

BAYSIDE TRAIL THEMES

In 2008, the City of Portland conducted the Bayside Trail Forum to solicit public input on the trail design. The goal of the forum was to develop design themes to be represented through infrastructure, landscaping, public art, and amenity installations, as the trail itself connects neighborhoods characterized by their diversity of land uses and people. The trail themes are intended to provide the reader with a perspective about the cultural identity of the Bayside community including its contemporary values and historic past.

Trail Themes

- Land Use – marine, rail, industrial, commercial, residential
- Acceptance – multiculturalism, immigration – contemporary and historical
- Respect – Martin Luther King, Jr., human rights and social justice
- Urban Environmental Sustainability – rain gardens, recycled materials, native plants, indigenous vegetation
- Water – connections to the sea and Back Cove, coastal community
- Individual Freedom – health, spiritual well-being, recreational fitness, safety
- Connectivity – seasons, neighborhoods, family, food, transit

Neighborhood organizations, nonprofits, and the business community have worked with the City of Portland for more than ten years to develop and raise funding to build the Bayside Trail. The project is changing the face of Portland by turning a former industrial rail corridor into a vibrant urban amenity. Part of a growing network of trails in Greater Portland, the 1.2 mile trail will become a focal point for cultural activities and community programs, contribute to the economic vitality of the city, and improve the quality of life for Portland residents, workers and visitors.

In the 1970s the Bayside neighborhoods were divided by the Franklin Arterial, a major thoroughfare running from Back Cove across the length of the Portland peninsula. The arterial forms a barrier between the Bayside neighborhoods and divides what was once an integrated community into the current “East Bayside” and “Bayside”. East Bayside is one of Portland’s most diverse and urban neighborhoods. It first developed a street network in the early 19th century, and by the 1820s the area was Portland’s second seaport, accessed via Back Cove. In 1840 the Union Railroad ran along the then shoreline of the cove. The original rail line (the location of the new Bayside Trail) travels through both mixed-use Bayside neighborhoods, which hold the potential for significant redevelopment. As noted above, the Bayside Trail is one part of an integrated, community-wide trail system and an important link in the trail surrounding the entire Portland peninsula.