

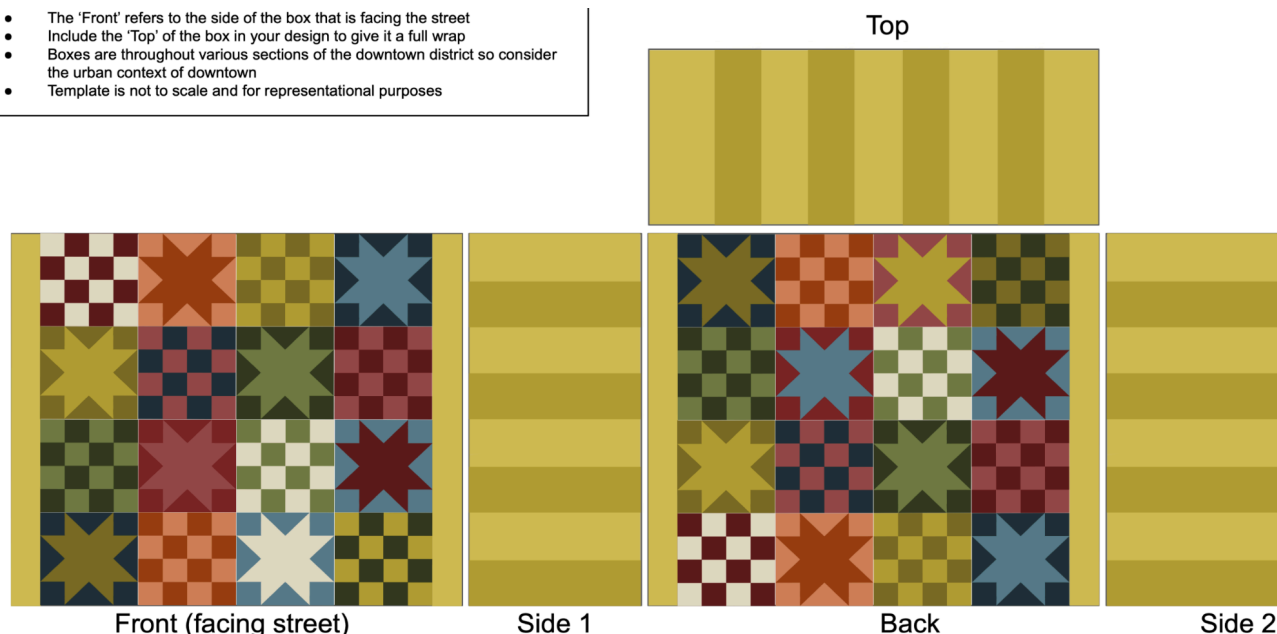
BNA Team Reports November 2025

Art Team — Kincaid Pearson, lead — Betsy Boyd, board liaison

First Friday November 7th. Adding Mayhem at 52 Alder Street and Open Systems Gallery at 47 Portland Street, 3rd floor.

Public Art Painting has begun on the utility box on Cumberland Ave and Elm Streets. The contract was awarded to Lily Carter, whose design was chosen by Kincaid over more than a dozen applicants, noting “I thought it was a fitting one because it's based on a quilt and the bayside neighborhood feels like the most diverse and similar to a quilted network of residents.” Rain has stalled the work but it should be done before snow flies.

- The 'Front' refers to the side of the box that is facing the street
- Include the 'Top' of the box in your design to give it a full wrap
- Boxes are throughout various sections of the downtown district so consider the urban context of downtown
- Template is not to scale and for representational purposes



Bayside Business Breakfast Club — Stacy Begin, lead — Betsy Boyd, board liaison

Meeting on October. 29th at Jay York Photography on Wilmot Street. A basic design has been agreed on for the Bayside Vistors' Guide. Sam from Maine Clay Collaborative set up a form to gather business info and the group brainstormed categories for the different types of businesses included.

The next meeting is scheduled for November 19th at Isa Bistro, one week early because of Thanksgiving. The Club will not meet in December but will pick up the regular schedule in January.

Citizens' Trash Brigade — Megan Holt, lead — Rob Sylvain, board liaison

Pre-trick-or-treat trash pickup was October 31st attended by Rob, Megan, Scott, Susan, Jim, Sarah and Pious.

The CTB hosts monthly block walks to pickup trash and/or shovel snow from neglected sidewalks in our neighborhood Next block walk is Friday November 21st @3pm

Communications Team — Joey Brunelle, lead — Jim Hall, board liaison

Fall issue of the Baysider is out. Next issue is in the works. Discussed the need for board to define communications needs.

Relevant Developments Team — Amelia LaBreck, lead — Jim Hall, board liaison

Construction begins on The Hill Arts theater in our neighboring East End. Residents already feeling the strain of parking on most of the hill have been concerned regarding the Hill Art's lack of parking and planned traffic management for their 400 person theater (plus 100 person conference space). It will no doubt be a sight to behold, and hopefully concerns were understood and remedied. This will also be a foreshadowing of the realities of the impact of entertainment venues with no parking on the Peninsula, and will hopefully shed light for Bayside on appropriate steps forward. As always, we welcome all Bayside voices to weigh in.

Full list of current property development projects here: tinyurl.com/bnaprops

Events team — Deidre Paul, lead — Peter Markoe, board liaison

The Howl-o-ween Dog Costume Parade was a howling success! 20 dogs and roughly 60 humans were in attendance. We are already planning for next year. We have received widespread support saying that the event has really been great for Bayside in raising awareness for the BNA and our efforts to build a community identity.

The Events team also discussed avenues for further awareness, engagement, volunteer-generating, and fund-generating events. More details to follow.

Garden Team — Holly Picotte, lead — Susan McClosky, board liaison

The 2025 garden season has ended as of November 1st. On that day, we had an amazing turnout of gardeners and volunteer students from Baxter Academy to help with our last workday of the season. This was a big workday too as gardener and co-coordinator Anna Brewer purchased supplies to replace the wood for 4.5 garden plots that had fallen apart and needed to be replaced. We utilized the funds we received from the mini-grant from the city for this work. We also put away the hoses for the season, cut any long grass, and cut back some plants for the winter. Cheers to a great season!

Tree Team — Avery Yale Kamila, lead — Susan McClosky, board liaison

1. Neighborhood launches effort to secure Bayside parkland

Neighbors kicked off the effort to create a community park in October, when BNA president Thomas Blackburn and the full board sent a letter to the Portland City Council requesting that part of the Midtown parcel be set aside for a new community park. This was followed by a Nov. 8 Maine Voices op-ed in the *Portland Press Herald*, written by BNA board president Blackburn and Camelia Babson-Haley, executive director of Youth & Family Outreach, a daycare and pre-K center.

In the newspaper piece, Blackburn and Babson-Haley wrote:

“A Bayside park is also about equity for one of Maine’s most diverse and lowest-income communities. Bayside has borne decades of redlining, disinvestment and the concentration of

social services others resisted, missing out on mature trees and pocket parks that other neighborhoods take for granted.

Research is clear: Direct access to parks, where one lives, is tied to better health outcomes, stronger social connections and economic uplift for the surrounding community. To deny Bayside green space now would repeat tired old inequities we must outgrow as a culture.

Reserving land for a park can finally begin to bring dignity to living in Bayside. The idea of a park here is not new. Twenty-five years ago, the New Vision for Bayside placed it right in the middle of Midtown."

The Portland City Council will decide whether or not land is set aside in Bayside to create a park. On Oct. 2, *Portland Press Herald* reporter Grace Benninghoff wrote about the decision facing the City Council. Both Councilor Ben Grant and Councilor Sarah Michniewicz told Benninghoff they support the creation of a park on a portion of the Midtown land.

A minimum of five city councilors will need to support a park in Bayside for it to become a reality.

Bayside is filled with children but lacks outdoor recreation space, particularly for teenagers and adults. The neighborhood houses two high schools: Portland High with 791 students and Baxter Academy with 400 students. The neighborhood is also the permanent home of Youth & Family Outreach, which has temporarily relocated to South Portland while its new facility is built. When it reopens at the corner of Preble Street and Cumberland Avenue, Youth & Family Outreach will serve 110 children. Meanwhile, the Boys & Girls Club serves an average of 400 students each school day.

"Dense urban areas function best when filled with trees, parks and places to gather," Blackburn said. "Bayside children and adults are underserved when it comes to parks and recreation space. Bayside lacks basketball courts, picnic tables, grassy areas and shade trees. We need more community garden plots and more splash pad space. Bayside is home to many private gyms but lacks adult exercise equipment for public use. The City Council has a rare opportunity to bring all of these amenities and more downtown."

No cost estimates to create a Bayside park are available. However, part of Portland's budget known as the 2026 CIP allocates \$150,000 to construct basketball courts somewhere in the Bayside neighborhood. The lack of basketball courts in Bayside has been recognized as a problem for years, yet there hasn't been any land on which to put them. Until now.

Recreation needs identified by Bayside schools and residents include:

- Basketball courts, which children and teenagers can access without crossing major traffic routes.
- Picnic tables, for students and workers on their lunch breaks

Grassy areas, for picnics or kicking a ball, which the lack of public space currently forces into the streets

- Shade trees, to help increase tree equity in Portland's least equitable neighborhood
- Adult exercise equipment, for residents, high school students and trail users
- Raised garden beds, to be tended by students
- A miniature arboretum, for teaching purposes
- A splash pad, for summer days when the Stone Street splash pad is over capacity
- A Story Walk along the trail, to serve young students and residents
- Natural play spaces with sticks and mud puddles, for preschoolers
- Water bottle filling stations, for park and trail users
- Bike repair stations, for trail users

2. Celebrating the Lincoln Park restoration



Avery Yale Kamila photo

Two city councilors who live in Bayside, Pious Ali and Sarah Michniewicz, joined Mayor Mark Dion and Parks director Ethan Hipple in Lincoln Park on Oct. 3 to honor Friends of Lincoln Park founders Frank and Sharon Reilly and all the craftspeople who are helping to restore the historic park

fence and revitalize Portland's oldest official park, which is located on the edge of Bayside. At the event, Hipple announced that when Franklin Street is reworked to increase pedestrian-friendliness and make room for more housing the park will reclaim the land taken from it when Franklin was expanded and turned into a limited access road.

3. Volunteers mulch trees on Bayside Trail



Avery Yale Kamila photo

Portland's tree steward Cameron Scharff was surprised by the number of volunteers who showed up on Saturday, Nov. 9 to help tuck trees on the Bayside Trail in for the winter.

"I am incredibly pleased with what was accomplished," Scharff said. "In less than two hours, we mulched and composted nearly 50 younger trees on the Bayside Trail, with volunteers from Bayside, the West End, the East End, and Libbytown. The addition of this organic material will support tree growth, increase water retention, suppress weeds and improve aesthetics along the trail. This collaborative effort is precisely the kind of community-driven forestry initiative that can make a large difference in the lives of trees, the health of parks and the enjoyment of the community that uses them."

The 15 volunteers were more than had RSVP'd, and people continued to trickle in as the event was in progress. With a fleet of wheelbarrows, shovels and rakes, and piles of loam and woodchips, the volunteers gathered behind Dunkin' and started with the recently planted trees and expanded from there. The trees in the section of the trail behind Trader Joe's had been topdressed and mulched in the spring.

All the activity on this part of the trail discouraged two individuals from setting up a tent. Four used needles were discovered during the tree mulching event.

Scharff instructed volunteers to spread the loam in a thin layer, feathering it into the topsoil, and then cover it with a layer of woodchips. Volunteers were careful to leave the root flare at the base of each tree trunk exposed to avoid creating the dreaded mulch volcanoes that can injure trees.

Scharff's last day on the job will be Nov. 21. He has been serving with the Portland Parks Conservancy and Portland's Parks and Recreation Department as a tree steward courtesy of the Maine Conservation Corps, which is funded through the national AmeriCorps program. One project Scharff worked on this season was cataloguing all of Portland's street trees. Portland hopes to host another Maine Conservation Corps tree steward next season.

Safe Streets Team — reported by Avery Yale Kamila

King Middle student grabbed by stranger on way to school

While walking to school on Thursday, Nov. 6, an eighth grade student at King Middle School was grabbed on the wrist by a stranger. The 14-year-old student was unhurt, and a teacher who was nearby quickly intervened and stayed with the girl. The incident took place on Park Avenue. Principal Amy Marx said the teacher called 911 and escorted the student to school.

"Once at school, the student was supported by school social workers/counselors and the Portland Police came to take a full report and began an investigation immediately," Marx said in her letter notifying parents, sent at 7 p.m. that evening.

Marx also said the school is "working with the Portland community police to monitor the areas where many of our students are walking before and after school."

The section of Oxford Street, Portland Street and Park Avenue that stretches between Bayside and Parkside is a known human trafficking corridor, attracts significant loitering and serves as a walking route to King Middle School. Students walking to and from King have been harassed and threatened along the route in the past. All Bayside children attend middle school at King.

The following day, the city of Portland issued a statement saying police had identified the perpetrator. The release said "it was determined that the incident was not nefarious in nature," with no further explanation of what was meant by "not nefarious." The student's parents declined to press charges. The release did not provide any details about increased monitoring of the

Oxford-Portland-Park corridor or any other solutions to ensure the safety of children walking to and from King Middle School.

This is the second time this academic year that King Middle School has had to call the police after strangers acted in threatening ways toward students. On Sept. 19, Marx alerted parents that more than half of the seventh grade class was in the Deering Oaks playground during school hours when “a male person by the swings in close proximity to (students) had exposed his private areas.” Teachers moved students back into the school and called the police. The perpetrator has not been found. According to Jennifer Rogers, of Midtown Community Policing, the police are still actively investigating the September incident.

Councilor Sarah Michniewicz, who lives in Bayside and represents District 1, was interviewed by multiple news outlets regarding the most recent incident.

Bylaws and Policies Committee - Chair Jim Hall

Governance priorities: additional bylaws updates to elections, template for membership policy, process for 1-year and 5-year goals

Budget and Finance Committee - Chair Peter Markoe

Membership and Outreach Committee - Chair Colette Bouchard

Meeting set for November 19th