



optimizing Pittsburgh's open space, parks, and recreation system



a component of



Pittsburgh's Comprehensive Plan



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OpenSpacePGH



CHAPTER I **INTRODUCTION**

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

IN THIS SECTION

OpenSpacePGH

Why OpenSpacePGH?

Relationship to PLANPGH Goals

Our Community Open Space Vision

The Planning Process

In an urban environment as large as Pittsburgh's, open space is a critically important resource. There are many open space areas in our city. We see them in our parks, hillsides, and river corridors, but also in our vacant lots, undevelopable parcels, street medians, and community gardens.

Our community's open space areas offer many benefits: these areas support recreation, protect natural areas, enhance water and air quality, foster community identity, sustain community gardens, and provide green space and shade in an otherwise developed, paved environment. Some benefits can be economically quantified, an aspect that was specifically explored during development of the Open Space, Parks, and Recreation Plan (OpenSpacePGH). These economic benefits accrue to individuals, reduce costs to the City and its taxpayers, and generate additional revenue for the City.¹

¹ As described in greater detail in Appendix F: Economic Calculators, factors include: 1) Increased property values based on proximity to large (30+ ac.) parks; 2) Property tax receipts associated with increased property values from park proximity; 3) Cost savings to the City government from stormwater mitigation, and; 4) Cost savings to the City government from air pollution removal.



Taking into account these various economic factors, the total economic value of Pittsburgh's open space system today is approximately \$2 billion. The majority of the economic benefits accrue to individual homeowners in the form of increased property values associated with proximity to large, well-maintained parks.² Although these spaces are vital to our city, they are owned, managed and maintained by many different people and agencies, and there has been no comprehensive planning effort to provide clear direction for their protection and use—until now.

OpenSpacePGH

OpenSpacePGH is our city's first comprehensive guide to the optimal use of its vacant, green, and recreation spaces. As one of twelve components of PlanPGH, this plan provides clear instructions and guidelines for land use and infrastructure decisions related to the ownership, management, maintenance, connectivity, and programming of Pittsburgh's open space system. Over the next

25 years, City leaders, staff, and residents will be able to apply these directions to meet current and future recreation, park, and open space needs. The plan will position our open space, parks, and recreation system to achieve the City's goals, including:

- Strengthening Pittsburgh's position as a regional hub and enhance its global significance.
- Providing equal access and opportunities for all to live, work, play, learn, and thrive.
- Growing and diversifying Pittsburgh's economy and its tax base.
- Fostering a sense of community city-wide while strengthening neighborhood identities.
- Capitalizing on Pittsburgh's diverse natural and cultural resources.
- Respecting and enhancing the relationship between nature and the built environment.

² Figures are represented in un-inflated 2010 dollars.

Why OpenSpacePGH?

Pittsburgh is a city with a large, concentrated open space system, created through a combination of forward thought, civic philanthropy and design, and physiographic features and limitations. To the credit of Edward Bigelow and Allegheny City, Pittsburgh's park system was conceived as part of the broader movement of the late nineteenth century to enhance quality of life and economic competitiveness by integrating parks and green spaces into the urban fabric of industrial cities. Many of the city's larger parks such as Frick, Westinghouse and Schenley were gifted by wealthy landowners, private citizens, and the giants of industry past.

Neighborhood parks, each with their own character and facilities, emerged over time to provide recreation opportunities for Pittsburgh's neighborhoods. The rugged topography with its green, wooded hillsides incised by the Allegheny, Monongahela and Ohio Rivers contributed to the creation of a "City of Neighborhoods", with smaller developed areas surrounded by the primarily undevelopable green hillsides.

In the late twentieth century, additional opportunities to preserve open space began to emerge, dictated primarily by social and economic trends.

Suburbanization, out-of-region migration, and economic conditions have created a number of challenges and opportunities for the City. The open space system, while vast in size and resources, has had less money to maintain and manage now-aging facilities and parks. The parks maintenance budget has been reduced over time due to depopulation and a resulting shrinking tax base, requiring the City to cut back on its once sound maintenance program.

The decline of heavy industry has created large vacant brownfield sites that are still in need of redevelopment. However, this decline has also allowed the general population to reconnect to and utilize the rivers for recreation. Hillside residences offer dramatic views, while the hillsides themselves support fewer residences than in the past due to the challenges of public infrastructure services (sewers, utilities, transit, etc.) and the effects of time or unstable slopes on hillside structures. Some hillsides still contain



old roads or foundations with utility lines, fire hydrants and street lights in improbable locations, reflecting the unsustainable development patterns of another time driven in part by different resident needs.

The loss of industry and residents has resulted in vacant lands both in former industrial areas and in neighborhoods that formerly served much larger populations. These lands have become part of the City's open space inventory and the responsibility of the City by default, due to the neglect of past owners who walked away from their properties. In addition, as the city's population has generally become more mobile and less dense, and as recreation interests have broadened, the same parks created to serve many of the neighborhoods where residents' lives were focused have now become duplicative.

As the city's population decline tapers off and as the economy stabilizes, this plan is intended to identify and create opportunities to turn the city's vacant lands into productive open spaces that meets twenty-first century needs. While Pittsburgh may not ever be as big as it once was,

it can be better than it ever was if conscious decisions are made to meet open space and recreation needs in a comprehensive, efficient and cost-effective manner. OpenSpacePGH will provide a blueprint to guide City decisions related to the re-use of vacant properties, provision of parks and recreation services throughout the city, and appropriate target areas for various City programs, with the goal of creating an open space system that best serves the needs of Pittsburgh residents, workers, and visitors.

OpenSpacePGH is one of the initial components of PlanPGH, the City of Pittsburgh's first ever Comprehensive Plan, with components such as Transportation, Public Art & Urban Design, and Cultural Heritage & Historic Preservation recently adopted or currently under development. Together, all components comprise the multi-purpose policy document that will set investment priorities, coordinate neighborhood-scale planning efforts, and guide the City's land use and development decision-making processes over the next 25 years.

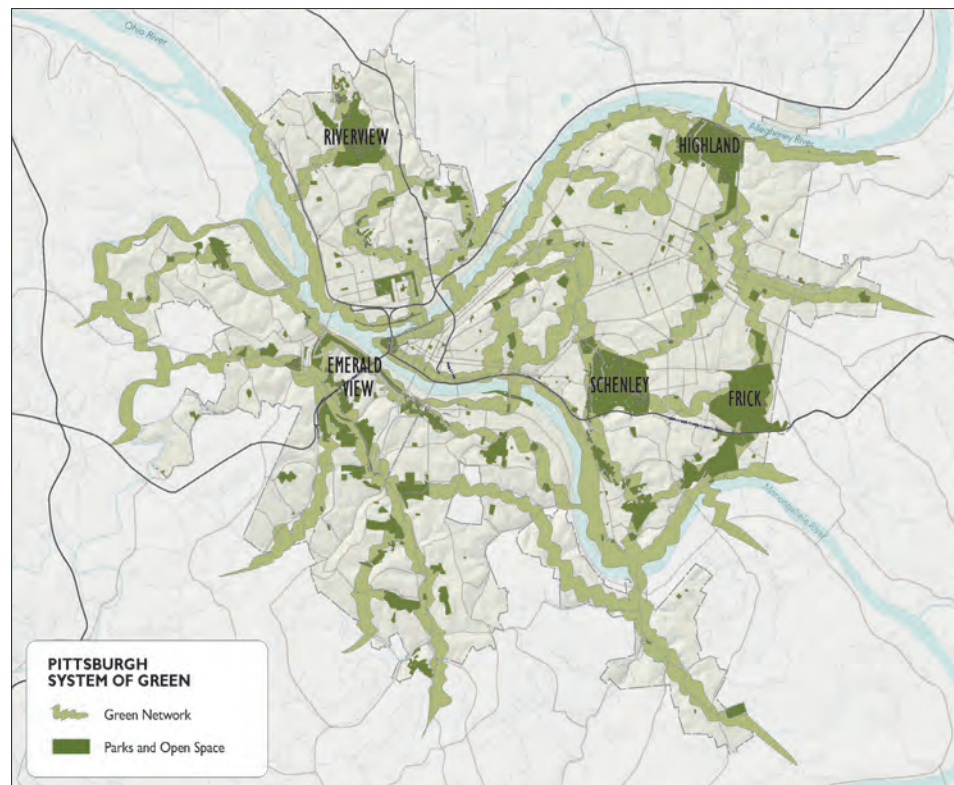
Relationship to PLANPGH Goals

Our Community Open Space Vision

OpenSpacePGH reflects the vision, values, and aspirations of city residents for an interconnected open space network. Figure I-1: System of Green illustrates this future vision, which is also described below:

*We define our city by our parks, greenways, and reclaimed urban wilderness. These lands serve as **our common green space**, weaving together all Pittsburghers and our neighborhoods through **a system of green that advances stewardship, equity, and our economy**. We care for our system to provide access to natural and historic assets, opportunities to be active and healthy, and places to play and celebrate.*

Figure I-1: System of Green



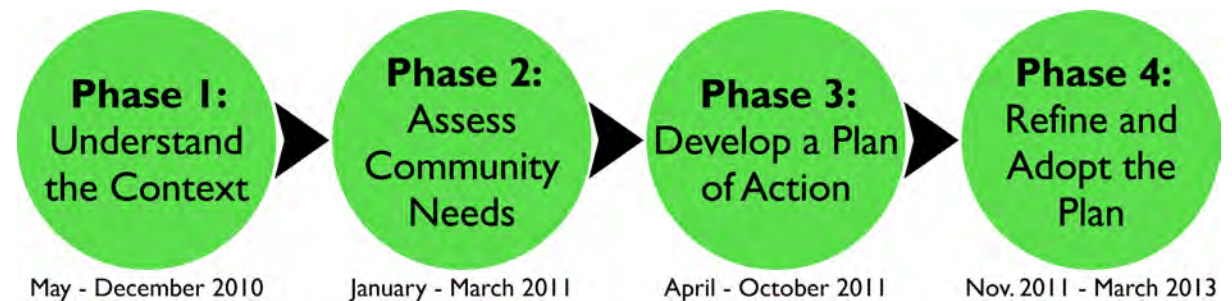
The Planning Process

To ensure that OpenSpacePGH is both a community-driven and community-supported plan, public involvement and outreach efforts were conducted throughout the planning process. Each phase of the planning effort combined public feedback with a technical analysis of resources leading to this OpenSpacePGH document. The four-phased planning process is described below.

Phase I: Understanding the Context

The planning team established baseline data during Phase I, to provide a solid foundation for later analysis. During this phase, the planning team began the community outreach activities, which included focus groups, stakeholder interviews, and intercept events held throughout the community. Also during this phase, a review of the existing conditions was conducted, including an inventory of parks, recreation facilities, and greenways.

Figure 1-2: The Planning Process



Phase 2: Assessing Community Needs

In Phase 2, the planning team conducted additional public outreach and evaluated the results to craft a vision for the open space system. Using feedback from the public, the team crafted a customized methodology to assess park and recreation needs in Pittsburgh, and developed a process to review suitability of vacant land for other uses. The economic model to quantify benefits of the open space system was also drafted during this phase.

Phase 3: Developing a Plan of Action

Based on the community vision and the results of the Needs Assessment and Suitability Analysis, the planning team worked with the Management Committee and Green Ribbon Committee to define a policy framework and develop specific strategies and actions for advancing the open space vision. Additional recommendations for the open space system were developed to outline how to transition the existing system

and fill gaps within the 25-year planning horizon. The economic model was further refined, and a predictive calculator was developed by BAE Urban Economics to help evaluate potential green premium benefits of projects. The Administrative Draft of OpenSpacePGH was prepared during this phase.

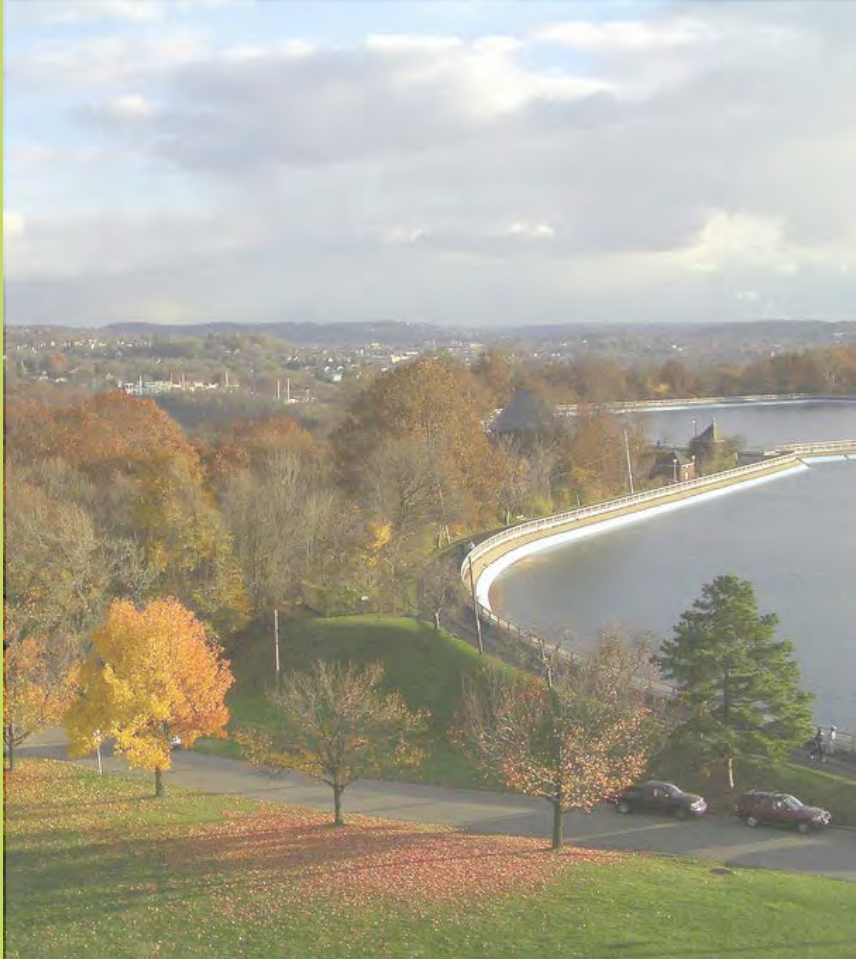
Phase 4: Refining and Adopting the Plan

In Phase 4, the public draft of OpenSpacePGH was released. Public comments were sought to refine the Draft Plan and prepare the Final Plan. In addition to an internal review by key staff, review sessions were held with the Management Committee, Green Ribbon Committee, Planning Commission, and City Council. This was followed by a public review period, in which the plan was posted online for review and comment and a series of public meetings were held. The Final Plan reflects and incorporates the views of each of these groups, in order to acknowledge and support the role that the City of Pittsburgh and its partners play in maintaining the city's open space system.





The following chapters summarize the context, existing resources and services, community needs, policy framework, and implementation plan for OpenSpacePGH. These elements together provide the game plan needed to achieve the Pittsburgh community's vision for parks, recreation facilities, open space, and trails in Pittsburgh — all of which are integral components of community livability and the city's long-term success.



OpenSpacePGH



CHAPTER 2

CONTEXT

CHAPTER TWO

Context

IN THIS SECTION

Natural Environment

Economic Environment

Built Environment

Social Environment

Planning Environment

While Pittsburgh is the center of a greater region, the focus of this plan is the city, its resources, and its future. As such, OpenSpacePGH (as part of PlanPGH) directly addresses the area within the city limits of Pittsburgh, but also takes features and assets in surrounding Allegheny County into consideration.

Natural Environment

Pittsburgh is located within the Allegheny Plateau, a glacier-carved sub-region that includes portions of Pennsylvania, Ohio, and New York. Though the area around Pittsburgh was not covered by glaciers, the physical form of the landscape was shaped when streams and tributaries were blocked by advancing ice. After sediments were deposited in the valleys, the streams and rivers cut through the plateau, creating the steep hills, sharp ridges, and deep valleys that characterize the landscape.



Waterways

Pittsburgh is located at the confluence of the Monongahela and Allegheny Rivers, where the two join to become the Ohio River. Despite its challenging topography, Pittsburgh grew and prospered in its early years because of the significant transportation potential of the three rivers and their position as a gateway to the early American western frontier. The rivers allowed for the movement of goods and commerce in natural resources such as iron, coal, and timber, making Pittsburgh an economic hub. Starting early on, a variety of channel-clearing and other navigation improvement projects (including locks and dams) were put in place to facilitate transportation and industry. These projects changed the natural flow of the rivers and streams, and greatly altered the surrounding riverside landscape.

In the late nineteenth century, the City started to draw its water supply from the Allegheny River. Developing a safe water source was of paramount importance. Pittsburgh had very high mortality rates from waterborne diseases—among the highest in the nation from 1880 to 1907. Today, the Allegheny continues to supply

Pittsburgh's Water and Sewer Authority with drinking water, passing through a filtration plant and a system of three reservoirs, delivering more than 70 million gallons per day (MGD), and storing much more.¹ The Monongahela River supplies the city and communities south of the river with 73 MGD of water through Pennsylvania American Water. Some of this infrastructure is contained within Pittsburgh's open space system, sometimes causing confusion with respect to maintenance and ownership.

In addition to the three primary rivers, numerous streams and creeks once flowed through the city and drained into the three rivers. Most of these streams and creeks were placed in culverts in the late nineteenth century, when the Department of Public Works created a combined sewer system, following the natural drainage patterns and discharging into the rivers. By 1910, only five major streams in the region continued to flow above ground: Chartiers Creek, Nine Mile Run, Street's Run, Becks Run, and Saw Mill Run, with the rest diverted into culverts and placed underground.

¹ The Pittsburgh Water & Sewer Authority, 2010 Annual Drinking Water Quality Report.

The Historical Landscape

At the time Europeans began colonizing America, Pittsburgh was heavily forested, with wetlands located in close proximity to the rivers and streams. The area was sparsely settled and primarily used as a hunting and trading crossroads by Native American tribes. Later in the mid-18th century, the area became a military outpost with the construction of Fort Duquesne in 1754 and then Fort Pitt in 1759. At that time, the area was rich in diversity with the same mammal, amphibian, reptile, bird, and fish species found throughout the region and state.

The combined effects of coal mining and the iron and steel industries transformed the physical landscape and significantly altered the natural environment. Trees were cut down for fuel in the early part of the nineteenth century, even those on steep hillsides. The deforested hillsides eroded and slumped, and became a location for trash dumping. Riverbanks were altered to support transportation and goods movement, and later to support manufacturing. Industrial waste and sewage flowed into the streams and rivers, destroying the fisheries by

the early twentieth century. With the loss of forests and streams, native species disappeared.

Because Pittsburgh became an industrial center early in its history and continued industrializing until the 1970s, few intact remnants of the pre-colonial environment remained by the mid-20th century. However, trees grew (though usually non-native species) and land formerly used for industry or homes was abandoned. The riverbanks, mostly cut off from public use for more than a century because of their importance to industry, have become more accessible as the industrial uses have declined or relocated.

Today's Landscape

As Pittsburgh's economy has gone through a structural change and the city's population has declined, there have been more changes to the landscape. Since the 1950s, trees have grown back on the hillsides and now provide a tree canopy larger than that of Pittsburgh's industrial past. Although these are not ecologically healthy forests (due to the proliferation of exotic species of plants and insects), deer and other edge species have also moved back to the city.

No city of equal size in America or perhaps the world, is compelled to adapt its growth to such difficult complications of high ridges, deep valleys and precipitous slopes as Pittsburgh.

- Frederic Law Olmsted Jr., 1910 Report to the Civic Commission



To an extent, controlling these populations has become an issue as no predator species remain.

Over the past 30 years, the community has been reevaluating its formerly industrial lands and impacted waterways to look at their potential for transformation and reestablishment of natural processes. One of the most striking stories of renewal is that of the Nine Mile Run Valley in the Lower East End. Mentioned throughout Pittsburgh's history as a significant feature in the landscape, the valley remained undeveloped until the 1920s. It was highlighted in several planning efforts as an important place to preserve or convert into a park, most notably in the 1910 Olmsted report² and the 1923 Citizens' Committee on City Plan recreation report. However, in the 1920s, a slag dump was placed in the valley and the stream was culverted. In 2006, in a project reflective of our changing view of urban streams, 2.2 miles of Nine Mile Run were restored. At the time, this \$7.7 million project was the largest stream restoration project in the country.

² Pittsburgh: Main Thoroughfares and The Down Town District, Frederick Law Olmsted report to The Pittsburgh Civic Commission, 1910

Economic Environment

Pittsburgh has been a hub for commerce and industry over its long history, with a highly productive economy that generated great wealth. As industry and the economy shifted in the late 20th century, and with the collapse of the steel industry, Pittsburgh endured a loss of jobs, population, and governmental tax revenues. Since that time, the city has reinvented its economy, focusing on science, medicine, and technology. Pittsburgh has become one of America's economic reinvention success stories, leading to its selection as the site of the 2009 G-20 Summit.

Within the urban landscape and open space system there are legacies of Pittsburgh's economic past, as well as a host of opportunities stemming from its economic present and future. During the early and mid-20th century, the sponsorship of foundations, or governmental initiatives such as FDR's Works Progress Administration, funded construction of a system of services, facilities, and infrastructure. This system was designed to serve a population much larger than today's. With the downsized population, the city is left with "legacy" public

facilities, parks, and civic infrastructure, a system that is unsustainable given the current sources of revenue and anticipated population numbers. However, the economic shift has also made new land available and led to the opening of the riverfronts for public access.

Built Environment

Pittsburgh's built environment has been shaped in part by its physical landscape, overlain with a history of economic and demographic change. The result is a very distinctive character among American cities, making Pittsburgh as memorable and iconic as San Francisco, New York City, or Boston – but less well-known because of its distance from other urban centers.

A City of Neighborhoods

Because of the city's topography, Pittsburgh developed as a city of neighborhoods nestled in the landscape, each with its own identity and local culture. The 90 different neighborhoods (including the Central Business District) range in population from over 15,100 (Squirrel Hill) to 11 (Chateau). The physical size of the

neighborhoods varies as does the density. Pittsburgh's most extensive land use is residential, but commercial and mixed use areas are found throughout the neighborhoods.

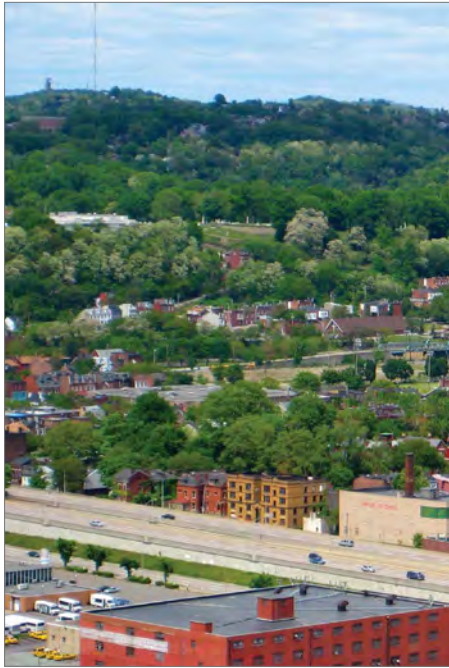
The Golden Triangle

Home to a number of iconic buildings and defined by a compact development pattern, Downtown Pittsburgh truly is the heart of the city. Known as the Golden Triangle, the downtown is located at the point of the river confluence in the center of the city. At the tip of Downtown is Point State Park. The Golden Triangle is linked by a series of bridges to adjacent neighborhoods across the Monongahela and Allegheny Rivers. The limited flat land in the Golden Triangle has resulted in a walkable and vibrant downtown area that is the center of business activity in Pittsburgh.

Transportation Challenges

Travel around Pittsburgh has always been challenging due to the rivers and steep topography. Streets were developed somewhat haphazardly, traversing the hillsides to access residential neighborhoods. Stairways were





constructed from hillside to hillside to create connections for pedestrians. Bridges were built to provide access across the rivers.

Because of the difficulty in traversing the city and connecting to the region, Pittsburgh has a long history of embracing transportation technologies and taking on engineering challenges. As an example, the remaining inclines represent a past transportation innovation that has become an important historic resource and mode of transit today. Pittsburgh was also an early adopter of the streetcar, light rail, and bus rapid transit.

In recent times, Pittsburgh has taken steps to improve the pedestrian and bicycle environment. The development of the riverfront trail system has been a notable success, providing an enhanced, active transportation network while reconnecting Pittsburghers to their rivers. Nonetheless, Pittsburgh's transportation challenges mean that many in the city face barriers to accessing public assets, including the system of open space and parks.

Vacant and Distressed Properties

One of the legacies of Pittsburgh's economic shift is a large amount and wide variety of vacant and distressed property. The reversion and accumulation of properties coming under public responsibility has placed an enormous burden on the City while contributing no taxes to pay for public services. Compounding the challenge is the dispersed nature of these properties, their size, their title status, and the fact that some have historic resource value or a historic designation. While some neighborhoods have more vacant and distressed properties than others, the parcels are distributed throughout the city. Finding viable interim uses, preserving future opportunities, and crafting long-term solutions for this inventory of land are key challenges with which Pittsburgh has been grappling, and that OpenSpacePGH in particular has been tasked with addressing. The estimated cost of maintaining these properties in 2011 totals \$20,457,155.³

³ BAE Economics, Valuation Calculator - See Appendix E: Park Quality Analysis of this report.

Social Environment

From theater companies to professional sports teams, to universities and the donors that support them, Pittsburgh is rich with institutions and organizations contributing to the city's identity, cultural environment, and community assets.

Philanthropy

Pittsburgh saw the birth of modern philanthropy in America over 100 years ago with Andrew Carnegie's "Gospel of Wealth".⁴ The city is still home to one of the most innovative philanthropic communities in the country. This community includes foundations built on the wealth of industrialists such as Henry J. Heinz, Henry Frick, George Westinghouse, and Andrew Carnegie, as well as pooled resources such as the Pittsburgh Foundation. A wide variety of nonprofit organizations, community improvement efforts, arts organizations, university endowments, public parks, and state of the art medical facilities have been supported by the extensive giving of these individuals and foundations.

⁴ Andrew Carnegie, *Wealth*, North American Review, 1889

Colleges and Universities

Colleges and universities draw a large population of young adults to Pittsburgh. According to the Pittsburgh Council on Higher Education, there are approximately 85,000 college students living within the city limits. Carnegie Mellon University, University of Pittsburgh, Duquesne University, and other well-regarded educational institutions draw thousands of students to the city. Pittsburgh is a center for biosciences, medicine, engineering, and technology due to the variety of programs offered by the universities. These institutions are integrated into the city fabric, and at the same time many also have distinct campus identities. Taken together, these institutions constitute major landholdings within the city (though as nonprofit institutions they are exempt from property taxes).

Professional Sports

Pittsburgh is also one of the country's premiere professional sports cities. Heinz Field, home of the Pittsburgh Steelers (six-time Super Bowl champions), and PNC Park, home of the Pittsburgh Pirates (five-time World Series





champions), are located on the north shore of the Allegheny River, across from Point State Park. Both are state of the art stadiums. The Pittsburgh Penguins (three-time Stanley Cup winners), recently completed its new Consol Energy Center ice arena on the eastern edge of the Central Business District. The energy around professional sports spills over into Pittsburgh's recreation patterns, and has provided sponsors and mentors for many recreation programs.

Arts and Culture

A thriving arts and culture scene has been part of Pittsburgh's civic presence for more than a hundred years. The Carnegie libraries, Carnegie Museum of Art, and Carnegie Museum of Natural History are cultural institutions that benefit the entire city. Downtown Pittsburgh includes a cultural district that is home to the renowned Pittsburgh Symphony at Heinz Hall, as well as several other stellar theaters. Organizations such as the Pittsburgh Cultural Trust, established in 1984 and considered both an arts agency and economic development agency, are working to maintain the vibrancy

of the arts in Pittsburgh. As a result, public arts programming has been a cornerstone of Pittsburgh's recreation approach, with programs such as City's Roving Art Cart teaching new generations to create art.

Demographics

Pittsburgh's 2010 population was 305,704, with a 2035 forecasted population of 337,044.⁵ This projected increase represents a shift from fifty years of depopulation to relative stability.

Between 1950 and 2000, areas that lost the most significant amount of population (depopulation by more than 60%) include neighborhoods directly north and east of Downtown, and neighborhoods along the Monongahela River. While almost every neighborhood experienced population loss, a few areas of the city experienced population growth. More detailed information on this topic can be accessed in the Citywide Information section of PGHSNAP [[link](#)].

⁵ 2010 Population: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census. 2035 Forecast: Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission, Cycle 8 Forecast 2005-2035, January 2008.

The population of Pittsburgh is stabilizing, but it is segmented by age, race, and income. Younger residents are generally living closer to Downtown and near the Oakland and Lower East End neighborhood sectors. Conversely, the majority of older residents generally live further from Downtown. The student population also contributes to this dynamic, even though they are not necessarily fully accounted for by the U.S. Census. Students supply an ever changing population of young adults that may not stay for the long term, but there is a steady influx of population each school year. Based on 2010 Census data, the age of the population is mostly similar to that of the U.S. and State averages, except for the 36% of the population age 20 to 39 years, which is substantially higher than both the State and U.S. averages.

In addition to a greater percentage of adults ages 20 to 39, the city has a higher percentage of black or African American residents (26.1%) than the nationwide percentage of 12.6%.⁶ At the same time, Pittsburgh's Racial Demographics report⁷ notes that whites and African Americans in the Pittsburgh region, as

in much of the nation, live largely in racially segregated communities. This report also found that Pittsburgh's population is far less diverse than that of the nation on the whole, primarily because the region has small Asian and Hispanic or Latino populations.

Table 2-1: Age Characteristics, U.S. Census Bureau, 2010

Age in Years	Pittsburgh	PA	USA
0 to 19	21.4%	24.9%	26.9%
20 to 39	36.1%	24.8%	26.8%
40 to 64	28.8%	34.8%	33.2%
65 +	13.8%	15.6%	13.1%

⁶ U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census.

⁷ Pittsburgh's Racial Demographics: Differences and Disparities, University of Pittsburgh, June 2007

Planning Environment

There are a range of plans, studies, and ongoing planning efforts that guide the future of Pittsburgh and its many distinctive neighborhoods and places. The OpenSpacePGH planning effort examined the energy put into these related efforts and, attempting to build on their momentum, incorporated them into the overall vision for Pittsburgh's open space system.

Related Planning and Implementation Efforts

The following is a brief overview of planning and implementation efforts that have factored into the OpenSpacePGH planning process.

PGHSNAP

The Department of City Planning created PGHSNAP in 2010 to provide easily accessible and understandable information on city neighborhoods and to serve as the data and map foundation for PlanPGH. Each planning

sector represents multiple neighborhoods that share similar characteristics related to geography, local political districts, community resources and assets, transportation infrastructure, and other traits. The city's 90 neighborhoods are divided into 16 planning sectors.

TreeVitalize

TreeVitalize is a statewide effort to restore the tree canopy in metropolitan areas of Pennsylvania. This public-private effort provides resources to encourage tree plantings and proper tree care amongst homeowners and local governments.

Neighborhood Plans

Many of Pittsburgh's 90 recognized neighborhoods have completed local plans to identify the envisioned future and goals of the community. For example, the Hill District's Greenprint focuses on connecting the neighborhood through the development of green spaces.

Riverfront Development Plan, 1998

The City adopted the Riverfront Development Plan to guide the development and protection of Pittsburgh's river resources. Along with zoning and development considerations, the Plan focuses on recreation, access, and tourism along the city's river frontage.

City of Pittsburgh Bicycle Plan, 1999

The City's Bicycle Plan identifies many challenges and opportunities for Pittsburgh in making this form of active transportation a viable option for more residents.

Pittsburgh's Regional Parks Master Plan, 2000

Pittsburgh's Regional Parks Master Plan, updated in 2012, provides a renewed strategy for the future of four of the city's five regional parks: Frick, Highland, Riverview, and Schenley Parks. The primary objective of the plan is to focus on long-term stewardship of these resources, and to balance the use, history, and ecology within each park.

A Vision Plan for Pittsburgh's Riverfronts, 2001

The Vision Plan calls for the redevelopment of the city's extensive waterfront as a connected waterfront park known as Three Rivers Park. When complete, the park will connect the city's existing waterfront parks – Point State Park, Allegheny Riverfront Park, Convention Center Park, and Northshore Riverfront Park – in a continuous flow of trails, bridges, green space, and waterfront amenities.

An Ecological and Physical Investigation of Pittsburgh Hillside, 2004

The report assisted the City of Pittsburgh Hillside Committee in creating public policy regarding the future of the city's hillside.

Allegheny Places: The Allegheny County Comprehensive Plan, 2008

Allegheny Places is Allegheny County's first comprehensive plan. The plan establishes a vision for the county and a framework for the strategic use of public resources. Allegheny Places identifies several pressing issues facing

the county, and presents several goals that affect Pittsburgh's parks and natural areas.

Market-Based Revenue Opportunities

The City is actively examining the potential of a range of advertising and other revenue opportunities to help support City services. The study is in process and, when complete, will inform revisions to City policy and funding options for a range of services including park operations and recreation programming.

Allegheny Riverfront Vision, 2011

The Allegheny Riverfront Vision is the planning process for the redevelopment of 6.5 miles of the Allegheny's south shore. The project area includes the Allegheny riverfront between 11th Street in the Strip District to Highland Park and a small area on the North Shore at the 16th Street Bridge.



OpenSpacePGH



CHAPTER 3

INVENTORY

CHAPTER THREE

Inventory

IN THIS SECTION

Public Open Space Lands

Other Open Space Lands

Trails and Connections

City Recreation Facilities

Natural Resources

Vacant and Distressed Lands

A critical starting point for OpenSpacePGH is defining and understanding the extent of Pittsburgh's existing public open space system and the function and roles of its many lands and facilities within the city. The following analysis is based on a snapshot of Pittsburgh in 2010-2011. This chapter includes the definition of what is and is not considered "open space" and description and classification of the lands and features found within the system.

Public Open Space Lands

Pittsburgh's public open space system contains more than 3,390 acres of land, constituting 10% of the city's land base.¹ Pittsburgh's open space system includes lands deliberately reserved for public purposes and to benefit residents and visitors, and to protect environmentally sensitive areas and natural systems. The open space system incorporates hillsides, natural resource lands, and developed lands containing parks, sports fields, swimming pools, buildings, and an

¹ The designated open space system does not include vacant, distressed or undeveloped land, nor does it include other publicly owned land (e.g., land containing fire stations, police stations, City-County Building)



According to the Trust for Public Land, out of the top 100 populated cities, Pittsburgh is 3rd in park acreage per capita (10.1 acres/1k residents) amongst cities of similar density (intermediate-high density).



3.2

extensive variety of built recreation features and amenities. This system is illustrated in Map 1: Existing Open Space System.

Greenways

The “Greenways for Pittsburgh” program was established in 1980 to consolidate steeply sloped, unbuildable land for the purpose of protecting hillsides and preserving passive open space resources. In Pittsburgh, the term greenway is defined by City Council designation, in contrast to some communities that use this term more broadly. Many greenways have been discussed conceptually. To date, the City has designated ten greenways totaling approximately 553 acres, 61.5 acres of which are contained within the boundary of Emerald View Park, and a combined 8.9 acres of which are contained within three neighborhood parks: Spring Garden, Tropical, and Vanucci Parks.

Beautification Sites

Beautification sites provide space for visual amenities such as planted medians, landscaping areas, and monuments or art that are not part of a larger park. The City maintains 46

beautification sites totaling approximately 22 acres of land. Some beautification sites are Western Pennsylvania Conservancy sites located on City property. These sites serve no recreational purpose but can contribute to the aesthetic quality and identity of the urban environment. Some of the beautification sites have been created because of the city’s topography and transportation network, reflecting a history and built environment unique to Pittsburgh.

Park Land

The City has an extensive inventory of parks that range from historic regional parks to small playgrounds and tot lots. As part of OpenSpacePGH, these lands have been classified by their function and type, as defined on the following pages. Table 3-1: OpenSpacePGH Park

Table 3-1: OpenSpacePGH Park Land Acreage by Classification

Inventory Classification	# Sites	Acres
Regional Parks	5	1,972
Community Parks	21	552
Neighborhood Parks	106	308
Riverfront Parks	6	51
Special Use Parks	8	4

Land Acreage by Classification, summarizes this inventory. A complete park system inventory is included in Appendix A: OpenSpace PGH Inventory.

Regional Parks

Regional parks are the signature open spaces of the city. These sites are amongst the largest park sites and draw visitors from throughout Pittsburgh and beyond. Each park has a unique identity shaped by its cultural resources, historic landscape, natural features, and recreational amenities. Regional parks are large enough that they can contain multiple spaces that in some instances function as “parks within parks”.

The City maintains approximately 1,972 acres of regional park land distributed across five parks. In Pittsburgh, four sites have historically been considered regional parks and were designed as large, continuous park sites: Frick, Schenley, Riverview, and Highland Parks. More recently, a consolidation of individually designed parks and forested hillside sites totaling more than 200 acres has been designated as the City’s fifth regional park, Emerald View Park.

Community Parks

The City maintains approximately 561 acres of community park land distributed among 21 parks. Community parks draw people from more than one neighborhood because of the features or character they offer, and they are intended to serve multiple neighborhoods.

These parks can vary in size depending on their setting and facilities. Community parks include a mix of active and passive recreation features. Competitive quality sports fields, indoor or outdoor swimming pools, multi-purpose recreation centers, and reservable picnic shelters are common features in community parks. This type of park also typically includes those features found in neighborhood parks. Because community parks contain larger or more specialized facilities, people visit them for a longer duration (an hour or more) and will often travel further to reach them. Transit access and support amenities such as restrooms are important components of community parks.

Figure 3-1 Regional Parks

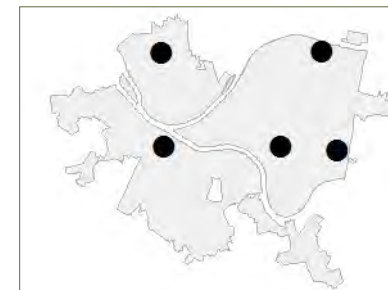


Figure 3-2 Community Parks

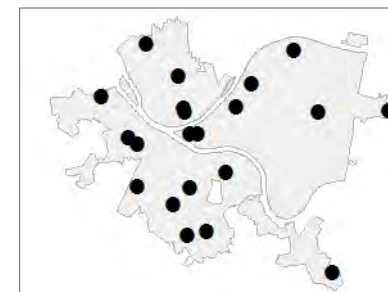


Figure 3-3 Neighborhood Parks

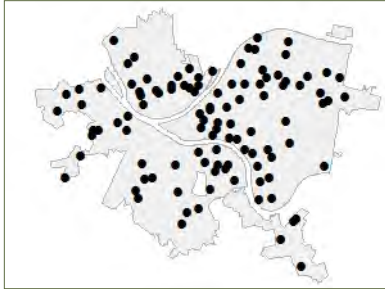


Figure 3-4 Riverfront Parks



Figure 3-5 Special Use Parks



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Neighborhood Parks

Neighborhood parks are the basic building block park within the Pittsburgh open space system. These locally-oriented parks provide residents with nearby access to the outdoors and recreation. Neighborhood parks typically include features such as picnic areas, playgrounds, open lawn, courts, and walking paths. Competitive quality facilities are not included, nor are facilities that draw people from a distance. This type of park is intended for casual, shorter duration use by those within walking or biking distance. Neighborhood parks can be located in residential areas, near work places or in business districts, and should provide recreation opportunities appropriate to their setting. The City maintains approximately 330 acres of neighborhood park land distributed across 106 parks.

Riverfront Parks

River access is highly valued in Pittsburgh. Riverfront parks sites are called out as a unique classification because they focus on proximity or access to one or more of Pittsburgh's rivers. Some of these riverfront sites may also

serve neighborhood, community, or regional park functions. It should be noted that the riverfront trails in Pittsburgh are not necessarily contained within riverfront parks – many of the trails are located on easements or lands outside of riverfront parks. The City maintains approximately 51 acres of riverfront park land distributed across six parks.

Special Use Parks














The special use park designation applies to park land that contains a specific feature or facility, but that is not a park with multiple facilities serving various users. Examples of such facilities in Pittsburgh are a stand-alone community center (e.g. Mt. Washington Senior Center) or the Oliver Bathhouse. The City maintains eight special use sites on approximately four acres of park land.

Other Open Space Lands

In addition to City-owned open space, public, nonprofit, and private entities maintain open spaces for a variety of purposes.

OPENSOURCE

MAP: I - EXISTING OPEN SPACE SYSTEM

-  Neighborhood Park
-  Community Park
-  Regional Park
-  Riverfront Park
-  Special Use Park
-  Public School *
-  Beautification Site
-  Other Park
-  Greenway
-  Non-Public Open Space
-  Other Municipality
-  Neighborhood
-  Water

(Some Parks are Not to Scale. Size Exaggerated)

* - Schools with open space that is maintained by the city through an agreement.



Public Schools

Pittsburgh's public school sites and school district lands, including schools that have been closed or are slated for closure, are valuable open space resources. Twelve school sites are maintained by the City for recreation purposes. Some school sites are used as fields permitted by the City (Horace Mann, Westwood) and some have City pools (Westwood) that make them function as City parks, even if they are under ownership by Pittsburgh Public Schools (PPS). There is an agreement that guides shared maintenance resources between the City of Pittsburgh and PPS.

Green Up Sites

"Green Up Pittsburgh" is a program designed by Mayor Luke Ravenstahl's office to transform blighted City-owned lots (often acquired as a result of tax delinquency) into community assets. Though this program does not specify a long-term future for Green Up sites, many Green Up efforts result in community stewardship of neighborhood lots and the creation of informal, undesignated open space for local use.

Private Open Spaces

As part of Pittsburgh's Downtown development requirements, plazas and open space are required through the Urban Open Space Requirements found in section 910.01.C.3 of the zoning code. These spaces are accessible to the public, but are privately constructed and maintained. A number of successful plazas, pocket parks, and open spaces have been integrated into Downtown as a result of these standards.

Cemeteries

Pittsburgh's cemeteries, though privately owned and operated, contribute to the open space system and provide connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists. Cemeteries, especially historic ones such as Allegheny Cemetery and Homewood Cemetery, have traditionally been designed not just as burial grounds but as picturesque landscapes designed with lanes, trees, and rolling lawn areas. The city's cemeteries are considered key scenic resources and are a critical component of Pittsburgh's open space system.

Campuses

A campus is defined as the grounds and buildings of a college, university or school. In some cases, hospitals incorporate a campus setting. Pittsburgh is home to many colleges and universities, many of which offer beautifully landscaped campuses that provide trees, lawns, walking paths, and forested areas.

Non-Profit Sites

Pittsburgh has an extensive nonprofit and philanthropic community. Sites owned by nonprofit groups such as land trusts, Boys & Girls Clubs, or YMCAs are an important component of the open space system and contribute significantly to recreation services. Major examples of nonprofit sites include the YMCA and the Boys & Girls Club of Western Pennsylvania.

Trails and Connections

The City's open spaces are connected by its on- and off-street transportation network. MovePGH, the transportation component of Pittsburgh's comprehensive plan, will address and plan for the future of the city's multi-modal transportation system. However, trails steps, and pathways play a vital role in the city's open space and active transportation systems, and so are described briefly herein.²

Multi-Use Trails

Multi-use trails are hard-surfaced, off-street paths used by pedestrians and bicyclists, and can be destinations for exercise and recreation. Pittsburgh's riverfront trails are multi-use trails.

Pedestrian Trails

Pedestrian trails are off-street trails that can be hard- or soft-surfaced. Examples of soft surfaces include soil, crushed rock, and wood chips. Some soft surfaces do not provide accessibility for

² These types of facilities exist within Pittsburgh's open space system but have not been inventoried and assessed for the OpenSpacePGH Plan process.





people with disabilities, but are preferable for some recreation activities, such as running and hiking.

Park Pathways

Park pathways are the paved or soft-surfaced paths contained within parks. At minimum, each park should have a paved pathway providing access to all elements on the site for compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Most of Pittsburgh's parks have at least a small park pathway connecting a playground or court to the sidewalk. Only a few parks have looped pathway systems, a desirable recreation feature given the high level of interest and participation in walking for exercise.

Mountain Bike Trails

Mountain bike trails are dedicated trails for mountain biking. They can be built using a range of surfaces. Off-street mountain bike trails are typically narrow, single track trails composed of natural/compacted earth. Reducing user conflicts is especially important when designing natural surface trails for use by cyclists and

pedestrians. Trail sections should be designed to prevent erosion and reduce speed, especially around corners or at trail intersections.

Steps

There are 712 sets of steps maintained throughout the city's hillsides that provide valuable connections for pedestrians willing and able to traverse the steep topography.

City Recreation Facilities

Within Pittsburgh's public open space system, the variety and number of recreation facilities create opportunities for many diverse experiences. Although not all facilities are used or actively programmed, they remain the City's responsibility. An inventory from 2010 of the City's major recreation facilities maintained by the Public Works Departments is supplied in Appendix A: OpenSpacePGH Inventory.

Scale of Facilities

Within the system of open space and park lands, Pittsburgh has amassed an extensive inventory of recreation facilities. Recreation facilities

have been designed at scales to serve different audiences, geographic areas, and levels of activity. Pittsburgh's recreation facilities fall into three categories of scale: neighborhood, community, and regional, as defined below:

Neighborhood Scale

Neighborhood scale facilities are intended for casual use, drop-in activity, and recreationists with beginning skill levels. Neighborhood scale facilities are not designed for competitive or advanced skill levels, nor are they maintained to competitive quality.

Community Scale

Community scale recreation facilities serve advanced skill levels, competitive play, and specialized recreation activities. These facilities are intended to draw people from a distance, are designed for competition, and are maintained to support their level of use.

Regional Scale

Regional scale facilities are one-of-a-kind, state of the art features. These are intended to serve a large market area, drawing from the entire city or even the region.

Regional-Scale Recreation Facilities

The regional-scale recreation facilities found throughout the park system are managed by Pittsburgh, by other entities, or through public-private partnerships. These include but are not limited to the following facilities.

Schenley Oval Sportsplex and Skating Rink

The Schenley Oval Sportsplex and Skating Rink provides the city with a diverse range of recreation facilities including tennis courts, a running track, soccer field, high jump area, cross-country trails, and an outdoor ice skating rink used as an ice rink in the winter and a miniature golf court in the spring and summer.

Schenley Park Café and Visitor Center

The Schenley Park Café and Visitor Center provides visitors with a coffee bar, food services, restrooms, wireless internet, and a map of park trails. The building can also be rented for special events such as weddings, retreats, and birthday parties.

Bob O'Connor Golf Course

The Bob O'Connor Golf Course is an 18-hole, par 67 public golf course located at Schenley Park.



Out of the top 100 most populated cities, Pittsburgh is (per capita):

- 6th in the number of playgrounds
- 4th in the number of diamond fields
- 4th in the number of swimming pools

3.9





3.10

Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens

The Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens located within Schenley Park has been in operation since 1893.

Frick Park Bowling Green

The Frick Park Bowling Green is the only public lawn bowling green in Pennsylvania.

Frick Environmental Center

The Frick Environmental Center offers environmental programming focused on local habitats and ecology, under the banner of “Education through Restoration.” The center burned down about ten years ago and is currently undergoing design for reconstruction. The center is surrounded by an extensive trail system—including an ADA-accessible trail through the woods—used for educational programs and nature walks.

Mellon Indoor Tennis Center

The Mellon Indoor Tennis Center located at Mellon Park provides year-round indoor tennis for all ages and abilities.

Pittsburgh Zoo & PPG Aquarium

The Pittsburgh Zoo & PPG Aquarium, located in Highland Park, has been operated since 1994 by the Zoological Society of Pittsburgh,

transitioning from a City-operated zoo. The facility offers a variety of conservation education and workshops, a zoo camp for children, as well as animal exhibits and interpretation.

National Aviary

The National Aviary is located in Allegheny Commons Park (West Commons), and has been operated by a nonprofit organization since 1992. The aviary attracts more than 100,000 visitors annually to view birds and participate in educational programs and camps.

Bud Harris Cycling Track

The Bud Harris Cycling Track is a half-mile oval loop track located in Highland Park. The Track provides recreational riding as well as racing opportunities organized by The Allegheny Cycling Association and the Pittsburgh Masters Velo Club.

Sports Fields

Sports fields include diamond shaped fields for baseball and softball, and rectangular fields that support a wide variety of sports including soccer, football, lacrosse, rugby, and Ultimate Frisbee.

Sports Courts

Sports courts are hard-surfaced outdoor facilities designed to support specific sports and games. Outdoor basketball courts may be half court or full court, and are generally used for informal pickup games. Tennis courts are generally constructed in pairs or groupings of four or more. Tennis courts can also be used to support other sports such as basketball or badminton with the addition of appropriate equipment. Pittsburgh also has hockey, bocce, and outdoor volleyball courts.

Swimming Pools

Swimming pools vary in size and depth depending on their intended use. They may be located indoors or outdoors, and be recreational or competitive in nature. Recreational pools are typically warmer than competitive pools, and incorporate moving water in the form of spray elements, current channels, whirlpools, slides, and interactive features.

Spray Parks

Spray parks have a zero depth play area where water sprays from mounted structures or ground sprays, and is then drained away before it can accumulate³. These facilities are popular water features with children of all ages and can be designed in a variety of configurations to accommodate diverse sites and users.

Children's Play Areas

Places and facilities for children to play may vary as widely as the imaginations of the children using them. From parks with play equipment, to open space and natural areas, almost any park can be a setting for children's play. Designated play areas at most parks in Pittsburgh are built with manufactured playground equipment. These modular structures, swings, slides, and other elements come in many shapes and sizes, and may contain multiple design components.

Special Facilities

Special use facilities are recreation features within the park and open space system that have been developed to support specialized

³ Meeting current sanitation standards.

The City of Pittsburgh has 4.1 ballfields per 10,000 residents, 6.1 pools for every 100,000 residents, and 4.2 playgrounds for every 10,000 residents.

3.11



3.12

interests or activities, serving as distinctive attractions within a larger park site. Disc golf courses and skate parks are examples of special facilities, as are regional facilities such as the Phipps Conservatory.

Outdoor Performance Facilities

A wide range of outdoor performance facilities and special events can be hosted at park sites and indoor facilities. These include fairs or festivals, movies in the park, races, concerts and art events. The type of event determines the scale and amount of supporting park amenities. Certain amenities, such as seating, trash and recycling containers, and lighting and restrooms, can all be temporarily added to handle larger events.

Shelters

Shelters are open-air, roofed structures such as picnic shelters and gazebos. Depending on the shelter's size and use, barbecue pits, grills, and other amenities may be provided.

Programmable Indoor Spaces

Enclosed structures designed to serve recreation needs provide indoor space for recreation programs, community events, and other activities. The size and design of these facilities can vary greatly. "Recreation centers" and "senior centers", two commonly used designations, do not correlate to a particular type or size of facility. For the purpose of OpenSpacePGH, these built structures are considered one category of facility since they serve the function of providing programmable indoor space for activities.

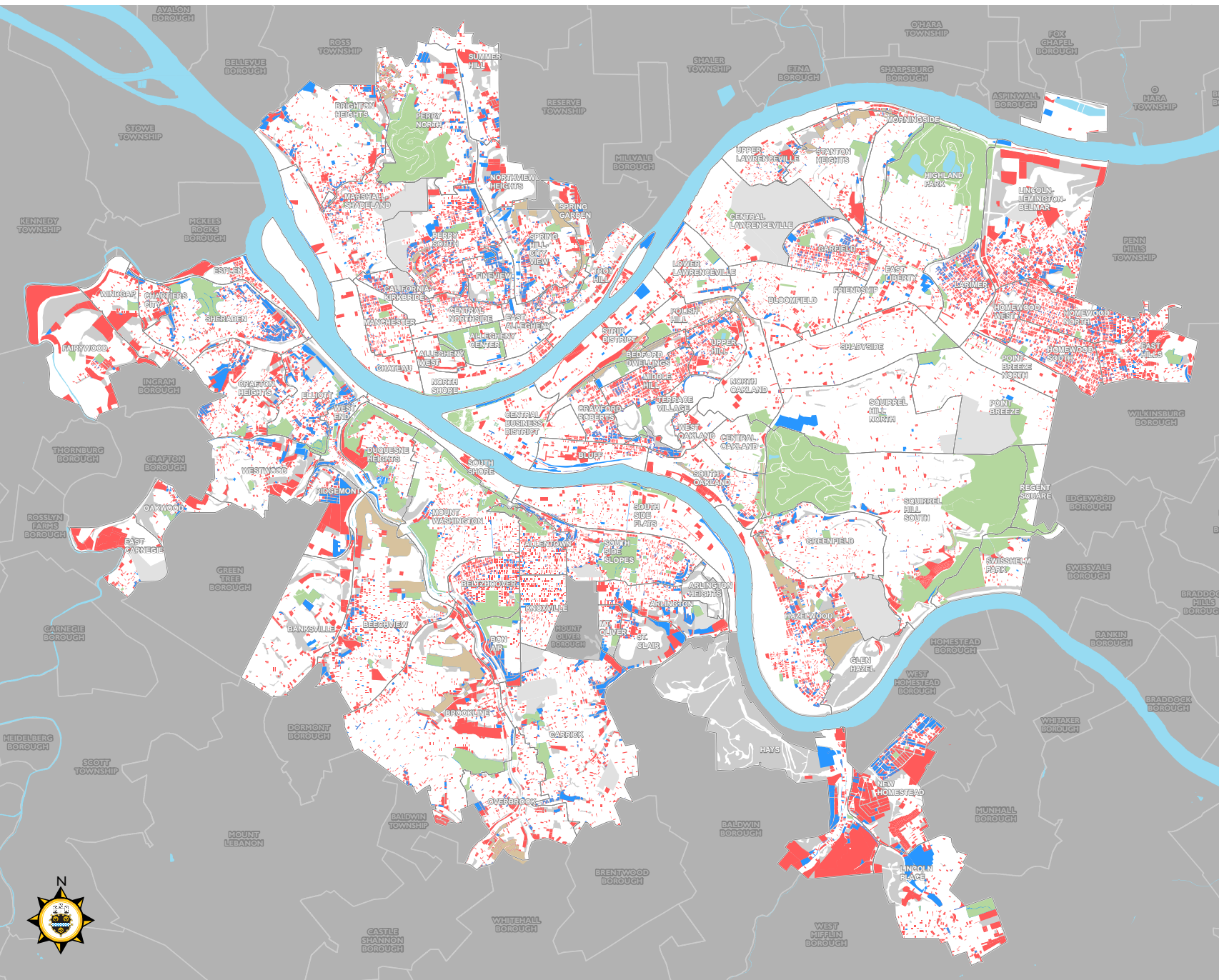
Community Gardens

In Pittsburgh, community gardens can be found within City-owned open spaces or parks, on land owned by other entities, or as stand-alone facilities. The most common form of this activity is through the self-directed gardening of a small plot at a community garden. Community gardens can be integrated into the design of parks with educational programming.

MAP: 2 - VACANT OR DISTRESSED PROPERTIES

- Vacant or Distressed *
- Public Property
- Park
- Greenway
- Non-Public Open Space
- Other Municipality
- Neighborhood
- Water

* - includes vacant parcels, condemned structures, and tax delinquency.



Natural Resources

Regardless of where they are located, natural resources throughout Pittsburgh contribute to the ecological health and aesthetic of the city's open space system.

Hillsides

Pittsburgh's topography is a defining feature of the city that helps shape its environment, aesthetic, and recreation opportunities. Hillsides with a slope of 25% or greater occupy 11%⁴ of Pittsburgh's land area, far more land than the amount contained within the system of formally designated greenways⁵. These hillsides are home to trees and wildlife and help "...mitigate air and noise pollution, reduce stormwater runoff and flooding, and reduce the heat island effect that cities have on local climate."⁶

⁴ Approximately 3,800 acres.

⁵ Approximately 553 acres.

⁶ Opportunities for Hillside Protection, 2005.

Urban Tree Canopy

The city's urban tree canopy includes forested hillsides, the trees in parks, the trees that line the streets, and trees on private property. While Pittsburgh has more forested land than it did 100 years ago, the city has experienced a decline in the number of street and park trees due to the effects of "...disease (e.g. Oak Wilt), introduced insects (e.g. Emerald Ash Borer), invasive plant species, and the effects of deer overpopulation."⁷ As a result, 25% of the city's street tree population is in poor or critical condition, and over 10% of the street tree population has been recommended for removal.⁸

Tree Pittsburgh has developed an Urban Forest Master Plan with the objective of addressing the issue of tree canopy loss and restoring the health of the urban forest. The completed plan is a road map that provides detailed information and recommendations, and identifies resources needed to effectively and pro-actively manage and grow the City's tree canopy. More importantly, it provides a shared vision for the future of the urban forest to inspire and engage stakeholders in the care and protection of trees.

⁷ 2011 Tree Crisis Action Plan.

⁸ City of Pittsburgh's 2005 Street Tree Inventory.

Vacant and Distressed Lands

Pittsburgh also contains approximately 30,000 properties that are—for economic, physical, or other reasons—vacant, distressed, or currently undeveloped.⁹ Distressed sites include parcels that are currently vacant, condemned, or encumbered. While these sites present a challenge in terms of defining a future use, they offer an opportunity to shape the urban form and character of Pittsburgh for years to come. Map 2: Vacant & Distressed Properties depicts these sites. This map represents a snapshot in time, as the inventory of vacant and distressed sites is constantly evolving.

Pittsburgh's vacant and distressed lands are not automatically considered part of the open space system. The City's park system is already under-resourced in terms of capital and operations funding. A major part of OpenSpacePGH was an analysis to help determine suitable uses for these lands. See Chapter 5: Community Needs for a discussion of the suitability analysis conducted.



3.15

⁹ Data sources: Capital Asset Research Corporation (tax lien parcels), Community Technical Assistance Center (vacant parcels) and City GIS (city owned, vacant and condemned parcels) from 2010.

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OpenSpacePGH



CHAPTER 4

OPEN SPACE OPERATIONS AND SERVICES

CHAPTER FOUR

Open Space Operations and Services

IN THIS SECTION

Maintaining the Open Space System

Activating the Open Space System

Sustaining Open Space and Park Services

Community Resources and Initiatives

The recreation and open space contributions of the City of Pittsburgh and community partners reach far beyond the provision of land and facilities. The City and community partners provide a variety of services in order to manage, restore, program and activate, beautify, and otherwise increase the value of the open space system for residents, business, and visitors. This chapter describes parks and open space maintenance and programming, the organizations involved, and related resource and funding realities, constraints, and contributions.

Maintaining the Open Space System

Keeping the open space system and the city's parks safe, clean, and ready for public use requires a wide range of activities. In addition to routine grounds maintenance, park amenities and other features of open space and park sites require monitoring and the occasional replacement of parts or even whole systems in order to meet public standards. Buildings and structures within the open space system, such as community and senior centers, require routine janitorial service, and building systems (HVAC, roof, plumbing, etc.) must be periodically maintained. Pittsburgh's parks and open space system also includes many special facilities and features, ranging from art and historic structures



4.2

to swimming pools and artificial turf; all have specialized maintenance needs that must be met in order to enjoy and, in some cases, protect the city's cultural, natural and recreation assets.

The importance of open space maintenance goes beyond making sure that parks and facilities are simply “safe, clean and ready”. The economic benefits that open spaces bring to a community are closely tied to the level and quality of maintenance. A reasonable level of investment to maintain parks and open spaces can result in significant indirect economic benefits in the form of increased valuation of surrounding and nearby properties, or increased neighborhood visitation and resulting benefits to local businesses. Conversely, a lack of investment, or notable disinvestment that does not lead to the transition of properties to better and higher uses, can result in potential negative economic impacts. One example includes unintentionally creating spaces more appropriate for vagrancy or crime rather than play, thereby reducing neighborhood visitation and nearby property values.

Whether enjoyed from nearby or from far away, all open space sites require some level of maintenance activity. Greenways comprise 14%

of Pittsburgh's public open space lands. These areas receive the least amount of maintenance effort both on a per-unit and absolute dollars basis. Due to lack of enforcement capacity and, in some cases, their remote locations, the city's greenways are vulnerable to over-use and illegal or inappropriate activities such as dumping, squatting, and motorized ATV use. Greenways are also negatively impacted by insects, disease and invasive species. Though not currently funded, interventions are required to address these issues. The city's greenways are fertile grounds for successful partnerships with organizations such as the Mount Washington Community Development Corporation (MWCDC). MWCDC has devoted resources to restore natural areas and engage volunteers in long-term stewardship efforts.

In addition to spaces for active recreation, Pittsburgh's open space network includes manicured landscapes, monuments and forested hillsides. Pittsburgh's beautification sites were formerly a City maintenance responsibility, but financial constraints have significantly limited its ability to continue maintenance and upkeep. In recent years, the City has reduced the number of roadside gardens it maintains. The Western Pennsylvania Conservancy and Oakland Business

Improvement District have since taken on greater responsibility for the maintenance of planters and beautification areas.

CitiParks Organization and Maintenance Responsibilities

Pittsburgh has witnessed many shifts in responsibility for maintenance of its parks over the years. The most recent organizational change began in 1993, when the City reorganized the department and divisional structure of both the Department of Parks and Recreation (CitiParks) and the Department of Public Works (DPW) as part of an ongoing initiative to streamline City services and reduce costs. Both the DPW and CitiParks are funded through general City revenues, and both have felt the strain of reduced financial resources. In 2004, and again in 2008, financial constraints led to further organizational mergers, resulting in a shift from dedicated parks maintenance crews with specialized training to a generalized public works maintenance crew model, where geographically assigned crews maintain both parks and streets.

In general, the cost of maintaining a property increases with the intensity of public use, with the intensity and type of development, the

design of the site, and the age of its assets.

Maintenance costs are largely driven by the cost of labor. As funding allocated to maintenance of open space dwindles, the maintenance frequencies and replacement schedules have consequently become much longer than City maintenance staff or best practices recommend. In addition, open space sites that are not traditional park land receive almost no attention due to a lack of resources, staffing and training.

The City incurs maintenance costs for a variety of properties not under its formal ownership or officially part of the open space system. Long-standing practices have resulted in a continuing arrangement whereby the City's maintenance responsibilities of fields and playgrounds extend above and beyond its own extensive inventory of open space sites. In 1999, the City and Pittsburgh Public Schools began to formalize an arrangement regarding maintenance of sites that function both as school fields/playgrounds and parks. The draft agreement addressed 24 sites owned by some combination of the City and the school district. However, this agreement was never signed or executed, resulting in CitiParks' continued maintenance of these sites as determined by prior agreements.



City-owned vacant, distressed, or condemned properties require resources for very basic maintenance such as hazard mowing, maintaining fencing, and removing debris and vegetation that encroaches on the right-of-way. These efforts provide few tangible benefits to Pittsburgh's citizens but are required for safety and liability reasons.

Activating the Open Space System

Pittsburghers use the open space system and the city's parks both informally and through their participation in organized programs and activities. Programs, events and activities are offered by the City, nonprofits, and other organizations and include not just traditional play and recreation, but community-based education, volunteer programs, neighborhood building, community development efforts, and stewardship activities.

There are a vast array of activities people pursue for recreation throughout Pittsburgh that take place outside the open space system, such as arts and cultural activities at numerous museums, galleries, and theatres; professional sporting events; and enrichment at the city's libraries and universities. While the broader

context of recreation in Pittsburgh is important to be familiar with when planning for the future, OpenSpacePGH focuses on the services and programs provided within the City's open spaces by the City or others.

CitiParks

Recreation programs provided by the City of Pittsburgh are offered through CitiParks, more formally known as the Parks and Recreation Department. CitiParks offers a wide variety of programs in five major program areas, described below. Program areas are characterized according to the City's main centers of recreation activity.

Community Recreation Division

The Community Recreation Division operates the city's ten actively programmed recreation centers, the seasonal aquatic programming at 17 outdoor swimming pools, and year-round programming at Oliver Bathhouse. The Division also hosts special events including the Great Race, the BIG League Sports program offered in partnership with the Pittsburgh Pirates and Penguins, and the regional programs at the Mellon Indoor Tennis Center and Schenley Oval Sportsplex and Skating Rink.

Frick Environmental Center

The environmental center is the primary home of environmental programming in the City. Formerly housed in a historic building in Frick Park the center's programs have continued in other locations while the building is restored after a fire.

Senior Community Centers

CitiParks provides neighborhood-based senior programs at 15 senior center sites. Some senior centers are located within other community recreation centers, while others are stand-alone senior centers.

Community Enrichment

The Community Enrichment Division provides year-round, family-oriented activities for people of all ages in underserved communities, using school sites to offer programs. The City Art Partners Program also promotes visual arts city-wide, and is offered through this program area.

Community Services

CitiParks programs and services also include seasonal farmers' markets in various city neighborhoods, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Summer Food Services Program,

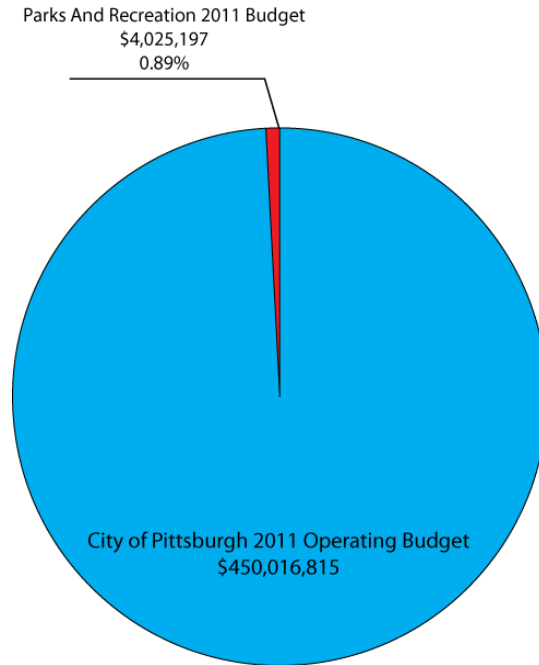
senior food voucher programs, and support of community and neighborhood festivals. In 2010 one of the programs of Community Services organized 26 free outdoor concerts across Pittsburgh's neighborhoods.

Community Recreation Program Providers

CitiParks collaborates with a multitude of partners to provide recreation programs, including aquatics and athletic organizations, nonprofit organizations, corporate sponsors and local businesses, community councils, child service providers, colleges and universities, and environmental partners. In all, CitiParks is connected to over 400 community organizations, each with many members, students, and customers of their own. This includes the many volunteer-run youth and adult sports organizations and leagues that use City facilities for basketball, baseball, soccer, softball, football, boxing, and other organized sports.

A number of non-profit and community organizations help fill the gaps in available services by providing activities and opportunities that target specific interests. Organizations working to program and manage key, publicly

Figure 4-1: CitiParks Budget as a Percentage of Total City Operating Budget (2011)



owned open space resources are included in the discussion of community partners that concludes this chapter.

Sustaining Open Space and Park Services

Pittsburgh's system of parks and open spaces was developed to serve the city's peak population of over a half million city residents. Tax revenues paid for the maintenance and operation of the city's public assets and were generated from a population twice the size of today's. For years, the City's tax revenues have not been adequate to sustain service levels of the past, leading to the difficult decision to close select neighborhood swimming pools and recreation facilities, reduce maintenance levels of the system, and reduce the number of programs offered.

The struggle to fund services began with the decline of industry, population, and tax base over time. Intensifying the struggle, almost 40% of the city's land area is tax exempt because religious institutions, universities, hospitals, and other nonprofit entities own the land. As other, formerly taxable properties have been abandoned or have simply lost market value, the

city's large proportion of tax exempt properties has become an especially pressing issue. In addition, the city's aging park infrastructure has been identified as the third oldest system in the U.S. This adds to operations costs and creates a huge need for infrastructure replacement. Since becoming the owner of Schenley and Highland Parks in 1889, Pittsburgh has been challenged by the maintenance demands of its open space and parks system. Funding the maintenance of the open space system continues to be an ongoing challenge, despite the stabilization of Pittsburgh's population and finances.

Since it was authorized by the Pennsylvania Legislature in 1993, the Allegheny Regional Asset District (RAD) funding has provided a consistent source of operations funding for the four historic regional parks. Though the RAD funding does not cover the full cost of their maintenance, it is stable and dedicated, unlike the general fund dollars which are used to maintain the other parks and open spaces.

In 2011, less than 1% of the City's general fund budget was allocated to CitiParks, accounting for less than half of the CitiParks budget (see Figure 4-1: CitiParks Budget as a Percentage of Total City Operating Budget). In combination, trust

funds for the Mellon Tennis Center, Schenley Ice Rink, Frick, Summer Foods Program, Seniors, and RAD Parks provide the rest of the CitiParks annual budget.

Capital Funding

The City's inventory of open space lands and recreation facilities requires continued investment to increase the lifespan and the value of the public's assets. Outside of the regional parks system, the City budget provides limited support for open space system capital improvements. Over the last several years, City-funded capital projects have generally focused on the renovation of existing parks facilities and emergency repairs. General fund dollars (unrestricted tax revenues available for all City services) and federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds targeted for low and moderate income areas generally fund the capital budget. These ongoing sources are supplemented by grants the City pursues for specific projects. For example, at the writing of this plan, Pittsburgh applied for \$2.2 million in federal TIGER III funds to build extensions to the regional riverfront trail system.

State sources such as the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources also provide grants, and partner organizations have contributed some funding for improvements. In addition, the City makes small-scale contributions of professional services and labor to help support community clean-up and stabilization efforts through the Green Up Pittsburgh program, funded through grants from the State's Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) and in-kind labor from the Department of Public Works (DPW).

An average of about \$5.5 million has been allocated annually by the City for capital improvements in the open space and parks system through the Public Works Department's annual budget. Despite notably limited resources available for capital projects, Public Works has made an effort to reinvest in existing assets by including regular funding for repair and replacement of park facilities within its capital improvement budget. In addition to emergency pool and facility repairs, the capital budget included limited funding for renovating and converting neighborhood pool sites to spray parks, matching funds for community center





4.8

improvements, replacing field lighting, and repairing and maintaining play areas in city parks. Given the magnitude of the system and the number of assets within it, the annual allocation does not go far.

Regional Parks Capital Improvements

The Allegheny Regional Asset District (RAD) provides funding for capital improvements within the four historic regional parks and other parks as specified by the City and the RAD. The RAD funds a standing capital grant of \$776,000 for Pittsburgh's regional parks that is targeted for sidewalk, step, and road repair; playground renovation; and major capital restoration and improvement projects. The level of RAD funding does not increase even if more regional park acreage is added to the four historic regional parks, nor if new regional parks (e.g., Emerald View) or regional facilities are added.

In addition, since 2000, fundraising efforts of the Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy (Parks Conservancy) have supported more than ten major projects within the regional parks, often in combination with available RAD funding or in-kind investment of labor and materials.

Urban Redevelopment Authority

The City's Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA) plays a role in capital improvements as part of its efforts to revitalize struggling areas. URA-funded projects include development of new park sites such as the new neighborhood park that is part of the Washburn Square redevelopment project, and the South Shore Riverfront Park, which has improved public access to the waterfront and added new trail connections. The URA also funds the renovation of existing sites such as Market Square, the design of which was developed under the Department of City Planning.

The URA can only provide capital funding, which means that, once built, these projects must then be maintained using limited Department of Public Works resources. Via an endowment, URA and Riverlife are funding maintenance of South Shore Riverfront Park. Also, URA is currently exploring long-term solutions to address maintenance funding needs for these parks.

These projects demonstrate the power that quality open spaces have to increase property values. The City was able to fund the projects

themselves by using Tax Increment Financing (TIF) to capture the increased property values resulting from these improvement projects.

Other Capital Resources

Pittsburgh's many volunteer groups, philanthropic organizations and nonprofits frequently contribute to open space system capital improvements by way of fundraising, donations, grants, and in-kind labor. The generosity of Pittsburgh's sizable philanthropic community has provided a substantial source of capital improvement funding over the course of development of Pittsburgh's public park system. Philanthropic organizations have funded the development of many projects, dating back to the establishment of the four historical regional parks, and continuing today to projects such as funding the restoration of the walled garden at Mellon Park.

In addition to the capital resources provided through philanthropy, Pittsburgh has many non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that provide social capital and volunteers for projects. The organizations have secured grant funding for projects, in some cases accessing grant programs that are not available to government agencies.

Community Resources and Initiatives

The city's and regions' variety of non-profit and community groups are instrumental to the continued development, programming, and management of Pittsburgh's open space system. The roles vary, and many of these organizations contribute to activating, sustaining and even maintaining the open space system. Most importantly, these community organizations and their members become a constituency in support of the values of open space and are organized to advocate for the system. The list of organizations included in this chapter is not meant to be exhaustive. However, it helps illustrate the diversity and value of the Pittsburgh community in protecting, improving and continuing to sustain the city's open space system for the long-term enjoyment and recreational benefit of everyone.

Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy

The Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy (Parks Conservancy) was founded in December 1996 by a group of citizens concerned with the deteriorating conditions of Pittsburgh's parks. In 1998, the Parks Conservancy signed an

official public-private partnership agreement with the City of Pittsburgh to work together towards the restoration of the city's four historic regional parks. Since 1998, the Parks Conservancy has raised over \$65 million toward park improvements, and is currently working in a variety of community and neighborhood parks, including Mellon Park, Mellon Square Park, Cliffside Park, and McKinley Park.

The Parks Conservancy's parks maintenance and management staff works closely with DPW staff and provides frequent training and professional development opportunities to City employees. The Parks Conservancy manages Schenley Plaza and the Schenley Park Café and Visitor Center under lease agreement with the City and, most recently, has undertaken an initiative to revitalize Mellon Square Park in partnership with the City. Volunteers under the management of the Parks Conservancy and other key partners also conduct stewardship and maintenance activities, including management of greenways and natural areas, and caring for specimen trees.

The Parks Conservancy's education and outreach programs help community members and interested parties learn about environmental issues facing urban parks and become dedicated stewards of the environment

through volunteer programs. Events and programs at Parks Conservancy-operated facilities such as Schenley Plaza, and Schenley Café and Visitor Center, expand the recreation opportunities in Pittsburgh and enliven these sites.

Western Pennsylvania Conservancy (WPC)

The Western Pennsylvania Conservancy (WPC) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to protecting the region's exceptional natural places. Since its founding in 1932, WPC has conserved nearly 225,000 acres in Western Pennsylvania, restored watersheds, and saved wildlife. WPC offers the Community Gardens and Greenspace program, drawing more than 13,000 volunteers annually to beautify communities in 19 counties, including Pittsburgh. WPC is also the managing partner for the TreeVitalize consortium focused on street and park tree planting. Over 17,000 trees have been planted since 2008.

Friends of the Riverfront (FOR)

The Friends of the Riverfront (FOR) mission is to create "increased awareness and engagement with the Pittsburgh region's rivers and riverfronts through activities, stewardship, and expansion of water and land

trails”. Incorporated in 1991, FOR manages a maintenance model for the riverfront trails through its Trail Care Riverfronts Naturally program.

Innovative Recreation Program Providers

Pittsburgh is also home to recreation program providers that utilize unique sites and facilities to fill niches where there are gaps in services identified by the City. These program offerings attract new users to the open space system, who might not have been interested in conventional offerings, activating sites and building support for sustaining the system. Good examples of this type of provider are provided below.

- Venture Outdoors – Venture Outdoors is a local nonprofit that focuses on outdoor adventure recreation programming, including hiking, biking, kayaking, and rock climbing.
- PUMP (Pittsburgh Urban Magnet Program) - PUMP is a social networking and community service organization for people in their 20s, 30s and 40s, and has been a major provider of younger adult recreation through the Pittsburgh Sports League (PSL) since 2000. The PSL has rapidly expanded and now offers popular co-ed adult sports leagues

including basketball, broomball, bowling, cornhole, darts, dek hockey, dodgeball, flag football, golf, kickball, running, shuffleboard, softball, tennis, and volleyball. PSL books a significant amount of field, gym, and lane time year-round throughout Pittsburgh, at City and non-City facilities.

- Grow Pittsburgh - Grow Pittsburgh is an organization that advocates for local food production and healthy living and the development of community through local agriculture. The group promotes education, production, and distribution of locally grown food and activities through projects such as Edible Schoolyards and community gardens.
- The Allegheny Cycling Association and the Pittsburgh Masters Velo Club - Jointly, these organizations provide bicycle racing opportunities at the Bud Harris Cycling Track.

Mt. Washington Community Development Corporation (MWCDC)

The MWCDC develops and implements strategic plans for neighborhood improvements in the Mount Washington area. It spearheaded the effort to designate Emerald View Park as a regional park, and is now working on implementing the vision for the park.





4.12

Allegheny Commons Initiative

The Allegheny Commons Initiative focuses on advocating for Allegheny Commons Park, which was designed in 1867 for what was then the City of Allegheny.

Riverlife

The Riverlife mission is “To reclaim, restore and promote Pittsburgh’s riverfronts as the environmental, recreational, cultural and economic hub for the people of this region and our visitors.” This organization has lobbied for park development and trail connections along the riverfronts.

Tree Pittsburgh

Tree Pittsburgh is a nonprofit group that developed out of citizen concern for the health of Pittsburgh’s trees. This group has played a key role in the city’s street tree inventory and management plan, and has trained more than 600 citizens as “Tree Tenders”.

GTECH Strategies

GTECH (Growth Through Energy + Community Health) is a nonprofit social enterprise dedicated to growing new opportunities to fuel sustainable community development. GTECH’s

call to action is “To revitalize communities through creative, productive and inspiring strategies to fuel a prosperous and inclusive green economy. We believe that blight and vacancy present opportunities for equitable, sustainable and innovative renewal.” GTECH advocates for reuse of vacant land for green economy ventures, including biofuels.



OpenSpacePGH



CHAPTER 5

COMMUNITY NEEDS

CHAPTER FIVE

Community Needs

IN THIS SECTION

Public Involvement

Public Involvement Findings

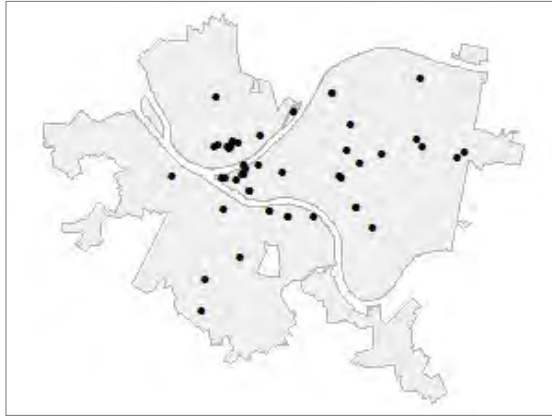
Needs Assessment and Results

Assessment Conclusions

Public Involvement

Pittsburgh's vision for open space, as presented in Chapter 1, grew from the words and ideas of approximately 3,000 residents who participated in the planning process. OpenSpacePGH was developed through the active participation of residents, advocacy and interest groups, community leaders, park users, recreation enthusiasts, nonprofit groups, City staff, and agency representatives, all of whom provided feedback through a variety of outreach forums. In addition, the Department of City Planning conducted outreach for PlanPGH, which introduced the open space plan to people who do not use City parks or recreation facilities or otherwise may not have been involved in the planning process.

Figure 5-1: OpenSpacePGH Public Outreach Activity Locations



5.2

Public Involvement Activities

The public involvement strategy for this open and inclusive process reached out across the community (see Figure 5-1: OpenSpacePGH Public Outreach Activity Locations) and included the following activities.

Stakeholder Interviews

In Spring 2010, the planning team interviewed seven community leaders and elected officials to discuss key issues for parks, vacant land, and open spaces.

Focus Groups

Nearly 160 people participated in eight focus groups held between March and July 2010. Each meeting focused on a key issue or issues identified in the planning process, including connectivity; maintenance, management and programming; the natural environment; active spaces; vacant properties; maintenance; riverfronts; special populations; and urban agriculture and gardening.

Recreation Questionnaire

Over 1,300 residents responded to a recreation questionnaire, hosted online through the PlanPGH website and available in paper format from July to September 2010. The questionnaire collected information on park use, recreation participation, and preferences

and priorities for open space. **Community**

Intercepts

City Planning took the planning process to the community, and spoke with residents at eleven different community events during summer and fall of 2010. Approximately 875 participants noted their priorities for parks and open space by voting on interactive display boards at the Venture Outdoors Family Outdoor Festival, Rachel's Sustainable Feast, Shadyside Arts Festival, Little Italy Days, The Home Renovation and Preservation Weekend, East Allegheny Pumpkinfest, Three Rivers BioNeers Conference, and the four Regional Parks Master Plan Meetings.

Voice of the Region Survey

Campos, Inc., interviewed 410 residents in August and September 2010. The statistically valid survey measured public opinion on a variety of issues on the parks, recreation, and open space system.

Best Practices Summit and Panel Discussion

In September 2010, a group of ten experts from around the nation and local to Pittsburgh convened in Pittsburgh with key City staff to discuss economic development, land stewardship, opportunities, and challenges, and to identify new approaches for parks, open spaces, and recreation in Pittsburgh. The Summit concluded with an evening panel discussion, open to the public and held at the Children's Museum, with 75 to 100 in attendance.

Community Workshops

In April and May 2011, 120 people attended five community workshops held across the city to gauge geographic differences in community priorities for parks and open space. These workshops included a hands-on exercise in which participants identified their priority projects within parameters that included

a limited capital improvement budget and operating cost constraints.

Green Ribbon Committee

A 46-member citizen steering committee, known as the Green Ribbon Committee, included members from the 16 planning sectors and key community organizations. The committee met six times throughout the planning process to provide input on planning issues from a community perspective. Between meetings, committee members reviewed technical reports and provided feedback.

Management Committee

A 20-member Management Committee provided technical expertise for OpenSpacePGH. The committee was composed of City staff from multiple departments, and representatives from nonprofits and community organizations involved with open space, recreation, and vacant land. This committee met eight times throughout the planning process, and members reviewed and provided feedback on technical reports between meetings.



Public Involvement Findings

Throughout the community engagement process, one finding remained consistent: Pittsburgh's park and open space system is considered critical to the civic identity of the city and its individual neighborhoods, and to the overall quality of life for its residents. City residents value their open space system, appreciate the opportunities presented by available land, understand financial constraints associated with providing recreation and open space opportunities, and, most of all, desire an equitable, sustainable, and memorable park and open space system. Other key findings are summarized by theme, below.

Connections and Access

As reported by multiple public involvement participants in a variety of settings, park access is a challenge in Pittsburgh given the uneven distribution of parks, the city's steep topography, the lack of connectivity between parks and neighborhoods, a lack of transit options and non-motorized transportation facilities, the

distance to current trailheads, and even the poor maintenance of the existing bike and pedestrian network.

The creation of a trail network to connect the open space system is desired to provide active transportation choices, trail-related recreation opportunities, and improved access to parks and open space. As residents rediscover the value of being reconnected to the rivers, the trail network will also need to take advantage of existing corridors. Findings suggest that the concept of "creating a connected network" should guide other elements, in particular MovePGH.

Natural Environment

Restoration and protection of the creeks, riverfronts, forests, and hillsides is a priority for residents across the city. OpenSpacePGH must support the restoration of ecological health and protect and restore habitat, which will require education and outreach to build an understanding of the importance of the environment and its stewardship.

Maintenance

Well-maintained parks are a high priority and play a role in creating a city that is attractive to professionals, entrepreneurs, artists, and residents. While community and regional parks deserve a higher level of maintenance because of their popularity and use, more equitable maintenance and improvements are needed across the city, including in low-income and minority neighborhoods.

Funding

Although resources are limited, residents feel that funding for the parks and open space system should be prioritized. Feedback suggests that the City move forward with projects that are cost-effective, capitalize on existing resources, provide multiple benefits, and support flexible uses. Partnerships should also be formalized to support recreation programs and maintenance.



Activity and Quality of Life

Having a place to experience nature, exercise and recreate with friends and family is important to quality of life, lifelong health, and well being. Active spaces that provide a variety of experiences are desirable within the open space system and should be a priority. Community gardening is also important, and supporting local food within the open space system is desired.





MAP: 4 - PARK ACCESS RECOMMENDATIONS

-  Access Issues
-  Park
-  Greenway
-  Non-Public Open Space
-  Other Municipality
-  Neighborhood
-  Water





5.8

Needs Assessment and Results

The Needs Assessment and Suitability Analysis provided a comprehensive evaluation of Pittsburgh's extensive park and open space inventory. The methodology applied to determine community needs was designed specifically for Pittsburgh, based on the elements the public identified as most important.

The analysis discussed needs for specific types of recreation facilities, including sports fields, swimming pools and recreation centers. It included an extensive evaluation of city park and open space land, including overall access to city parks as well as assessments by park classification. Additional factors evaluated include facility scale of service and location, park quality, and demographic equity. This analysis also includes an evaluation of suitable “opportunity lands” – the ever-changing inventory of vacant, distressed, and tax delinquent properties – to evaluate their reuse potential for 17 different use types.

The remainder of this chapter summarizes the results of this comprehensive assessment and is

organized according to the following issues and topics:

- Park Distribution and Access
- Park Quality and Equity
- A Mismatched System
- Underfunded System
- Vacant and Opportunity Lands

Park Distribution and Access

Pittsburgh's parks and open spaces serve as fundamental building blocks that make the city livable, memorable and attractive. In an effective open space system, parks should be situated so that their facilities and open spaces are easily accessible to potential users. Community feedback indicated that people most frequently use the parks close to their homes, and that a primary reason for not visiting parks is a lack of access.

In Pittsburgh, the need for park access is based on the premise that basic park amenities should be provided within walking distance ($\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ mile)¹ of all city residents, using the public street and trail network.

¹ Typical pedestrians are willing to walk between $\frac{1}{4}$ and $\frac{1}{2}$ mile (5-10 min.) to reach a park destination.

OPENSOURCE

MAP: 5 PARK QUALITY

- Poor (0-1)
- Fair (2-3)
- Average (4-5)
- Good (6-7)
- Excellent (8-9)
- Undetermined
- Greenway
- Non-Public Open Space
- Other Municipality
- Neighborhood
- Water

(park size is exaggerated)





5.10

Map 3: Walksheds and Underserved Areas shades the areas that can be reached within these distances and the areas of the city outside of this walking distance by density of housing.

People travel to and from parks in a variety of ways. Pedestrians are willing to walk between $\frac{1}{4}$ and $\frac{1}{2}$ mile to reach a park destination; bicyclists are willing to travel approximately $\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 mile to reach a destination. If a park or an amenity is larger in scale, such as a community or regional park or a park with unique amenities, people are willing to travel greater distances by transit, on a bike, or in an automobile.

While nearly all neighborhoods have open spaces within $\frac{1}{2}$ mile, the analysis showed that some Pittsburgh neighborhoods have too many parks, while others have too few. Others neighborhoods have more limited access due to additional travel requirements. Findings also indicate that some parks are not well located, and that the steep topography and a disconnected street network create barriers that prevent or complicate safe and convenient travel to some parks. In addition, in some neighborhoods, sidewalk infrastructure connecting communities to parks is inadequate.

Map 4: Park Access Recommendations highlights parks with access challenges.

Park Quality and Equity

Public feedback shared during plan development indicates that neighborhood and community parks frequently do not fulfill their intended role within the system or adequately serve residents within their service area. Staff and residents alike voiced concern about unevenness in the quality of Pittsburgh's parks and inequities in the distribution of quality parks.

Numerous characteristics of a park site impact quality. Some characteristics such as crime and maintenance can be considered temporary factors. These elements can change daily depending on external factors such as staff (maintenance crews and police) and resource availability (changes in budget). Other characteristics are related to the site itself, such as the types of recreation facilities available and the park site's context in the surrounding community.

The parks quality analysis evaluated and scored each park for their fitness of use, which included an evaluation of the park's environment,

visibility, layout, and parking. The full park quality evaluation criteria and results of the park quality analysis are included in the NASA document. The park quality evaluation scores were then compared geographically with demographic data on race and income.²

Map 5: Park Quality illustrates the park evaluation scores overlaid with the demographic data. Appendix D: Additional Public Input Results includes a summary of the evaluation criteria used for the evaluation.

Within the entire park system, regional, riverfront, and community parks encompass the greatest percentage of high quality parks. Neighborhoods nearby the city's five regional parks have some of the highest incomes and home values in the city.

According to the results of the park quality analysis, the parks that people use most frequently – community and neighborhood parks – are lower in quality than other park types. Overall, neighborhood and community parks located within census block groups that are predominantly African-American, and/or that

² Demographic aggregation is based on Nielsen-Claritas 2009 Update Demographics and ArcGIS 10. Analysis was performed at the block group level.

have a high density of low income households, scored lower in quality. In addition, African-American residents who participated in the plan development process generally voiced less satisfaction with the condition and maintenance of parks in their neighborhoods.

Historically across Pittsburgh, disparity has existed on many levels. The issue of inequity and disparity in parks and recreation was noted as early as 1923, when the Citizens Committee for the City Plan's citywide planning process reported that parks were being provided in the wealthiest areas while working class neighborhoods lacked access. This pattern can still be seen today.

Results of the park quality evaluation and public input indicate that quality, close-to-home active recreation opportunities are not available in many neighborhoods. Many of Pittsburgh's neighborhood parks lack a variety of facilities that encourage people to recreate and play. The result of the park quality evaluation indicated 65% of Pittsburgh's parks do not provide the minimum park facilities of a picnic area, playground, level grass area at least 100' by 100', and a ball field or sport court.

Continued investment in neighborhood and community parks is crucial to maintaining their quality. However, strategic investment in neighborhood parks and neighborhood scale facilities is clearly needed to address issues of quality, equity and distribution, as well. Not surprisingly, some of the highest quality parks are those with active volunteer or stewardship groups, highlighting the importance of community-based partnerships and investments.

A Mismatched System

The distribution and effectiveness of parks and facilities within Pittsburgh's open space system were evaluated based on the three scales of service. As noted in the Existing Conditions Chapter, scale of service falls into one of three categories: regional, community, and neighborhood scales.

The City currently has a parks system comprised of parks with recreation facilities that are inappropriately sized for their intended scale of service and population draw. In some cases, facilities may not be appropriately sized for their location, creating incompatibility with existing residential neighborhoods. For some types

of facilities, there are gaps in service across Pittsburgh. For other facilities, particularly those with high operating costs, the service is uneven.

While some areas in Pittsburgh completely lack access to certain recreation features such as public swimming pools, recreation centers, and senior centers, other areas have various overlaps in service or duplication of facilities. For example, this needs analysis shows that, by geographic distribution and market area, Pittsburgh is over-served with its current inventory of swimming pools, and the existing inventory does not meet current best practices for community scale aquatic facilities. Decisions about where to invest operating and capital dollars should factor in facility scale and location to target those facilities that will provide the most benefit to the broadest reach of the population. As the City transitions its park system to a more efficient service model, it will need to focus on designing facilities for the appropriate scale, invest in the development of facilities in neighborhoods that are underserved, and focus its limited maintenance and capital improvement funding to community-scale facilities.

MAP: 6 - UNDERSERVED GREEN PREMIUM AREAS

- Outside Green Premium
- Inside Green Premium
- Riverfront Park Access
- Park
- Non-Public Open Space
- Neighborhood
- Other Municipality
- Water



Distributing the “Green Premium”

There is an economic benefit associated with large parks, known as the “green premium”. The green premium is the positive impact that a large park has on the valuation and sales price of surrounding and nearby properties.³ The economic benefit of a large park extends roughly 2,500 feet (approximately one-half mile), with the properties closest to the park enjoying the highest premium. The findings for Pittsburgh’s system align with previous nationwide studies that identify a correlation between quality parks maintenance and increased property values.

The “green premium” provided by Pittsburgh’s five regional parks is not distributed evenly across Pittsburgh. Before Emerald View Park was designated a regional park, geographic distribution of the “green premium” was even less equitable. Adding more regional parks to share the economic benefits with more residents does not appear to be feasible, given the lack of availability of any sites large enough or with suitable characteristics to accommodate a regional park. Therefore, OpenSpacePGH must

consider how to share the “green premium” of regional parks equally across the city. The Economic Calculators model developed by Bay Area Economics (BAE) and described in Appendix E: Park Quality Analysis provide a means of evaluating what the “green premium” would be for park renovations or new parks, at parks of all types.

To create a successful and efficient system that maximizes available resources, the City needs to focus efforts on citywide equity, while reducing the number of underperforming park sites and facilities. One way of accomplishing this could be strategic investment in other types of parks, especially community parks and riverfront parks, targeting those areas outside of the “green premium” buffer of the existing regional parks. Map 6: Underserved Green Premium Areas illustrates the areas inside and outside of the “green premium” zone.

With so many parks and so little funding, strategic investments that increase neighborhood park access and equity are critically important, with improvements to park quality in underserved areas a high priority.

³ BAE. Appendix F: Economic Calculator.

Vacant and Opportunity Lands

Pittsburgh contains approximately 30,000 properties that are—for economic, physical, or other reasons—vacant, distressed, or currently undeveloped.⁴ Distressed sites include parcels that are currently vacant, condemned, or tax-delinquent. While these sites present a challenge in terms of defining a future use, they offer a variety of opportunities to shape the urban form and character of Pittsburgh.

Pittsburgh's vacant and distressed lands are not automatically considered part of the open space system. The City's park system is already under-resourced in terms of capital and operations funding. Turning acres of vacant land into formal parks and open spaces without consideration for when and where additions are needed or desired will have a negative impact on the existing system. As part of the OpenSpacePGH process, the City conducted an analysis to help determine suitable uses for

⁴ Data sources: Capital Asset Research Corporation (tax lien parcels), Community Technical Assistance Center (vacant parcels) and City GIS (city owned, vacant and condemned parcels) from 2009.

these lands. Concurrent with OpenSpacePGH, there have been other City efforts to evaluate vacant lands as well, including the efforts of the Land Recycling Task Force.

With the input of City staff and the OpenSpacePGH Management Committee, the planning team identified 16 potential categories of use for vacant land, including various park types, urban agriculture, urban forest, redevelopment, transportation system support, energy and stormwater management, among others.

The team defined each use and its potential analysis criteria, including size; characteristics such as slope or physical location; and adjacent uses or ownerships. The potential criteria were evaluated to determine whether GIS and other spatially linked data were available for analysis at a consistent level of detail across the entire city. The team completed the suitability analysis using GIS. A summary table of the findings is available in Appendix B: Suitability Analysis Summary Matrix.



The suitability analysis was intended as a first level screen to create a manageable list of individual sites for further investigation. The intent is to re-run the analysis periodically to account for changes in the inventory of vacant land. The methodology is designed to allow for refinement and re-analysis if new data becomes available, such as data or criteria resulting from MovePGH about transportation needs, or criteria for siting a specific type of energy use.

Opportunity lands were identified as part of the Suitability Analysis conducted during the community needs assessment. The inventory of opportunity lands includes the ever-changing inventory of vacant, distressed, and City-owned parcels. Using these lands will shape the urban form and character of Pittsburgh. Some of these properties could become part of the open space system, while others may be better suited for other types of uses.

The opportunity lands inventory was created using GIS data from the City of Pittsburgh and includes parcels that are vacant, public, have a tax lien, or are condemned. A goal of OpenSpacePGH is to develop an analytical methodology that can be refined and reapplied for future assessment, incorporating changing circumstances and new data.

A number of criteria were used to identify opportunity lands, including but not limited to parcel size; adjacency to greenways, or regional or riverfront park land; proximity to transit and commercial districts; and characteristics such as presence of heritage inventory resources, habitat land cover types, forested areas and impervious surfaces. The full methodology is included in the NASA report, and the results of the analysis are included in Appendix B: Suitability Analysis Summary Matrix.

Assessment Conclusions

There are multiple potential uses for some parcels, and determining the best use will require further public discussion. For example, riverfront land is suitable for many uses, including redevelopment as well as riverfront park use, riparian restoration, and water quality improvement and protection. In addition, there is a need to periodically rerun the suitability analysis following the methodology, as the inventory changes and as new data becomes available.

Many of the opportunity lands could potentially contribute to the enhancement of existing natural systems within the open space system, and would be suitable for multiple uses. There are enough opportunity lands to provide a multi-benefit green network that extends throughout the entire city, creating a network of urban farm and forest that retains stormwater, supports habitat, enhances water quality, and supports local food and forest production. Many of the properties within this network can also provide off-street trail corridors and even support low impact outdoor recreation activities. Some opportunity lands could be used

for redevelopment or other built uses, while still providing green benefits if land use regulations are put in place to require trail connections, habitat connections, and other desired green connections.

Reusing land is challenging for many reasons. From the perspective of community groups and organizations interested in using vacant land, the lack of clarity around what is permissible, the cost and the City process create major barriers. Simplifying and clarifying could go a long way in removing barriers to reuse, without creating new costs for the City.

There are opportunity lands that could allow for expansion of existing parks or provide new ones, such as the 281 parcels adjacent to a regional park. However, the community benefits of expansions to parks within the open space system should be carefully weighed against the long-term operations costs. If all potentially suitable sites were brought into the open space system, the quality of the system would degrade dramatically given the current level of funding for operations and maintenance.

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OpenSpacePGH



CHAPTER 6

POLICY FRAMEWORK

CHAPTER SIX

Policy Framework

IN THIS SECTION

Goal 1: Transition the System

Goal 2: Integrate Natural Areas

Goal 3: Activate People and Places

Goal 4: Steward the System

Goal 5: Document Progress

Pittsburgh has an extensive parks and recreation system that evolved to serve a population twice its current size. Many recreation facilities were constructed when the population peaked in the mid-20th century, and are now reaching the end of their useful lifespan. A shrinking population brought on shrinking budgets for maintenance and labor. At that same time, costs continued to rise as the system aged and new land was added, sometimes without carefully weighing the long-term costs and benefits. This created new maintenance and management needs, while at the same time existing needs were not being met. The City has also experienced dramatic shifts in neighborhood density. While some areas of the city thrived, others thinned, leaving some neighborhoods woefully underserved by lower quality parks and others with excess capacity. Residents continue to report that they prefer to use parks and recreation facilities close to home, and would do so more if they were in better condition.

Over the same time period, user preferences and trends in the parks and recreation industry have also changed. Best practices in park and recreation resource management now focus on providing a more balanced system that combines formal, programmed facilities coupled with more passive recreation

opportunities in more naturalized areas.

Advances in environmental science and natural resource management have demonstrated that reserving and connecting natural areas improves overall human and ecosystem health. However, finding the working capital to create a more integrated system will require new sources of revenue and more innovative partnerships.

Daunting as the City's current challenges may be, one must remember that Pittsburgh has all the makings of an exemplary 21st century Open Space, Parks and Recreation System. For the first time in 50 years, population decline has started to level off in the region. Population projections show modest growth of 30,000 people within the city limits over the next 25 years, and people are starting to talk about the future with renewed optimism. This important turning point presents a unique challenge for planners, decision-makers and residents as they

work toward finding solutions to present-day problems, while also looking toward a future where the system will once again need to serve more people than it does now. Whether focusing on the short-term goal of reorganizing a mismatched, over-sized and aging system, or meeting the longer-term goal of serving more people, the City and its partners will need to:

- **transition** to the right size and mix of opportunities and resources
- **integrate** natural areas into the system
- **activate** people and places according to their changing needs and desires
- **steward** the system with greater innovation and cooperation
- **document** progress toward these goals.

GOAL 1: Transition the System

Move proactively from today's inventory of public open spaces with declining parks, legacy facilities and vacant lands toward a more resilient, equitable and responsive system that is sustainably sized and scaled.

Pittsburgh's population today is half the size it once was, and yet the City's parks, recreation and open space system has grown during the same period of population decline. This growth was largely achieved through opportunistic parks expansion, incremental development of riverfront trails and landings, and the addition of greenways and other types of vacant land. Likewise, as playgrounds, ball fields, recreation centers and other facilities have aged, maintenance and capital needs have also grown, yet the City's budget and human resources have simultaneously shrunk due to the City's fiscal challenges.

Transitioning from this system to one that is more resilient, efficient, equitable, and responsive requires that investment decisions

are made more strategically; that users and decision-makers are open to re-organizing the system so that the right types of resources are in the right place; and that physical, financial and legislative barriers to new uses and better stewardship are removed to the extent possible.

The Need for Equitable Access and Investment

Despite the system's large size – almost 11 acres per 1,000 residents and 11% of the City's land area – the system is still not serving everyone as well as it could. The availability of high-quality parks and recreation amenities is uneven across the city. Some areas of the city have more open space resources than others, in some cases more than can be maintained or programmed by the City. Residents have maintained a strong preference for using parks close to home, yet maintaining the sheer number of smaller neighborhood and community-scale parks and recreational facilities has become an enormous drain on parks system resources. Some of the City's densest and poorest neighborhoods are left without access to adequate open space. The public surveys, systems analysis, and parks, recreation and

open space inventory all revealed that parks or recreation facilities in low-income and/or minority-majority neighborhoods are often in poorer condition than those in more affluent parts of the city.

The greatest beneficiaries of the parks system are those who live within a half-mile distance of a regional park and who gain a “green premium” of nearly \$25,000 to \$35,000 in property values. Extending this premium to other neighborhoods through strategic investment in community-scale parks that serve multiple neighborhoods is another important objective for achieving greater equity and efficiency in the system.

OpenSpace Policy 1.1

Target investment to ensure adequate access to parks and open spaces for all City residents.

Objectives

1.1-A Provide equitable access throughout the city so that everyone can get to open space resources within five to ten minutes (1/4 to 1/2 mile walk):

- Invest in identified neighborhood and community park sites (See Appendix G: Park Evaluation Project List).
- Relocate poorly sited parks and repurpose or naturalize them.
- Redevelop underperforming parks.
- Enhance access to existing sites via pathways, sidewalks, transit and trails.
- Provide an accessible public open space within 1/2 mile of all areas of the city, and within 1/4 mile of the highest housing density or job density areas.

1.1-B Prioritize investments in underserved areas, high job and housing density areas, and low income or minority-majority neighborhoods with low quality parks.

- Use the Needs Assessment methodology to provide more accessible open space in underserved areas.
- Increase the quality of neighborhood and community parks.
- Provide community parks within 1 mile and neighborhood parks within 1/2 mile of each Pittsburgh resident. In high density areas, strive to provide community parks within 3/4 mile and neighborhood parks within 1/4 mile.

- Designate as “signature” community parks those sites with strong potential to serve a larger population and provide “green premium” benefits to areas not benefitting from proximity to the City’s five regional parks.

I.I-C Fill gaps in the system of parks using contextually appropriate solutions..

- Expand some sites (See Appendix F: Economic Calculators).
- Acquire new parks by converting vacant land or through land dedication or transfer of ownership.
- Ensure new parks are meeting a need in an area that lacks access to park space, and are located thoughtfully to maximize public benefit.
- Secure property through easements or long-term leases.
- Develop parks in alternative sites such as rights-of-way (E.g. the Plaza Program in New York City) or through alternative management arrangements (E.g. public/private or public/nonprofit partnerships, similar to the Pavement-to-Parks Program in San Francisco) in areas that do not have

land available to be converted to a more traditional park use.

I.I-D Divest or naturalize duplicative parks and facilities.

- Transition duplicative neighborhood and community parks (See Appendix F: Economic Calculators).
- Phase out existing special use parks and avoid acquiring new ones except in rare circumstances where a proposed use is unsuitable for integration into another park or open space within the system.
- Do not replace active use recreation facilities or developed park features within areas targeted to be naturalized. (See Appendix F: Economic Calculators).
- Allocate resources to remove closed, failing or duplicative facilities.

The Need to Appropriately Scale the System

Although Pittsburgh has a large system for its population in both acreage and number of facilities, the system does not quite optimize all its resources. Some areas have a number of similar parks and facilities within a small geography, while other areas have very few or no options. There is an overabundance of some facility types, and they often do not match the site's carrying capacity, its level of use or the needs of the surrounding neighborhood.

Not everyone can be immediately adjacent to every type of park or recreation facility, but people do need to have easy daily access to some type of recreation option. Surveys have shown that, luckily, most people are willing to travel a little farther for larger scale or one-of-a-kind facilities and programs that they may use less frequently. Facilities such as swimming pools remain very popular, though the number of pools and their aging infrastructure make them extremely expensive to maintain at the current level of service throughout the city.

The highly developed and well maintained regional-scale parks and facilities continue to

draw users from greater distances, further enhancing the city's goal to strengthen itself as a regional cultural and economic hub. Expanding recreation options along the city's riverfront, and strategically adding new state-of-the-art facilities where there are gaps in the regional recreation marketplace will draw people into the city and serve as an economic catalyst. Obsolete, single-purpose design with limited access prevents the highest and best use of some resources. Some of the open space inventory is located on leftover land that was too difficult to develop in the first place because of steep slopes, unstable soils, or flood potential. Unfortunately, these factors may limit recreation uses as well. Upgrading the design -- or in some cases the physical location -- of some underutilized amenities will lead to greater use and help the City maximize its open space investments. Protecting more ecologically sensitive areas from over-use will also assure that these areas remain healthy and continue to provide other important benefits for humans, as well as wildlife.

OpenSpace Policy 1.2

Provide appropriately scaled parks and facilities within the open space system.

Objectives

1.2-A Design recreation facilities for a specific scale: neighborhood, community or regional.

- When reinvesting in recreation facilities at existing sites, redesign them at a scale compatible with the park's classification.
- Design facilities so that they serve multiple uses and are flexible and adaptable to the changing needs of the City and its varied geographies.
- Focus on appropriately scaled outdoor recreation facilities that take advantage of Pittsburgh's extensive open space land resources to build the City's niche as a superior provider of outdoor recreation experiences.
- Don't reinvest in inappropriately scaled facilities when they require a major capital investment.

1.2-B Improve the distribution and diversity of recreation facilities across the parks and open space system.

- Distribute major recreation facilities such as community centers and swimming pools to serve multiple neighborhoods. Locate these features with convenient access to transit service.
- Diversify the portfolio of active recreation facilities to accommodate new recreation activities and changing demographics.
- Consider eliminating some existing recreation facilities (baseball diamonds, swimming pools, tennis courts) to gain additional operations resources for new facilities.
- Consider replacing some existing facilities with better, more diversified facilities at new locations. For instance: The elimination of several aging smaller swimming pools could allow construction of a larger state-of-the-art year-round aquatics center at a community park. Modern aquatic centers should include features like zero depth entry, play features, and larger shallow water areas, (to accommodate children and users with limited mobility) as well as lap lanes for fitness and competitive swimming.

1.2-C Renovate community parks so that each site serves multiple neighborhoods, provides a balance of active and passive uses, and draws

people from a distance. Where needed, focus community-scale facilities at these locations.

1.2-D Enhance and strategically build regional parks, riverfront parks and regional scale facilities to enhance Pittsburgh's position as a regional center, advance economic development goals, and contribute to citywide identity.

- Support the implementation of the Emerald View Regional Park Plan.
- Continue to invest in and expand the network of riverfront parks to connect Pittsburghers to one of the City's prominent natural features, create a fabric of connectivity and provide greater access to water-based recreation.
- Maintain a portfolio of top-quality regional scale facilities, including the existing Mellon Park Tennis Center, Schenley Oval Sportsplex, Frick Park Lawn Bowling Green, Frick Park Tennis Center, and the Bud Harris Cycling Track in Highland Park.
- Consider the addition of new regional scale facilities such as a destination playground (a custom-designed, experiential play environment), a large scale off-leash area, a special events venue or a multi-field sports complex.

- Continue to invest in and expand the network of regional parks to enhance Pittsburgh's citywide identity and its regional draw.
- Support implementation of the Master Plan for Allegheny Commons.
- Support the implementation of the Historic Regional Parks Master Plan.

The Need for a Balanced System

Population loss has led to more than 30,000 abandoned and neglected parcels throughout the city. With few options, the City has assumed responsibility for much of this surplus land, but has inadequate resources to maintain or dispose of it properly.

There is an urgent need to repurpose this land, bring it back into productive use, and free up resources for the open space system. In addition, depopulation in environmentally sensitive areas has resulted in comparatively high costs for service provision and for mitigating environmental degradation. These areas would be best left to "return to nature" to balance environmental protection and service costs. Areas with particularly high concentrations of vacant land adjacent to existing open space

resources should be considered – though very carefully - for inclusion in the system.

Despite the challenges, there is unlimited potential for creating a more balanced and flexible green network by strategically incorporating the city’s abundance of vacant parcels, hillsides, riverfronts, trails and transportation system.

OpenSpace Policy 1.3

Provide an open space system that balances natural and designed landscapes, active and passive enjoyment, and permanent and temporary reuses of vacant and distressed properties to achieve financial, social and ecological benefits for all.

Objectives

1.3-A Expand greenways, natural areas, and open spaces within the system, transforming vacant land to create a comprehensive network that includes a better balance of landscapes.

- Continue to seek greenway designation for vacant hillside properties that connect other greenways, connect to parks, provide desired regional trail connections, or where

the highest and best use of those properties is undeveloped open space.

- Designate lands that don’t meet greenway or riverfront criteria as “green network land(s)” to ensure long-term protection and inclusion into the open space system.

1.3-B Use analysis tools to evaluate the open space system periodically and recalibrate the balance if needed.

1.3-C Reduce governmental barriers to the beneficial reuse of vacant and underutilized lands.

- Revisit City policies and regulations regarding vacant land. Reduce the length of time and streamline the process for reusing vacant and underutilized land. Incorporate the work of the Land Recycling Task Force into this assessment. For example, city policies do not allow for-profit activities on City land, a policy that was reconsidered for the food kiosks and the Porch restaurant at Schenley Plaza.
- Allow and encourage interim and long-term use of City land by entities capable of assuming the maintenance and management responsibility if compatible with and supporting the open space. Regulations

should allow both temporary use and long-term tenancy, factor in the reduction of long-term City maintenance costs compared to short-term gain (e.g., back taxes), and allow for-profit businesses to have use of the land if it is beneficial to the public.

- Carefully craft contracts to assure public access, affordability, and performance standards, and regularly revisit contracts to assure that third parties are meeting the City's and citizens' needs and goals.

1.3-D Support the expansion of urban agriculture in the city.

- Consider nursery and agricultural production in the park system only in lands outside of environmentally sensitive areas.
- Alter regulations as needed to allow farmers to sell produce and agricultural products grown on publicly owned land through a commercial use agreement, as distinct from community gardens.
- Provide one-stop assistance to independent organizations and individuals who are seeking sites suitable for agricultural activities.

- Continue to update the Zoning Code to incorporate emerging trends in agriculture (e.g. aquaponics)

1.3-E Develop prioritization criteria for land banking vacant properties that are targeted for development but have no near-term economic viability.

1.3-F Naturalize low density areas of the city that would better serve the community as natural areas.

- Target areas where high infrastructure and service costs outweigh revenue collected.
- Target areas with environmental constraints such as steep slopes and slide-prone soils that regularly damage infrastructure.
- Target areas with high environmental value, such as riparian areas, healthy interior forest species or stormwater management potential.

GOAL 2: Integrate Natural Areas

Integrate natural systems within the open space network and urban fabric to maximize ecological, recreational and environmental benefits.

Although Pittsburgh's rivers and hillsides are prominent natural features, the parks and recreation system is still dominated by developed parks. And while people travel from throughout the region to use the city's riverfront trail system, the trails network remains incomplete. Due to a legacy of industrial riverfront uses and the topography along the city's riverbanks, developed and developable public riverfront park land is sparse.

Second only to the parks closest to home, city residents most often use (or want to use) greenways and natural areas. Unfortunately, access into and between these natural areas and the more formal park system are currently lacking due to poor design, hilly terrain and limited transportation choices. Vacant land and duplicative parks in the system provide

opportunities to make more natural spaces accessible to people, creating a more balanced system and potentially reducing maintenance costs. Natural areas also provide other environmental benefits such as air and water quality improvements, reduction in local air temperatures, greater connectivity for wildlife, and overall improvements in public health and quality of life.

The Need for Enhanced Water Quality

Pittsburghers identified the three rivers as the most important defining feature of the city's natural landscape. The rivers are used for drinking water, industrial processing, transportation and recreation. As industrial uses have decreased over the last few decades, recreation has flourished. People can be seen kayaking, boating, fishing, canoeing, waterskiing, and even swimming on any given summer weekend.

To maximize investment along the city's riverfronts, water quality improvement must be a continuing priority. By focusing attention on the ecological health of tributaries and riparian

zones the City can facilitate and enhance new development and provide a safe place for water-based recreation.

OpenSpace Policy 2.1

Conserve and restore the ecological health of the city's rivers and streams.

Objectives

2.1-A Preserve vacant lands in riparian areas, or retain riparian buffers if these lands are designated for development.

2.1-B Protect, enhance, and increase regionally appropriate vegetation in riparian areas.

2.1-C Restore hydrology of stream and river corridors where appropriate.

- Consider daylighting channeled and buried stream corridors to improve stormwater conveyance and watershed health.

2.1-D Promote non-polluting recreation uses of rivers, streams, and creeks (kayaking, fishing, etc).

The Need for Green Stormwater Management Techniques

Managing stormwater runoff is essential to water quality. Rain water has traditionally been handled through man-made engineering solutions such as holding tanks and storm sewers, which are designed to flow into the same pipes that carry raw sewage whenever the storm lines exceed their capacity. Not only are these “grey” systems extremely expensive to build and maintain, they have proven inadequate and even damaging to water resources across the country. Like many older U.S. cities, Pittsburgh is currently under an EPA Consent Order to reduce the amount of storm-related sewage discharge into its rivers.

The City's parks system and abundance of vacant land provide many opportunities to explore smaller-scale, less-expensive stormwater management techniques that use natural systems to retain and filter rainwater.

OpenSpace Policy 2.2

Maximize the stormwater management and water quality enhancement potential of the open space system.

Objectives

2.2-A Preserve vacant land for stormwater management where appropriate, using the suitability analysis as a guide.

2.2-B Participate in local and regional watershed planning efforts, and encourage green approaches to watershed management that maximize ecological, recreational, and aesthetic value.

2.2-C Coordinate with Alcosan and Pittsburgh Water and Sewer Authority to develop regional approaches to green stormwater management and water quality protection.

2.2-D In all park and open space contexts, incorporate stormwater management best practices to improve and demonstrate ecosystem services.

The Need for Preserved Hillsides

Pittsburgh's forested hillsides are another important defining characteristic of the city. They are a remarkable natural resource that provides aesthetic, environmental, recreational and other public benefits. The hills and forests interlace and complement the city's dense urban fabric.

Steeply sloped land in Pittsburgh occupies approximately one-fifth of the area of the City. Although only a fraction of this land is currently occupied by buildings or other man-made features, it is exorbitantly expensive to provide public services such as fire protection and trash and snow removal. An appropriate balance between the economic, ecological, and recreational value and the costs of service provision must be established and maintained.

OpenSpace Policy 2.3

Preserve Pittsburgh's character-defining hillsides, views, and scenic resources.

Objectives

2.3-A Incorporate steeply sloped lands, view corridors, and scenic viewpoints into the open

space system as greenways, or protect them through regulatory means and conservation easements.

2.3-B Value and protect views of the hillsides as well as views from the hillsides.

2.3-C Vigorously enforce regulations related to hillside dumping, illegal vehicle access and tree pruning and removal.

2.3-D Minimize the use of retaining walls on hillsides.

- When they are absolutely necessary, retaining walls should use long-lasting materials and be sited in a manner to minimize their visibility.

The Need for a Healthy Urban Forest

The prevalence of woodland areas in Pittsburgh is unique among most other urban areas in the U.S. Though partially comprised of wooded hillsides, the majority of Pittsburgh's urban forest weaves its way through city residential neighborhoods, streets, and vacant lots. No matter where a tree resides, it provides valuable air quality, erosion prevention, stormwater

management and aesthetic benefits. These benefits can be maximized by expanding and connecting the urban tree canopy through careful planning, regulation and plant selection.

OpenSpace Policy 2.4

Enhance and replenish the function and condition of the urban forest.

Objectives

2.4-A Re-establish function of the urban forest by planting and protecting diverse regionally appropriate species, including understory plants.

2.4-B Establish a heritage tree program to protect significant trees throughout the city.

2.4-C Participate in the implementation of urban forest management plans, such as the Pittsburgh Urban Forest Master Plan.

2.4-D Review and enforce tree protection and replacement regulations.

2.4-E Expand tree canopy to cover 60% of City by 2032 to meet the goals of the Urban Forest Master Plan (UFMP).

The Need for Enhanced Ecological Health of the Open Space System

With limited capacity for natural resource management of undeveloped areas, invasive species - both plant and animal - are overtaking many areas of the city. Further maintenance, management, and monitoring will need to be applied to the open space system to enhance the value of its natural functions.

OpenSpace Policy 2.5

Ensure the ecological health of the open space system.

Objectives

2.5-A Manage invasive plant and animal species to protect ecosystems, including managing those native animal species that have become overpopulated (e.g., deer, geese).

2.5-B Support projects and programs that improve air quality in order to improve the health of urban ecosystems.

2.5-C Expand the open space network to create interconnected wildlife corridors which support the biological and spatial needs of wildlife.

2.5-D Consider creating an Open Space land use designation to protect parks, open spaces and potentially even non-City open spaces such as cemeteries.

2.5-E Do not replace active use facilities or reinvest in developed park features such as lawn areas, ornamental plantings, or play equipment within areas targeted to be naturalized.

2.5-F Encourage development of facilities such as soft surface trails, view points and overlooks and steps that allow access to the natural areas, but minimize impacts.

The Need to Create and Enhance Connections in the Open Space System

During the public engagement process, lack of connectivity was cited as one of the greatest barriers to use of the system. Enhanced access via pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure and public transit is highly desired. Improving connectivity within and between parks and the open space network will improve the system's ecological health, benefitting humans and wildlife alike.

OpenSpace Policy 2.6

Connect the system.

Objectives

2.6-A Develop an interconnected pathway and trail network that builds off the work of Friends of the Riverfront, Bike Pittsburgh and others to link neighborhoods, parks and open space via recreational trails, pedestrian and bicycle pathways, natural visual corridors, and hiking trails.

2.6-B Enhance the value of bicycle and pedestrian routes by locating these in the open space system along scenic views, wooded corridors, stairways, steps, and riverfronts, while minimizing erosion.

- Update City Ordinance language excluding bicycles from non-paved trails to support the development of mountain biking trails.

2.6-C Seek trail easements where connections are needed outside the public open space system.

2.6-D Complete the riverfront trail system and connect the open space system to it.

2.6-E Coordinate with other departments and authorities to promote the development of pathways, cross-walks, and connections throughout the open space system.

2.6-F Design and develop paths and trails to accommodate a variety of users, interests, and abilities.

2.6-G Assure both physical and visual access to the rivers.

GOAL 3: Activate People and Places

Craft a parks, recreation and open space system that welcomes, engages and educates everyone, regardless of background, age and ability.

Parks and open spaces serve as gathering places, strengthening the social and cultural fabric of the community. They also provide places to be physically active, which improves fitness and overall health. Contact with nature also promotes health and a sense of well-being. Tailoring a system that serves present and potential users requires constant public outreach and a commitment to adapt to changing needs and trends. Decreasing barriers to recreation programs, and creating spaces where all are welcome, encourages people to use and enjoy the system.

The Need for Community Outreach in Programming

The public engagement conducted during the OpenSpacePGH planning process is only the beginning of the outreach needed to meet the recreational and open space needs of Pittsburghers. User preferences and access to

information are critical to building a responsive system that is befitting such a vibrant city.

OpenSpace Policy 3.1

Increase community outreach and the cultural relevance of recreation programming and information.

Objectives

3.1-A Increase the diversity of program participants by involving people from a variety of backgrounds, cultures, abilities, and interests in the planning, design, and operation of the recreation system.

3.1-B Offer programs and events that foster cross-cultural interaction and activities.

3.1-C Continue to seek neighborhood input to tailor programming to local community interests and needs, including the expansion of programs outside of City recreation facilities.

3.1-D Provide easily accessible information about the entire open space system.

- Include information about opportunities provided by the City, nonprofits and other organizations.
- Tailor the diversity of programs and marketing efforts to meet demographic and

societal changes. This may mean changing the format of the printed CitiParks magazine so that resources could be refocusing towards more targeted marketing and outreach.

- Provide information in formats that are accessible to people with physical and sensory impairments.

The Need for Adaptable Recreation Programming

The parks and recreation system should provide Pittsburghers of all ages and abilities with memorable experiences, social engagement, and healthy activities. It needs to provide flexible services and evolving programs to meet people's needs and serve as a clearinghouse to link Pittsburghers to the vast range of recreation opportunities available in our city and neighborhoods.

OpenSpace Policy 3.2

Provide hands-on, customized, locally focused recreation and community programs and services that are adaptable to changing community needs, recreation trends, shifting interests, and city demographic characteristics.

Objectives

3.2-A Establish a program delivery system that provides equal access to facility-dependent programs (e.g., aquatics, sports, indoor programs, senior services).

- Remove potential barriers to participation.
- Vary fee structure to ensure financial affordability.
- Balance fees with cost recovery for services and programs.
- Ensure access for people with disabilities.
- Provide programs at multiple times and in multiple formats.

3.2-B Develop more mobile programming options, such as the Roving Art Cart, for areas lacking recreation centers and for areas that do not have sufficient population density to warrant permanently staffed recreation facilities.

3.2-C Encourage participation from people of varied abilities, interests, and skill levels by offering programs that range from skill-building to competitive.

- Include opportunities for life-long learning and contemplative, social, and physical activities.

3.2-D Expand programs to include people of all ages, family composition, socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds, and abilities.

The Need for Health and Sustainability in Programming

The recreation system should contribute to the health of the community and demonstrate Pittsburgh's commitment to fostering healthy lifestyles. This philosophy can be supported by encouraging access to clean air and healthy foods, reducing exposure to toxins, decreasing barriers, and improving safety.

OpenSpace Policy 3.3

Advance individual, public and environmental health through programs, practices, and policies.

Objectives

3.3-A Encourage use of active (non-motorized) transportation and transit to access recreation opportunities.

3.3-B Institute environmentally friendly practices for events that decrease the amount of waste going to the landfill, thereby decreasing the City's tipping costs.

- Institute waste management plans that require the use of biodegradable materials, composting, and ample and conveniently located recycling containers and other waste reduction strategies.

3.3-C Continue to sponsor, support and expand local farmers markets, increasing the diversity of vendors to ensure citywide access to healthy local foods.

3.3-D Continue to foster and support gardening programs in parks and at schools, to strengthen the link between locally grown foods and healthy eating.

3.3-E Provide healthy food and beverage options in City facilities (including vending machines and park concession stands), at City-sponsored meetings and events, and through vendor contracts.

3.3-F Ban smoking at public facilities and outdoor public events, including parks and

recreation facilities, farmers markets, and community festivals.

The Need for Active & Diverse Programming

Program diversity that accommodates busy lifestyles makes it easier and more convenient for people to get fit and stay involved in their communities. Program diversity that accommodates busy lifestyles makes it easier and more convenient for people to get fit and stay involved in their communities. Program diversity that reflects and celebrates different cultures promotes understanding and reinforces the qualities that make Pittsburgh unique.

OpenSpace Policy 3.4

Provide and facilitate high-quality programs to support active living, fitness, social engagement and cultural understanding.

Objectives

3.4-A Provide drop-in activities and programs in a variety of formats and times to respond to residents' active, busy lifestyles.

3.4-B Continue to provide high-quality special events, festivals, and other opportunities for community gatherings.

3.4-C Offer programs and events to promote human understanding and a sense of community through cultural and recreational opportunities.

3.4-D Involve the region's health care providers in the development of programs supporting health and fitness.

The Need for Nature Programming

During the public engagement process, people expressed not only a preference for using natural areas for recreation, but they also showed a willingness to travel some distance to enjoy them. This passion for the natural environment, combined with a well-connected and creatively programmed open space system, provides an opportunity to acquaint people who would otherwise go elsewhere with nature here in the city. By incorporating more natural areas into the system, the city can become more of a recreation destination for visitors, while also improving the lives of residents.

OpenSpace Policy 3.5

Promote programs and facilities that connect people with nature and that instill an appreciation and understanding of the natural environment.

Objectives

3.5-A Provide programs that support environmental education, encourage nature interpretation and stewardship, connect children with nature, and promote outdoor recreation in parks and open space areas throughout the city.

3.5-B Use the open space system to interpret and educate the public about natural resources, ecosystems, and restoration efforts. Consider this objective an essential element of master plans and designs for parks and open spaces with natural areas.

3.5-C Incorporate compatible outdoor recreation facilities (e.g., hiking trail, bicycle trail, off-leash area, disc golf course, challenge course) within the open space system, where ecologically appropriate.

3.5-D Foster the stewardship of Pittsburgh's natural resources and open spaces by community groups and citizen action.

The Need for Design in the Open Space System

The Park Quality Analysis showed that many of the City's open spaces could benefit from design improvements. Providing a variety of activities, facilities and experiences opens new opportunities to existing users, and attracts new people to the system. Whether constructing new facilities or retrofitting existing ones, capital improvements should be geared toward minimizing the development of single-purpose facilities and designing flexibility and adaptability into all high-cost facilities to address changing needs, user demand, and resources.

OpenSpace Policy 3.6

Activate spaces through design.

Objectives

3.6-A Design all parks and facilities to be inherently flexible and adaptable to meet the changing needs of Pittsburgh.

- Flexible spaces such as open lawns should be incorporated into all parks.
- Avoid over-investing in single purpose facilities.
- Single purpose spaces and facilities should not dominate individual sites.

- Do not allow any one facility type to dominate the system.
- New structures should be designed to support multiple uses.
- Sites should be designed to be adaptable to new uses and trends.

3.6-B Develop parks and facilities to incorporate “Play for All” universal access and design principles.

3.6-C Follow the city’s design guidelines (located in Appendix A: OpenSpacePGH Inventory of this document) for parks and open spaces.

3.6-D Design parks and open spaces for all seasons and to encourage year-round use. For example, site plans can incorporate trails designed to accommodate winter activities such as cross-country skiing and snow shoeing, and even include floodable areas for ice skating.

GOAL 4: Steward the System

Foster partnerships within and outside City government to manage, maintain and invest in the parks, recreation and open space system for long-term viability, asset preservation and system health.

Revenue to maintain and manage the City’s current open space system is not adequate to sustain it or fully staff its programs. Given the city’s history of fiscal distress and State oversight, the budgetary situation is not likely to change in the near term. However, maintenance, funding and programming can be further augmented by building upon existing partnerships and forging new ones. Fiscal as well as environmental benefits can be achieved by using additional sustainable design and management practices and through regular staff training. Innovative revenue and management opportunities should continue to be explored.

Cost savings can be achieved through comprehensive land management and systematic evaluation of programs, users and operating

costs. Some activities incur major costs but fail to generate sufficient revenue to offset operating costs. Other facilities, like the City's system of pools and recreation centers, could be re-designed to maximize the number of users, allow greater program flexibility, and attract people from greater distances. Others may need to be phased out of the system entirely to free up resources for other activities.

Expanding sustainable management and maintenance practices is another way to balance the needs of the system with the limited resources that are afforded it. Naturalizing or divesting in areas that are underutilized and obsolete should also be considered.

The Need for Partnerships

Pittsburgh and its residents greatly benefit from the interests, expertise, and energy of nonprofits and community groups. These organizations take on many responsibilities, including planning, design, maintenance, management, programming, and advocacy. Without these partnerships, Pittsburgh's regional parks would not be the

jewels they are today, the riverfront vision would not be moving forward, and the Zoo, Aviary and Phipps Conservatory would have been closed. Without the multitude of active organizations, there would be far fewer options to interact with the open space system.

Partnerships in Pittsburgh have been a success and should be nurtured by the City because of the many benefits provided to the general public and the individuals who enjoy the wealth of opportunities these organizations bring.

OpenSpace Policy 4.1

Leverage the passion, strengths, energy, and fundraising potential of Pittsburgh's volunteer and nonprofit organizations.

Objectives

4.1-A Continue to involve residents, the business community, local organizations and stakeholders in planning, park design, development, and maintenance.

4.1-B Formalize and strengthen existing partnerships and develop new ones to assist in the development, renovation and management

of parks, recreation facilities and open spaces. Clearly define roles and responsibilities for all partners.

4.1-C Expand public use of Pittsburgh's open space resources by engaging the stakeholder networks of partner organizations.

4.1-D Utilize partner organizations' strengths and facilities to fill gaps in the parks, recreation and open space system.

The Need for Volunteerism

The open space, parks and recreation system directly provides opportunities for social interaction, and it serves as a catalyst for building social capital and strengthening the community. Harnessing these opportunities in the right way can create direct benefits to the quality of the open space system itself.

OpenSpace Policy 4.2

Increase volunteer opportunities that support open spaces, parks, recreation, and programming.

Objectives

4.2-A Work with partner organizations with established volunteer bases to match open space projects and activities with their interest areas.

- Cultivate relationships with corporate, schools and university volunteer bases.

4.2-B Increase recruitment of volunteers and improve coordination of City volunteer programs, recognizing that volunteerism is a type of recreation activity.

4.2-C Develop additional volunteer opportunities for youth, seniors, and people with disabilities.

4.2-D Recruit volunteers that represent a variety of interests and cultural backgrounds.

The Need for the Coordination of Roles

Many players are involved in maintaining and improving Pittsburgh's open space, parks and recreation system. There are multiple departments and divisions within the City government itself. CitiParks, (Department of Parks and Recreation) the Department of Public Works, Department of Finance and the City

Planning Department are all directly involved in different but closely related aspects of the system. In addition, there are other agencies outside of city government that are charged with land and program management, or with interests that intersect with the open space system. Coordinating all the players and their respective roles is difficult and time intensive. As a response to dwindling resources, Pittsburgh's Parks and Recreation system has experienced several rounds of structural reorganization over the past 15 to 20 years, only adding to that challenge. To achieve the comprehensive system of green infrastructure envisioned by OpenSpacePGH, even greater coordination within and outside of city government will be necessary.

OpenSpace Policy 4.3

Clarify roles and responsibilities within City departments as well as with other public agencies regarding the open space, parks and recreation system.

Objectives

4.3-A Coordinate planning, programming, and operations among Pittsburgh departments, the Pittsburgh Public Schools, and other government

agencies to streamline the management of open space, parks, and recreation resources.

4.3-B Serve as a land and facility resource for organizations that provide sports, recreation, and educational programming and activities within the community.

- Facilitate finding space within the open space system to accommodate community-driven activities.

The Need for Comprehensive Land Management

Over time, management of the different components of the open space, parks and recreation system has become increasingly complex and, some would argue, convoluted or fragmented. The Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy assists in managing the regional parks and is actively involved with improving a growing number of community-scale parks. The Department of Public Works maintains the regional parks and manages and maintains all other parkland in the city. Community groups assist DPW with greenway management. Vacant properties are managed on a different track by multiple public and private entities. Although all

facets of the open space system are attended in some way, all could greatly benefit from coordinated, comprehensive land management.

OpenSpace Policy 4.4

Manage the open space system comprehensively, strategically and in a coordinated manner.

Objectives

4.4-A Maintain relationships and communication with the OpenSpacePGH Management Committee, and continue to convene with Committee members and other non-profit park and open space partners to share information and improve coordination.

4.4-B Evaluate alternative management arrangements for land and facilities, building on Pittsburgh's successful past models (e.g., Schenley Plaza, the Zoo and Aquarium) and exploring new opportunities.

- Ensure that public access is maintained and public benefit is provided when other entities assume responsibility for development, management or operation of park and open space resources.

4.4-C Hire community based landscape maintenance businesses to maintain vacant properties within the communities where they are based (and beyond).

4.4-D Regularly update the maintenance management plan for the open space system to address the entire spectrum of open space management needs, including natural resource and urban forest management tasks.

4.4-E Identify annualized operating costs and develop maintenance and capital replacement plans for each proposed new addition to the open space system.

- Factor the operating costs into the project evaluation process.
- Take on only those projects for which operating resources are available.

The Need for Environmentally Responsible Stewardship

With limited resources and staffing to maintain and manage an expanding open space system, finding ways to build environmental sustainability into the development, management and maintenance of the system becomes imperative. Expanding sustainability practices not only optimizes environmental benefits but will also reduce maintenance effort and costs.

OpenSpace Policy 4.5

Support sustainability and environmental stewardship in park design, development, maintenance, and management.

Objectives

4.5-A Implement maintenance techniques that enhance natural resources and minimize disturbance to natural vegetation and critical wildlife habitat.

- Differentiate between intentional landscape plantings and informal/natural plantings so that maintenance crews can easily tell the difference.

4.5-B Design and upgrade facilities to be energy efficient in order to reduce long-term operating costs.

4.5-C Provide public information or interpretive signage to educate the community about parks and open space maintenance. Include information on destructive forces (e.g. rogue trails, off-road vehicles, vandalism, invasive species) as well as beneficial maintenance practices (e.g. using native plant species, restoring stream buffers, creating habitat, installing permeable pavement)

4.5-D Provide features, assets, and landscapes requiring high levels of management, maintenance or capital replacement only in strategic locations where the most people benefit. This could include reducing turf areas, establishing “carry in, carry out” policies instead of waste receptacles at some sites, and providing restrooms at only certain types of parks.

4.5-E Expand and require regular staff training programs in new sustainable management techniques to ensure that they are abreast of and instituting best management practices in the City’s parks and open space system.

The Need for Funding to Sustain the Open Space System

Funding has been one of Pittsburgh's greatest challenges for the open space system. Pittsburgh needs to continue to reduce costs where it can (even when that means incurring costs up front), but must also focus on increasing revenue generation to sustain the open space system for the long term.

OpenSpace Policy 4.6

Allocate adequate resources to sustain the public open space system.

Objectives

4.6-A Commit funding to maintain parks, facilities, and open spaces at the desired level, in accordance with the maintenance management plan and capital replacement plan.

4.6-B Dedicate sufficient City staff time and budget to maintain, expand, renovate and operate parks, recreation and open space system resources according to the priorities and processes outlined in OpenSpace PGH.

4.6-C Invest in appropriate materials and construction techniques for optimum longevity and life-cycle costs.

4.6-D Consider the full operating cost of new park sites and features prior to their development. Maximize the City's limited funding resources through the development of low operating cost recreational facilities in existing park and opportunity sites without sacrificing quality, durability, or safety.

4.6-E When new parks are created, ensure that they have funding set aside for required maintenance and management activities, especially for those that have a more limited public benefit.

4.6-F Develop capital replacement schedules for all major assets. For example, adopt a 10 year capital replacement schedule for playgrounds.

4.6-G Include development of a maintenance plan and capital replacement schedule as part of every capital improvement project

The Need for Revenue Generation in the Open Space System

As open space budgets are declining and external funding sources are dwindling, it is important to find new, innovative ways to generate revenue to improve the open space system.

OpenSpace Policy 4.7

Foster revenue generation within the open space, parks, and recreation system.

Objectives

4.7-A Support the continuation and, if feasible, the enlargement of the Allegheny Regional Asset District funding.

4.7-B Develop a fee philosophy that identifies when and how fees are charged for services (programs, rental reservations for facilities and outdoor areas).

- Address resident versus non-resident program users when determining fees.
- Avoid creating barriers for low-income residents.
- Adopt an escalation factor (i.e., consumer price index) with the fees so that fees keep pace with inflation.

- Incorporate policies for concessionaires and nonprofit or private operators of facilities within the open space system.
- Evaluate concessionaire development and/or management as an option for providing new or renovated facilities.

4.7-C Evaluate the potential of the City's Market Based Revenue Opportunities (MBRO) program to raise revenues dedicated to the open space, park and recreation system without compromising the quality and aesthetic of the park system.

- Consider using this revenue to establish a Sports Commission to assure equitable distribution of funds raised through the use of City athletic facilities.

The Need for Decreasing Costs of the Open Space System

Limitations exist to finding new ways to generate revenue within the current open space system.

New forms of revenue generation must also be coupled with the act of decreasing long-term costs in the system, especially when facilities and properties are duplicative or no longer meet user needs.

OpenSpace Policy 4.8

Decrease long-term costs for the City.

Objectives

4.8-A Continue to formalize agreements with private and nonprofit organizations to take on operations of parks and open space sites, in order to ensure continued public access and community and government use.

4.8-B Develop suitability criteria, and prioritize title-clearance for parcels in the City's vacant lands inventory that are suitable for landbanking, for sale outright or for transfer to other ownership arrangements.

4.8-C Reduce underperforming sites and facilities while making strategic investments to increase equity.

4.8-D Design major recreation facilities, such as community centers and swimming pools, to operate efficiently and cost-effectively.

4.8-E Build facilities that are durable, are easy to maintain, and are flexible in design so they can be adapted to new uses in the future.

4.8-F Identify where higher up-front costs of upgrading or replacing certain recreation

facilities will actually lower the long-term costs of maintenance.

4.8-G Phase out isolated small development sites that are difficult and costly to serve and that require the maintenance of disproportionately costly infrastructure.

- Eliminate streets, surface or subsurface utilities, and other gray infrastructure within natural areas, except where a connection or easement is specifically recommended in infrastructure plans to provide efficient and cost-effective service.

The Need for Staff Development

A healthy open space system is a critical element of a competitive, economically vibrant 21st century city. Since the people who provide the services are instrumental to the health and success of the system, fostering staff development, advancement, satisfaction and retention are critically important. The loss of a skilled, effective and motivated employee is a loss of the investment in time, training and institutional knowledge.

OpenSpace Policy 4.9

Foster staff retention to maintain institutional knowledge and the investment in training.

Objectives

4.9-A Enhance customer service policies and encourage feedback from the public including when customer service surpasses expectations.

4.9-B Refine job descriptions to provide paths to advancement for staff working within the open space, parks, and recreation services. Reflect the value of the open space system within the job descriptions and compensation levels.

4.9-C Foster a collaborative work environment and culture that encourages the sharing of best practices, recognizes achievements, and provides professional development opportunities.

GOAL 5: Document Progress

Collect and provide data on the open space system to create an accurate, comprehensive portrait of the physical, financial and spatial resources upon which management decisions and progress monitoring will be based.

Reliable, current data is the foundation for maintaining a healthy, efficient system. Up-to-date information helps decision-makers and managers determine what resources they have, what the costs are, and what benefits will result from their investments. To fully harness the power of data to paint an accurate picture of the open space system, it must be consistently gathered and analyzed.

The Need for Data Collection

Data related to the City's open space assets is not currently well integrated due to the complex public-private management structure of the park, recreation and open space system. In some cases, data may not even be available in electronic format. As a result, Pittsburgh has multiple systems for tracking information with

no consistent, shared or centralized database regarding the land, facilities and management of the City's open space system. As part of OpenSpacePGH implementation, the City needs to integrate the various information systems into a centralized, dynamic system with consistent real-time data that can be accessed by all departments and management entities.

OpenSpace Policy 5.1

Coordinate and unify data collection across all facets of the parks, recreation and open space system.

Objectives

5.1-A Identify the parks, facilities and open space information shared and maintained by City Planning/GIS, CitiParks, DPW and other departments, authorities and bureaus.

- Establish a data-sharing agreement between the city and other management partners.

5.1-B Implement a systematic and comprehensive approach to data collection and management.

- Clarify responsibilities for tracking information and decision support data for the City's parks, facilities and open spaces.
- Craft a unified, single system for all open space resources, building on the existing data and tracking systems found within different departments, such as the Asset Management System.

5.1-C Consolidate the open space and park inventory into a database that is linked to Geographic Information Systems.

5.1-D Identify data gaps, as well as data needed for ongoing open space system management.

5.1-E Track assets in the Geographic Information System (e.g., location, age of asset, lifecycle information, condition information).

The Need for Data as a Decision-Making Tool

To ensure the best use of limited resources, time, and money, data needs to be used to help ensure that decision-making in the open space system provides the greatest benefit for the lowest cost effort.

OpenSpace Policy 5.2

Make decisions that are data-driven.

Objectives

5.2-A Create consistent budget tracking categories so that parks and open space funding can more accurately be measured over time.

5.2-B Track expenditures and revenues consistently, broken down by specific program elements.

5.2-C Require all departments and divisions to track budgets using the agreed upon system.

5.2-D Use tools such as health impact assessments to evaluate a program's or project's potential effect on public health outcomes.

5.2-E Use benefits calculators and continue to update them to make project and system decisions.

The Need for Land Use Strategies in the Open Space System

A large portion of the City's open space system is not formally designated as such. This allows incompatible uses to occur and the premature sale of City properties that have high potential for providing public benefits. Haphazard property disposition is a detriment to creating the balanced system that has been envisioned by OpenSpacePGH. Conflicts over land use can be minimized by ensuring that all parties involved in property disposition are aware of high-priority land that has been flagged for open space uses.

OpenSpace Policy 5.3

Use land use strategies to streamline park and open space acquisition and designation.

Objectives

5.3-A Consolidate lots to avoid the sale of city-owned natural areas and to formalize these as designated, permanent open space.

5.3-B Reconsider land use regulations as part of LandUsePGH to support implementation of OpenSpacePGH.

The Need for Metrics to Measure Progress in the Open Space System

Sometimes even great plans fail to achieve the goals that they set, and those once-inspiring documents end up “sitting on the shelf” unused. Progress metrics and indicators are essential tools for successfully implementing the policies and recommendations of the Plan. Consistent reporting will help keep plan implementers on task and informed about how well they are achieving the OpenSpacePGH goals.

OpenSpace Policy 5.4

Monitor and report progress of OpenSpacePGH.

Objectives

5.4-A Develop a report card, to be presented annually to the public, using comprehensive performance measures that support OpenSpacePGH goals.

5.4-B Keep park and open space system data updated and publicly accessible through PGHGIS.



OpenSpacePGH



CHAPTER 7

IMPLEMENTATION

CHAPTER SEVEN

Implementation

IN THIS SECTION

Strategies: TRANSITION

Strategies: INTEGRATE

Strategies: ACTIVATE

Strategies: STEWARD

Strategies: DOCUMENT

Prioritizing Strategies

This chapter presents the programs and projects that will implement the OpenSpace policy framework. For each policy presented in Chapter 6 implementing strategies are presented, each keyed with a letter (OpenSpace Strategy A, B, C, etc.). Following the description of strategies are prioritization criteria. An accompanying element is the Implementation Table, which summarizes the implementing strategies for OpenSpacePGH in a matrix format. Each PlanPGH element will include its own Implementation Table, following the format used in PreservePGH and adapted here for OpenSpacePGH.

Figure 7-1 Invest

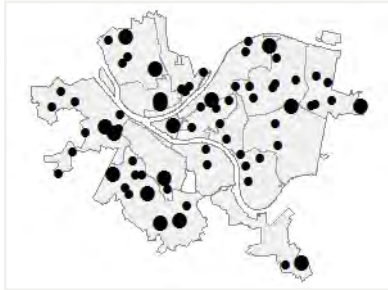


Figure 7-2 Redevelop

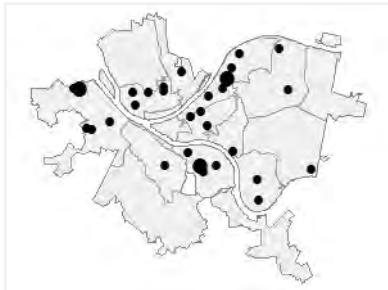
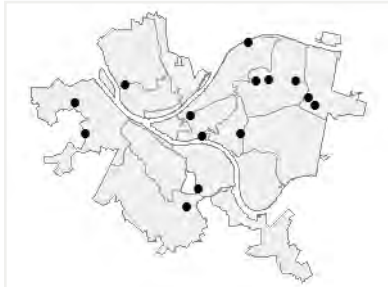


Figure 7-3 Relocate



7.2

Strategies: TRANSITION

Transition the right size and mix of opportunities and resources.

Policy 1.1

To achieve Policy 1.1, a long-term commitment to capital improvement is needed to transition the existing inventory of parks. The OpenSpacePGH team thoroughly evaluated existing parks, with special attention given to the neighborhood and community parks, and recommended a treatment for each site. The treatments are:

- **Invest.** Make capital replacement or capital improvement projects at the site. This includes high priority curb appeal improvements, such as the removal of fences, depaving, and other projects to improve the appearance of parks. This category also includes implementation of existing master plans, upgrade or capital replacement of existing amenities and facilities, and the addition of new features and facilities into the existing site.
- **Redevelop.** Redevelop the site completely, a major capital investment. This is intended to signify wholesale renovation of a site that

is poorly designed, targeted for a change of use or function, or in very poor condition.

- **Relocate.** Move the park to a better location. This category is intended to signify that a park is needed in the area, but that the existing location is subpar. Relocation means that the existing site will be changed to a different use.
- **Expand.** Acquire property to expand an existing park or open space, or expand a potential relocation site. Areas for expansion can include City property and vacant properties in tax delinquency of two or more years.
- **Naturalize.** Revegetate the property with appropriate species (riparian or upland), restore ecosystem or riparian processes, or remove invasive species or non-native vegetation (including turf grass). This may include development of low impact trails and other compatible features (viewing blinds, environmental education features, etc.).
- **Divest.** Transfer all or part of the property to another City department, sell the property, or transfer ownership to another non-city entity.
- Map 7: Transition depicts how the system will be transitioned to achieve Policy 1.1.

- Invest
- Redevelop
- Relocate
- Expand
- Naturalize
- Divest
- Park
- Non-Public Open Space
- Neighborhood
- Other Municipality
- Water

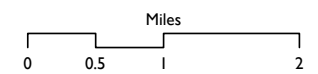


Figure 7-4 Expand

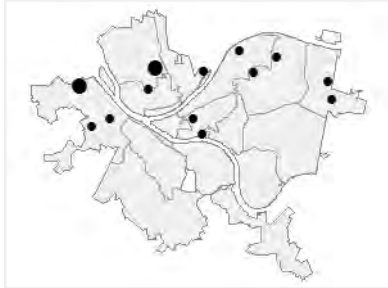


Figure 7-5 Naturalize

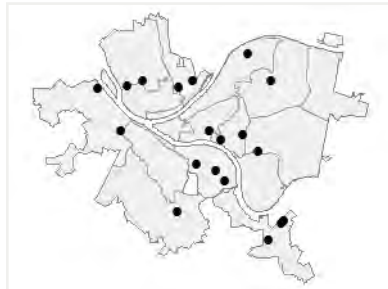
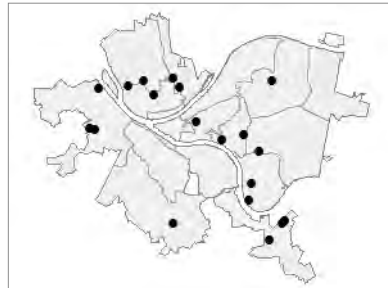


Figure 7-6 Divest



The following pages include projects to transition the existing system, achieving Objectives 1.1-A, 1.1-B, 1.1-C and 1.1-D. An anticipated investment level is provided for each site: \$ = \$2 million or less, \$\$ = \$2 million to \$8 million, \$\$\$ = 8 million+ (in 2012 dollars).

Appendix G contains the detailed site by site evaluations for every community and neighborhood park.

OpenSpace Strategy A: Transitioning Community Parks

Table 7-1 identifies the recommended treatment for each of the city's 21 community parks. Bold text indicates if a park is designated as a signature site. Signature sites are prioritized community parks with the greatest potential to fill gaps in the green premium, provide better and more diverse recreation experiences, and focus investment. Signature sites should receive a higher level of capital and maintenance funding than other community parks, have site-specific programming, and incorporate design features to highlight their specific identities. Regional scale recreation facilities can be targeted for signature community parks, as well as

community scale recreation facilities. Market Square, renovated during the preparation of OpenSpacePGH, represents the quality of capital investment and level of programming desired for signature community parks. Map 6: Underserved Green Premium Areas, in the previous chapter illustrates the green premium effect of existing regional parks and the underserved areas that could benefit from investments in signature community parks.

OpenSpace Strategy B: Prioritizing Improvements in Underserved Neighborhoods

Throughout OpenSpacePGH, many participants raised the issue of equity in the park system. Because of this concern, the project included specific analysis aimed at highlighting inequities or gaps. This included screening the quality of parks, identifying specific areas of Pittsburgh with higher densities of low income and/or minority-majority populations through census data, and assessing whether target areas were underserved with quality parks and open spaces. Table 7-3 identifies recommendations for the parks in these areas of special concern.

Table 7-1: Transitioning Community Parks

Park Name	Divest	Invest	Redevelop	Relocate	Expand	Naturalize	Investment Level
Allegheny Center Park Plaza (Public Square)		•					\$\$\$
Allegheny Commons Park		•					\$\$\$
Arsenal Park			•				\$\$
Banksville Park		•					\$\$
Brighton Heights Park		•					\$\$
Brookline Memorial Park		•					\$\$
Dinan Park		•					\$\$
East Hills Park		•					\$\$
Fowler Park		•			•		\$\$
Herschel Park		•					\$\$
Market Square Park	No Action						
McBride Park		•					\$\$
McKinley and Upper McKinley Park		•					\$\$\$
Mellon Park		•					\$\$
Mellon Square Park		•					\$
Moore Park		•					\$\$
Phillips Park		•					\$\$
Sheraden Park			•		•		\$\$\$
Southside Park			•				\$\$\$
West End Park		•					\$\$
West Penn Park		•					\$\$

Bold text = Signature community parks

Investment level ranges: \$ = \$2 million or less,
 \$\$ = \$2million to \$8 million, \$\$\$ = 8 million+

OpenSpace Strategy C: Transitioning Neighborhood Parks

Table 7-2 recommends a transitioning treatment for each existing neighborhood park, except for those neighborhood parks located in low income or minority majority neighborhoods.

Table 7-2 Transitioning Neighborhood Parks

Park Name	Divest	Invest	Redevelop	Relocate	Expand	Naturalize	Investment Level
Able Long Park		•					\$
Albert "Turk" Graham Park		•					\$
Alpine Gardens Park	•						-
Alton Park		•					\$
Ammon Park			•				\$\$
Arlington Park			•				\$\$
Armstrong Park			•				\$\$
Baxter Park		•			•		\$
Blair St. Park	•						-
Bloomfield Park		•					\$
Bon Air Park		•					\$
Boundary St. Park	•			•		•	\$
Bud Hammer Park		•					\$

Table 7-2 (cont.): Transitioning Neighborhood Parks

Park Name	Divest	Invest	Redevelop	Relocate	Expand	Naturalize	Investment Level
Catalano Park		•					\$
Chadwick Park		•			•		\$
Chartiers Park		•					\$
Cobden St. Park						•	-
Cowley Park		•					\$
Crafton Heights Park		•		•			\$
Dallas Park				•			\$
Davis Park		•					\$
Devlin Field						•	-
Dunbar Park	•		•		•		\$
Dunseith Park (Shalane's Play Yard)		•					\$
East Carnegie Park		•					\$
East Liberty Park			•				\$\$
Eleanor Street Park		•					\$
Enright Park		•					\$
Esplen Park	•					•	-
Fairywood Park		•					\$
Fifty-Seventh Street Park		•		•			\$

Table 7-2 (cont.): Transitioning Neighborhood Parks

Park Name	Divest	Invest	Redevelop	Relocate	Expand	Naturalize	Investment Level
Fort Pitt Park					•		\$
Four Mile Run Park		•					\$
Frank Curto Park		•					\$
Frazier Park			•				\$\$
Gardner Park		•					\$
Garland Park		•					\$
Gladstone Park			•				\$\$
Granville Park	•				•		\$
Hays Park	•					•	-
Heth's Park		•			•		\$
Joe Natoli Park			•				\$\$
Kennard Park			•				\$\$
Lawn and Ophelia Park	•					•	-
Leister Street Park	•					•	\$
Leolyn Park		•		•			\$
Leslie Park			•				\$\$
Lewis Park	•	•					\$
Lincoln Place Park		•					\$

Table 7-2 (cont.): Transitioning Neighborhood Parks

Park Name	Divest	Invest	Redevelop	Relocate	Expand	Naturalize	Investment Level
Lookout Street Park		•			•		\$
Magee Park		•					\$
Marmaduke Park		•					\$
Marshall-California Park	•			•		•	\$
McGonigle Park			•				\$\$
Monongahela Park			•				\$\$\$
Mutual Park		•		•			\$
Nelson Mandela Peace Park				•			\$
Niagara Park		•					\$
Oakwood Park		•					\$
Ormsby Park		•					\$
Osceola Park		•					\$
Overbrook Park	•						-
Panorama Field	•					•	-
Pauline Park		•					\$
Paulson Park		•					\$
Phillip Murray Park				•			\$
Revenue Park	•					•	\$

Table 7-2 (cont.): Transitioning Neighborhood Parks

Park Name	Divest	Invest	Redevelop	Relocate	Expand	Naturalize	Investment Level
Robert E. Williams (Herron Hill) Park		•					\$
Saline Street Park	•					•	-
Scherer Field	•						-
Spring Garden Park						•	-
Spring Hill Park			•				\$
Stratmore Park	•		•				\$
Sullivan Park			•				\$\$
Swisshelm Park			•				\$\$
Townsend Park			•		•		\$\$
Tropical Park		•					\$
Tustin Park				•	•		\$
Vanucci Park		•					\$
Vincennes Park		•					\$
Volunteers Park						•	-
Wabash Park		•				•	\$
Warrington Park			•				\$\$
West End-Elliot Overlook Park		•					\$
Westinghouse Park		•					\$

Table 7-2 (cont.): Transitioning Neighborhood Parks

Park Name	Divest	Invest	Redevelop	Relocate	Expand	Naturalize	Investment Level
Wightman Park		●					\$
Winters Park						●	-
Woods Run Park		●					\$
Young Park		●					\$

Table 7-3: Prioritizing Improvements in High Density Low-Income and Minority-Majority Neighborhoods

Park Name <i>NP = Neighborhood Park</i> <i>SU = Special Use</i>	Divest	Invest	Redevelop	Relocate	Expand	Naturalize	Investment Level
Burgwin Park (NP)			•				\$\$
Cliffside Park (NP)			•	•			\$
Cross and Strauss Park (NP)	•					•	-
Denny Park (NP)			•				\$
Duncan Park (NP)		•				•	\$
Fineview North Park (NP)			•				\$
Fineview South Park (NP)			•				\$
Friendship Park (NP)		•					\$
Herron Hill Tennis Courts (SU)	•						-
Homewood Park (NP)		•		•			\$\$
Jefferson Park (NP)			•		•		\$
Kite Hill Park (NP)	•			•		•	\$
Larimer Park (NP)		•		•			\$
Manchester Park and Manchester Park School (NP)			•				\$\$
Martin Luther King Park (NP)						•	\$\$
McCandless Park (NP)			•		•		\$
McKnight Park (NP)			•				\$

OpenSpace Strategy D: Phasing Out Special Use Sites

At the time of study, Pittsburgh's special use sites were overall in the poorest condition, and they tend to be single use buildings that are difficult to renovate. The recreation functions that take place at each of these sites are recommended for relocation, and the sites themselves should be considered for divestment. The one exception is Oliver Bathhouse, which has historic value. Investment in this site should include a reuse study.

Table 7-4: Phasing Out Special Use Sites

	Divest	Invest	Redevelop	Relocate	Expand	Naturalize	Investment Level
Arlington Gym				•			-
Hazelwood Senior Center				•			-
Homewood Senior Center				•			-
Lodge Potenza Senior Center				•			-
Oliver Bathhouse		•					\$\$
Sheraden Senior Center				•			-
Southside Market House				•			-



7.14

OpenSpace Strategy E: Filling Gaps With New Neighborhood Parks

Though there are duplicative parks within Pittsburgh's system, there are also areas throughout the City that lack access to neighborhood parks. To fill the gaps, as many as 18 new neighborhood parks are needed. In some cases, finding a site will be very challenging unless alternative solutions such as Pavement-to-Parks are employed. Map 8: Park Investment depicts target areas for new neighborhood parks.

Policy 1.2

OpenSpace Strategy F: Enhancing Regional Parks

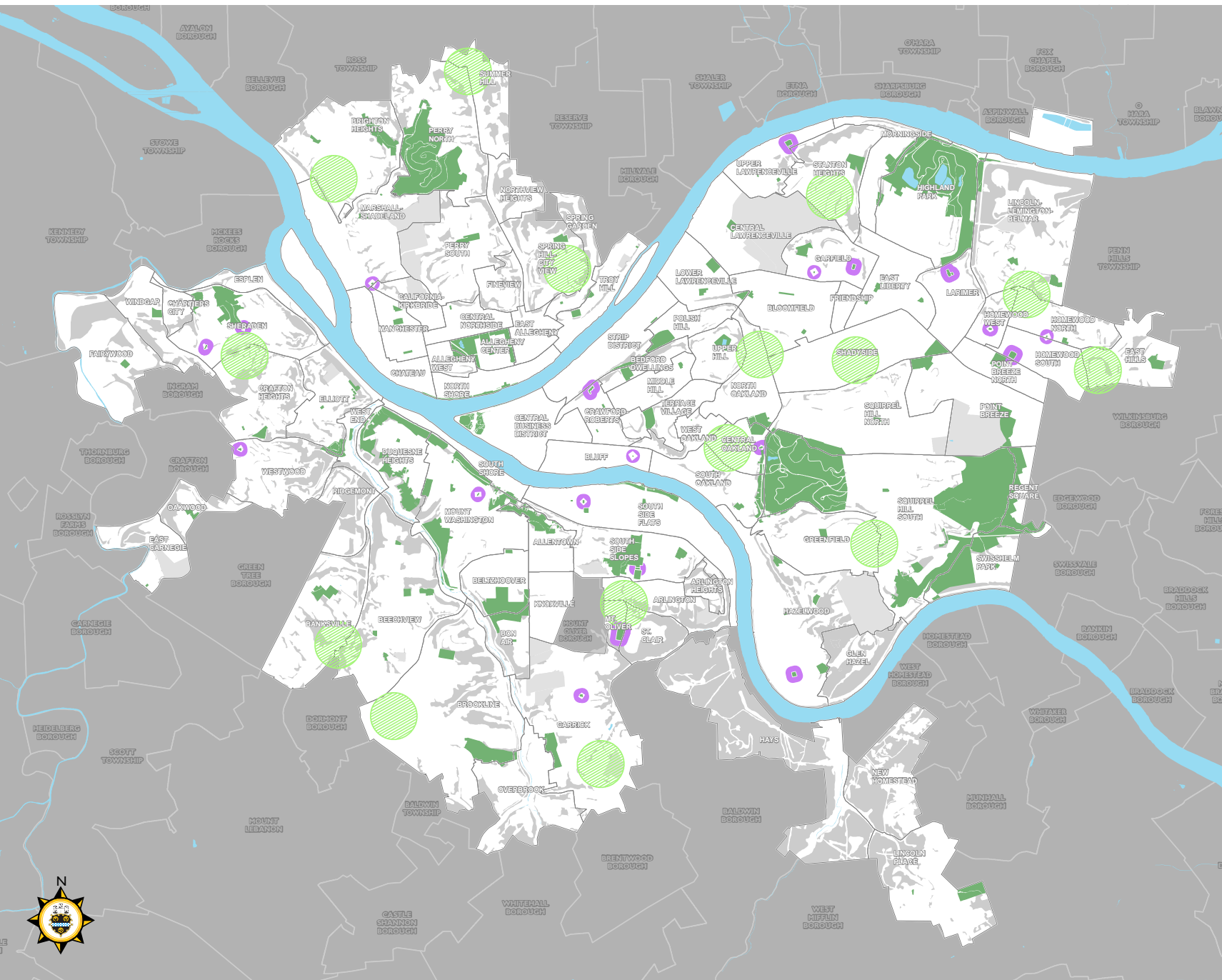
To retain their quality, Pittsburgh's regional parks will require ongoing capital investment. The City should implement the recommendations of the Emerald View Regional Park Master Plan, in coordination with partners, to create a more cohesive regional park with its own identity. Pittsburgh should also work with Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy to implement the updated Historic Regional Parks Master Plan.


OpenSpace Strategy G: Building New Riverfront Parks

Pittsburgh should provide new riverfront parks where feasible, providing more access to the rivers and tying into the riverfront trail system. In the Strip District, Esplan, Hazelwood and Lawrenceville neighborhoods, the City should acquire and develop riverfront parks that are also designed to include neighborhood features that fill gaps. Map 9 depicts potential riverfront park expansion areas onto land that is currently vacant or distressed.

OpenSpace Strategy H: Removing Decommissioned Facilities


The open space system contains "decommissioned facilities", features that are defunct or obsolete and no longer functional. In many cases, these are improperly scaled, not planned to be replaced or repurposed, and create an eyesore. The capital investment needs in the system are so great that nearer term action is needed to remove the decommissioned facilities before a park is renovated.








OPENSOURCE


MAP: 8 PARK INVESTMENT


 Areas for Park Additions


 Relocate

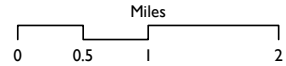
 Invest / Expand

 Non-Public Open Space


 Neighborhood

 Other Municipality

 Water



0 0.5 1 2 Miles



pittsburgh
city planning

May 2013



7.16

OpenSpace Strategy I: Investing in Sports Fields

Pittsburgh's existing community-scale sports fields are in need of investment. This project includes upgrading existing community-scale fields, improving the turf and improving or providing lighting, restrooms, bleachers, fencing, scoreboards and parking. In some cases, neighborhood-scale fields can be enhanced to transform them into community-scale fields. In other locations, diamond fields can be converted to support soccer, football, rugby and other sports using rectangular fields. New community-scale fields are also needed to support competitive play and more sports activity, and should be built in appropriate parks where space is available.

In addition to improvements to community-scale fields, Pittsburgh should develop a regional-scale sports complex suitable for tournaments to support economic development and meet competitive sports needs, defining the field mix, location, and operating model through a feasibility study. This complex should include multiple rectangular fields and may also include diamond fields.

OpenSpace Strategy J: Diversifying Play Experiences

Play areas are a foundational element of the park system. These features can take many forms, including the manufactured play equipment and structures found throughout Pittsburgh, but also including nature play and custom-designed destination play environments. The play areas at the Children's Museum and Highland Park are examples of destination play environments. Over the 25-year span of OpenSpacePGH, Pittsburgh will need to reinvest in every playground. As Pittsburgh targets a 10-year cycle of playground replacements, the City should diversify the types of play areas, experiences, and settings offered in its park system, and make sure that any new playgrounds are located based on identified need rather than as a rote approach to park improvement. Playgrounds may include manufactured equipment, but could also include continuous pathways, grassy hills, climbing features, and other elements that provide play value. Not all parks need playgrounds, and in some locations, designated nature play areas are more appropriate than built features. Nature play can take many forms, from simply designating an area where digging

in the dirt and building forts is permitted, to placing boulders and logs (meeting accessibility and safety standards, to more formalized play environments taking inspiration from the natural world. Regardless of how formalized, nature play areas, like playgrounds, should be located outside of environmentally sensitive areas and be visible with sightlines to and from other areas to enhance the sense of safety.

To diversify play experiences, Pittsburgh should avoid installing the same set of neighborhood-scale play equipment at every neighborhood park, which would result in a “cookie cutter” system that is not engaging, nor respectful of local identity. For ease of maintenance, Pittsburgh should include several play equipment manufacturers in its DPW standards that supports a menu of manufactured equipment options and approved elements (e.g., climbing rock, looped tricycle path, nature play) for its neighborhood-scale play areas to allow local choices within the neighborhood park maintenance workload expectation.

When they are upgraded, community-scale playgrounds should be designed to incorporate

new types of play experiences that appeal to a wider variety of age groups.

In addition, Pittsburgh should develop or work with partners to develop at least one new regional scale destination play environment incorporating art and natural/cultural history. This new feature should be located at a signature community park, Emerald View Regional Park, or at an appropriately sized riverfront park.

OpenSpace Strategy K: Developing a Regional-Scale Special Events Venue

Pittsburgh has been a successful provider of large special events. One major challenge in providing events is the lack of a suitable venue. The City should develop a special events venue to accommodate walks, runs, and large events (5,000+ people). To function properly, the venue:

- Must have nearby or on-site parking or be near transit service.
- Requires a site with a level grade that can be flexibly set up for different types of events.
- Needs utility service (electricity and water).
- Be a contained enough site to control entry for events that require it.





7.18

The regional-scale special events venue could be located at a regional-scale sports complex if it were designed to accommodate both uses, or it could be sited at a new riverfront park.

OpenSpace Strategy L: Enhancing Outdoor Recreation Opportunities

To take advantage of Pittsburgh's extensive land resources and respond to community interests and needs, a greater diversity of outdoor recreation facilities should be built, such as off-leash areas, skate/BMX parks, disc golf courses, bicycling facilities such as a pump track (i.e., dirt track designed for activity to improve bike handling skills) and skills courses, and adventure recreation options. Many of these types of outdoor recreation facilities can be integrated in a low-impact way into the park system, and many lend themselves to partnerships with user groups or even private businesses. Some types of adventure recreation facilities such as ziplines or challenge courses can even be provided by concessionaires or operated as self-supporting enterprises.

OpenSpace Strategy M: Rebuilding Recreation Centers

Pittsburgh's indoor recreation and senior centers are unevenly distributed throughout the city. None of the centers were designed to minimize operating costs, most have aging systems, and most predate the Americans with Disabilities Act. Programming offered through recreation and senior centers is highly variable – in some cases driven by local interests in keeping with the policies related to ACTIVATE, but in many cases due to limitations of the building or availability of staffing. The City is approaching a critical point where its recreation buildings will require major investment. In most cases, investment should not be made solely to preserve the status quo at the existing centers. Future indoor centers that are intended to be staffed should:

- Be designed to meet specific operating goals, whether a renovation or a new structure.
- Serve multiple age groups, include flexible spaces that can be adapted to accommodate many types of uses, incorporate plenty of storage, and be planned to minimize staffing needs for operation.

Modern multi-purpose centers can be designed to be operationally self-supporting. While an operating and business plan needs to be developed to define the building program and operating model, it is clear that fewer, larger centers will provide more recreation options and operate more efficiently. Most modern multi-purpose recreation centers incorporate an indoor swimming pool as part of their operating model. Preliminarily, the recommended approach is to develop three new 40,000+ sq. ft. multi-purpose community centers with additional square footage if indoor swimming is included. These should be incorporated into community parks (rather than as stand-alone special use sites) and be distributed throughout the City.

OpenSpace Strategy N: Renewing Pittsburgh's Swimming Pools

Pittsburgh's swimming pools are reaching the end of their life, and they were built based on a model that is now outdated. Recreational swimming attracts a broader market than competitive and lap swimming. Shallow water also permits more people in the pool at one time and is more conducive to play and general recreation swimming than lap pools. The broader market

increases the number of users of a swimming pool, and results in a facility that generates more revenue.

The City should provide fewer swimming pools, each one designed at a community scale to operate at a more sustainable level with adequate market share (i.e., enough to meet the established financial performance goals) for each site. The system of swimming pools should support a greater variety of aquatics opportunities (recreational, competitive, instructional) as well as year-round swimming at more than one site. Swimming pools (outdoor or indoor) should be more recreation-oriented by providing increased deck space that includes shaded areas, more shallow water, and recreation features (slides, current channels, spray features, etc.). While competitive swimming should continue to be supported (with 25m or 25yd swimming pools), avoid pursuing a 50m competitive pool due to the high operating costs.



- Prepare a feasibility study to define a sustainable service and market area when planning each new pool or defining a renovation program for an existing pool. The feasibility study should consider the availability of existing swimming pools operated by other providers (universities, nonprofits, private gyms) when determining a sustainable service and market area. The feasibility of Oliver Bathhouse to meet today's accessibility standards and financial performance targets should be evaluated.
- For new indoor swimming pools, provide energy efficient, recreational warm-water swimming (not just competitive swimming), combining the indoor swimming pools with recreation centers at community park sites.
- Continue to provide seasonal, outdoor swimming pools. Over time, phase out neighborhood-scale swimming pools (most of the existing swimming pools). Consider private or nonprofit operator models if the market will support it. If a private entity is willing to commit to operating a neighborhood-scale swimming pool slated for phasing out, consider this as an option if the entity develops a business plan that demonstrates an ability to bear all operating and capital costs for a specified time (a minimum of 10 to 20 years).

- Any new or renovated pools should include both an accessible ramp into the water and a lift.

OpenSpace Strategy O: Building More Spray Parks

Pittsburgh has been developing spray parks over the past few years, and these facilities have proven to be very popular. Cost-effective spray parks encourage visitors to play with water without the high maintenance costs or staff supervision required by swimming pools, and without the water waste of some of the older misters and spray features found in Pittsburgh's park system. Though the City has primarily built spray parks at a neighborhood scale, the limited numbers of these popular facilities attract community-wide audiences.

- Incorporate community-scale spray parks at signature community parks and consider them for other community parks. These are interactive fountains that are more sculptural or plaza-like in nature, with water jets and other features. Amenities such as reservable shelters and picnic areas should be provided near community-scale spray parks, and fees should be charged for their use.

- Consider local scale spray parks (readily available manufactured spray features) as an option for some neighborhood parks. However, they should not be provided at all neighborhood parks.

Policy 1.3

OpenSpace Strategy P: Creating a Vacant Land Toolkit

Develop a “Vacant Land Toolkit” to provide current and consolidated information about vacant land, and begin to prioritize the re-use potential for vacant and distressed properties. Retool regulations to make reuse of vacant land easier for community groups, including clarifying roles and responsibilities, allowing businesses to use vacant land under certain criteria, and identifying costs.

As part of this effort, continue to refine and use the Suitability Analysis tool to encourage and support the development of vacant properties where the highest and best use is determined by the environmental, social, and economic benefits of the use on those properties. Develop better data and further assess the suitability of vacant land for food production and supporting

infrastructure at various scales, ranging from community gardens to urban agricultural activities. Explore sites for the installation of alternative energy generation, such as geothermal, biofuels, and solar and wind farm sites, on vacant land. Vacant land reuse efforts should be closely coordinated with the City’s/URA’s land banking efforts.

MAP: 9 - GREENWAY AND RIVERFRONT PARK ADDITIONS

- Greenway Addition *
- Riverfront Addition *
- Existing Greenway
- Existing Park
- Non-Public Open Space
- Neighborhood
- Other Municipality
- Water

* - Potential Greenway & Riverfront Park Additions

Miles
0 0.5 1 2



Strategies: INTEGRATE

Integrate natural areas into the system.

Map 9: Greenway and Riverfront Park Additions depicts the expansion of greenway and riverfront park lands, strategically growing the open space system. In addition to these, Map 2: Vacant or Distressed Properties (located in the strategies for STEWARD) depicts vacant and distressed lands targeted for inclusion in the permanent open space system. The remaining vacant and distressed lands will remain targeted for temporary use, unless Integrate strategies identify a compelling need to preserve additional land to meet a policy and identifies stewardship resources.

Policies 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3

OpenSpace Strategy Q: Designating a Parks, Open Space and Green Infrastructure Policy

Pittsburgh Designate a Parks, Open Space and Green Infrastructure Policy Director to coordinate City efforts related to parks, open space and green infrastructure, including

cross-departmental collaboration and leading development of the annual capital improvement program. In the past, staff members have taken on various roles in advancing parks, open space and green infrastructure, but it has occurred within different departments, in a more ad hoc manner, and without overall coordination. Because so many entities are involved in parks, open space and green infrastructure, Pittsburgh needs a single high level policy director who would be responsible for:

- Overseeing implementation of OpenSpacePGH
- Promoting cross-departmental collaboration and solutions;
- Continuing to work with partners and stakeholders involved with open space issues;
- Coordinate integration and management of OpenSpacePGH data;
- Leading development of the annual capital improvement program; and
- Advocating for legislative change where needed.

OpenSpace Strategy R: Providing More Non-Motorized River Access

Pittsburgh's rivers are so highly valued that special attention is focused on riverfronts, including the designation of a specific riverfront park classification. Policy 2.1 supports the re-engagement of Pittsburgh's rivers, as envisioned by the river-oriented planning efforts and enthusiastically supported by the public. Pittsburgh should provide more access points for non-motorized boating, including support facilities that may include parking, boat storage, a boat house, and kayak/canoe rental or sales.

Policy 2.4***OpenSpace Strategy S: Enhancing the Urban Forestry Program***

Pittsburgh's expanded urban forest will require enhanced programmatic guidance to flourish as envisioned by OpenSpacePGH. Pittsburgh already meets the requirements to be designated a Tree City USA by having the Shade Tree Commission and a tree ordinance, allocating at least \$2 per capita to a community forestry program, and observing Arbor Day. The Forestry

Division in Public Works has developed a tree inventory and is actively coordinating with advocacy groups such as Tree Pittsburgh and TreeVitalize. The Forestry Division should be tasked with advancing Policy 2.4, including expanded efforts such as conducting a heritage tree inventory, developing heritage tree protection standards, and updating the 2005 Urban Forest Management Plan.

Policy 2.5***OpenSpace Strategy T: Establishing a Natural Resource Manager***

Pittsburgh should establish a Natural Resource Manager position, tasked with developing, analyzing and managing the natural resource lands and conservation programs within Pittsburgh's open space system in a holistic manner. This position requires a person with education in resource management, conservation, environmental studies, or similar fields. The Natural Resource Manager should be responsible for prioritizing greenway expansions, defining criteria for locating low-impact recreation facilities in natural areas and overseeing preparation of an invasive species

monitoring and management program (e.g., a Prevention/Early Detection/Rapid Response program at high resource value sites).

OpenSpace Strategy U: Expanding and Enhancing Greenways

Continue to expand Pittsburgh's system of greenways, using the tools already in place. Enhance greenways by removing invasive species, addressing deer browsing, and revegetating with native species. Consider adding low-impact trails and compatible low impact recreation facilities (e.g., viewing blinds, outdoor classroom), especially in areas that lack parks and recreation opportunities

OpenSpace Strategy V: Managing Invasive Species

Develop an invasive species management program and implement invasive species management at high priority sites and to manage high priority invaders. Site and system stabilization is a first step toward the long-term restoration of parks, greenways and open spaces. These tasks will support a healthy ecosystem, but also can enhance the recreation potential of a site and support public. As part of this effort,

gather & update data on invasive species, then prioritize stabilization efforts, using a “protect the best” approach to protect and restore all of the highest functioning sites first and then proceed to protecting others intactness or health, risk. Other aspects of this strategy include coordinating and assigning vegetation and fauna management; supervising seasonal help; and researching, writing, and managing grants

Policy 2.6

OpenSpace Strategy W: Updating Signage and Wayfinding Standards

Pittsburgh needs an updated signage plan and sign standards for Pittsburgh parks and trails before it makes any of the recommended signage improvements in its park system. This signage plan should be consistent with the signage system for the Historic Regional Parks. It should also include a ranking system for trails in parks and open spaces indicating the degree of challenge in a given route, such as easy, intermediate, and difficult, and should use the trail rating system at Riverview Park as a model.

OpenSpace Strategy X: Expanding the Multi-Use Trails Network

There are many components of expanding the network of paved multi-use trails, and this strategy is one that is strongly linked to MovePGH and to the work of the Department of Public Works throughout the city. Strategy elements should include the following large-scale and smaller improvements:

- Completing the riverfront trail network.
- Creating new multi-use trail connections between parks, open spaces and neighborhoods.
- Redesigning existing park roads to support shared multi-modal use.
- Evaluating Pittsburgh's inventory of steps and selectively restoring these as part of the City's pedestrian system.
- Adding missing sidewalks along park street frontages to fill gaps in pedestrian networks around parks, adding transit facilities such as bus shelters at transit stops near parks, and providing pedestrian safety improvements such as curb extensions.

- Establishing regulatory mechanisms through LandUsePGH to require the preservation of regional trail connections and to require connections to the city's larger trail system from private development.

OpenSpace Strategy Y: Developing a Network of Hiking Trails

Pittsburgh's expansive network of open space offers an opportunity to create the best urban hiking trail network in the country. Walking, hiking, and other trail-related activities are among the most popular locally and nationally, a trend that is expected to continue long into the future. Natural surface trails are lower cost and have fewer impacts than paved trails, and are especially appropriate in Pittsburgh's greenways, natural areas and open spaces. This project includes developing a network of looped trails for hiking and designated single track trails for mountain biking.

Strategies: ACTIVATE

Activate people and places according to their changing needs and desires.

Policy 3.1

OpenSpace Strategy Z: Enhancing Communications and Outreach

Pittsburgh's vision for recreation is to link Pittsburghers of all ages and abilities with memorable experiences. Social engagement, healthy activities, and communications and outreach programs are critical to making the link. CitiParks was one of the City departments to pilot the new website format, and should continue to lead in communications. As part of the programmatic commitment to enhance communications and outreach, CitiParks should:

- Establish procedures and protocols that other organizations must meet to be listed as a recreation provider in City materials and publications.
- Maintain, refresh and provide regular new content to the CitiParks website to keep people returning and engaged.

- Further advance online tools and communication, including online registration.
- Conduct a communications audit and refresh communications approaches to maximize reach with available resources.

Policies 3.2, 3.3, 3.4 and 3.5

OpenSpace Strategy AA: Increasing Outdoor Recreation Programs

To solidify Pittsburgh's niche as a premiere provider of urban outdoor recreation experiences, Pittsburgh should increase outdoor recreation programs that take place in the open space system. This is an established recreation interest area, with strong participation and increased interest in outdoor recreation close to home. In addition, this program area will attract more adults and older adults/Baby Boomers, populations that are not well-served by the City now. An Outdoor Recreation Program Supervisor should be designated, which may be a new position or created by reclassifying an existing Recreation Supervisor position. The Outdoor Recreation Program Supervisor will be responsible for outdoor recreation programming (canoeing, kayaking, hiking, mountain biking, snow

shoeing, etc.) and outdoor adventure activities such as ziplining, rafting and climbing. This position will be responsible for:

- Coordinating with other providers to promote use of public open space resources.
- Seeking new vendors or concessionaires.
- Providing new programs using city staff, contract teachers, and partnerships.
- Establishing an outdoor recreation lending library or encouraging a nonprofit entity to establish one. The intent is to offer equipment (tents, snowshoes, etc.) for outdoor activities to promote knowledgeable, safe, and environmentally respectful recreation participation. These can be used in classes as well as offered for checkout or rental to individuals or groups.

OpenSpace Strategy BB: Enhancing Event Support

Pittsburgh's special events, festivals and fairs touch most residents, and CitiParks has developed events expertise and provides events support that can further be strengthened by:

- Developing guidelines for use of parks for events (by outside organizations as well as by CitiParks). These guidelines should address park capacity, event duration, parking, maximum noise and lighting levels, access management requirements, and insurance requirements.
- Helping event organizers find suitable locations for valued community events in the area of the city most convenient for their needs, consistent with the new guidelines.
- Exploring opportunities for additional health and wellness focused events, such as sponsoring "car-free" days at major parks and on major boulevards, in addition to BikePGH Car-Free Fridays.
- Advocating for and guiding the development of a regional-scale special events venue (OpenSpace Strategy K)








OpenSpace Strategy CC: Defining New Service Provision Models

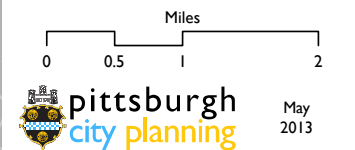
Recreation service provision models that are based on bricks and mortar structures are inherently less responsive to trends and changing needs than other models. Pittsburgh should define new service provision models for the recreation services that have traditionally been center-based, drawing inspiration from its own successful models such as the Roving Art Cart. New service provision models should be explored that take into consideration the City's fee philosophy and are flexible enough to be adapted to any configuration of structures and facilities. The shift to more adaptable service provision models should begin soon, well in advance of capital projects to build new pools and recreation centers.

OpenSpace Strategy DD: Fostering Hands-on Involvement

Pittsburgh has a wealth of active and engaged individuals and organizations working to make their City a better place. The City, through CitiParks should devote staff time to expanding volunteerism in the open space system and clearly defining roles for volunteers to play in the open space system. This includes establishing volunteer coordination as a dedicated job duty for a permanent employee, to include volunteer recruitment, training, management and recognition. The volunteer coordinator also would have responsibility for coordinating with Pittsburgh's active and engaged stewardship organizations to ensure a variety of hands-on volunteer programs, such as programs with different resource focuses, commitment levels (long-term vs. one time), and age groups, and coordinating with City departments to create activities for volunteers that do not conflict with City codes or regulations, such as union labor regulations, and coordinate City support for volunteer activities.

MAP: 10 - FUTURE PUBLIC OPEN SPACE SYSTEM

-  Future Open Space System
-  Areas for Park Additions
-  Areas for Riverfront Addition
-  Non-Public Open Space
-  Neighborhood
-  Other Municipality
-  Water



Strategies: STEWARD

Steward the system with greater innovation and cooperation.

Map 10: Future Public Open Space System depicts the entire system that will be activated and require long term stewardship. Pittsburgh's extensive system will require ongoing stewardship to achieve its potential, with contributions from many parties. As the landowner, the City of Pittsburgh must play a central role in ensuring stewardship, and must implement this role through many programs.

Policy 4.1

OpenSpace Strategy EE: Growing Partnerships

Establish and fill a Community Relations Manager position, tasked with managing partnerships and recruiting new partners. This position would be responsible for managing existing partnerships, including those with organizations that operate regional-scale facilities and regional parks within the system (such as the Pittsburgh Zoo & PPG Aquarium, the National Aviary, and the

Phipps Conservatory), as well as established entities such as the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy and Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy. The Community Relations Manager will be responsible for preparing formalized agreements for all partnerships. Each agreement should address financial obligations and operational responsibilities for each entity, and clearly define the role of City. This staff position will also be responsible for reviewing leases and agreements up for renewal, including approving community benefits provisions. Community benefits provisions include requirements for public access, affordability, maintenance, and public engagement. The Community Relations Manager will also meet with partners periodically to manage relationships and ensure agreements are working as intended.

Policy 4.2

OpenSpace Strategy DD: Fostering Hands-On Involvement will implement Policy 4.2.

Policy 4.3

OpenSpace Strategies KK and LL (contained in Document) will implement Policy 4.3.

Policy 4.4

OpenSpace Strategy FF: Reinstating a Ranger Program

Reinstate a ranger program to meet the need for an effective system of enforcement, without which the parks will continue to decline and investments will not be maintained. The preferred model is the unarmed park ranger, who is trained and in communication with police and emergency services, and who is able to provide guidance and education to park users and to write citations.

Policy 4.5

OpenSpace Strategies Q: Designating a Parks, Open Space and Green Infrastructure Policy Director, S: Enhancing the Urban Forestry Program and T: Establishing a Natural Resource Manager will implement Policy 4.4 (comprehensive land management) and Policy 4.5 (sustainability and environmental stewardship).

Policy 4.6

OpenSpace Strategy GG: Expanding the Asset Management Program

OpenSpace Strategy KK (contained in Document) will provide data needed to expand the asset management program to more effectively address the parks and open space system. As part of the asset management program expansion, the unified GIS inventory of assets will be used to store asset data. Using the inventory, the City should define a replacement value of assets and update the valuation annually. As capital improvements are made, asset data should be updated with expected lifecycles.

Inspect documented assets on a schedule, such as a five-year cycle where 20% of assets are inspected each year. Inspect mandated, high-value, or heavily used assets more frequently (e.g., playgrounds, buildings, swimming pools). This inspection would be in addition to the Park Inspection Program drafted by DPW, which evaluates sites for cleanliness and other factors, and is intended to provide detailed input to the asset preservation/capital replacement program.

Policy 4.7

OpenSpace Strategy HH: Establishing an Enterprise and Funding Development Manager

Pittsburgh should establish a position focused on developing new funding streams generated from system resources and from outside funders. This new position will also be charged with corporate and foundation relationship management to secure sponsorships and funding for strategies, as well as identifying and making recommendations on other revenue generation ideas and services. Revenue generation from the system could include event rentals, retail/restaurant leases, parking fees, film shooting, concessionaires. It could also include revenue sources such as mitigation banking (a technique used in other areas of the country), carbon sequestration credits, sustainable forestry or other land resources, and franchise/lease fees for energy production or cell tower locations. Mitigation banks are restored wetlands, where an entity negatively impacting wetlands can purchase credits to offset the impact. Credits are sold and the revenue generated is used to fund restoration, long-term stewardship through

an endowment, and in some markets creates a “profit” which can be used to fund other projects. As Appendix F shows, there is also value in stormwater infiltration in the existing open space system. This value can be increased as pervious acreage is added to the system.

Policy 4.8

OpenSpace Strategy II: Establishing a Vacant Lands Coordinator

Designate a staff member to coordinate all vacant land reuse inquiries. The coordinator could be housed in any one of the City departments (Finance, City Planning, DPW, CitiParks) and divisions tasked with addressing this land, but should, by assignment, work across organizational lines. This coordinator should be responsible for interacting with community groups and the public, maintaining a current database of opportunity properties, identifying suitable properties for proposed uses, making recommendations on properties with the highest priority for title clearing, and navigating (and helping the public navigate) the internal City processes for reusing land. The Vacant Lands Coordinator will be responsible for prioritizing

title clearing, and for preparing minimum standards for community-based organizations to take over vacant land for community benefit (without necessarily taking title to the property). Standards should address liability, identify responsibilities of the organization and the City, and spell out a path for the organization to take ownership of the property in the future. The intent of the standards is to provide quicker access to land for organizations to support experimentation and innovation.

Policy 4.9

OpenSpace Strategy JJ: Retaining Talent

Implement initiatives to increase staff retention and reduce “brain drain”, including regularly analyzing pay scales, updating and adjusting Human Resources policies to encourage a vibrant workplace, increasing training, allowing autonomy and ownership, rewarding initiative, and encouraging cross-disciplinary team-building.

Strategies: DOCUMENT

As OpenSpacePGH guides the system into the future, up-to-date information will be critical. By organizing information collection, data sharing, decision making and progress tracking, Pittsburgh can maximize the efficiency of implementation efforts and do more with limited resources.

Policy 5.1

OpenSpace Strategy KK: Implementing Data Management Protocols

Pittsburgh should designate an open space data manager, an existing employee who will be charged with systematically integrating open space data. The first step will be convening a work group to discuss and agree on data definitions before consolidating the inventory into the GIS system, to identify gaps in data regarding assets (both built and natural), and determine which data is not needed for ongoing management (and therefore should be a lower priority). Within the data management system, facilities should be organized by asset groups (e.g., site furnishings/amenities, buildings/

structures, recreation features/facilities, built infrastructure, green infrastructure, equipment/fleet). Eventually, parks maintenance management schedules and evaluations should be integrated with the GIS database. Protocols for collecting user data regarding programs, special events, and facilities should also be established to track data in a consistent manner among program areas and over time.

Policy 5.2

OpenSpace Strategy LL: Aligning Budgeting Objectives

In order to effectively manage limited resources, the City should create more consistency in tracking the budget for the open space system:

- Track expenditures and revenues consistently, broken down by specific program elements (e.g., vacant land management, building maintenance, grounds maintenance by land classification, swimming pool operation and maintenance, sports field maintenance, Roving Art Cart, farmers markets) and by major facility (e.g., Schenley Oval Sportsplex, individual recreation centers, Oliver Bathhouse).
- Set financial targets for performance. Evaluate performance at least annually. Performance targets can include expenditure levels (costs per acre for different classifications), revenue generation levels (percent of swimming pool costs generated through user fees, gross and net cost per capita), and participation levels (event turnout, program days, number served). Use the information generated to assist in decision-making.
- Require maintenance and program coordination staff to track budget by major categories. For maintenance staff, this should include time tracking by site. The DPW Asset Management System can provide a starting point, but should be instituted for all departments. If properly instituted, the cost of all City actions associated with a particular type of site should be quantifiable (e.g. to evaluate greenways, including clean-up of dumping, hazard tree removal, police enforcement).

OpenSpace Strategy MM: Updating the Needs Assessment and Suitability Analysis Regularly

As populations shift and projects are completed, the Department of City Planning should use the methodology defined in the Needs Assessment and Suitability Analysis (NASA) to

assess progress on the open space system. The Assessment should be updated approximately every five years. The methodology is as follows:

- Use the street, sidewalk, trails, and active transportation network to evaluate access to open spaces, developed parks, and recreation facilities. Avoid using an “as-the-crow-flies” straight line radius buffer analysis around the

Table 7-5 Needs Assessment and Suitability Analysis Targets

Feature	Target	Notes
Open Space and Park Land		
Accessible public open space	Within ½ mile	Reduce to ¼ mile of the highest housing or job density areas
Community parks	Within 1 mile	Strive to provide within ¾ mile in high population density areas. Regional parks can serve as well.
Neighborhood Park	Within ½ mile	Strive for ¼ mile within higher density areas. Community and regional parks can serve as well.
Riverfront Park	Every ½ mile	Along each river
Recreation Centers	Within 2 miles	To be located in community parks with transit access.
Sports Fields		
Neighborhood Scale Sports Field	Within 1 mile	Either diamond or rectangular field
Community Scale Sports Field Grouping	Within 3 miles	A cluster of either diamond or rectangular fields
Diamond Shaped Fields (total supply)	1/5000 residents	
Rectangular Fields (total supply)	1/5000 residents	
Other Facilities		
Swimming Pools	Within 2-3 miles	Considering pools operated by other providers.
Basketball court	Within ½ mile	
Other courts	Within 1 mile	Maintaining a mix of court types
Local Spray Parks	Within 1 mile	
Community scale spray parks	Within 2 miles	

locations, which does not reflect how people actually traverse the city.

- Collect data and incorporate actual access points to Pittsburgh's open spaces and parks into PGH GIS to improve the analysis.
- Over time, incorporate data on the presence of sidewalks and sidewalk/trail grades to determine ease of walking or bicycling to access a park site.
- Incorporate quality and condition ratings for each developed park using the ratings developed during OpenSpacePGH as a baseline, and update these ratings annually as capital improvements are put in place.
- Utilize the target distances and service levels identified in Table 7-5 in the NASA updates.

OpenSpace Strategy NN: Implementing User Feedback Protocols

Develop and implement user feedback protocols to obtain user feedback consistently. This includes consistent instruments to track satisfaction with various aspects of open space services, that are deployed on a consistent basis (quarterly, annually, after each program cycle) such as a consistent program participant satisfaction questionnaire, a regular survey of sports groups regarding field use, and inclusion of

parks maintenance, trails, and recreation program questions on citywide satisfaction surveys. Track and report on satisfaction, and use the data to inform decision-making about services and programs.

Policy 5.3

OpenSpace Strategy OO: Advancing OpenSpacePGH through LandUsePGH

The City should actively address vacant land and open space projects as part of planning for the land uses across the city in LandUsePGH.

- Consolidate and designate lands that are identified for inclusion in the permanent open space system. Special attention should be paid to property designated because of adjacency to existing parks and greenways.
- Reconsider the Golden Triangle District and Downtown Riverfront District, and Specialty Planned District open space requirements in the current zoning code. These requirements have resulted in an excellent inventory of small public squares and plazas Downtown. More public sites are not necessarily needed, as all of Downtown is within $\frac{1}{4}$ or $\frac{1}{2}$ mile of a public open space. In the land use component of PLANPGH, Pittsburgh should

define conditions establishing when open space dedication should be required, and establish thresholds for impact fees or other compensation methods to increase the usability of existing sites when on-site space is not needed.

- Support continuation of the Riverfront Overlay District, which mandates open space along the river's edge.
- Update the Pittsburgh Code, possibly in two phases: the first being quick clean-ups eliminating conflicts between the Code and OpenSpacePGH, specifically in Title Four (Public Places and Property), and a second phase being a more extensive overhaul of the Code in all aspects regarding open space and vacant property.

Policy 5.4

OpenSpace Strategy PP: Reporting Progress

OpenSpacePGH is a 25-year plan. Evaluating performance and progress will be critical to making sure Pittsburgh is on track and can adjust course when needed. The challenge of reporting progress is to define a short list of meaningful measures that can be generated from data that should be readily available if recommendations are followed, and to avoid creating an onerous

performance evaluation, with too many measures or measures that require inordinate staff time.

The Department of City Planning should create a report card or dashboard style progress report to be distributed annually to elected officials, staff and partners. The progress report should depict the following key metrics:

- % of City with an open space within ½ mile
- % of City with a community park within 1 mile
- % of City with a neighborhood park within ½ mile
- # of parcels and acreage of vacant and distressed lands
 - *change since previous year*
 - *# of parcels and acreage of lands recycled*
- Cost per resident of providing open space, parks and recreation services
- Predictive Calculator Results (See Appendix F)
- Value of Pittsburgh Open Space System based on Predictive Calculator
- Change in value from 2011 baseline

An update to this dashboard should be made annually and distributed to decision makers, community advocates and City staff.

Prioritizing Strategies

The prioritization criteria below were developed with the input of the Management Committee and Green Ribbon Committee, and are intended to be used to prioritize all recommendations and projects within OpenSpacePGH. This prioritization process is a tool to create capital improvement plans and annual work plans to implement OpenSpacePGH.

- Enhances partnerships - The strategy creates new partnerships or strengthens existing partnerships. For example, this can be achieved through cost-sharing, joint capital development, or programmatic collaborations. It can also include involvement of the public through volunteering and working with groups and organizations for ongoing open space land stewardship.
- Provides multiple benefits - The strategy also has the potential to lower costs, increase property value, provide environmental services, and enhance the multi-modal transportation network. The calculator tools in Appendix F can be used to determine if tangible multiple benefits are provided.
- Achieves greater equity - The strategy adds or enhances park sites, recreation facilities, natural areas or recreation programs for identified underserved populations or in underserved areas of the city.
- Is catalytic - The strategy will spur investment by other entities, advance other City projects, or it strengthens Pittsburgh's identity as a world class city.
- Creates greater efficiency or cost effectiveness - The strategy makes the best possible use of existing investments in land and facilities. For example, the strategy stabilizes, enhances or restores habitat or other ecological functions or the strategy provides a direct or indirect return on the investment of community resources.
- Meets recreation needs - The strategy fills a gap in service and priority recreation needs identified during the OpenSpacePGH planning process.
- Quick win - The strategy represents a limited time opportunity or a relatively low cost or effort relative to the resulting impact.


The list of strategies is lengthy and there is only a certain amount of staff and financial capacity each year. Therefore, implementation steps must be carefully prioritized and planned out with progress tracked on the accompanying Implementation Table, a key implementation tracking tool for each of the elements.

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KEY: PRIORITY: VH = very high priority; H = high priority; M = medium priority; L = low priority
 COST TYPE: I = one time cost; R = recurring cost
 FUNDING LEVEL (5 Years): \$ = \$2 million or less; \$\$ = \$2 million to \$8 million; \$\$\$ = \$8 million+

		PRIORITY (Very High, High, Medium, Low)	CITY LEAD	FUNDING LEVEL (\$, \$\$, \$\$\$)	RECURRING (R) OR ONE-TIME (I) COST	FUNDING SOURCE		STAFFING		
						CITY	GRANT	Add City Staff	Refocus Existing Staff	Hire Consultant
TRANSITION		Goal: Transition the right size and mix of opportunities and resources								
OPENSOURCE POLICY 1.1		Target investment to ensure adequate access to parks and open spaces for all City residents.								
Strategy A: Transitioning Community Parks Implement the recommended treatment for transitioning each community park through annual allocations in the Capital Improvement Plan. Prioritize the signature parks (Allegheny Commons, Mellon, Sheraden, Southside) first, with future improvements being prioritized by their ability to improve the park quality. Potential Funding Sources: City General Fund; State Funding (DCNR); NPP/NAP Tax Credits; NID/BID Development; PHMC (Allegheny Commons); RCAP Funds; Redevelopment Funds; Grants; Bond; National / Local Foundations OpenSpace Partners: Community Groups/Organizations; Allegheny Commons Initiative; Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy (PPC); Western Pennsylvania Conservancy (WPC); Design Center; Penn State Center; Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA)		VH	X	\$\$\$	R, I	X	X			X
Strategy B: Prioritizing Improvements in Underserved Neighborhoods Implement the park improvements in underserved neighborhoods through annual allocations in the Capital Improvement Plan. Prioritize parks that are of fair or poor quality as well as those that are determined to be in the greatest disrepair. Potential Funding Sources: City General Fund; State Funding (DCNR); Redevelopment Funds; Green Up; Grants; Bond OpenSpace Partners: Community Groups/Organizations; PPC; URA; University of Pittsburgh; Penn State Center; Design Center; Non-Profits		VH	X	\$\$\$	R, I	X	X			X
Strategy C: Transitioning Neighborhood Parks Implement the recommended treatment for transitioning each neighborhood park through annual allocations in the Capital Improvement Plan. Prioritize parks which are of fair or poor park quality, as well as those that are determined to be in the greatest disrepair. The Suitability Analysis should be used to determine the future uses of parks recommended for divestment. Potential Funding Sources: City General Fund; State Funding (DCNR), RCAP Funds; Redevelopment Funds; Green Up; Grants; Bond OpenSpace Partners: Community Groups/Organizations; WPC (for naturalization); PPC; Student Conservation Association (SCA)		VH	X	\$\$\$	R, I	X	X			X
Strategy D: Phasing Out Special Use Sites Phase out special use sites as the functions of the site are incorporated into nearby parks through annual allocations in the Capital Improvement Plan. Potential Funding Sources: City General Fund; Redevelopment Funds; Green Up; Grants OpenSpace Partners: Community Groups/Organizations; Non-Profits; URA; Pittsburgh Public Schools (PPS)		L	X	\$\$	I	X	X			

		PRIORITY (Very High, High, Medium, Low)	CITY LEAD	FUNDING LEVEL (\$, \$\$, \$\$\$)	RECURRING (R) OR ONE-TIME (I) COST	FUNDING SOURCE		STAFFING		
KEY: PRIORITY: VH = very high priority; H = high priority; M = medium priority; L = low priority COST TYPE: I = one time cost; R = recurring cost FUNDING LEVEL (5 Years): \$ = \$2 million or less; \$\$ = \$2 million to \$8 million; \$\$\$ = \$8 million+						CITY	GRANT	Add City Staff	Refocus Existing Staff	Hire Consultant
Strategy E: Filling Gaps With New Neighborhood Parks Implement the park improvements in underserved neighborhoods through annual allocations in the Capital Improvement Plan. Priority should be given to projects that serve underserved areas, that are in high-density locations and/or areas where the nearest parks are of poor or fair park quality. Potential Funding Sources: City General Fund; Redevelopment Funds; Grants OpenSpace Partners: Community Groups/Organizations; Private Businesses (Plaza-type program); PPS; Design Center; Universities		M	X	\$\$\$	R,I	X				X
OPENSOURCE POLICY 1.2 Provide appropriately scaled parks and facilities within the open space system.										
Strategy F: Enhancing Regional Parks Support implementation of regional park improvements in conjunction with the recommendations of the Regional Parks Master Plan. Potential Funding Sources: ARAD; Funding Campaign; City General Fund; Redevelopment Funds; Grants; National Scenic Byway Program (for Emerald View) OpenSpace Partners: Mount Washington CDC (MWDCD); Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy; Western Pennsylvania Conservancy; Non-Profits; Foundations; Community Groups/Organizations		M		\$\$\$	R,I		X			
Strategy G: Building New Riverfront Parks Acquire and build new riverfront parks. Priority should be given to sites that fill a gap in the riverfront park system and are deemed to be a catalytic investment that creates the greatest surrounding economic benefit. Potential Funding Sources: Funding Campaign; City General Fund; Redevelopment Funds; Grants; Bond; Urban Waters Program (US EPA) OpenSpace Partners: URA; Design Center; Riverlife; Friends of the Riverfront; Non-Profits; Foundations; Community Groups/Organizations: Allegheny County & Surrounding Municipalities		H		\$\$\$	R,I		X			
Strategy H: Removing Decommissioned Facilities Remove closed facilities and regreen sites. Priority should be given to facilities that are a public safety hazard and those that have the greatest visibility. Potential Funding Sources: City General Fund; Redevelopment Funds; Grants OpenSpace Partners: Community Groups/Organizations; PPC: Private Sector (Re-Using/Recycling Facilities to be removed)		VH	X	\$\$	I	X				




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					CITY	GRANT	Add City Staff	Refocus Existing Staff	Hire Consultant
Strategy I: Investing in Sports Fields Implement sports field improvements. Priority should be given to community-scale fields that are in the greatest need for repair or have drainage or other issues. Potential Funding Sources: Funding Campaign; City General Fund; Redevelopment Funds; Grants; Bond; User Fees (for operations) OpenSpace Partners: User groups (sports leagues); Professional Sports Organizations; PPS; Private Operators; Greater Pittsburgh Convention & Visitors Bureau	M	X	\$\$\$	R,I	X				X
Strategy J: Diversifying Play Experiences Implement playground improvements on a 10-year cycle, diversifying play experiences as sites are renovated. Playgrounds in community community parks, nature play, and destination playgrounds should be prioritized. Potential Funding Sources: City General Fund; Redevelopment Funds; Green Up; Grants; Bond OpenSpace Partners: Community Groups/Organizations; PPC; WPC; MWCD; Hill House; Duquesne University; KaBoom!	H	X	\$\$	R	X				
Strategy K: Developing a Regional-Scale Special Events Venue Develop a regional-scale special events venue to better facilitate the City's role in economically important special events. The first step is to conduct a feasibility and siting study that also evaluates the costs and benefits of different operation models. Potential Funding Sources: City General Fund; Redevelopment Funds; Grants; Bond OpenSpace Partners: Business Community; Professional Sports Organizations; Private Operators; Greater Pittsburgh Convention & Visitors Bureau	M	X	\$\$	R,I	X				X
Strategy L: Enhancing Outdoor Recreation Opportunities Provide more outdoor recreation opportunities working with user groups. Prioritize opportunities that have strong partnerships for fundraising and operational management. Potential Funding Sources: User Group Contributions (In-Kind and Funds); City General Fund; Redevelopment Funds; Grants; Bond OpenSpace Partners: User Groups and Advocates; Community Groups/Organizations; Private Operators; Corporations (for sponsorship); Healthcare Community; REI; Venture Outdoors	VH	X	\$\$	R,I	X	X			
Strategy M: Rebuilding Recreation Centers Build new recreation centers that meet business plan goals and are more adaptable to a range of uses and programs. Potential Funding Sources: Bond; Grants; User Fees (for operations); Senior Corps OpenSpace Partners: Business Community; Pittsburgh Public Schools; Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy; Health Care Providers; Design Center; Non-Profits; Community Groups/Organizations	L	X	\$\$\$	R,I	X				X




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					CITY	GRANT	Add City Staff	Refocus Existing Staff	Hire Consultant
Strategy N: Renewing Pittsburgh's Swimming Pools Build new indoor and outdoor swimming pools that meet business plan goals and create a greater diversity of opportunities for swimming and aquatic recreation. Potential Funding Sources: Bond; Grants; User Fees (for operations) OpenSpace Partners: Business Community; Health Care Providers; Non-Profits; Community Groups/Organizations; PPC; PPS	L	X	\$\$\$	R,I	X				X
Strategy O: Building More Spray Parks Add more spray parks, prioritizing locations in community parks and in areas without current access to them. Potential Funding Sources: Bond, Grants OpenSpace Partners: Non-Profits; Community Groups/Organizations	M	X	\$\$	R,I	X				X
OPENSOURCE POLICY 1.3 Provide an open space system that balances natural and designed landscapes, active and passive enjoyment, and permanent and temporary re-uses of vacant and distressed properties to achieve financial, social and ecological benefits for all.									
Strategy P: Creating a Vacant Land Toolkit Create a vacant land toolkit to facilitate the reuse of vacant land. Potential Funding Sources: General Fund OpenSpace Partners: Non-Profits; Community Groups/Organizations; Private Business; WPC; Growth through Energy & Community Health (GTECH); Pittsburgh Community Reinvestment Group (PCRG); Penn State Cooperative Extension; Universities; Design Center	H	X	\$	R	X	-	-	X	-


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Goal: Integrate natural areas into the system															
OPENSOURCE POLICY 2.1	Conserve and restore the ecological health of the city's rivers and streams.														
OPENSOURCE POLICY 2.2	Maximize the stormwater management and water quality enhancement potential of the open space system.														
OPENSOURCE POLICY 2.3	Preserve Pittsburgh's character-defining hillsides, views, and scenic resources.														
	Strategy Q: Designating a Parks, Open Space and Green Infrastructure Policy Director Designate a Parks, Open Space and Green Infrastructure Policy Director to coordinate City efforts related to parks, open space and green infrastructure, including cross-departmental collaboration and leading development of the annual capital improvement program. Potential Funding Sources: City General Fund OpenSpace Partners: 10,000 Friends; Western Pennsylvania Conservancy; Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy; MWCDC; Authorities; Non-Profits; Community Groups/Organizations	H	X	\$	R	X				X					
	Strategy R: Providing More Non-Motorized River Access Build river access projects (kayak/canoe launches, etc.), focusing at or near riverfront parks and in areas that do not currently have nearby access. Evaluate the designation of water trails. Potential Funding Sources: City General Fund, Grants, Fundraising, Bond, Urban Waters Program (US EPA) OpenSpace Partners: Friends of the Riverfront, Riverlife, Venture Outdoors, Other User and Advocacy Groups, Non-Profits, Foundations, Community Groups/Organizations	H		\$\$	R,I	X	X								
OPENSOURCE POLICY 2.4	Enhance and replenish the function and condition of the urban forest.														
	Strategy S: Enhancing the Urban Forestry Program Develop heritage tree inventories and protection, provide more funding for tree planting and care. Prioritize locations in conjunction with the Urban Forest Master Plan. Potential Funding Sources: City General Fund, Grants; Stormwater Fees; Future Carbon Sequestration Funding; Re-Leaf Program OpenSpace Partners: Treerevitalize; Tree Pittsburgh; WPC; PPC; Friends of the Riverfront, MWCDC	H	X	\$	R	X	X								
OPENSOURCE POLICY 2.5	Ensure the ecological health of the open space system.														
	Strategy T: Establishing a Natural Resource Manager Establish a Natural Resource Manager position to develop, analyze, and manage the City's natural resource lands and conservation programs. Potential Funding Sources: City General Fund OpenSpace Partners: Western Pennsylvania Conservancy; Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy; MWCDC	H	X	\$	R	X			X						

<div>OPEN SPACE PGH</div> <div>KEY: PRIORITY: VH = very high priority; H = high priority; M = medium priority; L = low priority COST TYPE: I = one time cost; R = recurring cost FUNDING LEVEL (5 Years): \$ = \$2 million or less; \$\$ = \$2 million to \$8 million; \$\$\$ = \$8 million+</div>		PRIORITY (Very High, High, Medium, Low)	CITY LEAD	FUNDING LEVEL (\$, \$\$, \$\$\$)	RECURRING (R) OR ONE-TIME (I) COST	FUNDING SOURCE		STAFFING		
						CITY	GRANT	Add City Staff	Refocus Existing Staff	Hire Consultant
Strategy U: Expanding and Enhancing Greenways Expand the Greenway system. Prioritize hillside lands that create connections for trails or for habitat to and from parks, the rivers, and neighborhood centers. Enhance greenways with trails and other suitable low impact recreation elements. Potential Funding Sources: City General Fund OpenSpace Partners: Western Pennsylvania Conservancy; Mount Washington CDC; Neighborhood Groups		H	X	\$	R	X				
Strategy V: Managing Invasive Species Improve the ecological health of open space areas by removing or eliminating invasive species and revegetating degraded areas. Potential Funding Sources: City General Fund OpenSpace Partners: Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy; Alcosan; Western Pennsylvania Conservancy; MWDC		H	X	\$	I	X				C
OPENSOURCE POLICY 2.6 Connect the system.										
Strategy W: Updating Signage and Wayfinding Standards Develop new signage and wayfinding standards and implement, building off of the existing model of the signage introduced in the Regional Parks. Potential Funding Sources: City General Fund; Grants OpenSpace Partners: Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy; Friends of the Riverfront; MWDC; Design Center		VH	X	\$	I	X	X			X
Strategy X: Expanding the Multi-Use Trails Network Build more paved trails, sidewalks, and crosswalks to connect parks, open spaces, neighborhoods, and the rivers in conjunction with the recommendations of MovePGH. Potential Funding Sources: MAP-21; City General Fund; Grants; Redevelopment Funds; Transportation Funds; Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program (National Parks Service) OpenSpace Partners: Friends of the Riverfront; BikePGH; Bike and Walking Advocacy Groups; Community Groups/Organizations		H	X	\$\$	R,I	X	X			
Strategy Y: Developing a Network of Hiking / Mountain Biking Trails Build natural surface trails for recreational purposes in greenways, natural areas, and open spaces, placing priority on community and regional parks that do not currently have a developed trail system. Potential Funding Sources: City General Fund; Grants, User Groups and Volunteers In-Kind; Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program (National Parks Service) OpenSpace Partners: Pittsburgh Trail Advocacy Group (PTAG); User Groups; Advocacy Groups; Pittsburgh Off-Road Cyclists; Audubon; Emerald Trail Corps (MWDC); Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy		H	X	\$\$	R,I	X	X			

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ACTIVATE Goal: Activate people and places according to their changing needs and desires										
OPENSOURCE POLICY 3.1 Increase community outreach and the cultural relevance of recreation programming and information.										
Strategy Z: Enhancing Communications and Outreach Update communications plan and refresh communications tools regularly.		H	X	\$	R	X	X		X	
Potential Funding Sources: City General Fund; User Fees (for recreation programs); Grants OpenSpace Partners: Foundations; Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy; Design Center										
OPENSOURCE POLICY 3.2 Provide hands-on, customized, locally focused recreation and community programs and services that are adaptable to changing community needs, recreation trends, shifting interests, and city demographic characteristics.										
OPENSOURCE POLICY 3.3 Advance individual, public and environmental health through programs, practices, and policies.										
OPENSOURCE POLICY 3.4 Provide and facilitate high-quality programs to support active living, fitness, social engagement and cultural understanding.										
OPENSOURCE POLICY 3.5 Promote programs and facilities that connect people with nature and that instill an appreciation and understanding of the natural environment.										
Strategy AA: Increasing Outdoor Recreation Programs Dedicate or reclassify a staff person to act as an Outdoor Recreation Program Supervisor. Recruit and/or put on more outdoor recreation programs, focusing on programs that include partnerships for operations, create unique experiences, and are financially self-supporting.		VH	X	\$	R	X	X		X	
Potential Funding Sources: City General Fund; Grants; User Fees; Sponsorships OpenSpace Partners: Venture Outdoors; User Groups; Business Community; Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy										
Strategy BB: Enhancing Event Support Put more resources towards special events and festivals and amend policies surrounding the same.		H	X	\$	R	X	X		X	
Potential Funding Sources: City General Fund; Grants; User Fees; Sponsorships OpenSpace Partners: User Groups; Business Community; Greater Pittsburgh Convention & Visitors Bureau (VisitPittsburgh)										
Strategy CC: Defining New Service Provision Models Convene an internal work group to define more flexible service provision models for recreation programs and services, one that is not based on brick and mortar buildings and is adaptable to change. CitiParks should designate a staff person to serve as the convener.		H	X	\$	I	X			X	
Potential Funding Sources: City General Fund; User Fees (from recreation programs) OpenSpace Partners: Non-Profits										

<div>OPENSOURCEPGH</div>		PRIORITY (Very High, High, Medium, Low)	CITY LEAD	FUNDING LEVEL (\$, \$\$, \$\$\$)	RECURRING (R) OR ONE-TIME (I) COST	FUNDING SOURCE		STAFFING		
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Strategy DD: Fostering Hands-On Involvement Designate or hire a volunteer coordinator/manager, and expand involvement in the open space system. Potential Funding Sources: City General Fund; Grants OpenSpace Partners: Western Pennsylvania Conservancy; Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy; MWCDC; Non-Profits; Colleges/Universities; Business Community; Community Groups and Organizations		VH	X	\$	R	X	X		X	
OPENSOURCE POLICY 3.6	Activate spaces through design. Implemented by Transition projects and application of the Design and Development Guidelines	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
STEWARD	Goal: Steward the system with greater innovation and cooperation									
OPENSOURCE POLICY 4.1	Leverage the passion, strengths, energy, and fundraising potential of Pittsburgh's volunteer and nonprofit organizations.									
Strategy EE: Growing Partnerships Establish and hire a Community Relations Manager to manage partnerships and recruit and develop new partners for the development, management, maintenance, and programming of the City's open space system. Potential Funding Sources: City General Fund; Grants OpenSpace Partners: Western Pennsylvania Conservancy; Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy; Grow Pittsburgh; Friends of the Riverfront; MWCDC; Non-Profits; Colleges/Universities; Business Community; Community Groups and Organizations		VH	X	\$	R	X	X	X	X	
OPENSOURCE POLICY 4.2	Increase volunteer opportunities that support open spaces, parks, recreation, and programming. Implemented by Strategy DD (Fostering Hands-On Involvement).	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
OPENSOURCE POLICY 4.3	Clarify roles and responsibilities within City departments as well as with other public agencies regarding the open space, parks, and recreation system. Implemented by Strategies KK (Implementing Data Management Protocols) and LL (Aligning Budget Objectives).	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
OPENSOURCE POLICY 4.4	Manage the open space system comprehensively, strategically and in a coordinated manner. Strategy FF: Reinstating a Ranger Program Reinstitute a ranger program in the open space system as part of an increased system of enforcement. These would be unarmed rangers who are trained and in communication with police and emergency services, able to write citations and also provide guidance and education to park users and to write citations Potential Funding Sources: City General Fund; Grants OpenSpace Partners: Western Pennsylvania Conservancy; Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy; MWCDC; Non-Profits	H	X	\$\$	R	X	X	X		
	Implemented by Strategies A (Transitioning Community Parks), B (Transitioning Neighborhood Parks), C (Prioritizing Improvements in Underserved Neighborhoods), KK (Implementing Data Management Protocols) and LL (Aligning Budget Objectives).	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

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OPENSOURCE POLICY 4.5 Support sustainability and environmental stewardship in park design, development, maintenance, and management.														
		Implemented by Strategies A (Transitioning Community Parks), B (Transitioning Neighborhood Parks), C (Prioritizing Improvements in Underserved Neighborhoods), KK (Implementing Data Management Protocols) and LL (Aligning Budget Objectives).				-	-	-	-	-	-	-		
OPENSOURCE POLICY 4.6 Allocate adequate resources to sustain the public open space system.														
		Strategy GG: Expanding the Asset Management Program Add open space and parks assets to the asset management protocols.				VH	X	\$	R	X				
		Potential Funding Sources: City General Fund OpenSpace Partners: Western Pennsylvania Conservancy; Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy; Non-Profits												
OPENSOURCE POLICY 4.7 Foster revenue generation within the open space, parks, and recreation system .														
		Strategy HH: Establishing an Enterprise and Funding Development Manager Establish and hire a new position tasked with revenue-generation through programs and services and generation of funding for the open space system through outside sources and organizations.				H	X	\$	R	X		X		
		Potential Funding Sources: City General Fund OpenSpace Partners: User Groups; Private Operators and Businesses; Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy												
OPENSOURCE POLICY 4.8 Decrease long-term costs for the City.														
		Strategy II: Establishing a Vacant Lands Coordinator Designate or hire a vacant lands coordinator to serve as a coordinator of all vacant land inquiries and of the internal City process for using City-owned land for potential vacant land re-use strategies.				VH	X	\$	R	X	X			
		Potential Funding Sources: City General Fund; Grants OpenSpace Partners: G/Tech Strategies; URA; Community Groups and Organizations										X		
OPENSOURCE POLICY 4.9 Foster staff retention to maintain institutional knowledge and the investment in training.														
		Strategy JJ: Retaining Talent Implement initiatives to increase staff retention and reduce "brain drain", including regularly analyzing pay scales, updating and adjusting HR policies to encourage a vibrant workplace, increasing training, allowing autonomy and ownership, rewarding initiative, and encouraging cross-disciplinary team-building				VH	X	\$	R	X	-	-		
		Potential Funding Sources: City General Fund; Grants OpenSpace Partners: Non-Profits; Universities										X		
												-		

 KEY: PRIORITY: VH = very high priority; H = high priority; M = medium priority; L = low priority COST TYPE: I = one time cost; R = recurring cost FUNDING LEVEL (5 Years): \$ = \$2 million or less; \$\$ = \$2 million to \$8 million; \$\$\$ = \$8 million+		PRIORITY (Very High, High, Medium, Low)	CITY LEAD	FUNDING LEVEL (\$, \$\$, \$\$\$)	RECURRING (R) OR ONE-TIME (I) COST	FUNDING SOURCE		STAFFING		
DOCUMENT	Goal: Document the progress toward these goals					CITY	GRANT	Add City Staff	Refocus Existing Staff	Hire Consultant
OPENSOURCE POLICY 5.1	Coordinate and unify data collection across all facets of the parks, recreation and open space system.									
	Strategy KK: Implementing Data Management Protocols Designate a lead staff person and departmental contacts to integrate and expand the open space datasets. Potential Funding Sources: City General Fund (Existing Staff Time) OpenSpace Partners: Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy; Western Pennsylvania Conservancy; MWCDC	VH	X	\$	I	X			X	
OPENSOURCE POLICY 5.2	Make decisions that are data-driven.									
	Strategy LL: Aligning Budget Objectives Implement budget tracking improvements - ensuring detailed reporting and targeting to ensure that data is being best used in the decision-making process. Potential Funding Sources: City General Fund (Existing Staff Time) OpenSpace Partners: Community Groups and Organizations	VH	X	\$	I	X			X	
	Strategy MM: Updating the Needs Assessment and Suitability Analysis Regularly Designate a staff person to update the Needs Assessment at least every 5 years. Designate a staff person to continue to refine and rerun the Suitability Analysis at least every 2 years. Potential Funding Sources: City General Fund (Existing Staff Time) OpenSpace Partners: OpenSpacePGH Management Committee	H	X	\$	R	X			X	



KEY: PRIORITY: VH = very high priority; H = high priority; M = medium priority; L = low priority
 COST TYPE: I = one time cost; R = recurring cost
 FUNDING LEVEL (5 Years): \$ = \$2 million or less; \$\$ = \$2 million to \$8 million; \$\$\$ = \$8 million+

	PRIORITY (Very High, High, Medium, Low)	CITY LEAD	FUNDING LEVEL (\$, \$\$, \$\$\$)	RECURRING (R) OR ONE-TIME (I) COST	FUNDING SOURCE		STAFFING		
					CITY	GRANT	Add City Staff	Refocus Existing Staff	Hire Consultant
Strategy NN: Implementing User Feedback Protocols Develop and implement user feedback protocols to obtain user feedback consistently. Incorporate the data into decision-making about services and programs Potential Funding Sources: City General Fund (Existing Staff Time) OpenSpace Partners: OpenSpacePGH Management Committee	H	X	\$	R	X			X	
OPENSOURCE POLICY 5.3 Use land use strategies to streamline park and open space acquisition and designation.									
Strategy OO: Advancing OpenSpacePGH Through Regulations and Codes Update land use codes and the Pittsburgh Code to advance OpenSpacePGH. High priorities are a clean-up of the Pittsburgh Code, and advancement of OpenSpacePGH through LandUsePGH. Potential Funding Sources: PlanPGH OpenSpace Partners: Design Center	VH	X	\$	I	X			X	
OPENSOURCE POLICY 5.4 Monitor and report progress of OpenSpacePGH.									
Strategy PP: Reporting Progress Prepare an annual report card to judge progress made in the system by the implementation of the Plan. Potential Funding Sources: City General Fund (existing staff time) OpenSpace Partners: OpenSpacePGH Management Committee	VH	X	\$	R	X			X	