

# Best Practices

*Learning from Other Cities*

Atlanta

Boston

Chicago

New York City

Philadelphia

Portland

Seattle

Vancouver



GREEN SPACE PLANNING - US AND INTERNATIONAL EXAMPLES		Boston		Chicago		NYC		Philadelphia		Portland		Seattle	
City													
Name of Plan/Initiative	Project Greenspace	Opens Space Plan (2002-2008)	CitySpace	PlanNYC	GreenPlan	Park Vision 2020	Open Space 2100						
Previous Plan?	Parks, Open Space and Greenways Plan (1993)	Boston 400 - the first comprehensive planning process (directed by Redevelopment Agency)	Land Policies Plan (1990) and Parklands Needs Analysis (1993)	none	none	A plan was created in reaction to the 1995 Portland-Metro bond	Blue Ring, City Center Parks Task Force						
City Description	new-growing	mature	mature	mature-growing	mature-shrinking	new-growing	new-growing						
Catalysts/Other Reports	Greenspaces included in Atlanta's Economic Development Plan	The new "challenges / opportunities since the last open space plan" had been created (1993); the "Big Dig"	Mayor Initiatives; Millennium Park	Mayor Initiative; Ernst and Young Study on Parks and Economic Revitalization	Wharton Study on Vacant Lands; City Planning Commission Study	Portland is in the process of re-writing Park Vision 2020 so that it is "implementable"	Blue Ring						
Bond, Levy, or Special district?	Yes - Bond		Yes - Chicago Parks District			Yes - Bond	Yes - Levy						
Start Date	Sep-06	Late 1990's	1993	Jan-05		1999	?						
Compl Date	Aug-07	2001	1997 (some initiatives launched before 1997)	Summer 07	end of 2007	Official Release 2002	?						
Long-range goal?	Ensuring that there is a neighborhood park within a half-mile of every person, and integrating Atlanta's history and arts into the greenspace program.	Specific community objectives for the 2002-2006 period are found in the final section of the plan. Examples would be the preservation or acquisition of a small park in local neighborhood.	By 2010, each community will reach minimum acreage/1000 residents; by 2020, entire city will have acres/1000 and balance of regional and local access/opportunities	By 2030, every New Yorker will be within a 10 minute walk to a neighborhood park	Equity in Access by 2030	(1) Acquire 1870 acres of parkland, including 620 acres of protected habitat. (2) provide 100 new sports fields. (3) Build 6 new full service community centers. (4) Provide 150 additional miles of trails. (5) Increase urban forest on streets and in parks. (6) Create public plazas in each regional and town center.	Develop a comprehensive Open Space Plan for Seattle						
Contracted Out Work?	Project Management and Implementation Strategy; WRT Design; Public Involvement Coordinator and Public Relations; Malvada Consulting Group; Web Site; Metro Gift; GIS; Advanced Tech Solutions; Statistical Survey; ETC; Institute; Park Operations; PROS Consulting				Community Engagement; PA Horticulture Society, Drafting of Plan; Philadelphia-based planning firm								
Lead Agency/Org	Department of Planning & Community Development, Bureau of Planning	Boston Parks Department	City of Chicago, Chicago Park District, Forest Preserve District of Cook County; in 1996, School District joins as lead implementing agency	Mayor's Office of Environmental Coordination - the new office is called Mayor's Office of Long Term Planning and Sustainability	Managing Director's Office	Parks and Recreation	Urban Land Institute; University of Washington; City of Seattle						

GREENSPACE PLANNING - TRANSNATIONAL EXAMPLES		Chicago	NYC	Philadelphia	Portland	Seattle
City	Atlanta Boston	Chicago	NYC	Philadelphia	Portland	Seattle
Implementation Structure	Project Greenspace will be presented to the city council in 2007. It will be left to them to operationalize the goals in the annual capital improvement programs.	Executive Committee (Mayor's Chief of Staff, Parks District Superintendent, Chief Operating Officer of Chicago Public Schools)	Mayor Bloomberg	Managing Director's Office	The Parks and Recreation Board was created to oversee implementation of the plan.	
"Champions"	Mayor Franklin	Mayor Daley	Mayor Bloomberg			
Major Funders	City of Atlanta	Chicago Community Trust	City	State	City	ULI, City Council, University of Washington
Budget?		Originally 400K for first two years		around \$600,000		ULI grant, city council grant, in-kind donation from University and design firms
Partners	Department of Planning & Community Development, Bureau of Planning	Open Space advocates, open space agencies, public agencies, civic and community orgs, planning and development agencies	12 city agencies	14 city agencies; 12 federal, state, and non-profits	Community members were on the "vision team" and the PPRD coordinated with other local government agencies throughout the process.	UW College of Architecture and Urban Planning; joined by a coalition of over 50 organizations and city departments
"Task Force"	Mayor Franklin's Parks and Green Spaces Task Force (March 2002 - Oct. 2002) - this was separate of Project Greenspace	10 task forces: Neighborhood Spaces, Wetlands and Natural Areas, Lakefront, Greenways, Downtown District, Transportation Corridors, Industrial Corridors, Municipal Buildings, Finance and Management, + CitySpace Steering Committee	Mayor's Task Force on Sustainability - one element is open space (January 2005-December 2006)	2 pre-GreenPlan Task Forces: 1) inter-agency open space working group (2001 - Managing Director's Office); 2) Prior Study (2005-City Planning Commission)	System Development Charge Task Force	City-wide Green Futures Charrette

OPEN SPACE PLANNING - US AND INTERNATIONAL EXAMPLES							
City	Atlanta	Boston	Chicago	NYC	Philadelphia	Portland	Seattle
Phases	<p>Phase I: Project Initiation and Community Outreach Plan (September 2006); Phase II: Data Collection/Inventory and Analysis (October 2006); Phase III: Greenspace Plan Development (March 2007); Phase IV: Strategic Implementation Program (May 2007); Phase V: Draft and Final Plan Preparation (August 2007)</p>	<p>Late 1990's to 2001: Discussion with interest groups and within BPD department that led to drafting of the plan. 2002 to 2006: Planned implementation of citywide and community level goals</p>			<p>Phase I: Information Gathering (Spring 2006); Phase II: Community Engagement and Technical Needs Analysis (Winter 2006); Phase III: Recommendations (Winter 2007); Phase IV: Draft (TBD); Phase V: (TBD)</p>		<p>Phase I: Strategy and Coalition -- assemble coalition members, identify resources and project planning strategies into focus groups (August-Sept 2005); Phase II: Research, Design Brief, and Speakers - speaker series, background research, logistics development, guidance committee meetings to develop Guiding Principles and review Design Brief (October-Dec 2005); Phase III: Visioning, Synthesis, and Design - green futures charrette, technical panels, lectures, present synthesized open space vision to Executive and Guidance Comm (January-April 2006); Phase IV: Documentation and Dissemination -- Present Open Space Seattle process results to coalition members, charrette participants, city officials, civic leaders, and media</p>
Working Groups/Subcommittees			Working Groups = Task Forces	Open Space/Land Use working group	6 working groups (communication and civic engagement, cost/benefits, quality of life/healthy lifestyle, environmental quality, ?)		Guidance Committee and Executive Committee
Expert Panel					Peter Hanik (TPL); Patricia Galiager (former Director of Chicago's CitySpace plan); Carol Franklin (planner) -- during pilot phase		Green Speaker Series
Design Charrettes							Green Futures Charrette: 2-day planning process
Comm Engagement	<p>Public Forum Meetings: 3 in February 2007 - purpose was to inform public and get input to incorporate into plan; 2 in May 2007 - purpose is to involve citizens in defining actions that can be taken to implement the system</p>	<p>Multiple public forums were initiated by BPD. Furthermore, BPD attended community organized meetings and put-out a survey of community members.</p>	<p>Decentralization of Park District through NeighborSpace</p>	<p>4 month public outreach effort starting in December 2006 -- website (December 2006-March 2007); community leader meetings (January 2007 - 6 meetings); town hall meetings (Feb-March 2007 - 5 meetings by borough)</p>	<p>2 series of community meetings: Series One: (Winter 2006 - one meeting for each neighborhood - wish list" - incorporated into GreenPlan Draft). Series Two: (Winter 2007 - one meeting for each neighborhood - "draft rec and review, oning community planning)</p>	<p>Community members on "vision team" and providing input through forums and surveys.</p>	<p>Open Space 2100 is a community-driven initiative. The city is not necessarily an integral part of the process --</p>

GREENSPACE PLANNING GOALS AND INTERNATIONAL EXAMPLES							
City	Atlanta	Boston	Chicago	NYC	Philadelphia	Portland	Seattle
Neighborhood Planning	Public Forum Meetings	Public Forum Meetings	NeighborSpace (non-profit created by the City of Chicago in May 1996 -- acquires and insures land to be improved and managed by local community groups as small parks by targeting City-owned and tax delinquent vacant land and river edges)	Townhall meetings	Community Engagement process was by neighborhood, but the plan will be a city-wide framework -- and not detailed at the neighborhood level		Charrette "teams" were divided by watershed
Success?	Emerald Necklace		Creation of the Campus Park Program to eliminate blacktop in schoolyards, and the creation of the Chicago River Program, preserving riverfront open space during development	plan was just released	Community engagement process was a success (plan has yet to be released)	number of acres acquired	Neighborhood Matching Fund
Shortcomings?							Lacks city support
Next Steps?	Currently in Phase IV of the Process -- Summary Report Posted to Website (June 2007); Public Meeting on Recommendations (September 2007); Preparation of Final Plan (December 2007)	Boston is in the process of updating the plan -- plan is updated every 5 years		Implementation of Open Space Initiatives -- Mayor launches schoolyards to playgrounds initiative on July 2, 2007	Currently in Phase II of the process: Community meetings (Winter 2007). Draft of Plan, Final Version of Plan and Implementation	Currently working on how to implement plan and conducting a more rigorous analysis	
Contacts	Dee Merriam, Bureau of Planning	Aldo Girin, Senior Planner	Nelson Chueng, CitySpace Project Manager	Sue Donahue, Parks and Recreation Department	Bob Allen, Assistant Managing Director, Joan Reilly, PA Horticulture Society	Sue Donaldson, Portland Parks and Recreation	Nancy Rottle, University of Washington

## COMPARISON OF PARKS & RECREATION FACILITIES IN VARIOUS CITIES

	Portland	Seattle	Boston	Chicago	San Francisco	New York
City Population	533,427	573,911	596,638	2,842,518	739,426	8,213,839
Total park acres held by city						
Park & Rec Dept.	10,613	6,050	2,262	7,557	3,866	29,024
Total park acres held by all agencies	13,246	6,050	5,496	11,916	5,773	38,147
<b>Number of parks held by all city agencies</b>						
Playgrounds	281	430	304	569	213*	4012
Pools	121	168	220	512	144	1007
Tennis Courts	13	10	12	87	9	69
Sports Fields	111	165	88	618	155	712
Neighborhood Parks	365	185	395	1,041	88	800
Rec. Centers	98	61	not counted separately	283	132	864
Golf Courses	18	26	39	268	99	51
	6	5	2	11	9	16

**SOURCES:**

Total acres held by city Park & Rec Dept. from "Acres of Parkland per 1,000 Residents, by City and Agency", □ FY2006, by Trust for Public Land (TPL)

Number of parks held by all city agencies from "Park Units per 10,000 Residents", FY2006, by TPL

**Facilities data provided by:**

**Portland:** Josh Darling, GIS Specialist, Portland Parks & Recreation, and TPL

**Seattle:** [www.seattle.gov/parks/quickfacts.htm](http://www.seattle.gov/parks/quickfacts.htm), and TPL

**Boston:** Aldo Ghirin, Senior Planner, Boston Parks and Recreation Department, and TPL

**Chicago:** Doreen O'Donnell, Planning & Development Project Officer for the Chicago Park District, and TPL

**San Francisco:** Michelle Reyes, Intern, and Sean Stasio, Planner I & GIS Coordinator at RPD, and TPL

**New York:** 2004-2005 Biennial Report and [www.nycgovparks.org](http://www.nycgovparks.org) website, and TPL

\*number of units held by SF Recreation and Park Department only

## Total Parkland Per 1,000 Residents: Various Cities

	Austin, TX	Portland, OR	Seattle, WA	Boston, MA	San Francisco	Vancouver, BC	Chicago, IL	New York, NY
City size (acres)	160,969	85,964	53,677	30,922	29,844	28,160	145,362	194,115
Population	690,252	533,427	573,911	596,638	739,426	547,000*	2,842,518	8,213,839
Population density	4.2	6.2	10.7	19.3	24.7	19.4	19.5	42.3
Total acreage of all public parklands (city, state, federal)	26,586	13,246	6,050	5,496	5,773	3200	11,916	38,147
Total parkland as percentage of city land area	16.50%	15.40%	11.30%	17.70%	19.30%	11.30%	8.20%	19.70%
Acres of parkland per	38.5 acres	24.8 acres	10.5 acres	9.3 acres	7.7 acres	5.8 acres	4.2 acres	4.6 acres

Sources:

\*2001 Canadian Census data

Trust for Public Land, Center for Park Excellence: "Acres of Parkland per 1000 residents by City and Agency", FY2006  
 Trust for Public Land, Center for Park Excellence: "Total Parkland as Percent of City Land Area", FY2006