

# Fort Allen Park

Eastern Promenade, Portland



## Significance

The Eastern Promenade has been a common ground for residents since 1828. Fort Allen, built in 1814 and named for Revolutionary War U.S. Navy Lieutenant William Henry Allen Jr., was incorporated into the Promenade in 1890. In 1905, a formal plan for Fort Allen Park was prepared by the Olmsted Brothers, with a focus on pedestrian circulation. Historic features include a carriage drive, tree-lined footpaths, and earthen berms from Fort Allen. The Eastern Promenade was listed on the National Register of Historic Landscapes in 1989.

## Project Scope

Recent modifications to Fort Allen Park have been considered at conflict with the Olmsted vision. Friends of the Eastern Promenade was founded in 2006 and commissioned a master plan to restore the park to its 1905-1930 appearance. A series of public workshops were held, and the final design was approved in spring 2012.

The park closed in fall 2013 for its \$1.4 million restoration. Bike racks were installed and historic bench rows were restored. Trees once again line the newly illuminated walkways. The main drive follows the original route, flanked by cobblestone gutters. The bandstand walkway was also restored, and the bandstand itself repaired and repainted. Overgrowth blocking the view of Casco Bay was removed, and a new universally accessible granite staircase and wrought-iron fencing were installed. Three artillery guns were restored and reset on new carriages. The park reopened in time for the bicentennial celebration of Fort Allen in fall 2014.

## Recognition

The restoration of Fort Allen Park was a massive undertaking to revive the park's historic plan and features, while compatibly accommodating modern-day needs. In addition to adhering to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards, the Friends of Eastern Promenade worked closely with the city of Portland, Historic Preservation Board, and the public to ensure that the master plan would result in a park that everyone would enjoy and celebrate.