with crowd beyond during "Oregon Invites the World Celebration" [OHS No. 0323G061]

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South Park Blocks

Name of Property

Multnomah Co., OR

County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Documentation Page 119

- 1925 photo of "Oregon Invites the World Celebration" platform set-up on Madison St in the South Park Blocks [OHS No. 0323G053]
- First Annual Art Show in South Park Blocks, July 1949 [OHS No. 51945]
- 1949 photo of crowd watching Panthers in action at Oregon Society of Artists Annual
- 1970 Portland riot police on the PSU campus during solidarity demonstrations in the wake of students killed at Kent State University [OHS]
- 1970 photo of Portland police preparing to dismantle a tent in the South Park Blocks while students and anti-war protestors block their path
- 1970 photo of PSU students protecting a "medical tent" that stood in the South Park Blocks between SW Harrison and Montgomery St where "young people make their last stand after barricades toppled"
- 1922 photo of Roosevelt groundbreaking ceremony with President Calvin Coolidge
- 1974 photo of Theodore Roosevelt "Rough Rider" statue from lawn between SW Madison and Jefferson [City of Portland Archives and Record Management, AP/6301]
- 1949 photo of Abraham Lincoln statue between SW Main and Madison, looking southeast [City of Portland Archives and Record Management, A2005-005.35.1-35.3]
- 1975 photo of Abraham Lincoln statue between SW Main and Madison, looking northwest [City of Portland Archives and Record Management, AP/6302]
- c. 1929 photo of Shemanski Square looking toward Masonic Temple [City of Portland Archives and Record Management]
- 1967 photo of Shemanski Fountain looking north [City of Portland Archives and Record Management, A2001-066.219]
- Photo of 1975 dedication of Farewell to Orpheus fountain [OHS]

**South Park Blocks
Multnomah County: OR**

Photos 1 & 2 of 24:

Photo Log

Name of Property: South Park Blocks

City or Vicinity: Portland

County: Multnomah **State:** Oregon

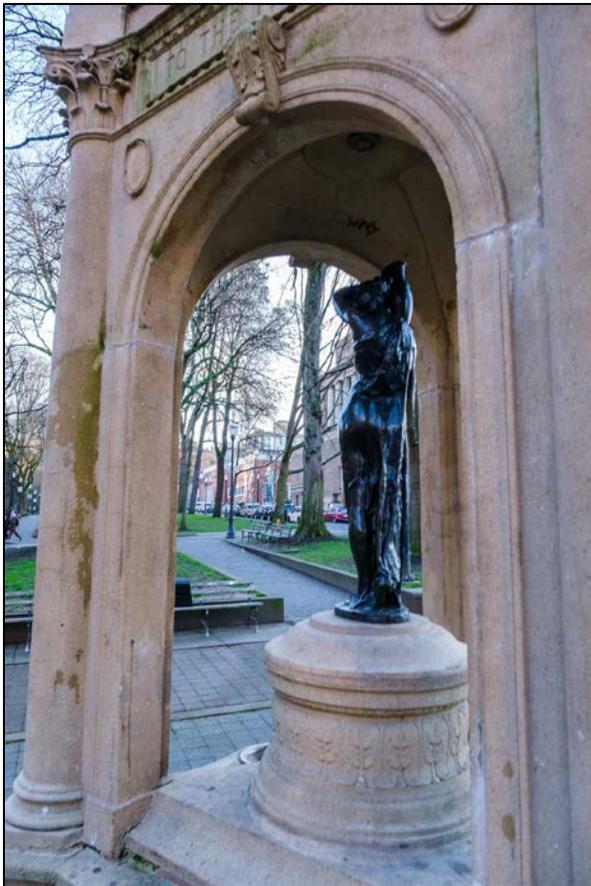
Photographer: Richard (Dick) Kaiser

Date Photographed: February 20, 2020

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

"Rebecca at the Well", 1926 Sculptor: Oliver L. Barrett
Shemanski Fountain by Carl L. Linde
Block 12, View SW, South Park Blocks
(OR_MultnomahCounty_SouthParkBlocks_0001)

Benson Bubblers, Linde, Block 12, View S, South Park Blocks
(OR_MultnomahCounty_SouthParkBlocks_0002)



**South Park Blocks
Multnomah County: OR**

Photos 3 & 4 of 24:

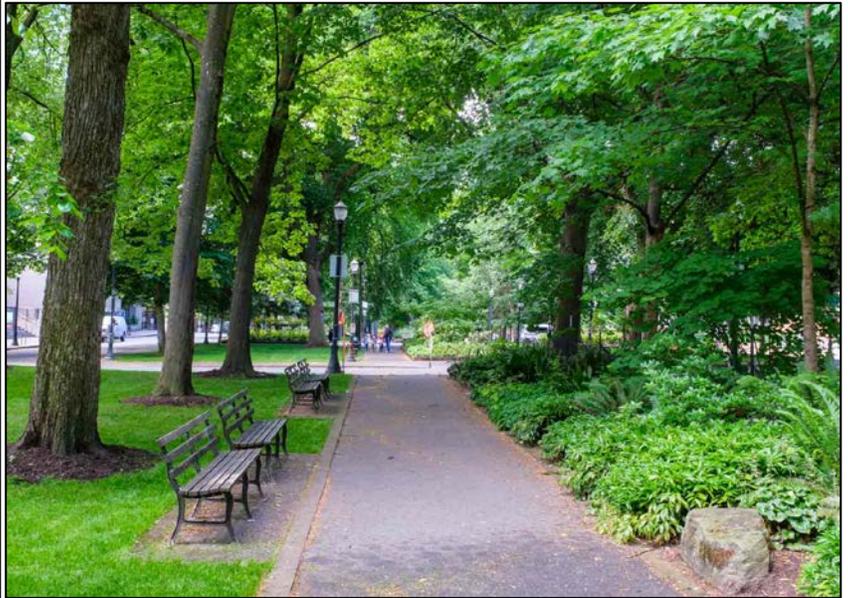
Photo Log

Name of Property: South Park Blocks
City or Vicinity: Portland
County: Multnomah **State:** Oregon
Photographer: Richard (Dick) Kaiser
Date Photographed: February 20 & 21, 2020; May 19, 2021

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

Lincoln Square, Abraham Lincoln Sculpture Granite Pedestal, Block 11, View SE, South Park Blocks (OR_MultnomahCounty_SouthParkBlocks_0003)

Traditional Park Benches, Block 11, View S, South Park Blocks (OR_MultnomahCounty_SouthParkBlocks_0004)



South Park Blocks
Multnomah County: OR

Photos 5 & 6 of 24:

Photo Log

Name of Property: South Park Blocks

City or Vicinity: Portland

County: Multnomah **State:** Oregon

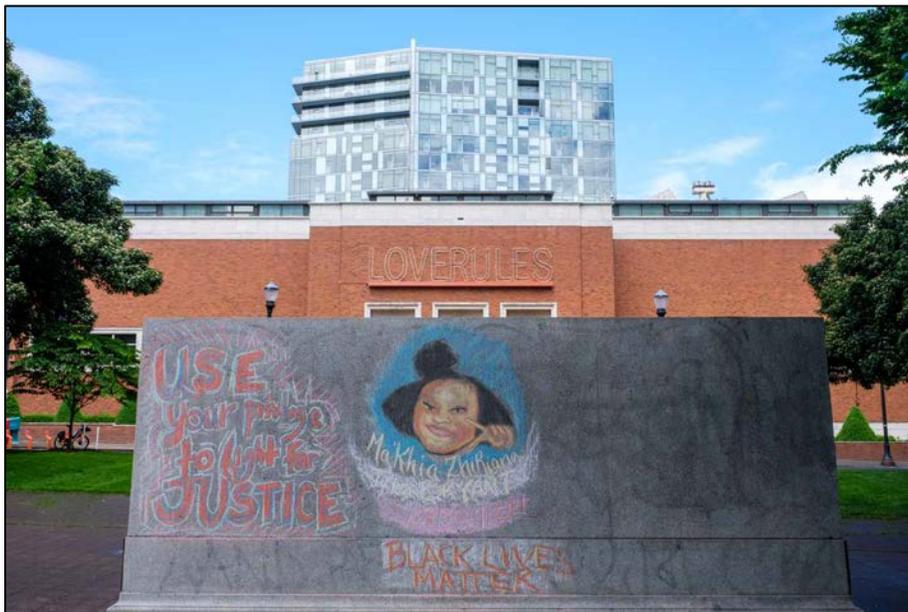
Photographer: Richard (Dick) Kaiser

Date Photographed: February 20 and 21, 2020; May 19, 2021

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

Roosevelt Square, "Rough Rider" Sculpture Granite Pedestal, Block 10, View W, South Park Blocks (OR_MultnomahCounty_SouthParkBlocks_0005)

Axial View with Street Car, Block 6, View S, South Park Blocks (OR_MultnomahCounty_SouthParkBlocks_0006)



**South Park Blocks
Multnomah County: OR**

Photos 7 & 8 of 24:

Photo Log

Name of Property: South Park Blocks
City or Vicinity: Portland
County: Multnomah **State:** Oregon
Photographer: Richard (Dick) Kaiser
Date Photographed: February 20 & 21, 2020

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

Axial View, Block 7, View N, South Park Blocks
(OR_MultnomahCounty_SouthParkBlocks_0007)

Axial View, Block 8, View S, South Park Blocks
(OR_MultnomahCounty_SouthParkBlocks_0008)



South Park Blocks
Multnomah County: OR

Photos 9 & 10 of 24:

Photo Log

Name of Property: South Park Blocks

City or Vicinity: Portland

County: Multnomah **State:** Oregon

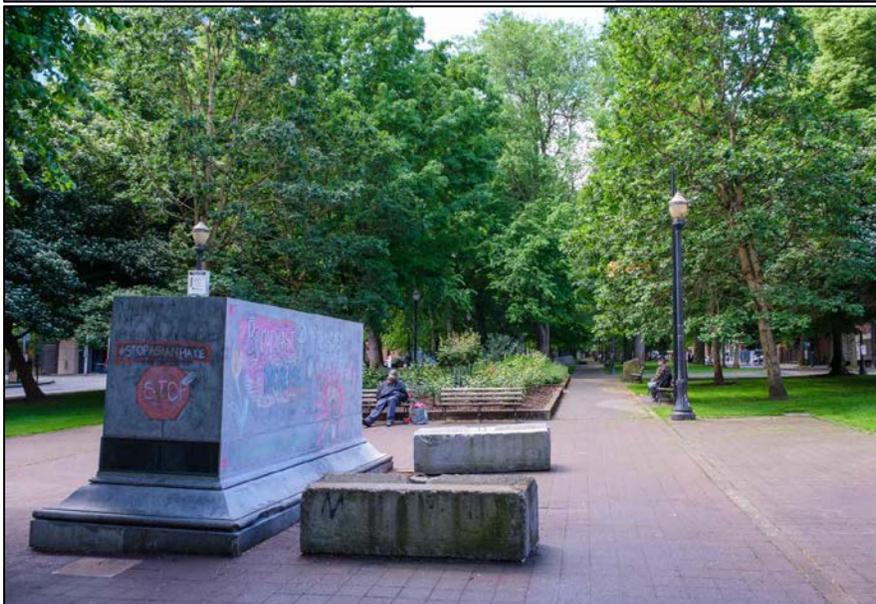
Photographer: Richard (Dick) Kaiser

Date Photographed: May 19, 2021

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

Axial View, Block 10, View N, South Park Blocks
Photographer: Richard (Dick) Kaiser, May 19, 2021
(OR_MultnomahCounty_SouthParkBlocks_0009)

Axial View, Block 10, View SE, South Park Blocks
Photographer: Richard (Dick) Kaiser, May 19, 2021
(OR_MultnomahCounty_SouthParkBlocks_0010)



**South Park Blocks
Multnomah County: OR**

Photos 11 & 12 of 24:

Photo Log

Name of Property: South Park Blocks

City or Vicinity: Portland

County: Multnomah **State:** Oregon

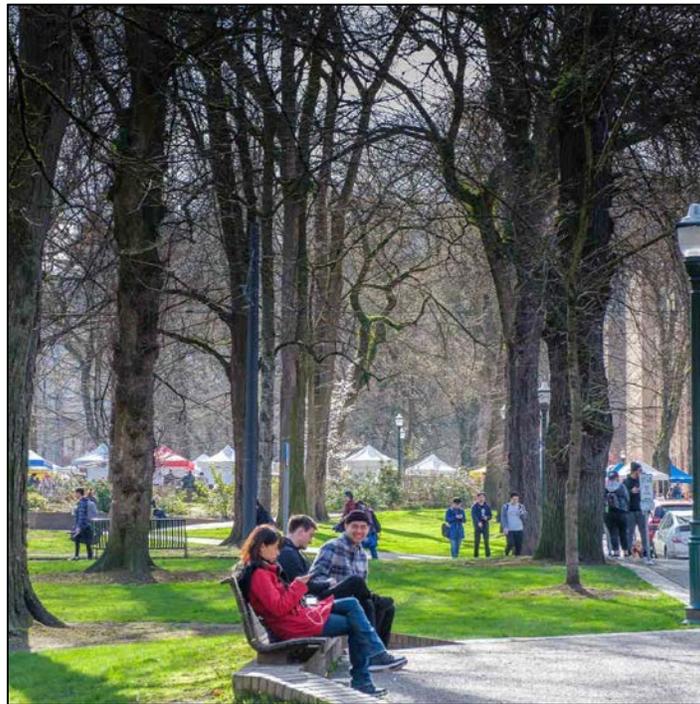
Photographer: Richard (Dick) Kaiser

Date Photographed: February 27, 2020

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

Axial View, Block 6, View S, South Park Blocks
(OR_MultnomahCounty_SouthParkBlocks_0011)

Public Farmer's Market, View S, Block 3, South Park Blocks
(OR_MultnomahCounty_SouthParkBlocks_0012)



South Park Blocks
Multnomah County: OR

Photos 13 & 14 of 24:

Photo Log

Name of Property: South Park Blocks

City or Vicinity: Portland

County: Multnomah **State:** Oregon

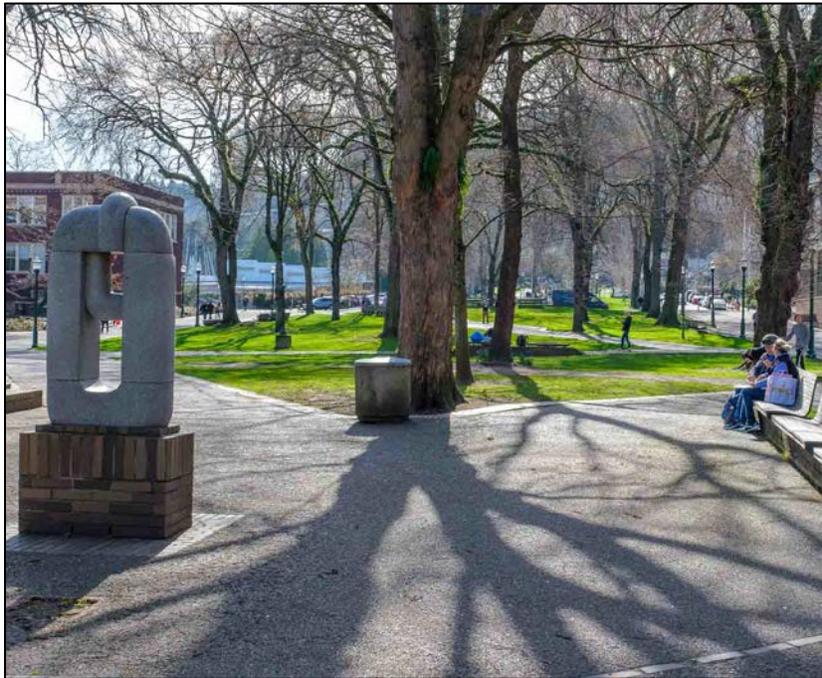
Photographer: Richard (Dick) Kaiser

Date Photographed: February 27, 2020

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

"Holon" Sculpture, Block 3, View S, South Park Blocks
(OR_MultnomahCounty_SouthParkBlocks_0013)

Axial View, Block 3, View S, South Park Blocks
(OR_MultnomahCounty_SouthParkBlocks_0014)



South Park Blocks
Multnomah County: OR

Photos 15 & 16 of 24:

Photo Log

Name of Property: South Park Blocks

City or Vicinity: Portland

County: Multnomah **State:** Oregon

Photographer: Richard (Dick) Kaiser

Date Photographed: February 20 & March 5, 2020

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:
Children's Play Structure, Block 1, View N, South Park Blocks
(OR_MultnomahCounty_SouthParkBlocks_0015)

Evening View, Block 12, View S, South Park Blocks
(OR_MultnomahCounty_SouthParkBlocks_0016)



South Park Blocks
Multnomah County: OR

Photos 17 & 18 of 24:

Photo Log

Name of Property: South Park Blocks

City or Vicinity: Portland

County: Multnomah **State:** Oregon

Photographer: Richard (Dick) Kaiser

Date Photographed: May 19, 2021

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

Roosevelt Square, Block 10, View E, South Park Blocks

Photographer: Richard (Dick) Kaiser, May 19, 2021

(OR_MultnomahCounty_SouthParkBlocks_0017)

Lincoln Square, Block 11, View W, South Park Blocks

Photographer: Richard (Dick) Kaiser, May 19, 2021

(OR_MultnomahCounty_SouthParkBlocks_0018)



South Park Blocks
Multnomah County: OR

Photo 19 & 20 of 24:

Photo Log

Name of Property: South Park Blocks

City or Vicinity: Portland

County: Multnomah **State:** Oregon

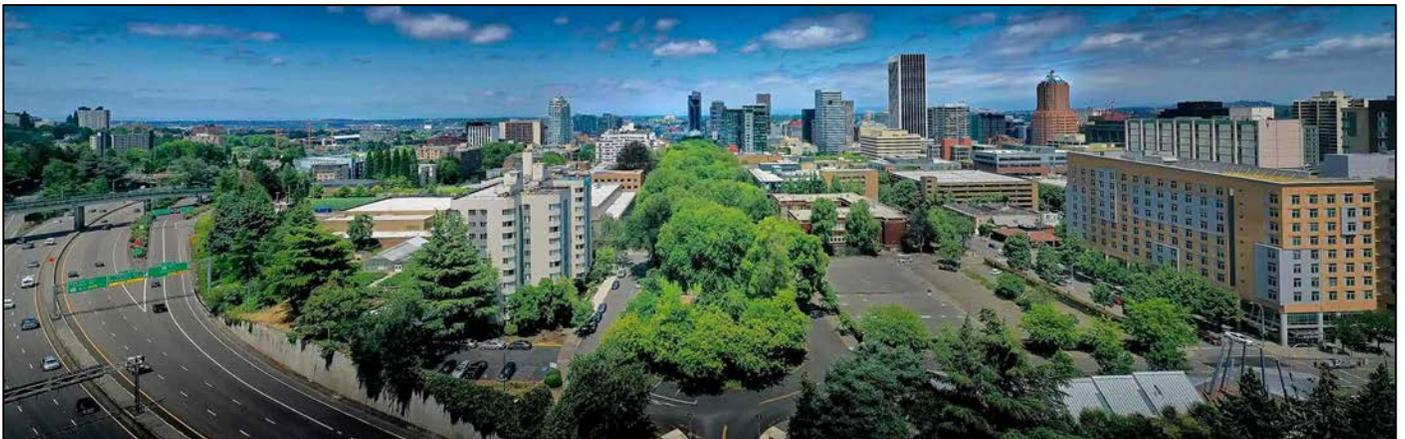
Photographer: Ronald Cooper

Date Photographed: June 30, 2020

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

Aerial Panoramic, View N, South Park Blocks
(OR_MultnomahCounty_SouthParkBlocks_0019)

Aerial Panoramic, Block 6, View N, South Park Blocks
(OR_MultnomahCounty_SouthParkBlocks_0020)



South Park Blocks
Multnomah County: OR

Photo 21 & 22 of 24:

Photo Log

Name of Property: South Park Blocks

City or Vicinity: Portland

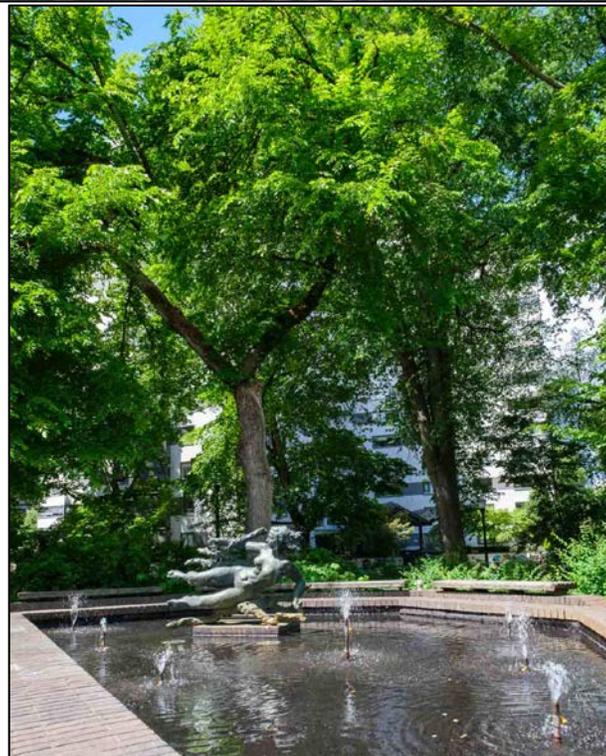
County: Multnomah **State:** Oregon

Photographer: Richard (Dick) Kaiser

Date Photographed: May 19, 2021

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:
Smith Center Amphitheater, Block 4, View SW, South Park Blocks
(OR_MultnomahCounty_SouthParkBlocks_0021)

Farewell to Orpheus Sculpture, Block 5, View NW, South Park Blocks
(OR_MultnomahCounty_SouthParkBlocks_0022)



South Park Blocks
Multnomah County: OR

Photo 23 & 24 of 24:

Photo Log

Name of Property: South Park Blocks

City or Vicinity: Portland

County: Multnomah **State:** Oregon

Photographer: Richard (Dick) Kaiser

Date Photographed: May 19, 2021

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:
PSU Benches and Game Tables, Block 3, View S, South Park Blocks
(OR_MultnomahCounty_SouthParkBlocks_0023)

PSU Diagonal Walkway and Bench Seating, Block 2, View SE, South Park Blocks
(OR_MultnomahCounty_SouthParkBlocks_0024)

