

BPRD Mount Hope Cemetery Briefing Meeting Notes - April 1, 2026 6PM

A community briefing was held to gather input on Mount Hope Cemetery and its surrounding open space. Attendees shared strong appreciation for the cemetery, noting its importance as a valued neighborhood resource and a place of reflection, recreation, and natural beauty.

Access and Connectivity

Residents highlighted that Mount Hope Cemetery is one of the closest open spaces for those living along American Legion Highway. Multiple pedestrian access points are used regularly, particularly along Canterbury Street and Paine Street. Community members expressed the importance of maintaining and improving these entry points, including winter clearing to ensure year-round access. Specific locations of concern include Mount Hope Street, Mount Calvary, and Paine Street.

Site Amenities and Improvements

There is strong interest in adding more benches throughout the cemetery to support rest and accessibility. Residents also recommended improved wayfinding to help visitors better navigate the site and understand its layout and significance.

Historic Recognition and Interpretation

Community members noted that Mount Hope Cemetery is not currently included on the historic roster but should be considered a landmark. There was also interest in enhancing interpretive elements, as many visitors may not fully understand the historical and cultural significance of the space.

Memorialization

Residents expressed a desire for a more prominent memorial to honor individuals in unmarked graves. While there may be an existing plaque, the community feels that a more visible and meaningful installation would better reflect the importance of remembrance.

Landscape and Environmental Concerns

Participants encouraged the incorporation of additional tree allees, noting that this landscape style would complement the character of the cemetery. There is also interest in expanding tree planting efforts overall.

The community raised concerns about the condition of on-site ponds and emphasized the need for restoration. Additionally, invasive plant species, particularly in wooded areas, were identified as an ongoing issue requiring attention.

Maintenance and Safety

Several maintenance concerns were noted, including damage to the chain link fence along Paine Street and low-hanging tree limbs that may pose safety risks in that area.

Funding Opportunities

Attendees inquired about the status of the Percent for Art Program as a potential funding source for memorial elements, particularly for unmarked graves.

Community Partnerships and Next Steps

The local resident association has been awarded grant funding to support tree planting within the cemetery and is interested in coordinating with the City to ensure trees are planted in appropriate locations and maintained for long-term health.

Project Manager Kenya Thomasons shared that she will connect with Tom Sullivan to determine whether there are existing plans for additional tree planting and to identify suitable locations for future plantings.