

Hays Woods Task Force

Findings and Recommendations
to Mayor William Peduto and the
Pittsburgh City Council

AUGUST 2019



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Letter from Task Force Co-Chairs.....	5
Background Information.....	6
Maps.....	10
Task Force Process.....	16
Summary of Community Meetings.....	18
Summary of Task Force Recommendations.....	20
Guiding Principles.....	21
Consolidated Phasing & Goals.....	26
Topics for Future Study & Master Planning.....	28
Potential Partner Organizations.....	29
Appendix A: Task Force Committee Reports	
Programming and Education Committee Report	
Management and Organization Committee Report	
Development Committee Report	
Layout, Connectivity, and Environment Committee Report	

Appendix B: Community Feedback Activity Results



LETTER FROM TASK FORCE CO-CHAIRS

One year ago, we were appointed by Mayor Bill Peduto to chair the Hays Woods Task Force to develop recommendations for the future of this remarkable urban greenspace, recently acquired by the Urban Redevelopment Authority, and to be transferred to the City of Pittsburgh.

We want to thank the members of the Task Force who gave their time and shared their expertise and insights into generating principles and identifying opportunities in this report. The Task Force includes parks and open space experts, community organizations, nonprofit stakeholders, and City, County and State officials who all contributed to the process.

Our charge was to make recommendations to the Mayor and Pittsburgh City Council based upon our findings. To that end, the Task Force formed four committees: Programming and Education; Layout, Connectivity and Environment; Management and Organization; and Development. The Task Force worked together to incorporate each committee's goals into the vision and guiding principles documented in this report. This is the beginning of what will continue to be a careful, deliberative process of engagement and master planning for the long-term.

This urban open space is a remarkable opportunity for not only Pittsburgh and its surrounding communities, but for the region. For generations, one of the most enduring assets of our community have been our parks. Hays Woods will add a critical addition to our verdant and dynamic park system.

Two handwritten signatures in black ink. The first signature is 'Corey O'Connor' and the second is 'Thomas Murphy'. Both are written in a cursive, flowing style.

Co-Chairs of the Hays Woods Task Force
Corey O'Connor, Councilman, District 5, City of Pittsburgh
Thomas Murphy, Former Mayor, City of Pittsburgh

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Hays Woods - Introduction

Hays Woods is a large tract of undeveloped land in southeastern Pittsburgh, which served historical industrial uses including coal mining, but now maintains a sense of wilderness in an otherwise urban area. Despite the environmental degradation typical of its former uses, it features areas of significant tree canopy, seasonal streams, steep escarpments and ridgelines with views of the city, and rare native flora and fauna - even a pair of nesting bald eagles. A series of trails crisscross the property from utility corridors and remnant mining paths to foot trails through deep brush.

Use of these trails indicate the site's popularity among outdoor recreation enthusiasts, despite the fact that the land is not currently open to the general public without a permit. Because of Hays Woods' unique qualities and the potential for conservation, recreation, and education, the City of Pittsburgh and the Urban Redevelopment Authority are currently endeavoring to establish Hays Woods as a public park that will expand its value to patrons for generations to come while preserving and restoring important natural ecosystems.

The URA purchased Hays Woods in 2016 from the Betters Family, whose contributions helped to make the land available at a reduced value for the park. In Spring 2018, City of Pittsburgh Mayor Peduto appointed a task force to explore potential uses for the site, establish guiding principles, and outline a scope of work for the initial planning stages. The task force has been charged with discussing aspects and possible use of the site including but not limited to layout, trails, connectivity, development, programming, environmental considerations, public participation in planning, funding, and long-term operations and maintenance.



View southeast from Hays Woods ridgeline across the Monogahela River toward Hazelwood

The Department of City Planning has aided the Task Force through the process to ensure that the Task Force's recommendations align with City policy and incorporate planning best practices. This report reflects the activity, discussions, and work of the Task Force as a precursor to the park master-planning process.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Site Context

The Hays Woods tract was purchased by the Pittsburgh Urban Redevelopment Authority in 2016. The purchase consisted of a large 626-acre parcel in the City of Pittsburgh, Council District 5, as well as a few smaller ancillary parcels, some of which are in Baldwin Borough. The task force focused on the main 626-acre parcel shown in this report. It is largely bordered by Baldwin Borough to the north and south. The primary vehicular access point currently exists at the end of Agnew Street, in Baldwin, and there is also a parking space entrance off of Glass Run Road.

The site was previously zoned SP-6, a specially-planned zoning district based on the former development proposal for 'Palisades Park'. However, since a Final Land Development Plan for Palisades Park was never approved for the site the zoning has reverted to the underlying designation of 'Parks', a low-density district that allows parks and recreation uses as well as single-family residential and some other conditional uses.

The City of Pittsburgh completed OpenSpacePGH, a component of the City's Comprehensive Plan, in 2013. OpenSpacePGH does not provide specific recommendations for Hays Woods,

OpenSpacePGH Goals

- 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

but the principles and practices outlined for city parks in general are also applicable to the planning, design, operation, and maintenance of the future Hays Woods park.

A Basic Timeline of Hays Woods

While additional historical research and documentation will be an important component of future planning processes, the following timeline represents a broad historical overview of the site:

- Pre-1700: Native American use of general area; further research needed
- 1700-1930's: colonial settlers, farms, coal mining, gas extraction
- 1930's: J&L Steel consolidation
- 1970's: LTV acquired J&L
- 2003: Pittsburgh Development Group II - Palisades project, PLDP
- June 2016: URA purchase
- Nov 2017: URA vote to transfer 555 acres to city
- Spring 2018: Mayor initiated Hays Woods Task Force

Environmental Considerations

Because of Hays Woods' natural topography and characteristics, as well as its past industrial uses, there are a number of environmental concerns that limit development potential, including steep and land-slide prone slopes, undermined land that is subject to subsidence, acid mine drainage, and potential soil and aquifer contamination.

Hays Woods also provides a wide array of environmental benefits that can be protected and maintained for future generations. It is significantly valuable in terms of contiguous forest and it is home to a number of rare plant and animal species.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The project offers the opportunity for future environmental restoration projects such as remediation of acid mine drainage, management of invasive species, and renewal of degraded land. Conservation efforts can help protect critical wildlife habitat, forested watersheds, wetlands and riparian corridors from encroachment by future development, while making these resources available for public enjoyment.



An eroded gully functions as a makeshift path beneath thick stands of invasive knotweed



A turkey feather seen at Hays

Previous Hays Woods Studies and Relevant Plans

A number of assessments and studies about Hays Woods have been conducted, both as part of prior development proposals and ongoing conservation efforts. These serve as important starting points for future master-planning efforts:

- 1988: Environmental Assessment for DGD Realty Acquisition - Earth Sciences Consultants
 - 2003: Hays Property Site Visit Report for Councilman Peduto - Western Pennsylvania Conservancy
 - 2004: Pittsburgh Hillside Ecology Report for City of Pittsburgh Hillside Committee and Allegheny Land Trust
 - 2016: Phase I Environmental Site Assessment draft for Urban Redevelopment Authority – Chester Engineers
 - 2017: Hays Woods Ecological and Conservation Assessment for Allegheny Land Trust by Western Pennsylvania Conservancy
- [source: Friends of Hays Woods website]

Additional plans relevant to park planning in Pittsburgh include:

- OpenSpacePGH – component of City's Comprehensive Plan
- OnePGH, the City's Resilience Strategy
- City of Pittsburgh Climate Action Plan 3.0
- City of Pittsburgh & Pittsburgh Water and Sewer Authority's City-Wide Green First Plan
- Baldwin Borough Comprehensive Plan
- Pennsylvania State Climate Action Plan (draft, 2018)
- Allegheny County Comprehensive Plan
- Allegheny County Green Web

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Additional Considerations

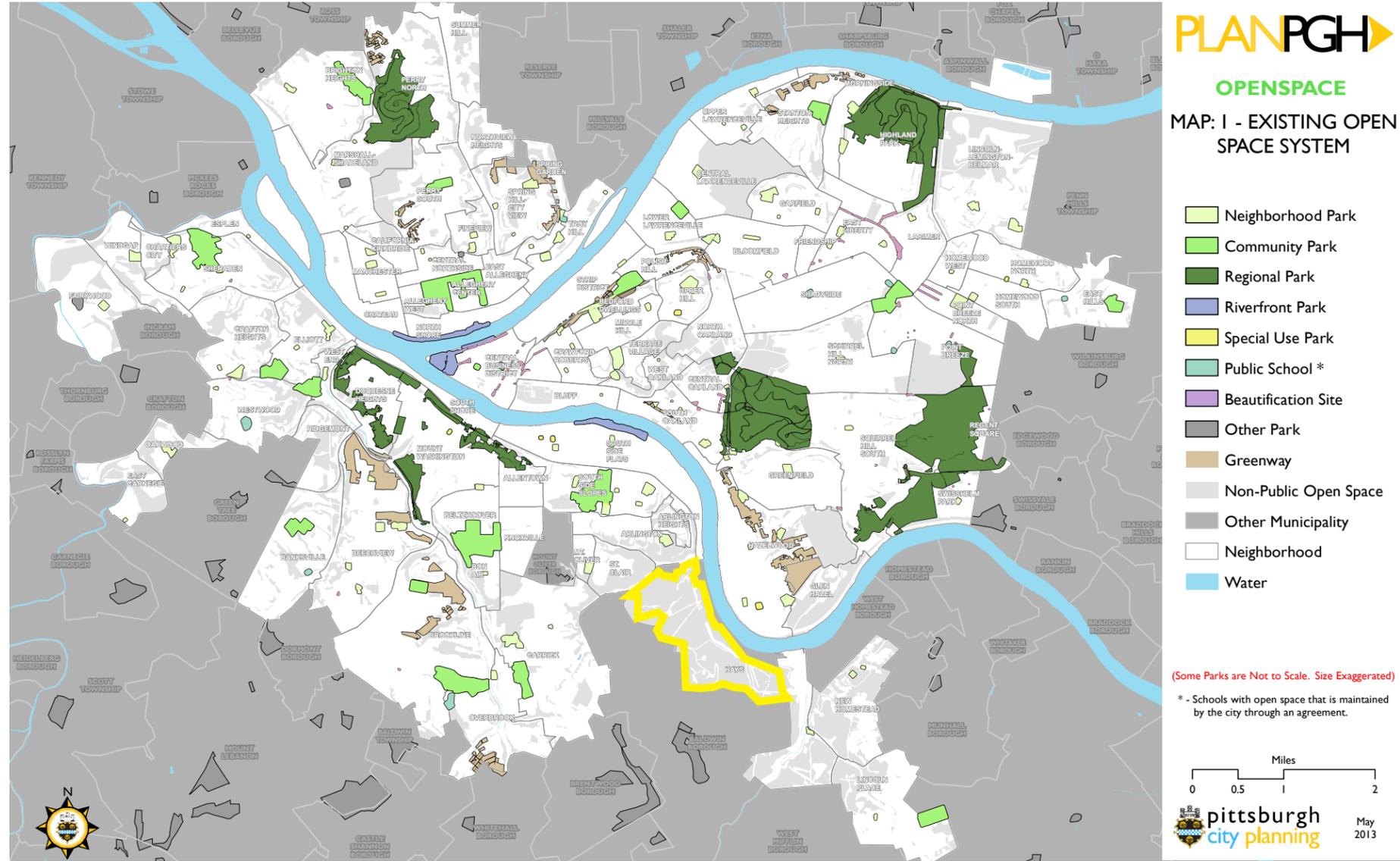
In 2016, the Urban Redevelopment Authority acquired the Hays Woods site. Subsequently, the URA board approved the transfer of 555 acres to the City of Pittsburgh for development of a public park while reserving approximately 81 acres for potential development of single-family low density residential development. The Task Force, while recognizing the extraordinary opportunity of the 555 acres, raised concerns regarding the preliminary development concept for the 81 acres. The URA articulated the preliminary concept regarding the 81 acres to the Task Force in a study session and also provided additional information regarding studies, concepts, and current management of the site. The Task Force voiced concerns throughout the process that there will be significantly improved ecological and experiential opportunities in a larger park, one without an embedded 81 acres of residential development. They have worked to articulate the basis for those concerns in the Task Force Findings section of this document and in more detail in Appendix A: Task Force Committee Reports.

The Task Force also notes that potential access and borders underscore the importance of inter-governmental and local community and organizational cooperation for an initiative of this scale. Four Baldwin Borough representatives have served on the Task Force, and their concerns are incorporated into this report, as well as those from County and State representatives.

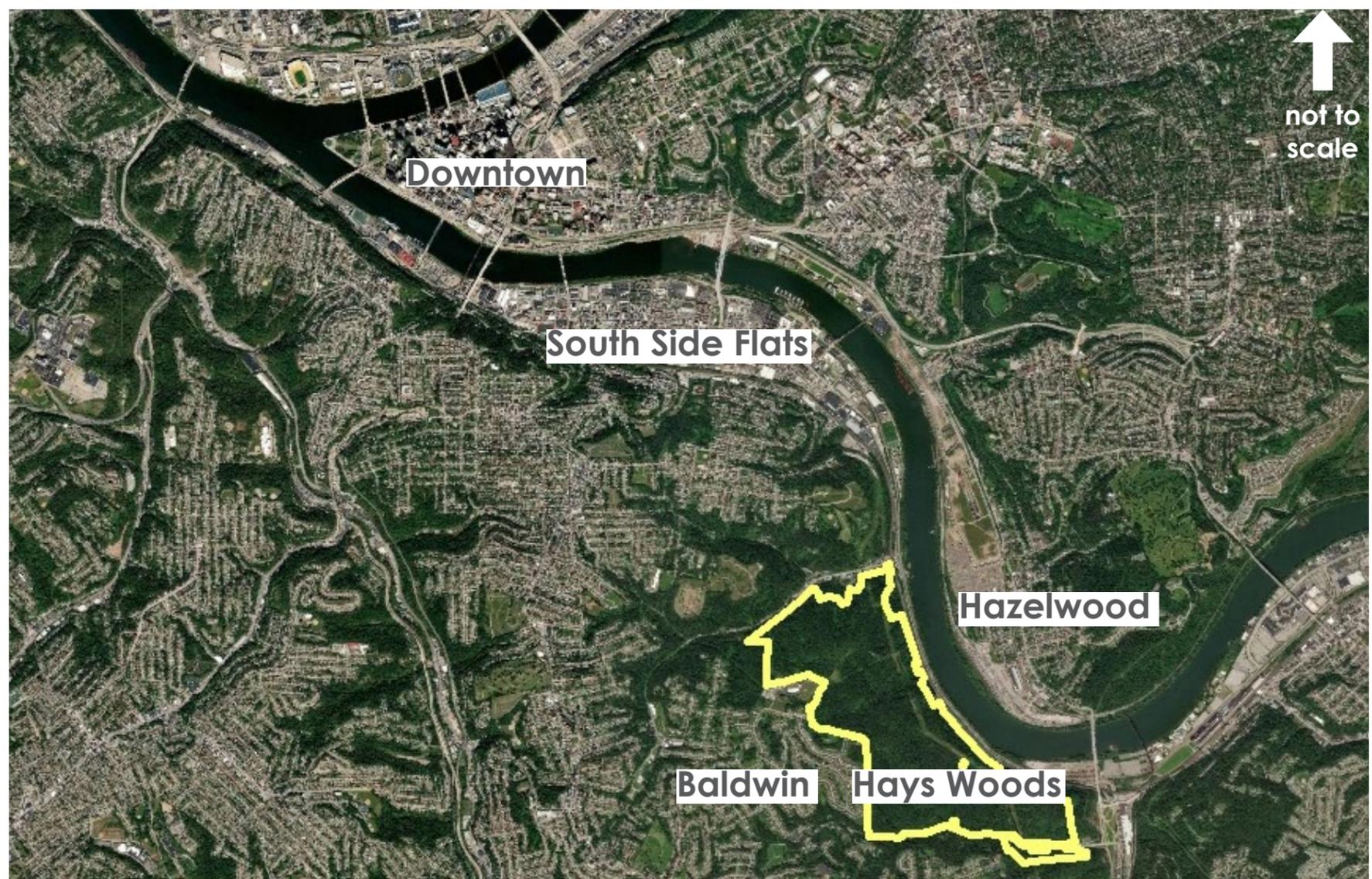


Utility corridors serve as trails through Hays Woods and frame views showcasing the site's steep topography

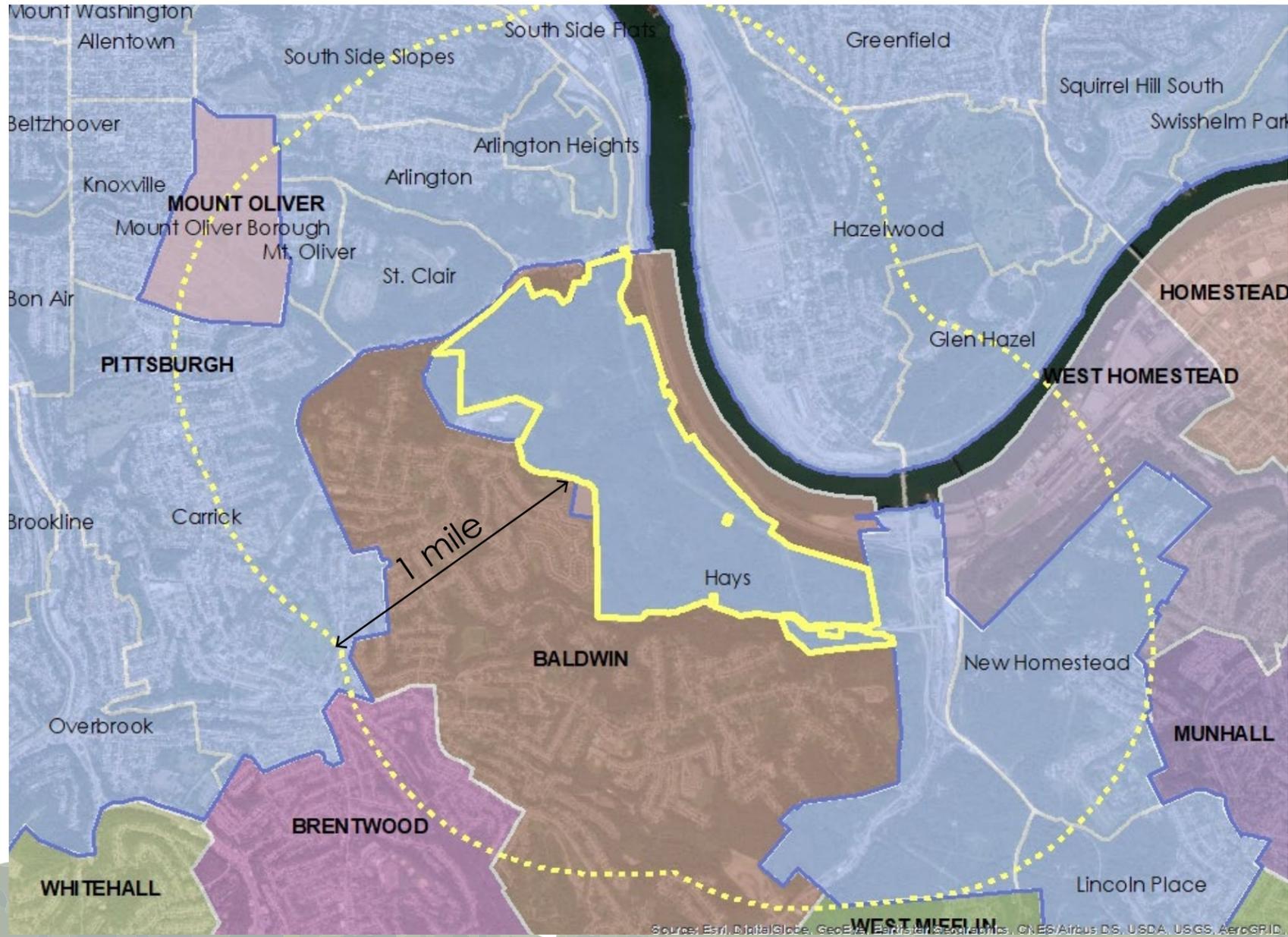
MAPS - OPENSOURCEPGH EXISTING OPEN SPACE INVENTORY



MAPS - CONTEXT TO DOWNTOWN PITTSBURGH



MAPS - ADJACENT MUNICIPALITIES AND PITTSBURGH NEIGHBORHOODS



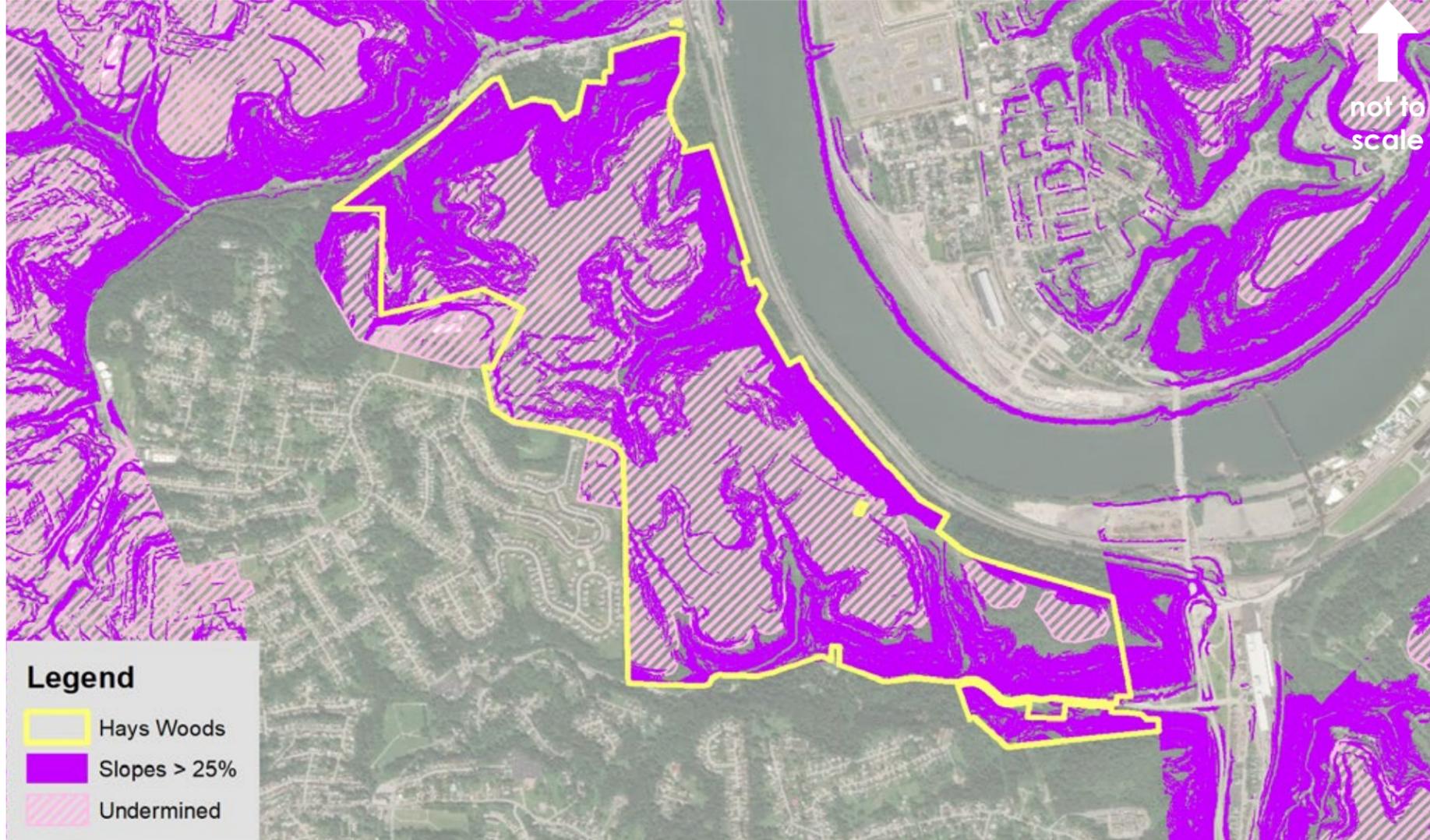
MAPS - NEARBY ROADS & RAILWAYS



MAPS - AERIAL IMAGE WITH PARCEL BOUNDARIES



MAPS - UNDERMINED LAND AND STEEP SLOPES



TASK FORCE PROCESS

Mayoral Appointment of Task Force

Pittsburgh Mayor William Peduto appointed the Hays Woods Task Force in Spring 2018 with the mission to provide the following:

- A sustainable plan to keep the park as the largest 'natural space' park in Pittsburgh's parks system
- Recommendations for long-term funding for maintenance and preservation
- Options regarding the Urban Redevelopment Authority reserved land for proposed future residential use
- The identification of all uses, purposes, and needs for the remaining acreage of preserved land.
- An exploration of necessary partnerships beyond city government with specific requests to make the above four points successful.

The Hays Woods Task Force is chaired by Former Pittsburgh Mayor Tom Murphy and Councilman Corey O'Connor of District 5, which includes Hays Woods. Members of the Task Force include representatives from the Departments of City Planning, CitiParks, and Public Works, Friends of Hays Woods, Allegheny Land Trust, Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy, Baldwin Borough, the Heinz Endowments, and other critical local and regional stakeholders.

The Task Force established four subcommittees to go into greater depth on the following topics:

- Programming and Education
- Layout, Connectivity, and Environment
- Management and Organization
- Development

The Task Force and its committees have met numerous times

to identify the opportunities and constraints for Hays Woods, develop guiding principles, and draft goals and scope of work for master planning efforts. Below is an outline of the meetings held to date:

Kick-Off Meeting - April 30th, 2018

Task Force members made introductions and discussed the purpose of the task force - to give the Mayor / City recommendations on how best to incorporate the Hays Woods parcel. Committee topics, the need for a site tour, and future meeting schedules were also discussed.

Site Tour - June 12th, 2018

Mayor Murphy led Task Force members on a guided tour of Hays Woods.



Mayor Murphy leads Task Force members of a site tour at Hays Woods
photo credit: Hannah Hardy

TASK FORCE PROCESS

Task Force Meeting - July 24th, 2018

The meeting began with a debrief of the site tour, discussion about the central identity of the park, and the importance of near-term access and constituency building. More process-oriented topics were also discussed: the desire for an information session, facilitated workshop, and public engagement, as well as expected deliverables and how reports would be used.

Info Session – September 12th, 2018

This information session provided task force members with a shared knowledge base on several key topics. Presentations included:

- Department of City Planning – background site info, context, mapping, zoning
- Western Pennsylvania Conservancy – overview of their 2017 Hays Woods Ecological and Conservation Assessment
- Friends of Hays Woods – overview of the group and their goals for Hays Woods
- Urban Redevelopment Authority – overview of proposed residential development

Task Force Workshop - October 26th, 2018

A Task Force workshop was facilitated to help members create a conceptual, preliminary vision for Hays Woods in a focused 6-hour session. A creative brain-storming exercise and 'SWOC' analysis helped identify the site's Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Constraints. Individual committees drafted Guiding Principles and phasing goals, and the entire Task Force built consensus on 10 Guiding Principles.



Education & Programming Committee photo credit: Curt Conrad

Committee Meetings

The task force committees met individually in order to develop their committee reports and outline goals for short-term, medium-term, and long-term park planning, development, and operation. Their reports are included in Appendix A of this document.

February Task Force Meeting

Task Force members reviewed and discussed the Draft Task Force Report, the upcoming public meeting, budget and grant opportunities for further planning, and coordination with Baldwin.

March Task Force Meeting

Task Force members reviewed the revised Draft Task Force Report and the presentation and feedback activities for the upcoming public meeting. Property transfer and access was discussed.

TASK FORCE PROCESS

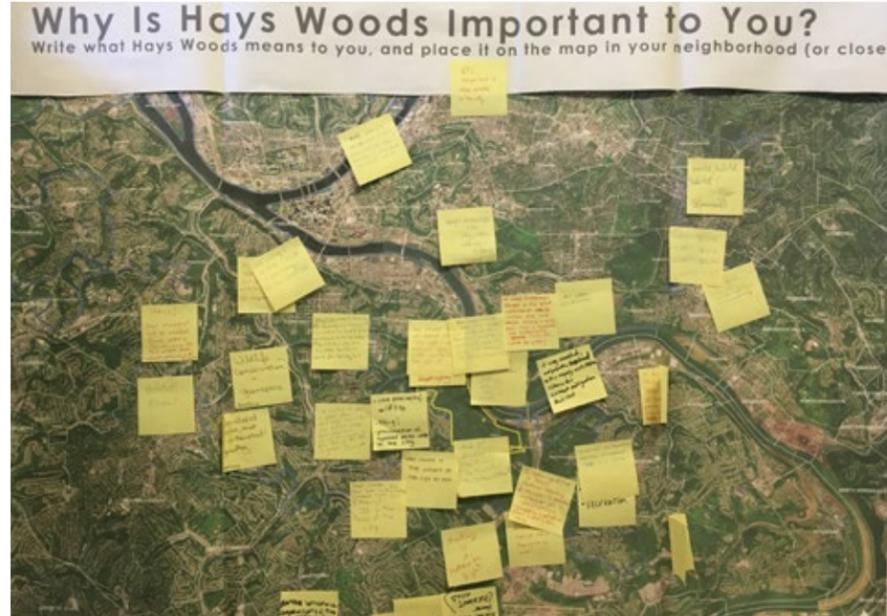
Community Meeting - April 3rd, 2019

The purpose of this meeting was to present the work of the Task Force and their recommendations, as well as to solicit feedback for incorporation into this Final Task Force Report. The meeting was held at the Holy Angels Parish and was attended by over 100 people. The meeting began with opening remarks by Councilman O'Connor, who explained the recommendation by the Task Force not to consider previously proposed residential development, and followed with a presentation by the Department of City Planning that gave an overview of the Task Force's mission, process, and recommendations along with basic site analysis and explanation of next steps.

In the discussion that followed, main topics included: adjacent forested land, utility right-of-way concerns, why residential development was not recommended, the timeline for Hays Woods to become a public park, flooding and stormwater management, future site access, and private property concerns.

Attendees were invited to participate in four feedback-gathering activities asking the following questions:

- Why is Hays Woods Important to You?
- Which Guiding Principles are the Most Important?
- Who Should We Work With?
- What Future Activities Might You Like to Explore?



This activity encouraged people to post a note on the map where they live and explain what Hays Woods means to them.

These activities generated useful input that is included in Appendix B of this report. They confirmed that the Task Force's vision and guiding principles are generally compatible with the wishes of many of the community members in attendance. Major themes of the feedback gathered include the importance of preserving and restoring the natural features of the site and improving education and recreation opportunities.

TASK FORCE PROCESS

Baldwin Borough Meeting - April 22nd, 2019

Given that Hays Woods is surrounded on multiple sides by the Borough of Baldwin, this meeting was held to provide residents another opportunity to learn about the Task Force and vision for Hays Woods, with time dedicated to discuss topics relevant to Hays Woods' closest neighbors.

Topics discussed included future park access locations, concerns about public safety related to abandoned mine land, future park ranger presence, stakeholder / adjacent property owners' involvement in the planning process, and future site design details such as paving and lighting.

Attendees included Baldwin Mayor Depretis and Councilman Stelmasczyk, and Pittsburgh Mayor Murphy and Councilman O'Connor. The Task Force is hopeful that this will be a great municipal partnership project that benefits residents of Baldwin as well as Pittsburgh and surrounding locales.

Task Force Recommendations

Over the course of the past year, the Hays Woods Task Force members have researched and discussed the issues and opportunities for the future of Hays Woods as a City Park. City Planning, the Office of Councilman O'Connor, and Mayor Murphy have worked together to provide an overview of the Task Force work to date and provide a summary of the Task Force's recommendations, contained in the next section: Summary of Task Force Recommendations. This section consolidates the goals of the four committee reports, which can be found in Appendix A.

Guiding Principles, Goals, and Phasing

The Guiding Principles found in the next section have been generally agreed upon by the Task Force as high-level concepts meant to provide a basis for future planning, design, development, and maintenance of the park. While specific goals may change over time, they should always be consistent with the guiding principles. Example goals have been pulled from the committee reports to show how guiding principles lead to more concrete actions. The goals have also been grouped into approximate phasing categories (short, medium, and long-term) to indicate that development will take years, but that important actions can be taken in the short term.

Next Steps

Following the conclusion of the Hays Woods Task Force and release of this Task Force Findings and Recommendations Report, the City will begin preparations for park master planning and transfer of the land from the Urban Redevelopment Authority to the City. City Planning, in coordination with other relevant departments and organizations, will develop a scope of work for master planning consultants based on the recommendations of this report and feedback garnered at the community meetings. The master planning process will include a thorough public engagement component as well as further study on the environmental, geotechnical, park access, and programming aspects of the future park.

Summary of Task Force Recommendations

SUMMARY OF TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS - GUIDING PRINCIPLES

1. Preserve forested areas, wooded ridgeline, and archaeological features by limiting site disturbance.

EXAMPLE GOALS:

- Conduct an extensive archaeological and environmental surveys, building upon previous work, to ensure adequate planning for preservation and restoration prior to any development.
- Commit to no net-loss of tree canopy and maintain vegetation and ecological integrity.
- Contain build-out to no more than 5% of the total site, limited to the edges of conservation areas, and limiting impermeable surfaces wherever possible.
- Emphasize historical and cultural value of the site through programming, design, and interpretive signage.

2. Plan within the context of the region's ecological and open space systems.

EXAMPLE GOALS:

- Connect with existing programming organizations that share a common interest in using green space for programming and recreation, and identify what gaps Hays Woods could fill.
- Evaluate and plan for potential connections to other local and regional open spaces.
- Conduct analysis to quantify the economic, social, and environmental benefits of existing natural features in context of regional loss and preservation of open space.
- Review opportunities for adoption of Hays Woods as a Regional Park.

3. Adhere to resilience and sustainability goals and best practices to balance the needs of people and the environment.

EXAMPLE GOALS:

- Ensure park planning efforts follow the recommendations laid out in OpenSpacePGH, Urban Forestry Master Plan, OnePGH, Climate Action Plan, and other relevant plans and policy.
- Install phased infrastructure to support park use, following sustainable-construction guidelines in all development.

4. Make partnerships and community engagement a priority.

EXAMPLE GOALS:

- Be intentionally inclusive and use public engagement best practices in the planning process.
- Identify stewardship, education, workforce development / green jobs, and other constituency-building opportunities.
- Build a publicly-accessible "library" of documents, maps, guidelines, and plans.
- Include stakeholder groups in and outside of the city including residents of adjacent neighborhoods, conservation and recreation organizations.
- Create / strengthen existing 'Friends of the Park' groups and expand their role in park development, operations, and advocacy.

5. Conserve and restore the ecology of the site through environmental management.

EXAMPLE GOALS:

- Develop and implement an Ecological Master Plan that incorporates adaptive management for long-term, incremental change via continued monitoring and evolving management goals.
- Enhance wildlife habitat, conserve and improve forest habitat, management stormwater and improve water quality (headwater and ephemeral streams) through park improvements.
- Implement an invasive species management program.
- Operate a living laboratory for urban forest conservation that integrates research and innovative management practices, serving as a model.

6. Provide inclusive programming to a diversity of user groups.

EXAMPLE GOALS:

- Partner with various organizations and 3rd party vendors to promote specific uses such as birding or biking.
- Provide for a range of passive to active recreation in alignment with master plan recommendations.
- Offer environmental education for all ages.
- Evaluate efficacy of park programming and implement changes as needs shift.

7. Plan for a variety of transportation options so people without a car can get to the park, and to reduce ecological impact.

EXAMPLE GOALS:

- Develop a Park Master Plan that considers adjacencies and context and minimizes impacts on neighboring areas.
- Work with Port Authority to increase existing bus service with convenient routes to Hays Woods.
- Enhance existing transportation network options, such as improving bike route connections to and through the site.
- Where parking lots are necessary, follow best sustainability and landscape design practices.

8. Provide accessible trails to key park amenities and wherever feasible, given the steep terrain.

EXAMPLE GOALS:

- Map the trail system and formalize it to increase connectivity and accessibility while maintaining ecological integrity –use existing disturbed land and/or utility easements for trail network.
- Identify existing access points, trails and 'destinations', such as the ridgeline.
- Establish and maintain a well-designed, well-marked, non-motorized trail system with a hierarchy of trail networks for various levels of recreation, including ADA-accessible trails.
- Ensure Emergency Management Services is adequately involved and informed during trail planning and design processes.

9. Make Hays Woods a City park.

EXAMPLE GOALS:

- Consider establishing Hays Woods first as a greenway temporarily before designation as a city park.
- Seek capital funding for planning, design, and interim improvements.
- Identify and use existing best management practices that were employed for the design, development, and maintenance of Riverview, Emerald View and Frick Parks to the benefit of Hays Woods.

10. Establish long-term funding.

EXAMPLE GOALS:

- Solidify long term sources of funding and support for maintenance. Dedicate funds from City.
- Implement opportunities to monetize ecosystem values, such as carbon offsets.
- Gain support from Allegheny Regional Asset District (ARAD) funding as a separate line item in the City Budget.
- Seek foundation support and grants for initiatives through programs such as the National Urban and Community Forestry Program, Healthy Watersheds Consortium, Participatory Science, Climate Resilience Fund, etc.

SUMMARY OF TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS - GOALS & PHASING

Short-term Goals (next 5 years):

High-Level Decisions, Legislation and Administration

- Complete scope of work for master planning.
- Confirm anticipated timing of transfer from URA to City.
- Consider establishing Hays Woods first as a greenway temporarily before designation as a city park.
- Seek capital funding for planning, design, and interim improvements.
- Establish conservation easement per URA's grant with DCNR.
- Retain task force/advisory committee.
- Review opportunities for adoption of Hays Woods as a Regional Park.

Environmental & Park Planning

- Conduct an extensive environmental survey of sensitive species of flora and fauna, building on previous work, to ensure adequate planning for habitat preservation and restoration prior to any development.
- Develop and implement an Ecological Master Plan that incorporates adaptive management to build a framework for long-term, incremental change via continued monitoring and management goals that shift accordingly.
- Conduct analysis to quantify the economic, social, and environmental benefits of existing natural features in context of regional loss and preservation of open space.
- Identify and use existing best management practices that were employed for the design, development, and maintenance of Riverview, Emerald View and Frick Parks to the benefit of Hays Woods.
- Begin invasive species management program.

Access & Information

- Solidify protocol for visiting and traversing Hays Woods, and create guidelines for public access and sensitive use of site.
- Work with Baldwin and PA Game Commission regarding pre-park access including rules for the Bald Eagle exclusion zone.
- Identify existing access points, trails and 'destinations', such as the ridgeline,
- Assess parking needs and roads for initial demand.
- Ensure Emergency Management Services is adequately involved and informed.
- Map the trail system and formalize it to increase connectivity and accessibility while maintaining ecological integrity – use existing disturbed land and/or utility easements for trail network.
- Build a publicly-accessible "library" of documents, maps, guidelines, and plans.
- Develop a Park Master Plan (layout and connectivity) that considers adjacencies and context and minimizes impacts on neighboring areas.

Public Engagement

- Promote public awareness of Hays Woods and create community engagement.
- Create / strengthen existing 'Friends of the Park' groups and expand their role in park development, operations, and advocacy.
- Identify stewardship, volunteer, education, and constituency-building opportunities.
- Identify the target communities surrounding the park that will be potential park users and give them the opportunity to shape the programming that falls broadly within the identified categories.

SUMMARY OF TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS - GOALS & PHASING

- Connect with existing programming organizations that share a common interest in using green space for programming and recreation, and identify what gaps Hays Woods could fill.
- Explore a 'living laboratory' concept as a means of engaging scientists and citizens in research and education at Hays Woods.
- Be intentionally inclusive. Employ public engagement best practices in the planning process.
- Include stakeholder groups in and outside of the city, including residents of adjacent neighborhoods in Baldwin Borough, and conservation organizations that span municipal boundaries.

Medium-term Goals (5-10 years):

Public Park

- Implement Hays Woods Park Master Plan.
- Install phased infrastructure to support park use, following sustainable-construction guidelines in all development.
- Establish and maintain a well-designed, well-marked, non-motorized trail system with a hierarchy of trail networks for various levels of recreation, including ADA-accessible trails.
- Where parking lots are necessary, follow best sustainability and landscape design practices.
- Construct non-structural spaces such as picnic areas and viewpoints.
- Partner with various organizations and 3rd party vendors to promote specific uses such as birding or biking.
- Evaluate and plan for potential connections to other local and regional open spaces.

- Create a tool kit to evaluate efficacy of park programming (take into account social change) and implement evaluation.

Environment

- Create partnerships to establish vision and governance for a 'living laboratory'.
- Implement adaptive management (Ecological Master Plan) that enhances wildlife habitat, conserves and improves forest, and improves water quality (headwater and ephemeral streams) and manages stormwater through park improvements.

Funding

- Develop a phased funding strategy to support Hays Woods by using foundations, private, corporate, government, and possible naming rights for the planning and maintenance of Hays Woods.
- Gain support from Allegheny Regional Asset District (ARAD) funding as a separate line item in the City Budget.
- Implement opportunities to monetize ecosystem service values.

Long-term Goals (10 years +):

Public Park

- Provide a park that is welcoming to all races, nationalities, creeds, abilities, genders and gender identities, and economic backgrounds to help patrons connect with nature

SUMMARY OF TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS

- in a variety of ways.
- Provide for a range of passive to active recreation in alignment with master plan recommendations.
- Build a Visitors Center / educational structure in an accessible location, with ADA accessible bathrooms, classroom, and community gathering spaces.
- Employ Park Rangers for the protection and safety of visitors.

Environment

- Offer environmental education for people of all ages.
- Operate an ongoing laboratory for urban forest conservation.
- Contain build-out to no more than 5% of the total site, limited to the edges of conservation areas, and limiting impermeable surfaces wherever possible.
- Commit to no net-loss of tree canopy and maintain vegetated landscape, ecological integrity.

Funding

- Solidify long term sources of funding and support for maintenance.

Topics for Continued Study / Draft Scope of Work for Master Planning

- Ecological inventory and management as a priority, with guidance by conservation land management experts; park programming as an overlay to the ecological management plan
- Public engagement during master planning process to solicit input on use of the space and share ideas for Hays Woods'

potential at both a local and regional level

- Further review of existing maps and geotechnical reports, and additional investigations identifying concerns with undermined land, subsidence, landslide risk, soil and water contamination, and stormwater management concerns
- Thorough inventory of existing infrastructure, utilities, transportation, and trails, and recommendations for improvements, including transportation demand management
- Further research on the conservation easements, protection and regulations that are already in existence and/or have potential to impact future use of the area
- Research into other local, regional, and national models that can be used as examples for programming, management, and funding
- Stakeholder involvement in master planning advisory committee
- Determination of development needs and limitations -whether buildings will be included as part of the project and if so, where can they sited -housing, community center, or other park-use buildings

SUMMARY OF TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS

Potential Partner Organizations

Members of the Task Force represent numerous organizations, which are already noted as excellent partners. This list contains those organizations as well as other possible partnerships for programming and funding, as identified by the Task Force:

31st Ward Community Action Group
Allegheny County
Allegheny Land Trust
Audubon Society of Western Pennsylvania
Baldwin-Whitehall School District
Borough of Baldwin
City Parks Alliance
Colcom Foundation
Duquesne Light (utility right-of-ways)
Economic Development South
Eden Hall Foundation
Friends of Hays Woods
Hazelwood Initiative
Heinz Endowments
Landforce
National Recreation and Park Association
Outward Bound
PennFuture
Pennsylvania Dept. of Conservation and Natural Resources
Pennsylvania Dept. of Environmental Proections
Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy
Pittsburgh Public Schools
Pittsburgh Water and Sewer Authority
Richard King Mellon Foundation
Riverlife

Steinbrenner Institute for Environmental Ed. and Research (CMU)
Tesla/Solar City
The Academy School
Tree Pittsburgh
Trust for Public Land
United States Forest Service
Urban Forest Project
Urban Land Institute
Venture Outdoors
Western PA Conservancy