

North Portland Parks Improvements and Northgate Park Rugby Field Relocation Survey Summary and Key Themes



Project Background

North Portland Park Improvements

In May 2024, Portland's Vibrant Communities Commissioner Dan Ryan, who oversaw Portland Parks & Recreation, directed that University Park and Columbia Park/Columbia Park Annex receive improvements funded by System Development Charges (SDCs). \$3.6 million in SDC funds were allocated to the project.

Northgate Park Rugby Field Relocation

As Portland Parks & Recreation prepares to build the North Portland Aquatic Center at Northgate Park (construction anticipated to begin in 2027), we will be relocating the Northgate Park Rugby Field which is the only permanent rugby field in the PP&R system.

Engagement Introduction

In June 2024, Portland Parks & Recreation's (PP&R) conducted a digital survey to hear community priorities around the North Portland Parks Improvements and Northgate Park Rugby Field Re-location effort. The following key themes, summary and data are the results of that effort.

North Portland Park Improvements Key Themes and Summary

General Summary

We had a robust participation of 845 participants in the online survey. Overwhelmingly, at both Columbia Park/Columbia Park Annex and University Park, participants selected the “Active Recreation” amenities category, over “General Improvements”, and “Passive Recreation”.

- **Survey Participation**

- **Total participants:** 845
- **Unique Collector Link Totals:**
 - **North Portland Parks Stakeholders:** 400 (primarily North Portlanders)
 - **Social Media:** 420 (primarily Citywide)
 - **In-Person Engagement** (@ Cathedral Park Dock Grand Opening Event - June 29, 2024): 25

Community Recommendations

Our participants recognize that there are many new amenities that would help Portland Parks & Recreation better serve the North Portland communities. Based on significant community feedback from North Portlanders (from survey demographic information and survey collector link data), Portland Parks & Recreation is urged to invest heavily in the diverse and densely populated University Park neighborhood. Amenities added at University Park would have a greater impact based on proximity to Rosa Parks (PK-5th Grade) Elementary School, Rosemary Anderson High School, Regence Boys & Girls Club, and several hundred Federally subsidized dwelling units within a half mile of University Park.

The following pages outline the top priorities at each site (Columbia Park/Columbia Park Annex and University Park)

University Park key themes and take-aways:

- **Active Recreation was the overwhelming top priority amongst our three categories of improvements:**
 - Active Recreation (487)
 - General Improvements (137)
 - Passive Recreation (88)
- **Huge community support from the following groups:**
 - **North Portland Little League** (North Portland's only Little League) and **Friends of Baseball** (North Portland-based Youth Baseball non-profit): Artificial Turf and Ballfield Improvements
 - **Northwest Trail Alliance** (Citywide): Off-Road Cycling
 - **Portland skateboarding community** (Citywide): Skate Dot
- **University Park Collector Link Themes:**
 - **North Portland Parks Stakeholders Top Priorities:**
 - Artificial Turf (136)
 - New Playground Amenities (104)
 - Covered Basketball (36)
 - **Social Media Top Priorities:**
 - Skate Dot (183)
 - New Playground Amenities (51)
 - Disc Golf (38)
- **Overwhelming support for investing heavily at University Park to better serve long underserved communities in Portsmouth Neighborhood and New Columbia communities.**
- **Key Comments:**
 - **Common Quote:** *“Evenly splitting the \$3.6 million allocated to North Portland Park improvement between Columbia Park/Annex and University Park would drastically reduce the amount of funding directed to the much-needed improvements and upgrades to University Park. Columbia Park is a destination park for visitors from throughout the area and has the amenities to continue to draw visitors into our community without any significant upgrades. University Park, however, is a small park that serves one of the most diverse and densely populated neighborhoods in Portland. Allocating the majority of funding to improvements at University Park would benefit residents of the Portsmouth neighborhood by providing a cleaner, safer, and more engaging park space...”*
 - **Common Quote:** *“5,000-10,000 sq ft bike park and family friendly soft surface cycling perimeter trail as described on pages 89 and 90 of the City of Portland's ORCMP”*

Columbia Park/Columbia Park Annex key themes and take-aways:

- **Active Recreation was the clear top priority amongst our three categories of improvements:**
 - Active Recreation (366)
 - General Improvements (149)
 - Passive Recreation (111)
- **Huge community support from the following groups:**
 - **North Portland Little League** (North Portland's only Little League) and **Friends of Baseball** (North Portland-based Youth Baseball non-profit): Artificial Turf and Ballfield Improvements
- **Columbia Park/Columbia Park Annex Collector Link Themes:**
 - **North Portland Parks Stakeholders Collector Link Top Priorities:**
 - Ball Field Improvements (119)
 - New Playground Amenities (100)
 - Covered Basketball (52)
 - Fitness Equipment along Paved Path (41)
 - **Social Media Collector Link Top Priorities:**
 - New Playground Amenities (109)
 - Covered Basketball (50)
 - Fitness Equipment along Paved Path (41)
- **Skate Dot and Off-Road Cycling Path were both popular (write-in) options**
- **Key Themes or Comments:**
 - **Theme:** *We need a solution for the permanently closed Columbia Indoor Pool building.*
 - **Common Quote:** *"Columbia Park is already really beautiful. Please do not take away from the nature that is already there."*
 - **Common Quote:** *"Columbia Park and Annex are already beautiful parks that draw visitors from around the city. The old growth trees growing above the park's many picnic area, play structures, walking paths, and sports fields provide a shady retreat on summer days and a venue for a variety of PPS and PP&R sponsored activities. The funding allocated to North Portland Parks should go to University Park, to create more parks with the level of amenities already boasted by Columbia Park"*

Northgate Rugby Field Re-location

- Delta Park Field #9 was the clear favorite among survey participants.
- Many participants chose “No Opinion” option if they or their family had no affiliation with the sport of rugby.
- Final survey results:
 - Delta Park Field #9: 46% (329)
 - No Opinion: 42% (313)
 - Columbia Park: 13% (95)

Next Steps

- The Community Engagement team will share this report and summary with the PP&R Project Manager, design team consultants, PP&R Maintenance and Facilities staff, and PP&R Director.
- Our design team consultants will mock-up a design scenario of the most popular new amenities at each site.
- **Important Note:** Portland Parks & Recreation (PP&R) does not have funding to support all the amenities listed in the survey. Based on survey results, PP&R will prioritize community needs and balance new amenities with the available funding.

