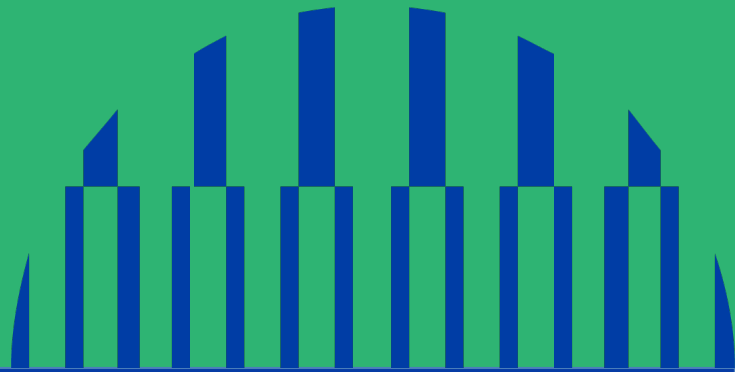


Collaborative Governance Report:



A Framework 1.0
for Toronto Parks

July 2021

MaRS

 **TORONTO**

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Introduction



Our idea of an urban park, says Toronto-based medical historian Christopher J. Ruddy in the Fall 2020 issue of *Ground*, the magazine of the Ontario Association of Landscape Architects, “goes back to the mid-19th century and the idea of escape.” Parks were driven by “infectious disease management because there was nothing else: the only thing [government] could do to respond to a cholera epidemic, in particular, was manage the physical space.”

We now find ourselves in a profoundly similar predicament in the early 21st century. Absent the vaccines that are now thankfully being distributed, our city parks played an essential role in our collective response to, and coping strategy for, the COVID-19 pandemic. The threat of the novel coronavirus reminded us, in stark terms, how parks are a crucial component of public health and urban resilience.

However, the seeds of this report were planted well before COVID-19 surfaced. There has been a growing awareness, backed by science, economics and our collective lived experience, that parks are not just “nice to haves,” but indeed are critical infrastructure essential to the physical, mental, social, economic and environmental health of our cities.

This heightened sense of the value of parks and calls for more kinds of park services, along with increasing demands on municipal budgets, has led civil society to become more engaged in the programming, operations, maintenance and sometimes capital fundraising for our parks and related assets. This is true not just in Toronto, but in jurisdictions all over the world. In local terms, the rise of the Park People organization, founded in 2011, and the explosion in the number of park “Friends” groups is only one measure of this trend.

At the same time, racism and colonialism are factors that have shaped not just our planning and design of park spaces, but our thinking about those spaces including who can and “should” be using them, for what purposes, and whose voices get to decide those things. Gender, age, ability, and income are also equity characteristics that must be considered in a discussion about our collective spaces. Who are parks for? Who sets the rules? Why do some communities feel unwelcome and indeed unsafe in parks? Why are some communities deeply involved in the life of a park, and others not? Why are the benefits of parks and natural spaces not enjoyed equally by all? Where does park planning, design, and governance fit within the context of truth and reconciliation, particularly when the issues of land and connection to the land are so central to Indigenous people?

The question for municipal government, then, is how best to organize itself in the management of its park spaces to maximize the value of partnering with civil society, including community groups, non-profits and charities - especially those in under-represented communities - and the private sector, to deliver positive social, financial and ecological outcomes that are mutually positively reinforcing.

Looking beyond the limited scope of this Framework

Public spaces performing essential social, economic and ecological functions are enjoyed by wide swathes of society. For this reason, parks rightly generate considerable debate about how they should be planned, designed and managed. The COVID-19 pandemic has only heightened this debate. The Miami-based Knight Foundation, for example, published a report in March 2021 on what made certain public spaces successful during the pandemic, and offered recommendations for developing equitable and inclusive spaces beyond the pandemic. Among the findings: “Prioritizing

and embedding resident engagement throughout the entire [park] lifecycle led to community ripple effects like wider local capacity-building and community development beyond the project site."

Closer to home, Toronto-based Azure magazine published "Shared Governance: A Democratic Future for Public Spaces" in February 2021. Authors Bianca Wylie and Zahra Ebrahim argued that collective stewardship of our shared realms can be achieved through an ongoing, collaborative process of rule-making and modifying. "We have to stop thinking about community processes and city processes as independent approaches, instead start actively mapping them together."

Because collaboration is ongoing and evolving and encompasses the political sphere and social justice, no one report can hope to be the final word on the topic. While this report touches on many aspects of collaboration in our park spaces, the Framework itself focuses specifically on formal, ongoing relationships between the City and incorporated not-for-profits, registered charities and agencies when it comes to programming, operations, maintenance and capital fundraising for parks.

This scope, therefore, does not specifically address the wide range of civic organizations that may be called grassroots organizations that have a voice and community relationships, but are not incorporated as non-profits or registered charities. We recognize that incorporation can be a significant barrier for some communities and organizations. More work needs to be done on creating better tools for working collaboratively with grassroots organizations when there is the promise of community benefit. This could take the form, for example, of a permit category review, or documented relationship frameworks (formal but not legal agreements) that set out roles and responsibilities around a common vision. Another strategy may be creating resources to help build capacity within communities and organizations to hurdle

those barriers and attain non-profit or charitable status, with all the benefits – such as increased grant opportunities – those models provide.

For these reasons, this report can be considered "Framework 1.0," as the conversation will continue and the practice will evolve. While acknowledging its limitations, we hope this report is useful and advances the larger discussion around communities and government working together for better outcomes.



City of Toronto

Executive Summary

Background

Park partnerships, in the broad sense of the term, can take many forms. Examples include one-time efforts like community fundraising or corporate sponsorship for a new playground or park amenity. The Partnership unit of Parks, Forestry and Recreation has successfully facilitated these relationships for years, helping to raise millions of dollars with third parties for park improvements, recreation service enhancements and natural-space investments.

A growing number of partnerships revolve around what's come to be known as "collaborative governance," which is an ongoing relationship between the City and a partner group typically around a specific park or a series of parks within a specific geographic area.

Collaborative governance involves the government, community and private sectors communicating with each other and working together to achieve more than any one sector could achieve on its own.

Some collaborative governance relationships have existed for decades, such as the agreement in place between the City and Toronto Botanical Garden, a registered charity, at Edwards Gardens. But new ones are developing with more frequency, existing ones are becoming more sophisticated and ambitious, and globally the movement towards collaboration and partnerships in park spaces has been gaining increasing attention.

In 2017, Park, Forestry and Recreation began to invest in a more thoughtful approach to managing these relationships with non-profits and other

types of partners. One existing Business Development Officer in the Partnerships and Business Services unit was assigned to a collaborative governance portfolio of ongoing relationships with several non-profit partners that, to date, had been managed in an ad hoc fashion, many with a specific historical context.

Grouping some of these partnerships under one practice led to the development of a fledgling collaborative governance framework. This report takes the next step.

Parks, Forestry and Recreation engaged MaRS Solution Lab to take a social innovation lab approach to developing the *Collaborative Governance Report: A Framework 1.0 for Toronto Parks*. Governance models are highly complex and highly specific to the local context. While it is useful to consider best practices and case studies (as this report does), evaluating the impact and viability of successful practices from other jurisdictions is difficult, without direct experimentation with local stakeholders. At the same time pilot projects can be costly. For these reasons the project took a nimble yet robust social innovation lab approach to designing and testing a new collaborative governance framework within our local ecosystem of stakeholders.

To better understand and perhaps borrow applicable best practices from other jurisdictions, Parks, Forestry and Recreation concurrently engaged Park People to undertake research on 16 other park sites. The eight sites in Canada, seven in the United States and one in the U.K. represent a mix of destination parks, neighbourhood parks, small urban parks and plazas, and park networks, with highly varied collaborative governance structures. The one element in common was that in each case, the government authority collaborates or partners with a third-party organization to program, operate and maintain park space, and to raise funds for capital improvements – to varying degrees at each site. The results of the study are included in the Appendices and, we hope, infused

throughout this Framework, recognizing that in Toronto there is no "one size fits all" model.

Advancing Collaborative Governance of Parks at the City of Toronto

This section of the report begins by noting what has already been achieved through partnerships in parks and public spaces. It then looks at some of the opportunities and challenges related to building out a more formalized collaborative governance framework. It places this report within the context of many other City strategies that emphasize the importance of partnerships in building a modern, healthy, inclusive and prosperous city.

About the Framework

Setting the stage for the Framework itself, this section describes how it was developed, how it will be used, who will use it, and how it will adapt. While this Framework 1.0 is a discrete work, we recognize that nothing stays still, and over time through practice, learnings and continued public input, the Framework is likely to evolve to ensure it continues to deliver value and meet the needs of the City, partners and the people of Toronto.

The Framework

The Framework begins with a set of guiding principles to ground its development. It briefly describes how collaborative governance falls on a spectrum. The Framework then includes a set of Social, Financial and Ecological benefits that accrue from a successful practice, and suggests that the City should work with its partners to measure and demonstrate these benefits.

A section on eligibility guidelines details the types of partner groups are covered in this Framework. It describes other kinds of organizations playing important roles but falling outside the scope of this Framework. This section includes an outline of the administrative steps and processes required to develop and implement a collaborative governance

relationship, including key milestones such as City Council approvals.

While many collaborative governance relationships are initiated by the partner organization, the Framework recognizes that there are times when the City may wish to initiate a collaborative governance relationship with another party. This section looks at those instances and touches on tools that may help management and elected officials sort through the opportunities for best approaches. A discussion around an enhanced internal collaboration model is included.

The Framework also considers how it should be measured, through a proposed Partnership Value Report that was tested as part of this work. The Partnership Value Report would measure and demonstrate the benefits of collaborative governance across social, financial and ecological metrics to inform policy initiatives and the City's collaborative governance efforts. It would also align with the outcomes-based budgeting efforts and other value data captured by Parks, Forestry and Recreation.

Next Steps and Conclusion

While the Framework's scope is necessarily limited, the authors recognize the hard work of collaboration is endless. This section suggests ways to continue to build out the Framework, outlines additional ideas to explore, and suggests further learning to shift mindsets – topics that grew out of the lab work, stakeholder conversations and analysis of success factors in other jurisdictions.

Critically, Framework 1.0 concludes on a theme repeated throughout the report: there is more work to be done to engage with and build the capacity of underrepresented communities to fully benefit from collaboration in our park spaces with all of Toronto.

**Advancing Collaborative Governance of Parks
at the City of Toronto**



Sharing Ground: Celebrating what we've achieved through partnerships in parks and public spaces

The City has partnered with communities, civil society and the private sector since at least the time of the young City taking ownership of Allan Gardens from the Toronto Horticultural Society in 1864. Under that arrangement, the City leased back the land to the Society to manage it as a free, public space, with a condition allowing the Society to run paid events in the evening to support itself.

Much has changed since 1864. Most recently, in 2017, Parks, Forestry and Recreation (PFR) Partnerships began to invest in a more thoughtful approach to managing relationships with non-profit and other types of partners. One existing Business Development Officer was assigned to “collaborative governance,” defined as a portfolio of ongoing relationships with several non-profit or agency partners that to date had been managed in an ad hoc fashion, many with a specific historical context.

Grouping some of these partnerships under one practice led to the development of a fledgling collaborative governance framework that, at its core:

- Starts by defining and agreeing to the “value add” the partner can bring to the relationship, aligned with City and Parks, Forestry and Recreation objectives
- Identifies roles and responsibilities, linked to the ambitions and capacity of the partner, and also the authority and resources of the City
- Works through, and with, the relevant City policies and tools needed to make the partnership work, flourish and grow, including seeking Council authority when necessary
- Typically, but not always, organizes the work through a committee structure that advances

the agenda, builds relationships, identifies challenges, and assigns accountability.

PFR’s current collaborative governance practice centres largely on a City-partner steering committee model. It has been adopted with partners such as Evergreen, Friends of Allan Gardens, Toronto Botanical Garden, and Downtown Yonge Business Improvement Association (BIA), and is adaptable and scalable depending on the situation. A Leadership Team is formed by members of the partner organization and by City staff, and meets regularly to advance the objectives of the partnership as well as to address any issues that may arise.

These existing arrangements have been successful in building relationships, advancing agreements (including through staff reports to City Council), providing additional programming to the public, shoring up the sustainability of non-profit partners, and in some cases securing third-party financial contributions through donations or sponsorships. Examples of outcomes since 2017 include:

- Additional public programming at Allan Gardens through the Friends of Allan Gardens
- A new ongoing revenue source to help sustain Toronto Botanical Garden through an agreement to manage on-site parking operations;
- \$1 million gift secured from TD Bank thanks to City-High Park Nature Centre collaboration, to support subsidized school visits and also a capital project to renovate the High Park Forest School, home of the Nature Centre;
- Completion of a partnership with Evergreen in the Lower Don Valley that resulted in \$1 million in additional donor funds to the City for capital improvements to the Lower Don Trail, and additional donor funding for Evergreen-led public art programming;
- Deeper relationship with Downtown Yonge BIA, including a \$250,000 contribution to support the new Barbara Ann Scott Skating Trail (com-

pleted), and forthcoming \$100,000 in-kind donation of new clock tower at Trinity Square Park, plus enhanced BIA public programming in downtown parks; and

- Construction Management Agreement with Friends of High Park Zoo to build new llama and capybara building, with the Friends contributing \$224,000 plus construction management.

In addition to these outcomes, there is a general signal from various stakeholders that the City is on the right track. Participants in an early engagement workshop with stakeholders shared some of the positive trends they saw in working with the City through PFR in park spaces:

- City being more open to the collaborative role of private partners in public spaces beyond funding and transactional partnership models and
- More trust and collaboration between community groups and City staff, where there were greater gaps before as they operated in very different contexts and at different scales
- More efforts to engage and start conversations to work proactively and responsively with BIAs on common goals particularly in response to the pandemic
- More flexibility to accommodate and support community programming including simplifying some permitting requirements to facilitate said programming
- A focus on ensuring that the design of our parks and public spaces is done in a manner which supports existing and future community programming
- Greater use of the park system where partnerships were supported
- Increasing interest from communities who want to be stewards of park spaces

There is much to celebrate in the collective progress that the City of Toronto and its many partners have made in delivering public value through our parkland. At the same time the City faces

many challenges. These challenges need to be addressed in order to more fully leverage collaborative governance relationships and maximize collective benefits, especially with under-represented communities.

Fertile Ground: New opportunities to advance strategic outcomes through collaborative governance

A more formal collaborative governance practice will build on the successful elements of what has been working to date while better addressing key opportunities and a number of important new challenges. A formal practice will also help to “daylight” processes and opportunities, particularly with groups that don’t know where to start - a challenge that came up often in stakeholder conversations for this report.

Opportunities

The timing is ripe for a more formal collaborative governance framework that aligns with strategic priorities at the City while responding to the increasing demand from the civic sectors for partnership arrangements.

Strategic priorities at the City

The role of collaboration and partnerships is becoming increasingly important for the City. This is reflected in several of its corporate strategies and priorities:

- **Toronto Official Plan:** grounded in principles of Diversity and Opportunity, Beauty, Connectivity, and Leadership and Stewardship. Leadership and Stewardship are particularly relevant to collaborative governance, with the Official Plan noting that “implementation of this Plan needs the participation of all segments and sectors of

the City. The City of Toronto cannot do it alone. We need leaders in the public and private sectors with the courage to take risks, develop proactive solutions and then follow through." The Plan also identifies diversity as our strength because it means vibrancy, opportunity, inclusiveness and adaptability - it is a fundamental building block for success. To be successful, our future must also be diverse, inclusive and equitable.

- **City of Toronto Corporate Strategic Plan:** In outlining the City's commitment to people, partnerships, performance and priorities, the City's Corporate Strategic Plan highlights the need to continue to improve the performance of the City as an organization to improve the quality of life for Torontonians. This is particularly relevant where it notes the City will be intentional and actively seek partnerships that support programs and services which improve the quality of life in Toronto.
- **Toronto's Resilience Strategy:** sets out a vision, goals, and actions to help Toronto survive, adapt and thrive in the face of any challenge, particularly climate change and growing inequities. This strategy is meant to light a spark – to drive action at the City and from business, academia, non-profit organizations, and residents to build a city where everyone can thrive. In outlining its shared community vision for a more resilient Toronto, the following points from the Resilience Strategy are particularly relevant to the development of a collaborative governance framework:
 - A place where residents feel empowered to help shape their communities and where government works in deep collaboration with the people it represents to advance an agenda of fairness and prosperity for everyone.
 - A place that creates space for diversity and recognizes every resident's right to the city.
 - A city of connected communities, where residents feel heard, share common goals, and have broad empathy and understanding for one another.
 - A place that is led by brave and caring people who reflect the diversity of the communities they represent.
- **Statement of Commitment to the Aboriginal Communities of Toronto:** In 2010, the City adopted the Statement of Commitment to the Aboriginal Communities of Toronto. In 2015 City Council, in consultation with the Aboriginal Affairs Committee, identified eight Calls to Action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Report as priorities for implementation. The City's Statement of Commitment identifies seven distinct goals to be fulfilled as part of the Urban Aboriginal Strategy/Framework. One of these goals is the commitment to engaging Aboriginal communities in the City's decision-making process, to removing barriers to civic participation and to increasing the representation and role of Aboriginal people on municipal boards and committees. The development of a collaborative governance framework will play a role in working towards achieving some of these goals and the City's Statement of Commitment.
- **For Public Benefit: City of Toronto Framework for Working with Community-Based Not-for-Profit Organizations:** The Collaborative Governance Framework is aligned with the principles, commitments and actions outlined in the For Public Benefit Framework. In particular, principles including 'Generating Public Benefit,' 'Connecting to Community,' 'Encouraging Diversity' and 'Recognizing our Interdependence' align with this Framework. Commitments such as 'Collaboration and Dialogue' and 'Modernizing

Administrative Processes' are applicable to PFR's mandate and its work with not-for-profits. This Framework is also aligned with the short and longer-term actions such as 'Promote good governance' and 'Create better navigation.'

This work is also aligned with the principles of PFR's strategic priorities:

- **Parkland Strategy:** At PFR, four guiding principles support the vision for Toronto's parks system and form the foundation of the Parkland Strategy: Expand, Improve, Connect and Include. These principles will guide the work of City staff, City Council, and other stakeholders as the Parkland Strategy is implemented.
- **Ravine Strategy:** Five principles, Protect, Invest, Partner, Connect and Celebrate guide the Ravine Strategy. The Partner principle, which highlights the need to create more opportunities for individuals and organizations to contribute to our ravines, again reinforces the need for a more structured approach to collaborative governance.
- **Recreation Service Plan (2009), Parks Plan (2013) and the Facilities Master Plan (2019):** These three plans share principles of quality and equity. The Recreation Service plan includes principles of inclusion and capacity building. The Parks Plan calls for increased opportunities for resident, group and stakeholder involvement. The following principles guide the Facility Master Plan:
 - Quality – Provide high quality and inspiring facilities to enhance the health, wellbeing and quality of life of residents.
 - Innovation – Encourage progressive strategies and partnerships that respond to changing times, address emerging needs and promote excellence. Innovation means finding better ways of designing, providing

and funding spaces, such as co-located and integrated facilities that reflect the unique needs of each community.

- Sustainability – Protect the interests of current and future generations through adaptable and resilient facilities that are socially, environmentally and financially sustainable.
- Equity – Provide an equitable distribution of parks and recreation facilities on a geographic and demographic basis for all residents. Equitable access means that all Toronto residents should be able to utilize facilities, regardless of their age, location, financial or other barriers.

"Toronto's success decades from now will be measured on how we worked with our partners. Achieving our vision and carrying out our mission requires the City to work with residents, other governments, institutions, the private sector, the not-for-profit sector and Indigenous peoples."

- Corporate Strategic Plan

"To achieve the goals and objectives of this [Official] Plan, the City will exert influence through policy levers and partnerships and seek partnerships with other levels of government, the business sector, labour and non-governmental and community organizations."

- Toronto Official Plan Policy 5.3.4.1

“Around the world, there is growing interest in exploring how governments and the not-for-profit sector can work together better. This is in recognition of the unique roles that not-for-profit organizations (NFPs) can play in mobilizing people, generating ideas and benefiting communities... The City’s new framework for working with the not-for-profit sector is based on past good practices and looks ahead to an even better relationship in the future. It will create ongoing opportunities to learn from “what works” and to share best practices across government and across the sector.”

- A Whole-of-Government Framework to Guide City of Toronto Relationships with the Community-Based Not-for-Profit Sector, 2017

New parks in development

As outlined in the [Parkland Strategy Report and associated staff report](#), new parks are proposed or under development in order to maintain parkland supply in the face of growth pressures. Collaborative governance arrangements to program, operate and maintain the parks, to varying degrees, and raise additional capital dollars will be important considerations for such parks. At the same time, the Strategy’s principles of ‘Improve’ and ‘Include’ point to the opportunity for collaborative governance to play a role in existing parks.

Notable examples of new, proposed or evolving parks include:

- The parks network that will line the banks of the new mouth of the Don River, currently under construction by Waterfront Toronto as part of the Port Lands flood-protection and revitalization project
- Decked parks over railway corridors or other infrastructure
- Beare Hill Park on the border of Scarborough and Pickering, the site of an old landfill, is also under development, and other smaller parks are proposed or under development across the city
- The proposed Loop Trail, while not one park, would build out the network of interconnected, off-road, multi-use trails in our ravine system, in hydro corridors and along the waterfront
- The Meadoway: spearheaded by the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority with the support of the City of Toronto, Weston Family Foundation and Hydro One, the Meadoway is transforming a hydro corridor in Scarborough into a vibrant 16-kilometre stretch of urban greenspace and meadowlands that will become one of Canada’s largest linear urban parks.

Increasing demand from the civic sector

There is a growing trend of harnessing the ingenuity, talents and creativity of the civic sector to create and deliver more benefits to residents, in partnership with residents. For Toronto, an important milestone was the amalgamation of the six metropolitan municipalities (Etobicoke, York, East York, Scarborough, North York, and Toronto) into the “megacity” of Toronto in 1998. Constrained budgets sharply reduced the level of programming in parks by recreation branches in the amalgamated municipalities, which faced challenges delivering the same amount of programming with more limited resources across a larger geography.

“Friends of ‘x’ Park” groups began to emerge in response to these challenges and today there are now upwards of 100 such groups. This trend also

led to the founding of more organized non-profit and charitable organizations such as Park People in 2011, which started with the founding question: “How can we all play a role in making our parks better serve people and neighbourhoods?” As a result the City depends on - and civic groups increasingly desire and demand - partnerships to deliver park programming and services.

Challenges

There are two broad categories of challenges that have been identified in enhancing PFR’s collaborative governance practices. The first relates to a lack of clarity and shared understanding among internal and external stakeholders regarding the purpose/objective of entering into a partnership arrangement. This missing ‘common ground’ today lies at the root of many frustrations, and causes friction, between both internal City stakeholders and external partners as well. A number of issues also suggest internal City processes and organization of staffing and resources need to change if the City and its diverse partners are to fully take advantage of new opportunities. The second category of challenges relates to the City’s own internal processes, organizational structure, and other operational context matters that impose constraints on staff’s ability to maximize the benefits of partnership arrangements.

Lack of clarity and shared understanding

Defined principles and outcomes: The current collaborative governance approach is primarily ad hoc. Defined principles and measurable outcomes will give the practice more structure and accountability, aligned with City strategies. Up-front work around a shared vision is critical as Councilors have to buy into the vision to support recommendations.

A common language: A successful practice depends on common language and understandings around outcomes, processes, structures, tools,

roles and responsibilities. A framework can deliver this language.

Lack of a clear intake process: There are opportunities to improve the intake process for proposals from other parties through more clarity, better communications and defined internal procedures. This effort can also specifically target the implementation of an engagement model that is truly responsive to traditionally underrepresented communities.

Lack of a solicitation process: There is an opportunity to develop a clearer path for soliciting partners desired by the City for the programming, operation and maintenance of park spaces, when partnership offers mutual benefits. This effort can also focus on developing new ways of engaging diverse populations, including Indigenous, Black and people of colour communities, that go beyond transactional approaches in an effort to address City equity, diversity and inclusion objectives and its Indigenous reconciliation goals.

Mapping the process: Because every collaborative governance project or site has its own story, history and context, development can take different routes, and the starting point (and timing) isn’t always crystal-clear. This can create friction with partners. Defining or better understanding the grey zones between commercial arrangements and not-for-profit partnerships, and the revenue and benefit implications, will also advance the collaborative governance practice.

Agreement labyrinth: A wide range of agreement types and variances in the authorities in place to enter agreements can make or appear to make the process opaque or cumbersome.

Adapting organizational structure and processes

Staff structure, training and turnover: Stakeholders identified an increasing openness at the City to partnerships and collaborations, but also suggested that not all staff have the right skill sets or

training for working with deeply engaged, responsive, and motivated community groups and other potential partners. The fact that community volunteers also typically undertake their work after typical business hours or on weekends can hinder communications and relationship-building with City staff whose schedules do not typically align with external groups' availability. Furthermore, some ongoing community relationships with Parks staff are interrupted when there is staff turnover or turnover at the community group. This is a particular challenge with regard to relationships where the partnership arrangements are ad hoc or not well-documented.

City "silos": Divisional and intra-divisional branch "silos" can add extra steps when pursuing collaborative opportunities. The need to work with interdivisional partners on more complex partnership arrangements, or complex requests of existing partners, requires an investment of time and other resources that aren't always available. The relative senses of urgency and competing priorities and/or objectives of interdivisional partners can also cause delays and spark frustration on behalf of the external partner which does not have a "window" into internal processes and communications, or simply lacks one point-person with which to engage.

Demand outstripping resources: The growth in partnership and collaborative governance activity threatens to outstrip the City's ability to effectively manage the opportunities. In 2017, when the PFR Partnership unit was reorganized to consolidate collaborative governance relationships into one portfolio, the staff team was only responsible for sustaining six core ongoing partnerships. By 2020, that had more than doubled, to 14 ongoing partnerships, with no commensurate change in staff resources. Park managers have also noted a progressive tightening of available resources allocated to maintenance needs while simultaneously working to support the increasing use and number of parks, park facilities, and parks programming.

Community groups have voiced concerns about the risk of downloading costs to community partners from the City through, for example, permit fees or other costs.

Increasing pressure for innovative business models to deliver sustainable park services: Toronto's parks offer a wide range of visitor experiences, from quiet contemplation in nature, to active recreation, to fun-filled family outings. Over the decades, the City has developed numerous relationships with other parties to help deliver services to provide these visitor experiences. With a growing, diverse population, the demand for ever more diverse and better visitor experiences has only increased, putting pressure on City resources to deliver. Bake ovens, urban agriculture, new sports activities, markets, arts and cultural experiences are just a few examples. There are often grey areas, situations without exact precedents, new realities, even seeming paradoxes (not-for-profits hiring for-profits to provide a defined service, for example). We need to allow for creative ways to end up with desired outcomes, while providing agreed-upon principles, a sound knowledge base, a common language and other tools to guide the work in a consistent and durable way. Appropriate tools and City procurement policies may include those that enable successful fundraising efforts and deliver community relevant initiatives on parkland.

The Collaborative Governance Framework is intended as the first step towards addressing these opportunities and challenges. While the Framework itself will not address them alone, it is considered a critical foundational touchstone to align the many stakeholders' perspectives and set a shared direction for next steps.

About the Framework



How it was developed

This Framework was developed through a combination of

- Examining past and current practices from internal and external stakeholders' perspectives through structured one-on-one and group interviews;
- Undertaking a jurisdictional scan of partnership and governance models in Canada, U.S. and U.K. (See Appendix C); and
- Mapping the operational and strategic processes and objectives which inform Parks, Forestry, and Recreation's desired outcomes regarding enhancing collaborative governance practices.

The project roadmap provides an overview of the process in Appendix D.

These inputs were used by the Project Team to generate, iterate, and test, a number of ideas. A summary of these ideas are available in Appendix E. Following internal discussions and problem-framing work sessions, the team identified the priority ideas that required further feedback and input from stakeholders to validate the proposed solutions; one example is the Partnership Value Report Prototype (see Appendix A). We then synthesized a selection of these ideas into the new Collaborative Governance Framework. A draft of this Framework was reviewed by stakeholders and this report has incorporated their valuable feedback.

How it will be used

The intent of this Framework is to provide our diverse stakeholders with greater clarity regarding Parks, Forestry and Recreation's internal partnership policies and processes; insight which many interviewees identified as being difficult to find or understand concretely. We believe that a more transparent process is the first step in addressing what lies at the heart of many challenges today for both internal and external stakeholders. This

Framework is a communication tool to align and advance the work of collaborative governance among varied stakeholders. It visualizes key processes to make them more explicit and offers shared language and structure to support ongoing and future productive discussions. In this way it builds on existing understanding while creating the potential to see this work in a new light, helping to open minds to new possibilities.

Indigenous Groups

A growing number of Indigenous groups are building relationships with Parks, Forestry and Recreation in relation to use of space. Some of these groups are unincorporated collectives, some are incorporated non-profits, and sometimes collectives are working in collaboration with non-profits. Activities include programming such as healing circles, ceremonial fires or medicine gardens, or a more established, longer-term presence in park space. In many cases these are evolving relationships that currently don't fit into more formal or traditional collaborative governance frameworks, but may evolve in that direction. This report may provide some useful context and reference for these relationships, understanding that treaty rights and efforts at truth and reconciliation often have a reality separate from current administrative processes and procedures.

Leading Partners

Leading Partners refers to stakeholders with whom PFR enters into direct partnerships on a long-term basis, and where the collaborative governance relationship is generally focused on a single park site. They are 'leading' partners as they tend to initiate new proposals that may entail the creation of new collaborative governance arrangements or necessitate the modification of an existing one. This group generally includes incorporated not-for-profit or charitable organizations who have legal status to enter into formal agreements with the City such as the Bentway Conservancy, Evergreen, Toronto Botanical Garden,

Friends of Allan Gardens, High Park Nature Centre, and Riverdale Urban Farm. Additionally, these partners are often characterized by the following attributes:

- They contribute expert knowledge (e.g., horticulture, design, capital development, fundraising, etc.), volunteer and stewardship hours, and other direct and in-kind resources.
- They receive a number of benefits from the City such as:
 - Staff support (e.g., a Business Development Officer, Partnerships, assigned to the file; Capital Projects staff assigned if capital work is part of the project)
 - Potential facility/space support (depending on context)
 - Potential support (may be in-kind) for feasibility studies and visioning exercises
 - In some cases, financial and capacity-building support
- They generally organize programming, if not directly operate facilities, in parks.
- Often there is a large capital project or a series of smaller capital improvement projects at the centre of the relationship.
- They already meet on a monthly or regular basis with PFR staff.
- Often have close relationships with local councillors and sometimes direct access to the Mayor, and PFR staff sometimes serve as ex-officio on the organization's board.

Their goals in working with the City include the following:

- Leveraging mutual expertise and strengths with the City to create public value on parkland.
- Creating world-class park experiences for residents and visitors (tourists).
- Expanding and growing their mandate and program offering.
- Ensuring compliance with rules and regulations.

Interviews with stakeholders from this group of leading partners surfaced the following frustrations and limitations of the current collaborative governance practice:

- Financial penalties incurring to the partner as a result of the length of time it takes for the City to execute the requisite agreements. For example, partners can incur costs arising from insurance coverage requirements over extended periods of time or from legal fees, which in one case totalled approximately \$1 million.
- Lack of clarity regarding the complexity of City processes and length of time to enter into a partnership, causing delays on the partner side in achieving project milestones related to fundraising and development.
- Lack of a mechanism to address and/or reduce these delays other than “escalation” to a more senior staff person or elected representative.
- Lack of dedicated and/or sustainable funding from the City of Toronto to support partner proposals.
 - Partners identified alternative models from other cities like Montreal and Winnipeg as well as international examples from the U.S. and U.K.
- Municipal constraints regarding permitted revenue streams compared to parks in other jurisdictions such as preventing partners from collecting admission fees.
- Conflicting guidance regarding City policies and procedures from different Divisions (e.g., Fire Services vs. Forestry).
- High staff turnover at the City requires further investment in relationship building and results in a loss of institutional knowledge to support partners in navigating City processes.

The Framework suggests that these challenges can be mitigated by providing more clarity regarding the City's goals for partnerships and the City's rationale regarding internal processes. A more transparent process for internal stakeholders will

also support improved internal coordination activities that will result in fewer delays for existing and potential partners. The Framework also suggests how to formalize certain ad hoc or informal processes, tools and relationships in order to address issues related to staff turnover. We also anticipate that greater transparency will encourage partners to propose improvements to the process where they may see opportunities for greater mutual and public benefit.

Multi-site Partners

In some cases the City may have, or may be developing, a collaborative governance arrangement for a number of different park sites with the same group. The group may be a Leading Partner or governmental agency. Examples include Toronto and Region Conservation Area and Business Improvement Areas. In such cases, collaborative governance arrangements may be initiated by the City.

As large or embedded institutional entities, they possess the professional and technical knowledge to partner with the City or collaborate directly with Parks, Forestry and Recreation staff. The key to these relationships is marrying the resources, authority, and mandates of each party to produce better outcomes.

The Framework provides a separate engagement model for this group of stakeholders, as PFR typically takes the lead in these cases. The Framework also outlines additional tools that match appropriate governance models to site-specific attributes in order to develop appropriate collaborative governance arrangements.

Enabling Partners

This group consists of stakeholders who play critical roles in enabling successful collaboration while they currently do not enter directly into a partnership through formal legal agreements.

Local community-based groups

This group of stakeholders includes a broad spectrum of community-based organizations who take an active interest in the use and programming of parks and recreational facilities. Examples include many of the smaller “Friends of” groups, sports leagues, and other interest-based groups, collectives, and tenants’ associations, among others. These groups may be seeking opportunities to host a one-off event in a park like a movie night, secure ongoing access on a regular basis for a farmers’ market or sports event, or permanently alter the design or programming of a park such as by advocating for the installation of a dogs off-leash area. What distinguishes this audience category from formal not-for-profit or charity organizations, agencies, or philanthropic organizations is a relative lack of institutional and financial resources. Many, if not most, of these organizations are not incorporated. Their concerns and advocacy are generally limited to a single park site, to a single amenity within a larger park site, or to one type of amenity across multiple park sites. As a result, their interest and capacity is relatively narrow and scoped.

For this group of stakeholders, the Framework provides more transparency about the relevant contacts, processes, and pathways for working with the City on park initiatives beyond the existing permit process for securing access to park space or amenities on a transactional basis.

Corporate and family foundations

This group of stakeholders comprises important funding partners that may enable specific initiatives within a broader collaborative governance relationship between the City and Lead or Multi-site Partners. Often there is no ongoing collaborative governance aspect to corporate-giving relationships with the City, which tend to be time-limited and related to specific events (e.g. Family Day sponsorship) or capital improvements (e.g. rink or basketball court refurbishments or playground donations).

However, in some cases, corporations may support not-for-profit partners in park spaces and be an important contributor to their activities. For example, TD Bank's \$1 million contribution to the High Park Nature Centre, an independent charity, supports both the Nature Centre's subsidized school trip program, and also a Nature Centre-City collaborative fundraising project to enable major capital renovations at the City-owned facility that houses the Nature Centre. Other longer-term, site-specific examples include the Regent Park Athletic Grounds, a PFR-run facility built in collaboration with Toronto Community Housing and Maple Leaf Sports and Entertainment (MLSE) Foundation. As part of the project, the Foundation created a legacy grant program for community groups using the facility. The Foundation also entered into an agreement with PFR that governs how those grant-supported community groups will obtain access to the facility and how they will coordinate with PFR's Client Services group which issues permits.

Similarly, family foundations play an important role in funding and supporting our parks and public spaces. And although they have not traditionally become involved in governance discussions, this orientation is starting to change as evidenced by the Judy and Wilmot Matthews Foundation's ground-breaking \$25 million gift that kickstarted The Bentway public space under the Gardiner Expressway. In addition to the funds that were devoted to capital work undertaken by the City, a major point of discussion during the partnership process was the governance of the future space. These conversations led to the creation of a new not-for-profit entity, The Bentway Conservancy, which was charged with programming, operating, and maintaining the space. The conservancy is a registered charity with an independent board and operates the space under a Use Agreement with the City. It is sustained through self-earned revenues including programming fees, event revenue, and sponsorships; through donations; and, initially, was "seeded" with a \$10 million fund from

the original Matthews gift that will be drawn down over eight years. The intent is to give the new conservancy sufficient stability in its early years to mature and grow into a self-sustaining organization.

For this group of stakeholders, the Framework provides a starting point to discuss how and when funding partners might, and should, be involved in collaborative governance arrangements.

Local councillors and other City divisions

Local councillors and other City Divisions work with businesses, individuals, and groups seeking greater collaboration with PFR on park initiatives. For these stakeholders, the Framework provides additional clarity and transparency regarding when and how to engage PFR on matters related to collaborative governance.

- **Councillors:** The Framework serves as a reference document for advising and engaging residents, businesses, and other groups on park initiatives. It provides clarity on how collaborative governance arrangements might be used to support impactful parkland initiatives in their ward over the long term. It invites local leaders to engage PFR on ways to make local park initiatives more successful.
- **City frontline staff and Toronto Office of Strategic Partnerships:** The Framework provides clarity to more efficiently and effectively triage variable inbound requests for collaboration and partnership with PFR.
- **Indigenous Affairs Office and the Confronting Anti-Black Racism Unit:** The Framework clarifies points of alignment and joint actions where collaborative governance of parkland can advance our progress towards reconciliation and to cultivating an actively anti-racist city.

- **Policy makers (Senior Management, Council):** Specific elements of the Framework such as the Partnership Value Report provide actionable insight for directing City resources (e.g. future new partner funding, or business cases for increased staff resources to match growth or build not-for-profit capacity, or new policy such as potential changes to delegated authority).

Commercial Operators

Commercial operators include for-profit businesses that sell products and services on parkland. Small-scale commercial operations in parks can and do add to the visitor experience: a coffee, an ice-cream cone, or a kayak rental can often serve as the catalyst for forming lasting positive experiences.

Commercial operations can also be used in some cases to generate revenue to support not-for-profit organizations and groups, whose missions are aligned to the park space in which they operate. Examples include:

- The cafe space at Edwards Gardens, operated by a for-profit firm on behalf of the not-for-profit Toronto Botanical Garden, with whom the City has an agreement
- The farmers' market at Riverdale Park West, run by the not-for-profit Riverdale Urban Farm group

These and other groups typically earn revenue and raise funds to support their operations that may, for example, provide free programming in a park or contribute to capital improvements of City property.

There may be ways to enable not-for-profit/for-profit relationships, develop more collaborative ways of working with the right businesses in our parks, and explore opportunities that generate improved outcomes. However, this work was beyond the primary focus of this report.

How it will adapt

A 1.0 version of the Framework is presented in this report. It signals the start of a formal collaborative governance practice that will adapt and evolve in step with ongoing stakeholder input. The final section on Next Steps provides recommendations to further validate and refine the Framework in the near term as well as promising medium to longer-term ideas to explore in the future.



Rafael Correa/City of Toronto

The Framework



A. Guiding Principles

The following guiding principles are consistent and aligned with the strategic direction of the Parks, Forestry and Recreation division and across the City as a whole. These principles also incorporate and reflect the values we heard from initial stakeholder engagements to date.

These principles serve as a guide to developing and refining the Framework as presented here and as it evolves over time.

Clarity and Transparency: Straight-forward process that can be easily understood and applied by intended audiences (Council, staff, partners, public) and builds trust of all parties in adopting the processes.

Equity and Inclusivity: Grounded in equity to support stakeholders facing systemic and historic barriers to participation and in terms of where the City focuses its resources. This includes equity-deserving communities as well as playing a role in helping to meet the City's Statement of Commitment to Indigenous Communities of Toronto.

Accessibility: Flexible and adaptable to different capacities of collaborators with PFR. PFR and internal City partners act as enablers of civic participation and community development.

Accountability and Sustainability: Rigorous accountable process that aligns mandates of government with external partners towards measurable social, environmental and economic outcomes.

Leadership and Stewardship: Collaborative governance has to enable the participation of all segments and sectors of the City. The City of Toronto cannot do it alone. We need leaders in the public, not-for-profit and private sectors with the courage to share risks, develop proactive solutions and then follow through.

Diversity and Opportunity: Collaborative governance has to allow for vibrancy, opportunity, inclusiveness and adaptability. To be successful, our future must also be diverse, inclusive and equitable.

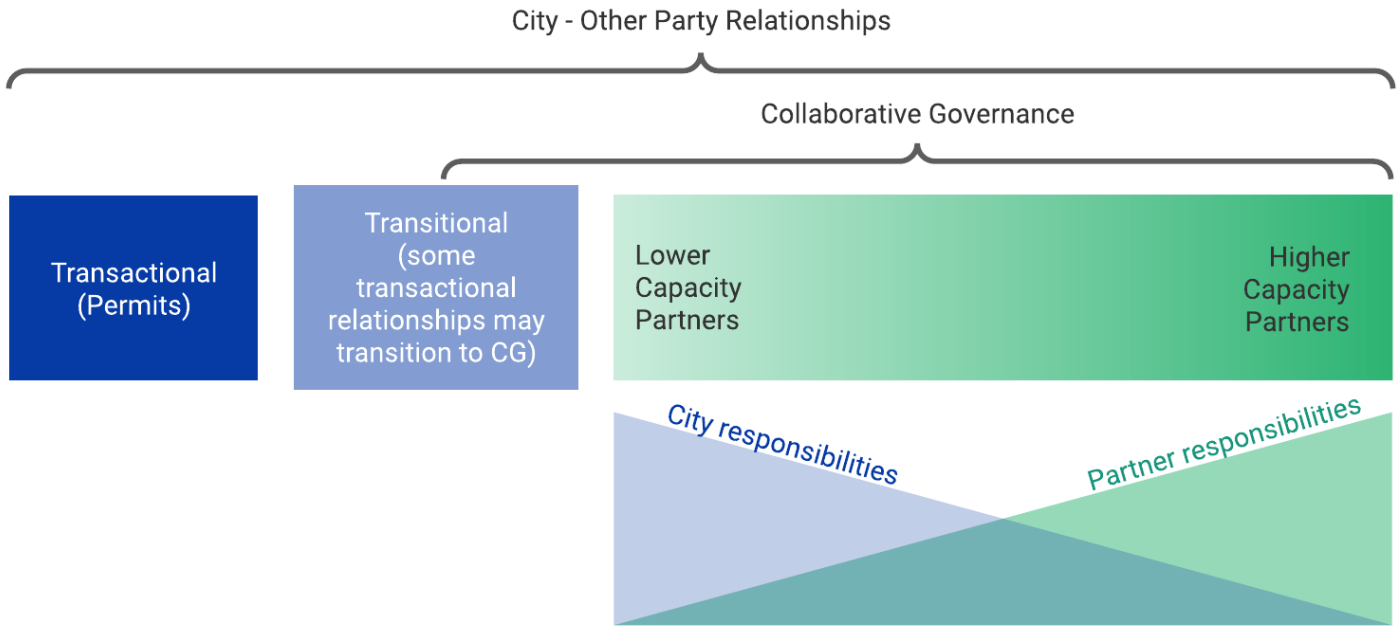
Common Goals: Collaborative governance framework should be modelled in a manner that helps achieve agreed-upon goals, objectives and principles outlined in strategic documents, for example the Parkland Strategy, the Ravine Strategy and the Corporate Strategic Plan.

Innovation: Encourage progressive partnerships that respond to changing times, address emerging needs and promote excellence. Innovation means finding better ways of designing, providing and funding spaces, such as co-located and integrated facilities that reflect the unique needs of each community.

Quality of Life: Collaborative governance framework and models must allow for partnerships that support programs and services which improve the quality of life in Toronto.

B. Collaborative Governance at PFR Partnerships

The City of Toronto works with a variety of organizations to make public park spaces inviting and enjoyable for Toronto's residents and its many visitors. The various types of organizations, entities, and stakeholders with which PFR partners were described and categorized earlier in the report. This section describes not the stakeholders, but the types of relationships they have with the City. Such relationships may be generally categorized into three types which lie on a spectrum:



- Transactional: Individuals, groups and organizations access existing City services (e.g., permits) to work with the city towards aligned mandates.
- Transitional: Relationships that began as transactional in nature that are evolving into a longer-term collaborative governance relationship.
- Collaborative governance relationships: Long-term relationships with one or more external partners that are grounded in formal legal agreements or working towards such agreements.

In this way, collaborative governance in parks refers to a governance arrangement that applies to a subset of partnerships that require a long-term view. In these cases, the City works with one or more partners whose mandates align with the City to develop, program, operate and maintain public park spaces, and in many cases to raise funds for capital improvements

C. Public benefits and intended outcomes

Value-added outcomes that enhance the public good can be achieved by combining the authority, resources, skills, and experience of the City with the local knowledge, creativity, passion, capacity, ambition, and autonomy of a partner organization. Put another way, while the City excels in many capacities, civil society (represented by non-profits, charities and unincorporated community groups) and the private sector can bring their own skill sets and resources to bear to accomplish mutually beneficial goals. By working together in collaboration, there are greater benefits than working alone. For the City and residents there are a number of social, economic and ecological benefits to be achieved through collaborative governance.

Social Benefits

Belonging: Collaborative governance can foster a stronger sense of belonging among individuals and communities. People are heard, contribute to and make a difference in their communities.

Inclusivity: Collaborative governance models can offer opportunities to better reflect the diversity, experience, talents, creativity, ingenuity and resourcefulness of Torontonians who use park space but may not be engaged in the management, planning and ambitions for Toronto's parks.

Cohesion: Collaborative governance can foster stronger social cohesion and resilience by building relationships and trust within communities and with government.

Financial Benefits

Funding: Collaborative governance models can generate additional funding for park programming, operations and sometimes maintenance, to improve the visitor experience. A balance needs to be struck between these opportunities and the risk of "over-commercializing" public park space.

Value-Add: Collaborative governance can add value to City investments and assets by leveraging partner resources (including volunteers) to deliver public benefits.

Capital: Collaborative governance can raise additional funds from non-City sources for capital improvements to City parks and park amenities.

Ecological Benefits

Stewardship: Collaborative governance can provide models for enhanced community stewardship of our green and natural spaces while respecting collective agreements and the expertise of staff managers.

How we will work in partnership to demonstrate these benefits

Overall there is general agreement among PFR, internal and external stakeholders that collaborative governance is worthwhile because it allows for "1+1 = 3" types of gains. But a clear evidence base is lacking as it is an emerging practice. The

Framework and its associated processes and tools will allow stakeholders to develop a shared understanding of the collective investments and outcomes of collaborative governance relationships (see section G Annual Reporting).

D. Collaborative Governance Partner Eligibility Criteria

The most important consideration for a Collaborative Governance Partnership is that it contributes to the overall vision of Toronto Parks, Forestry and Recreation:

Toronto's parks, recreation facilities and natural spaces are places where Torontonians come together to build community and play, celebrate and explore. In our role as stewards of these spaces, we contribute to the city's social and environmental resilience by ensuring that our parks, playing fields, recreation centres, ice rinks and pools, along with treelined streets, trails, forests, meadows, marshes, and ravines, are beautiful, safe and accessible, that they expand and develop to meet the needs of a growing city, and are filled with vibrant, active, and engaged communities.

Secondly, partnerships and outcomes of the vision must align with the core mandate of PFR:

Parks, Forestry and Recreation services are key drivers of social, environmental, and economic capital, contributing to Toronto's sustained livability and overall health during a period of unprecedented growth. A vibrant and accessible system of parks, recreation facilities and programs, healthy and growing natural environments, and a strong and resilient urban forest canopy are essential to maintaining

a livable and sustainable Toronto. What we want for Torontonians:

- Equitable access to affordable and high-quality recreation programs and facilities; high-quality connected parks and natural spaces
- A healthy and resilient urban forest and ravines; safe and resilient parks and public spaces; awareness of the benefits of trees, green infrastructure and ravines; and
- Youth that are engaged through leadership and life skill development, volunteerism and employment.

In addition to the above vision and mandate, collaborative governance partnerships require the following criteria for leading partners. These are the criteria for formal relationships governed by agreements with incorporated not-for-profits, registered charities and agencies. See the Introduction for a discussion on the larger topic of collaboration.

General Criteria

Typically, all criteria in this section must be met by Leading Partners.

- ❑ Objectives of the partner corporation are aligned with PFR mandate/mission, e.g. relating to parks or public spaces, recreation, natural spaces. Alignment with other City mandates falling under the jurisdiction of other divisions that relate to the public enjoyment of public space may also be taken into consideration (e.g. public art and culture).
- ❑ Based in Toronto or has a Toronto office serving Toronto residents.
- ❑ Provides services or programming that complements or enhances City-provided services or programming in a demonstrable way (e.g., geographic or demographic coverage).

- ❑ Incorporated non-profit or registered charity in good standing, or a government agency, board or commission. (For-profit business activities are governed by Business Opportunities, e.g. market-based licences or leases, a separate process.)
- ❑ Brings demonstrated governance and funding resources, or promise of such, to sustain the partnership, service, program, project.
- ❑ Partnership is for a set term, which may be renewable.
- ❑ Agrees to contribute outcomes data (e.g. annual Partnership Value Report questionnaire) to City specifications.
- ❑ Agrees to provide annual financial statements to the City; and access to financials with reasonable notice.
- ❑ Adheres to applicable corporate bylaws, e.g. upon dissolution of the non-profit, assets are disposed of or distributed to the City, or to registered charity with City's assent.

Specific Criteria

Leading partners should also meet at least one of the following criteria that is most relevant to the proposal.

- ❑ Provides non-profit public programming in parks on a regular or ongoing basis. Must be free or a mix of free and paid programming, with equity considerations, with revenue going to sustain the operation.
- ❑ Provides non-profit recreation programming in parks or recreation spaces on a regular or ongoing basis. Must be free or a mix of free and paid programming, with equity considerations, with revenue going to sustain the operation. Does not include amateur or professional sports clubs or associations (governed separately by permits or licences/leases).

- ❑ Provides non-profit public stewardship of natural spaces on a regular or ongoing basis, contributing to a healthy and resilient urban forest and ravines, safe and resilient parks and public spaces, and/or generating awareness of the benefits of trees, green infrastructure and ravines.
- ❑ Provides non-profit public horticultural programming and education on a regular or ongoing basis. Must be free or a mix of free and paid programming, with equity considerations, with revenue going to sustain the operation. Does not include Community Gardens (governed separately by the Community Garden program.)
- ❑ Supports youth development through leadership and life skill development, volunteerism and employment through the delivery of recreation-based programming.

Additional Criteria

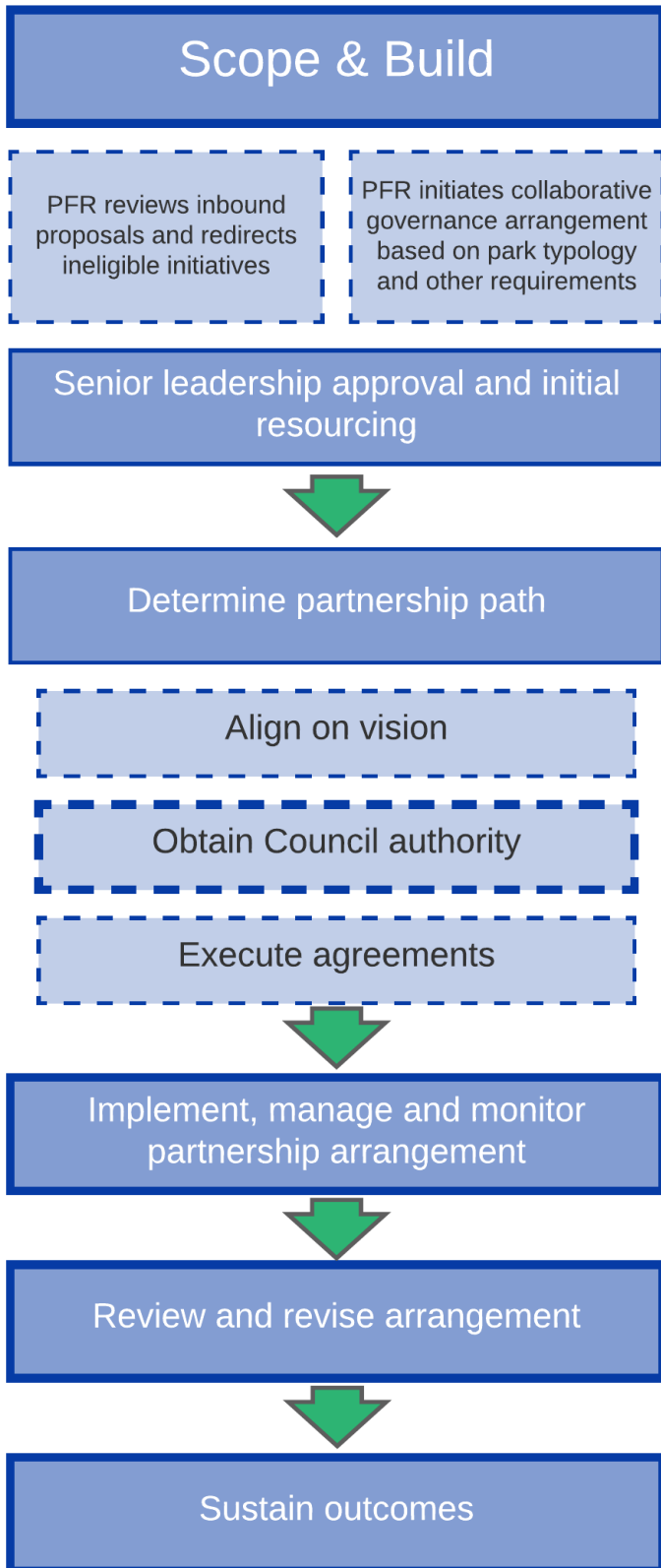
These criteria are not essential but are considered in the due diligence phase and would be captured in any agreements when relevant.

- ❑ Fundraises for City-owned parks, natural areas or recreation facilities on a regular or ongoing basis.
- ❑ Provides operational and maintenance services to parks or recreation spaces in a way that enhances existing service levels and respects collective agreements and other relevant regulation (e.g. Fair Wage, OHSA).

E. Process Overview

Collaborative governance relationships typically start with a prospective partner approaching the City with a proposal for a new project or with a vision for a specific context, usually a park or recreational facility. Sometimes, City Councillors may initiate collaborations. And in the future, the City may be more intentional in seeking collaboration partners (see Section F, City-initiated Collaborative Governance Arrangements). Which is to say, there is no one-size-fits-all model for collaborative governance in Toronto. Agreement types and agreement details vary considerably given the circumstances unique to each site or relationship. A key variable is the wide range in capacity between different partner groups. Some partners are in the early stage of development, others may be more advanced.

Despite the dynamic operational context in which partnership relationships are formed, this Framework proposes a consistent process for advancing collaborations, with defined milestones, and with an understanding that deviations may occur depending on context and circumstance. The intent of the Framework is to provide guidance and respond with an adaptable approach rather than introduce additional layers of inflexible constraints.



Milestones

1. Scope & Build

1.1. Initial due diligence

Proposals may come to PFR Partnerships and Business Services unit (PFR PBS) through a variety of channels. Initial inquiries may come from the public, or through referral from Councillors or other staff members. Informal or formal proposals may come through PFR staff such as park managers, or the main parks@toronto.ca email.

Once PFR receives the inquiry or proposal, PBS staff review it using a set of eligibility criteria and perform an initial due diligence assessment.

Some key considerations of this review include:

- Whether the proposal clearly falls within or outside of PFR jurisdiction (e.g. the site in question is not managed by PFR). If the latter, it is redirected
- Whether the inquiry relates to an existing PFR permit process or a potential commercial relationship. Depending on the nature of the inquiry, it may be redirected to the appropriate staff within PFR or to a different Division

For inquiries that meet a set of eligibility guidelines (see Section D), potential partners are asked to complete a Partnership Application Form (see Appendix B). This form collects contact information and requests the potential partner provide a high-level description of the proposal, with indications of support from the Councillor, the community, or other sources as relevant.

Based on this information, PFR PBS staff continue informal due diligence by, for example, connecting with relevant staff within PFR (e.g. Park Supervisors), liaising with the relevant Councillor's office, and/or reaching out to other colleagues in the City such as the Indigenous Affairs Office or the Confronting Anti-Black Racism Unit. Staff may also connect with other relevant community groups.

1.2. Secure Senior Leadership Approval and Initial Resourcing

In cases where eligibility criteria and initial due diligence is promising, PFR PBS staff prepare an internal Briefing Note for Senior Management. The Briefing Note outlines the proposal, indicates due diligence performed to date, indicates the potential benefits to the City, indicates required City resources to advance the work (at least to the next stage), and includes recommendations for next steps. Senior Management reviews the Briefing Note and approves, amends, or rejects the recommendations.

1.3. Determine Partnership Path

For proposals approved to proceed to the next stage, PFR PBS will convene an interim Leadership Table (steering committee) comprising both City and proponent representatives to chart a Partnership Path. In broad strokes, a partnership path begins with a vision, describes the process for getting from concept to a more developed plan, and concludes with concrete actions such as formalizing other implementation requirements including senior management and City Council approval, and entering into agreements. Below are illustrative examples of paths that such partnership have taken in the past:

- One partner had an ambitious plan for major capital improvements and related programming, operations and maintenance functions. The partner engaged its members and supporters in developing a concept plan presented to staff and the Councillor. Because of the scope of the plan, funding was secured to develop the concept into a more evolved Master Plan and Management Plan, which was presented to City Council for endorsement and approval of related recommendations. Those recommendations gave authority to City staff to enter into the necessary agreements with the partner to advance and implement the vision.
- Another partner worked collaboratively with City staff, the local Councillor and stakeholders to create a document that included a vision, principles and themes that would guide the partnership and future projects on the site. The Councillor brought the vision document to City Council for endorsement. The document not only guides the work of the partner, but also serves as a foundation upon which future staff reports, recommendations to Council and agreements will reference.
- A registered charity already in partnership with the City had a vision for the new use of an existing park building. Working with the Councillor and staff, a feasibility study was commissioned that has become a core document. It prompted recommendations to Council that gave staff authority to enter into related agreements with the partner to advance the vision outlined in the feasibility study.
- Individual private donors desired to fund an outdoor, public-realm related capital project. Their vision included aspects of programming, operations and maintenance. The donors and a local urban designer approached key City staff, local Councillors and the Mayor. Following an initial due diligence process, City staff submitted a report to Council to accept the donation and enter into a memorandum of understanding to advance the proposal. A subsequent report to Council gave authority for staff to enter into the necessary agreements to implement the proposal.

1.3.1 Align on Vision

A shared vision is essential to a successful collaborative governance relationship. The visioning process typically starts with some idea of the final product, usually suggested in general terms by a Leading Partner group. PFR PBS staff then work with the Leading Partners to begin defining the

following elements that are later formalized for inclusion in subsequent agreements and/or other implementing documents:

- shared objectives, benefits and outcomes
- clear points of collaboration and how mandates are aligned, noting points of parallel work and interdependencies
- respective roles and responsibilities
- frequency of anticipated meetings and preferred modes of communication
- an initial governance structure that includes procedures and processes for decision making and conflict resolution
- resourcing considerations
- how the overall relationship will be evaluated for continued investment and impact.

Depending on the nature and circumstances of the proposed collaboration, capacity of the partner, and the scale of ambition, the initial vision may be captured in a few bullet points on a short document or slide deck, or may be elaborated upon in a formal report or master plan document based on member or stakeholder feedback.

1.3.2 Obtain Council Authority

Once a shared vision is achieved and recorded to mutual satisfaction, PFR PBS staff work with the Leading Partner to formalize the shared vision and the anticipated outcomes through Council authority. Council authority is typically required to, for example:

- authorize staff to enter into the necessary agreements with the proponent to advance the collaboration
- authorize key elements of the relationships, for example the term (period) or any financial considerations.

Council authority may also be sought, but is not necessarily required, to endorse the shared vision. Partners and staff may seek Council endorsement for a variety of reasons including conferring legiti-

macy to an idea, encouraging fundraising activities, and building awareness of the effort.

A collaborative governance relationship may require multiple reports over time to Committees of Council and/or City Council, depending on the unique circumstances of each partnership. PFR PBS staff, in collaboration with the partner and with the relevant Councillor(s), manage this process through Council and also with other relevant staff, e.g. Legal, Financial Planning, Insurance and Risk Management, etc.

Agreement Types

Real Estate Agreements

- Licence Agreements
- Market-based Lease Agreements
- Below-market-rent Lease Agreement (Community Space Tenancy)
- Use Agreements

Other Agreements

- Management Agreements
- Fundraising Agreements
- Construction Management Agreements
- Donation Agreement
- Sponsorship Agreement
- Individual and Corporate Naming Rights

2. Formalize, Implement and Manage Partnership Arrangement

Once Council authority is granted PFR PBS staff and the Leading Partner formalize the shared vision through legal agreement(s). Many of the elements of the shared vision are simultaneously operationalized at this stage.

2.1 Execute Agreements

Legal agreements capture the agreed-upon details of the shared vision. Agreements refer to the objectives behind the relationship as well as spell

out the obligations and responsibilities of each party. Agreements will also typically outline a governance structure, such as a steering committee, that will advance the work and also have a process for identifying and resolving conflicts.

Schedules or appendices attached to agreements may go into more details as necessary to instill trust and build consensus for each party. Details can vary depending on the context; for example, some agreements may focus on implementing a capital project (including fundraising), while others may revolve around programming, operations, and maintenance of a particular park. Some may be hybrids or describe both in detail.

Common elements in almost all agreements include insurance and indemnification clauses, termination clauses, and a set term (period) defining the duration of the agreement, which may include a renewal clause.

2.2 Governance & Structures

In many cases the Interim Leadership Table (committee) is formalized and adjusted to take the partnership into the next phase. This committee is responsible for executing any agreements (each party will have specific obligations), providing guidance and support for the work that flows from it, and facilitating any external joint communications such as announcing the partnership or other milestones. Agreements may also require the City to have an ex-officio representative on the partner's board of directors or similar governing body. Additionally, other partnership tables may be established as appropriate, for example a Working Group that meets monthly for front-line operations or a Steering Committee composed of executives to champion and elevate the work.

Over the course of the partnership, the Leadership Table's agenda will evolve to reflect the progress of the work. For instance, it may involve collaborating on more staff reports to City Council to seek authority for new joint projects. (Staff reports

would be subject to the normal internal City process for approving and advancing.) In general terms, the Leadership Table will:

- Mobilize - build capacity to deliver, build communications processes, track progress against joint milestones and deliverables.
- Deliver - develop program/project/service and confirm outputs of these deliverables and assess early outcomes.
- Resolve - any conflicts or issues as they arise.

3. Review and Revise Arrangement

Based on the schedule set during the previous phases, the Leadership Table will review and revise the collaborative governance arrangement based on results, value to each party and any changes to the organization or operating context.

- Measure and report on results - PFR will work with Leading Partners to assess progress against stated deliverables and assess impacts of the partnership. This will involve sharing data on an annual basis towards a Partnership Value Report on defined outcomes, as well as reviewing the efficiency of the partnership for each party.
- Revisit and revise - Partners will draw out learnings, make changes to project(s) or overall agreement as required, making deliberate and data-informed decisions on whether to continue, refine, renew the partnership as set terms reach expiration.

4. Sustain Outcomes

Successful partnerships may lead to scaling opportunities while others may sunset after achieving stated outcomes.

- Scaling - PFR works with Leading Partners to identify sustainability or growth plans and additional options for reaching targeted outcomes.

- Moving on - PFR may alternatively work with Leading Partners to develop a range of options to scale down or sunset a partnership or initiative and manage necessary next steps.

F. City-initiated Collaborative Governance Arrangements

Although non-profit organizations initiate the majority of potential partnership discussions, there are occasions when the City, either through Councillors or staff, may wish to proactively explore collaborative governance arrangements in anticipation of a new park, facility, or City program offering. For example, the future Port Lands Park system at the new mouth of the Don River, will be programmed in partnership with TRCA and other institutional and private partners.

In such cases the City assesses the park attributes and determines an appropriate governance

model against a set of partnership requirements and opportunities. This work is part of the initial due diligence process that leads to a Briefing Note for Senior Management. The Framework here provides better tools for PFR PBS staff to assess park site typology (table) and a governance model (decision matrix).

Park Attributes

A preliminary list of park attributes relevant to collaborative governance are outlined in the table below. These attributes include those in the park classification system outlined in the Parkland Strategy but go beyond those descriptions to consider other important factors that could shape collaborative governance discussions, such as adjacencies to social service organizations, BIAs, or Indigenous, Black or people of colour communities. These attributes can also play a role in shaping the decision matrix tool discussed below.

From Parkland Strategy			
Park Type	Park Functions	Park Size	
Natural	Passive + Ecological	Parkette	<0.5 ha
Planned	Sport + Play	Small	0.5 - 1.5 ha
	Community + Civic	Medium	1.5 - 3 ha
		Large	3.5 - 5 ha
		City Park	5 - 8 ha
		Legacy Park	8 ha +
Future Capital Investment		Operational Complexity	
(State of Good Repair and/or planned revitalization)		(Diversity of amenities, environmental requirements, high use, etc.)	
Minor		High	
Major		Medium	
None		Low	
Future Park	Park Family or Network	Neighbourhood Improvement Area	
Yes	Yes	Yes	
No (existing)	No	No	

Park Signature Features (Examples)			
Major playground	Gardens	Arena	
Water park	Sports fields	DOLA	
Animal attraction	Pool	Heritage	
Natural environment	Beach	Community centre	
Indigenous Affiliation	BIA	Residents Association	Friends group
Current Project or Program	Within BIA boundary	Within RA boundary	Existing
Organization Adjacencies	Proximate to BIA boundary	Proximate to RA boundary	Potential
General (Treaty Relationship)	N/A	N/A	
Social service agencies*	Public schools	Post-secondary schools	
Nearby – walking distance	Immediately adjacent	Immediately adjacent	
N/A	Nearby – walking distance	Nearby – walking distance	
	N/A	N/A	
Businesses	Commercial Operations related to Visitor Experience in Park		
Immediately adjacent	Existing (e.g. restaurant, concession)		
Nearby – walking distance	Proposed		
N/A	Potential		
	N/A		
Neighbourhood Type			
Primarily residential – mixed housing types			
Primarily residential – multi-unit housing types			
Primarily residential – single-dwelling housing types			
Primarily commercial			
Primarily industrial			

Governance Model Matrix

Another tool that might assist park developers and managers has been developed by Waterfront Toronto and is adapted here by permission. It is a matrix that assesses the features of different governance models against specific requirements of the partnership. It is worth noting that one option, of course, is not to pursue a collaborative governance model when a standard parks operation model is appropriate.

Partnership Requirements (examples)

- High Quality Operations & Maintenance

- Low Operating Cost
- Inclusive Programming
- Fundraising & Revenue Generation
- Ongoing Community Involvement
- Cohesive Marketing and Promotion

Governance Models

- **Standard Parks Operation Model:** Standard divisional operating and maintenance model for park governance. Example: Milliken District Park.

- **Non-profit Independent Entity Model:** An incorporated non-profit or registered charity wholly responsible for programming, operating, maintaining and capital investment for a specific site, operating under a lease, licence or management agreement with the City. Examples: The Bentway Conservancy, Toronto Botanical Garden.
- **City Board Model:** A separately constituted board of management responsible for programming, operating, maintaining and capital investments in a park or public space, with a City-appointed board of directors and its own staff complement, reporting to City Council. Examples: Yonge-Dundas Square, Exhibition Place.
- **Multiple Parties or Hybrid Models:** PFR O&M with ongoing partners active in the park and contributing to the visitor experience, with little or no centralized coordination. Examples: Toronto Island Park, High Park, Centennial Park, Music Garden.
- **City Internal Collaboration Model** (see sidebar): Formal or enhanced collaboration between City divisions (for example, PFR, Economic Development and Culture, Transportation Services/Cycling) to deliver a unique visitor experience requiring specialized expertise. Example: Sculpture Garden.

The ranking system applies different weights to different requirements, depending on which appear to be most relevant to the site and the visitor experience. This is the link between the park attributes and the matrix table: for example, certain park features or a park’s connections to the neighbouring community may influence the weighting of different requirements, such as inclusive programming or ongoing community involvement.

Each model is then ranked on a low to high score. The final totalled rankings suggest the most promising models to pursue, and the kinds of partners that could be engaged.

At this stage, the collaborative governance process could then continue from the Briefing Note step and onwards in the Process Overview. Relevant sign-offs, shared visions, Council authorities, collaborative structures and implementation steps would still be required in a City-initiated collaborative governance process.

Enhanced City Internal Collaboration Model

Collaboration between City divisions and partnered agencies such as the Toronto and Region Conservation Agency and Ports Toronto happens virtually every day. However, there may be scope for even more intentional collaboration around certain park sites where there are overlapping jurisdictions and opportunities to enhance services and the visitor experience by coordinating and leveraging the expertise of each division or agency with focused effort. This does not preclude partnering with non-governmental groups on value-added components within a specific park. This allows the City to focus on what it is most effective and efficient at doing (e.g. grass-cutting, recreation programs, public art, cycling infrastructure, solid waste services), while calling on agencies to provide their expertise (e.g. ecological services, infrastructure) and non-profits to participate in the delivery of other aspects of programming, operations and maintenance (e.g. farmers’ markets, community events, adopt-a-park-tree programs). Key to this model is ensuring accountability through a shared vision and agreed-upon roles and responsibilities, with some form of centralized coordination. Development of this model lies outside the scope of this Framework, but is suggested here for further consideration.

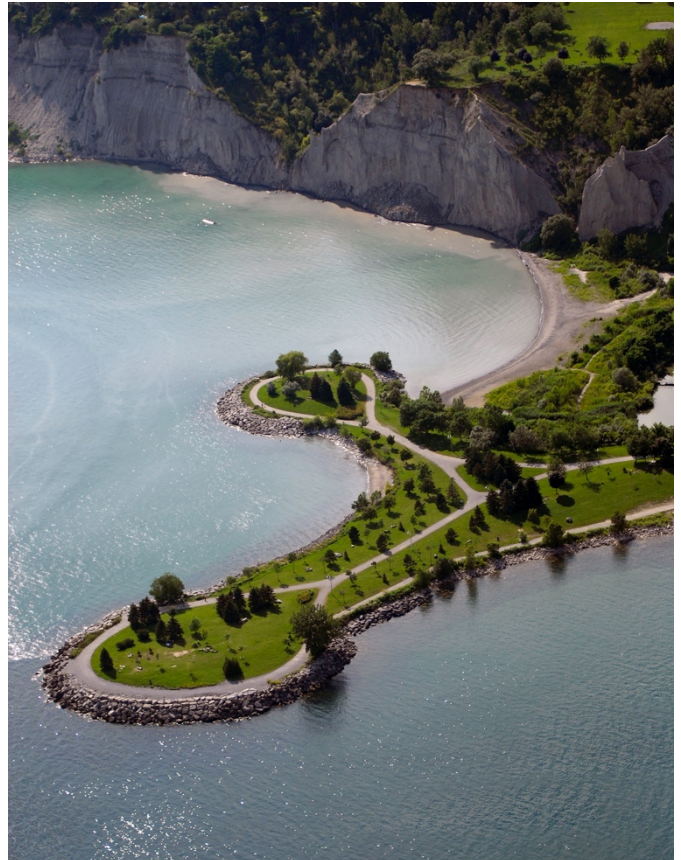
G. Annual Reporting

An important addition to Framework 1.0 is the concept of a Partnership Value Report. The concept

was prototyped and tested with internal stakeholders (see Appendix A). Overall the concept of a regular report that summarizes the joint investment in park initiatives as well as relevant metrics around the social, economic and ecological benefits of collaboration, was seen as an effective communication and accountability tool. Such a report would make the practice measurable, and trackable over time. The results could be shared with the City Council (and thus the public) to inform future direction and possible investments to leverage City resources for greater impact and value, potentially including capacity-building with under-represented groups. Additional considerations included reporting an overall picture on an annual basis while highlighting one or two partnerships to celebrate breakthroughs and major milestones through more in-depth story-telling.

Feasibility details need to be refined such as aligning the work with overall outcomes-based reporting at the City and a data collection methodology that is not onerous for both the City and its partners. Examples of non-personal data may include metrics on:

- partner contribution (e.g., volunteerism, programming hours, participation rates, stewardship, financial and in-kind donations)
- City contribution to the initiative (e.g, base funding, in-kind resources, maintenance, etc.)
- collective economic impact (e.g. total expenditures)
- testimonials from diverse communities on the qualitative value of relevant initiatives
- ecological outcomes resulting from combined stewardship activities.



John Davidson/City of Toronto

Next Steps



Build Out the Framework

This Framework 1.0 represents existing practices, considers the experience of other selected jurisdictions through the study provided by Park People (see Appendix C), incorporates input from a mix of external stakeholders and internal City staff (see Acknowledgements), and captures the development process undertaken by the City and MaRS project team.

However, nothing stays static and collaboration is an ongoing process with constant refinement. In that regard, we recommend the following steps for further review and development of the Framework:

- Continue to engage a broad range of stakeholders, for example through a questionnaire, on both the content of this report and additional measures the City could undertake to advance collaboration in park spaces.
- Schedule a review of the Framework in three to five years to ensure it remains relevant and useful.
- Refine the Partnership Value Report concept and operationalize it by building it into PFR PBS annual work plan. Study and track the results of the proposed Partnership Value Report to ensure it is delivering useful and actionable metrics that may influence future policy and the Framework itself depending on what is learned.
- In particular, study and track how the Framework and Partnership Value Report can help build capacity in under-resourced or under-served communities. For example, how can this work advance City goals in relation to Indigenous and Black communities? Are there ways to align this work with existing capacity-building measures, for example the City's Community Services Partnership Funding program (managed by the Social Development and Finance Administration Division)? Can this work inspire

the co-development of specific capacity-building actions, for example helping grassroots organizations become incorporated non-profits which can open up additional resources and opportunities?

- Consider formalizing the "partnership path" in section Milestones 1.3 in the form of a Letter of Intent, Terms of Reference or other document that provides a tool for outlining shared vision, outcomes and milestones, including required Council authorities and agreements.
- Consider how the PFR-specific framework evolves within the context of work being undertaken by others at the City, specifically the Office of Strategic Partnerships.

Explore additional ideas

These additional ideas to advance collaboration surfaced during the work of developing the Framework, and are recommended here for further exploration:

- Explore the development of a General Manager Leader's Table around collaborative governance, strategic partnerships, sponsorships and other related initiatives to elevate the conversation, build deeper relationships and study new ways of working together for mutual benefit.
- Develop a revenue model that supports the collaborative governance practice. Assess PFR's resourcing requirements to effectively engage, onboard, manage and report on the collaborative governance work. Explore and test revenue and cost structures that help answer key questions such as:
 - Is there a limit to how many existing or new collaborative governance partnerships can be effectively managed and maintained?

- If and how much more resources need to be devoted to the work to grow the portfolio and thus scale the benefits to desirable targets, for the public, the City and partners?
- What are potential sources of new revenue?
- Explore effective proactive engagement models that create more inviting, direct and informative touch points for potential partners. Examples might include:
 - A public-facing Collaborative Governance Handbook, incorporating elements of this Framework and other relevant content to help build understanding and capacity for less experienced groups. It might make the process less opaque, e.g. how Council and agreements factor into the process. It might also help partners understand what is expected of them, and the range of services that are available from the City.
 - An online presence for the Collaborative Governance Framework to facilitate improved intake and transparency. Currently there is no point of contact on toronto.ca
 - Information sessions such as webinars, for potential partners to learn about eligibility, milestones and key contacts.

Further learning to shift mindsets

Recommendations in this section challenge some long-held assumptions about what is “normal” or “acceptable” for collaborative governance at PFR. They reflect long-term shifts in mindset and narratives that might be needed to better reflect many of the Guiding Principles such as equity, inclusion, diversity and innovation (see Section A). They set new directions for where Framework 2.0 needs to go next.

City funding for Approved Collaborative Governance Partners

Many cities support non-profit partners with some kind of funding. The jurisdictional scan prepared for this report shows that government funding of strategic park partners is a common success factor. The amount of funding as a percentage of overall non-profit revenue ranges dramatically, from single digits to as high as 36 per cent. The rationale is that municipal funding leverages additional funding from other sources (including other levels of government, philanthropy, corporate sponsorships, memberships and so on) to deliver even greater value than the municipal funds alone.

In Toronto, the Social Development and Finance Administration division provides grant programs for some non-profits, mostly in the social services. Similarly, the Economic Development and Culture division provides grants to cultural organizations to help sustain the sector, even though City funding typically makes up a small percentage of these organization’s overall income. The City’s report on the economic impact of the entire not-for-profit sector reveals that City funding accounts for only 7 per cent of the sector’s total revenue, with the other 93 per cent obtained from other sources.

While Parks, Forestry and Recreation may provide many in-kind services and access to physical assets, PFR typically does not provide direct funding to support the operations of not-for-profit organizations active in programming, operating or maintaining park spaces. One notable exception is the \$240,000 annual funding provided by PFR to the Humber Arboretum, a tripartite organization jointly controlled by the City, the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (land owner), and Humber College (operator). In that case, the City’s former Director of Parks, and now Director of Parks and Culture for the TRCA, commented, “The City couldn’t run one-quarter of that place” for the amount it invests. In other words, the City funding leverages considerable additional value by partnering with the other organizations.

The question of direct funding was outside the work of this report, but merits additional study given the experience in other jurisdictions, and the challenges many non-profits face in sustaining themselves and growing, particularly in under-resourced communities.

Pathways for Enabling Partners to Lead

“Public value is value that is created collectively for a public purpose – this requires citizens to engage in defining purpose, nurturing capabilities and capacities, assess the value created, and ensure that societal value is distributed equitably.”

- Mariana Mazzucato, Institute for Innovation and Public Purpose, University College London, U.K.

Building the capacity of priority communities

The growth of many “Friends of” park groups, both in number and capacity is a positive trend and should be encouraged. This is particularly the case with Neighbourhood Improvement Areas as defined in Toronto’s Strong Neighbourhood Strategy in order to ensure that uneven growth of such activities does not create greater inequalities over the long term. Park People’s Sparking Change report (2017) made a strong case for the positive social impacts of communities in underserved neighbourhoods becoming involved in animating and improving their local park. For Neighbourhood Improvement Areas, principled and proactive engagement

will be critical, and should no longer rely on reactive measures. Doing this well will require fulsome engagement of the very communities who face the most barriers, yet may have the most to gain from a closer collaboration with PFR.

Today the collaborative governance practice in PFR focuses on inter-organizational partnerships. A Framework 2.0 should consider incorporating collaborations where a more ‘comprehensive community initiatives’ approach might be taken.

By doing so, PFR can play the critical bridging role in highlighting funding opportunities for foundations while helping communities build capacity to propose unique initiatives that build authentically on the cultural strengths of the community.



City of Toronto

“Comprehensive Community Initiatives describes the full range of initiatives that take a comprehensive approach to change within communities to improve the well-being of their residents. These initiatives indicate a commitment to change at many levels, including individual, family, institutional, and community-wide, through processes that involve collaboration and coordination within the community and between the community and the broader society.”

- Joan Roberts, *Governance for Collaboratives: A Guide to Resolving Conflicts and Power*

Establishing new spaces for historically marginalized groups to participate in collaborative governance

In developing the Framework we consulted with both the Indigenous Affairs Office (IAO) and the Confronting Anti-Black Racism (CABR) unit at the City of Toronto. While a deep dive into these areas was beyond the scope of this work, there is clearly much future work to be done here.

The historical reality is that many of Toronto’s park spaces have not been designed with the diversity of communities in mind. The missing perspective of some groups has meant that even today, park use by such groups are treated as ‘exceptions’, and in many cases, ‘issues’ to be resolved. This can be seen in the ‘issues’ that arise from an increasing urban Indigenous population using public and park spaces for healing circles, to impromptu uses by unhoused peoples to avoid shelters during the pandemic. This missing perspective in park design, programming and maintenance, has also meant that, for example, the mental health benefits of green spaces, perceived to be universal, is indeed untrue for those who face racial profiling during their earliest park experiences.

We recommend evolving the Framework over the long term in close collaboration with the work of the IAO and the CABR unit. Specifically, it should focus on creating legitimate spaces for traditionally underrepresented groups to lend their perspectives and influence as well as accountability, in closer collaborations with PFR.

Learnings may come from related efforts like the Spirit Garden project on Nathan Phillips Square with Toronto Council Fire. The project responds to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada Call to Action 82: “We call upon provincial and territorial governments, in collaboration with Residential School Survivors and their organizations, and other parties to the Settlement Agreement, to commission and install a publicly accessible, highly visible, Residential Schools Monument in each capital city to honour Survivors and all the children who were lost to their families and communities.” The proposal for the Spirit Garden includes co-management of the space, which can be considered a form of collaborative governance.

PFR’s Public Engagement Unit, part of the Parks Development and Capital Projects branch, has made great strides in recent years in deep community engagement with groups that have traditionally not been involved in the planning and design of new park spaces, or in the re-imagining of existing parks, including Indigenous groups. The current public engagement process underway for the new Toronto Island Park Master Plan is an excellent example of this work. The Master Plan will be a long-term planning document that is being co-created with Indigenous rights holders, local communities, and the public. The Public Engagement team was consulted on this Framework, and further development of the Collaborative Governance Framework should align with the work and the role of the Public Engagement unit in planning and designing public spaces.

Conclusion

Harvesting Grounds

Cities and the communities that comprise them are, and have always been, products of collaboration amongst and between competing interests and perspectives. The Indigenous peoples who have called, and continue to call, the Lake Ontario shoreline and the broader Great Lakes Region home since time immemorial explicitly recognized this dynamic in the concept of the dish with one spoon; the dish representing the shared land and its resources and the one spoon representing the shared use of them. And although the colonial powers did not share this mutualistic perspective, instead understanding resource usage through a transactional perspective, they nevertheless also recognized that the use of our common grounds was a matter of negotiation and agreement. The legacy of both perspectives informs our contemporary context: our parks and public spaces are both shared resources used for the benefit of all as well as sites of ongoing negotiation and consensus

building. The opportunity before us now, and the topic explored in this report, is to recognize what has worked in the past, adapt to the challenges of a twenty-first century city, and work towards a more sustainable and collaborative future.

This report harvests the insight gathered from research, City staff's institutional knowledge, and the lived and professional experiences of representatives from a broad array of neighbourhood groups, charities, non-profit organizations, philanthropic foundations, and the private sector. The Collaborative Governance Framework presented here synthesizes that insight and offers suggestions for how the City of Toronto and its partners can build upon their respective strengths and skill sets to enhance the social, financial, and ecological value of our collective spaces. Further analysis, discussion, and collaboration between all parties is required to refine, and then implement, those suggestions as well as surface other suggestions that will emerge. In that way, the Framework is as much a new beginning as it is a milestone on a path we've been sharing with our partners for years. We look forward to where the next steps will take us on our journey together.



City of Toronto

Appendix



Partnership Value Report

Part 1

Prototypes:

roll up of all partnerships - executive summary version

Partnership Value Report 2022

This report provides an overview of the outcomes that have been made possible through the various PFR partnerships. Some of these partnerships reflect one time opportunities while others reflect longer term collaborative governance relationships with park groups throughout the city. The following pages summarize the value of the collaboration either by site or collaborating organization.

Partner Direct Contributions to City

Partner Cash Contributions to City
\$2,345,000

Partner In-Kind Contributions to City
\$3,200,00

Partner Economic Impact

Partner Economic Impact in Toronto
\$15,500,000

Partner Total Full-Time Employees
##

Partner Total Part-Time Employees
##

Number of Capital Projects Undertaken with Partner Participation
##

Partner Social Impact

Partner Total Volunteers
##

Partner Total Volunteer Hours
##

Number of Participants in Partner Programs
##

Number of Partner Programs
##

Number of Partner Program Hours
##

Number of Partner Events
##

Priceless Impact

“This is the best summer I’ve ever had.” -Aisha, age 11, first-time participant at Panorama Young Gardeners Program

“You have shaped my son’s sense of self and his goals for the future. I am endlessly thankful that our community has the High Park Nature Centre!” ~Kathy, Parent

Concept 1 - page 1
Values are for illustration only - not validated

Partnership Value Report 2022

City Investments in Partners

Direct Financial Contribution

\$xxx,xxx

Other Contributions

- PFR's Partnership Team is three Business Development Officers, a Manager (with other duties) and an administrative assistant (with other duties)
- Partners may have short or long-term licence or lease agreements for access to City spaces, at either below-market-rate levels or market rates, depending on context
- City may provide various in-kind services that benefit partner locations, such as Solid Waste pick-up
- Some partner sites are designated as Municipal Class Facilities and are not subject to property taxes.
- Partners earn revenue from activities on public land leased or licenced to them, including programs, events, parking lots (in some cases)
- Other supports?...

Footnotes

1. Partner Cash Contributions to City: Includes donations, sponsorships, licence fees, rent, fees for services provided by the City
2. Partner In-Kind Contributions to City: Value of goods or services provided in-kind. Examples include supplies, food and beverage for program participants, coaching, others?
3. Partner Economic Impact in Toronto: Includes total partner expenditures based on annual reports, pro-rated for Toronto in the case of partners with activities outside of Toronto
4. Number of Capital Projects Undertaken with Partner Participation: Includes PFR-led projects with partner cash or other contributions, and partner-led projects.
5. Number of Participant in Partner Programs: Includes total number of participants in programs and events.
6. Priceless Impact: Testimonials from partners or partner program or event participants.
7. City Investment in Partners, Direct Financial Contribution: Cash value of grants, subsidies, transfers to partners during the year.

Partnership Value Report 2022

Long term urban growth and fiscal constraints require creative and strategic partnership approaches to investing in parkland initiatives that lead to greater social, economic, and ecological benefits. An important step in this direction is recognizing the value that is generated by the many different types of groups who are active in parkland spaces and seek better long term relationships with PFR and other divisions within the City. This report is intended to provide a more holistic view of the shared contributions by the City and their collaborators towards better outcomes. The hope is this information is a critical input into how the City invests in these relationships and evaluating the public value resulting from that investment.

This page provides an overview of the overall outcomes that have been made possible through the PFR collaborative governance practice with park groups throughout the city. The following pages summarize the value of the collaboration either by site or collaborating organization.

Partner contribution

Direct Cash:
\$2 million

Direct In-kind:
\$1.1 million

City contribution

Fundraising support:
\$50,000

Maintenance:
\$12 million

Direct Cash:
\$0

Activity scope

Program Participation (visits):
3 million

Program Hours:
100,000

Volunteer Hours:
10,000

Stewardship Hours:
300,000

Employees:
500

Capital projects:
10

Strategic alignment with City mandate

Toronto's success decades from now will be measured on how we worked with our partners. Achieving our vision and carrying out our mission requires the City to work with other governments, institutions, the private sector, the not-for-profit sector and Indigenous peoples. (Corporate Strategic Plan)

To achieve the goals and objectives of this [Official] Plan, the City will exert influence through policy levers and partnerships and seek partnerships with other levels of government, the business sector, labour and non-governmental and community organizations. (Toronto Official Plan Policy 5.3.4.1)

Encourage progressive strategies and partnerships that respond to changing times, address emerging needs and reflect the unique needs of each community. (PFR Facilities Master Plan Guiding Principles)

Concept 2
Values are for illustration only - not validated

Social Benefits

Equitable access to natural space*
84%

Equitable access to programming*
84%

Ecological Benefits

Carbon sequestration (tonnes):
35,165

Tree canopy:
28.4 - 31%

Economic Benefits

Economic activity:
\$15 million

Jobs:
10,000

Long-term impact

Sense of belonging and quality of life for residents:

"This is the best summer I've ever had." -Aisha, age 11, first-time participant at Panorama Young Gardeners Program

[quote from elderly community]

[quote from black community]

[quote from indigenous community]

*Percent of people surveyed who agree.

Partnership Value Report

Part 2

Prototypes:

Individual partner “case study” spread versions

High Park Nature Centre



Concept 3
Values are for illustration only - not validated

Partnership overview

The High Park Nature Centre is a charitable organization established in 1999. The Centre runs out of the City-owned High Park Forest School under a licence agreement. Its mission is to promote awareness and respect for nature through year-round, hands-on outdoor nature education and park stewardship. Nature Centre programs inspire a sense of wonder, knowledge and respect for High Park’s natural systems; restore human connections to local plants and animals; and engage visitors in ecological restoration activities to ensure a sustainable future for High Park for generations to come. The High Park Nature Centre serves a diverse audience primarily from Toronto but also from the Greater Toronto Area, including children, adults, seniors, families, elementary and secondary school students, teachers, ESL schools, Girl Guides and Boy Scouts, community centres, recreational programs, and Indigenous groups. The Centre offers a mix of free and paid programs including nature walks, workshops, camps and park stewardship activities like planting native grasses, wildflowers and sedges or removing invasive plant species.

Value of partnership

10,806 children and adults connecting with nature and local ecology.	1500 hours of stewardship (planting, spading, leading walks)	Value of services provided by partner: \$691,333.
--	--	---

Total direct City funding provided to partner: \$0

Number of visitors or participants: 10,096	Number of events held: ##	Number of programs run: ##
Full-time employees: 16	Part-time employees: 17	Interns: 5
Number of volunteers including board members: 154	Total volunteer hours: 3,212	Indicator: ##

High Park Nature Centre

Registered Charity
Maintain and nurture

The High Park Nature Centre is a charitable organization established in 1999. Its mission is to promote awareness and respect for nature through year-round, hands-on outdoor nature education and park stewardship.



Concept 4
Values are for illustration only - not validated

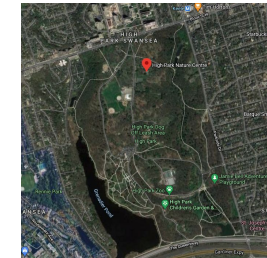
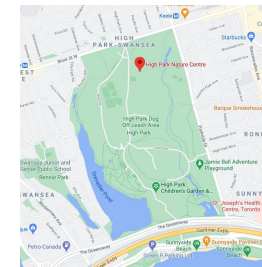


Outcomes

10,806
children and adults
connecting with nature
and local ecology.

1500
hours of stewardship
(planting, spading,
leading walks)

3,212
volunteer hours served



Nature clubs participants have the opportunity to experience High Park changing in each season, connecting with nature through sensory activities, games, songs, and stewardship.



67 kids-at-heart join us for Urban Naturalists, our adult club. The adults formed an inclusive community of nature enthusiasts who sharpened their nature skills and contributed to buckthorn management!

Value of collaboration from partner

“Doug had really done a lot of the groundwork for soliciting and getting the \$1 million TD grant while a key enabler was that the funds could go directly to the HPNC. This was a huge accomplishment to have as a lead donor for renovating the forest school building.”

Collaboration progress

- Campaign underway, \$1M lead donation from TD Bank
- Joint City-HPNC application to ICIP CCR prov/fed infrastructure grant program, \$4M ask has made the short list
- Biweekly campaign update meetings
- Parks General Supervisor is ex-officio on HPNC board

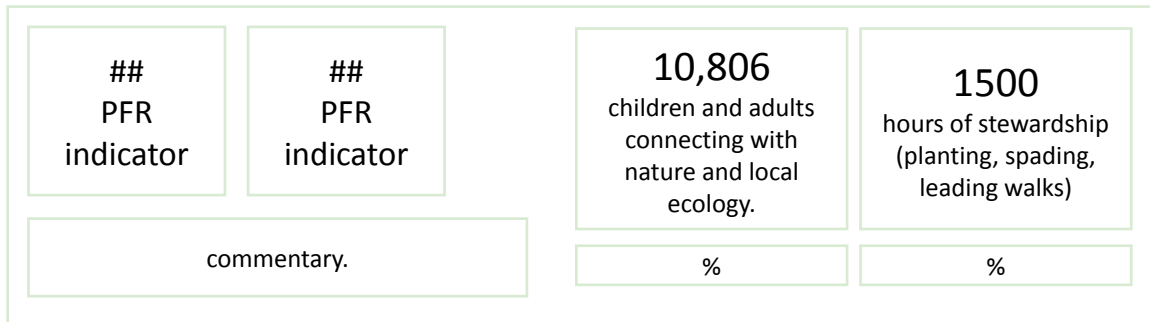
High Park Nature Centre



Registered Charity
Maintain and nurture

The High Park Nature Centre is a charitable organization established in 1999. The Centre runs out of the City-owned High Park Forest School under a licence agreement. The Centre offers a mix of free and paid programs including nature walks, workshops, camps and park stewardship activities like planting native grasses, wildflowers and sedges or removing invasive plant species.

Collaborative Outcomes



City contribution

- \$68,000 feasibility study supported by Local Councillor, implemented by PFR Capital projects
- Fundraising support
- PFR Park General Supervisor serves as ex-officio on HPNC board
- Bi-weekly meeting with PFR Partnership staff
- SOGR maintenance - value \$\$
- Space use - value of \$\$

Partner contribution

- \$12,000/year for utility cost
- 17 FT employees
- 16 PT employees
- 5 Interns
- 3,212 volunteer hours
- 154 volunteers (including board)
- \$700,000 annual revenue from grants, donations, program fees

Partner Profile | Partnership Value Report

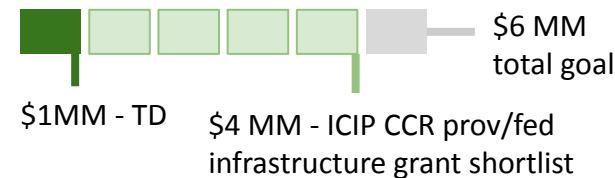
Concept 5
Values are for illustration only - not validated

Agreements

- Licence Agreement to use space at Forest School, to 2030
- Fundraising Agreement for \$6M capital campaign to renovate 83-year-old building to become High Park Visitor and Nature Centre

Collaborative Progress

Fundraising



Capital projects

- Collaborating on business plan for new Visitor Centre should campaign be successful

Programming

- Cherry blossoms ambassador program
- Monitoring to augment Forestry's planting and removal work

Maintenance

- OurSpace - reduced the cost of maintaining a manicured lawn by turning it into outdoor educational space using Savannah (OURspace).

Partnership Value Report

Part 3

Inspiration for possible future graphic design...

Inspiration for possible future graphic design...

A YEAR AT A GLANCE: HIGH PARK AND THE NATURE CENTRE



1.5 million

Visitors annually



80,000

Total park supporters and stewards annually



3,500+

Hours spent connecting people with nature



1,100

Students from priority neighbourhoods supported to attend nature programs



14,486

Nature Centre program participants



925

Outdoor experiential nature programs



840

Children and youth engaged through nature clubs



7,600

Native species planted by children and youth annually



7,852

Student participants in 38 curriculum-linked school programs



190

Participants in educational programs for adults and seniors

B. Partnership Application Form



Parks, Forestry and Recreation

Applicant Information

First Name		Last Name			
Address		Apt.#	City	Prov	Postal code
			Toronto	ON	M
Home Telephone		Alternate Telephone		Email	

General Project Information

Project title	
Project Location (name and official street address)	
Ward number	Councillor's name

Main Project Contacts

	Name	Position	Project Role	Telephone
1				
	Email		Organization / Division Role	
2				
	Email		Organization / Division Role	
3				
	Email		Organization / Division Role	
4				
	Email		Organization / Division Role	

Please list any other **City divisions, organizations, groups or key contacts** involved in this project

Name	Organization	Phone	Email	Role

List any other **City of Toronto officials or councillors** who support this project

Name	Division	Position

Project Overview

Please provide an overview of the project

Parks, Forestry and Recreation

Community Development

Briefly explain the need for this project in your community (300 word max)

What **barriers** do you expect to face? What is your plan to overcome these barriers?

How will you measure your success? How many people will be impacted?

Does your project specifically service any of the following? (Check all that apply)

- Children Youth Seniors New immigrants People with disabilities Less advantaged communities

Does your project involve any of the following? (Check all that apply)

- Energy and Environment Sports Research and Training Arts and Culture
 Beautification Play Space Capital Infrastructure Renewal Other _____

Does your project include a volunteer component? Yes No

If yes, briefly describe the volunteer opportunities: (200 word max)

Does your project include any events? Yes No

If yes, briefly describe the event(s): (200 word max)

Partnership Project Application

Parks, Forestry and Recreation

Please list all **anticipated or potential** funding sources

Organization	Contact	Amount of Contribution	Funding allocation (what will the money be used for?)
		\$	
		\$	
		\$	
		\$	

What will happen if your funding requests are unsuccessful? (300 word max)

Parks, Forestry and Recreation

Recognition Opportunities

In your opinion, what is the community receptiveness to corporate involvement and recognition in your community? (200 word max)

What recognition opportunities exist for this project? (please provide a bulleted list)

Attachments Checklist

- _____ An itemized project budget
- _____ A letter of endorsement or agreement from your local councillor, parks supervisor, recreation supervisor or other officials, if available
- _____ For capital projects, please attach construction drawings or rendition drawings if available
- _____ Please attach any additional documentation, testimonials, or pictures, from your community to support the initiative

Send completed application to:

Manager, Partnerships and Business Services
City of Toronto: Parks, Forestry & Recreation
Metro Hall, 24th Floor, 55 John St.
Toronto, ON M5V 3C6

Email: partnerships@toronto.ca
Tel: 416-392-7808

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Toronto Parks, Forestry and Recreation collects personal information on this form under the legal authority of the City of Toronto Act, 2006, SO 2006, Chapter 11, Schedule A, s 136(c) and the City of Toronto By-law No 1448-2012. The information is used to process your application and for related administrative purposes. Questions about this collection can be directed to the Manager, Partnerships and Business Services, Toronto Parks, Forestry and Recreation, 81 Elizabeth Street, Toronto, ON M5G 1P4 or by telephone at 416-392-7808.

Park Governance Models: High Level Review

Prepared by Park People for Parks, Forestry and Recreation Division, City of Toronto
October 2020

Canada

[Assiniboine Park Conservancy, Winnipeg](#)

[Les Amis de la Montagne, Montreal](#)

[St. Charles River Society, Quebec City](#)

[Jim Deva Plaza \(and Plaza Stewardship Program\), Vancouver](#)

[Rotary-Mattamy Greenway / Parks Foundation Calgary, Calgary](#)

[River Valley Alliance, Edmonton](#)

[VanDusen Gardens, Vancouver](#)

[Riverwood Conservancy, Mississauga](#)

[Friends of the Living Prairie, Winnipeg](#)

U.S.

[Millennium Park, Chicago](#)

[Governors Island, New York](#)

[Pioneer Courthouse Square, Portland](#)

[Klyde Warren Park, Dallas](#)

[Rose Kennedy Greenway, Boston](#)

[Emerald Necklace, Boston](#)

U.K.

[The Royal Parks, London](#)



Canada

Assiniboine Park Conservancy, Winnipeg

Website: assiniboinepark.ca

Twitter: [@assinibionezoo](https://twitter.com/assinibionezoo) / [@assiniboinepark](https://twitter.com/assiniboinepark)

Instagram: [@assiniboineparkzoo](https://www.instagram.com/assiniboineparkzoo)

Facebook: [/assiniboineparkzoo](https://www.facebook.com/assiniboineparkzoo)

Governance Model

Financial

- Revenue (2019): \$33,093,961
 - City of Winnipeg - \$11,078,000 (33%)
 - Other operating grants - \$301,393 (1%)
 - Gifts and sponsorships - \$1,233,004 (4%)
 - Amortization of deferred contributions - \$7,208,566 (22%)
 - Interest and other income - \$227,678 (1%)
 - Park revenues - \$13,045,320 (39%)
- Expenses (2019): \$24,802,651
 - Direct costs of park revenues - \$8,144,175 (25%)
 - Administration - \$1,423,929 (4%)
 - Amortization of capital assets - \$6,861,306 (21%)
 - Insurance - \$200,798 (1%)
 - Interest - \$90,992 (0%)
 - Operations - \$2,378,064 (7%)
 - Utilities - \$1,281,792 (4%)
 - Wages, benefits and contract services - \$12,556,719 (38%)
 - Donation to Winnipeg Foundation - ParkShare - \$9,051 (0%)
- Total contributions for Capital 2019 (new development): \$31,932,747
 - City of Winnipeg - \$9,851,000
 - Province of Manitoba - \$3,000,000
 - Federal Government - \$11,231,963
 - Foundations and Charities - \$2,713,325
 - Individuals - \$3,396,727
 - Corporations - \$1,739,732

Operating Agreements and Group History

- Summary of agreement with government authority (when formed, etc.): APC was founded in 2008 and has a [50-year lease with the City of Winnipeg](#) (owns the property and assets). APC is responsible for the operation of Winnipeg's historic Assiniboine Park, and "establishing the future vision for the Park and Zoo and carrying out this transformation while protecting the Park's cherished character and ensuring its long-term financial viability"
- Receives funding from all levels of government. In 2019, APC received two amounts of funding from City of Winnipeg listed under revenue sources (ongoing operations) and capital contributions.
- APC is responsible for all operations, capital, fundraising, programming, etc.
- No accountability measures listed.

Structures

- Group is a registered non-profit and charitable organization.
- APC is governed by a Board of Directors composed of community leaders, including representation from the City of Winnipeg, Province of Manitoba, and leaders in business, philanthropic, and post-secondary institutions.
- APC leases the land from the city. There is no shared staffing.

Visitor Experience

- APC has its own branding and logo, and is not marketed as a Winnipeg city-owned park. Marketing of the zoo takes precedence over the park.
- APC has three distinct spaces for visitors - zoo, park, the leaf (under construction) - each with similar branding, but different colours.

Highlights/Challenges

- Successes
 - In 2019, APC began construction on [The Leaf](#) and [Canada's Diversity Gardens](#).
 - APC constructed a new greenhouse, improved existing athletic fields, and invested \$500,000 in zoo improvements in preparation for re-accreditation by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA). The accreditation process was successful.
 - The Assiniboine Park Zoo opened new exhibits, acquired new animals and has new programs working to save animals from extinction.
 - Assiniboine Park Zoo welcomed over 86,000 visitors over the course of 32 days to the inaugural Zoo Lights Festival, increasing zoo visitation over winter months.
 - Annual report acknowledges several gifts in support of The Leaf and Canada's Diversity Gardens; one of which is a \$1 million gift from Sean McCoshen, who

previously gave \$2 million in 2018. APC appears to have very successful fundraising campaigns.

- In April 2019, APC launched their annual campaign to recruit new Park and Zoo volunteers. 112 new adult volunteers completed training, 95 youth volunteers joined as part of the summer Zoo Camp Crew. There were a total of 450 active volunteers throughout the summer, giving over 65,000 hours in 2019 - over \$1 million in donated time.
- Challenges
 - “[Since it was founded in 2008](#), the Assiniboine Park Conservancy has undergone a decade of rapid development and change. In 2019, following a review of our strategic plan, a new organizational structure was put into place to realign resources in order to address the evolving operational needs of the organization, facilitate systemic and cultural changes to improve employee engagement, and direct focused resources toward the Canada’s Diversity Gardens project.”
 - The historical [Assiniboine Park Conservatory was demolished](#) in 2018 to make way for The Leaf and Canada’s Diversity Gardens. The conservatory was built in 1914 and renovated in 1968, but due to ongoing issues with the exterior of the building, heating and ventilation systems, it was no longer feasible to continue to maintain the space.

Park Typology



Source: Assiniboine Park Conservancy

Age

- Officially opened as a park in 1909, but the space had been used for recreation prior to becoming an official park by the Winnipeg Public Parks Board. The construction of the Palm House was completed in 1914.

Size and general use

- City-wide destination park and is an important tourist attraction for people visiting Winnipeg from Canada and beyond.

Important amenities and facilities

- Assiniboine Park amenities include a large zoo (main attraction of the space), gardens, art galleries, nature playground, park cafe, trolley, and more. A new element of the park, The Leaf and Canada's Diversity Gardens, are set to be completed in 2021.

Neighbourhood

- The neighbourhood surrounding Assiniboine Park is primarily low-density residential, with no significant commercial activity. The park is a 15-minute drive or 30-minute transit ride from central Winnipeg.

Important Proximities

- Assiniboine River
- Winnipeg airport

Toronto Comparison

- High Park
- Allan Gardens (conservatory)
- Centennial Park

References:

- [2019 Annual Report](#)

Les Amis de la Montagne, Montreal

Website: lemontroyal.qc.ca

Twitter: [@lemontroyal](https://twitter.com/lemontroyal)

Instagram: [@lemontroyal](https://www.instagram.com/lemontroyal)

Facebook: [/JaimelemontRoyal](https://www.facebook.com/JaimelemontRoyal)

Governance Model

Financial

- Revenue (2019): \$4,951,907
 - Private funding: \$1,072,572 (22%)
 - Public funding: \$570,018 (11%)
 - Programs and services: \$3,309,317 (67%)
 - 100% of this revenue is reinvest into conservation and protection of the Mount Royal park
- Expenses (2019): \$4,698,298
 - Advocacy, engagement, education and public programs: \$1,702,393 (36%)
 - Mount Royal Park Visitor Services: \$2,036,954 (45%)
 - Philanthropic development: \$206,237 (4%)
 - Administration: \$752,704 (15%)
- Ongoing fundraising efforts or capital campaigns: \$616,110 funds raised in 2019-20

Operating Agreements and Group History

- Les amis de la montagne was [established as a grassroots movement](#) in 1986 to oppose the construction of a telecommunications tower and tourist operations on top of Mount Royal.
- Les amis are responsible for conservation, public animation and improvement of Mount Royal Park.
- Les amis provides: welcome and visitor services, nature programs for schools and youth, as well as cultural and outdoor recreational activities such as walking tours, a cross-country ski club, a summer day camp, guided snowshoe treks and more. They also have three food outlets and winter sports equipment rentals.
- The organisation advises the City about the day-to-day issues arising in the park.
- The City contributes to the operating budget for the provision of welcome services, educational programs and a conservation patrol. The City also leases to the organisation free of charge spaces in the Park buildings from which the Les amis operates.
- Les amis plays a role in advocacy and engagement between stakeholders, beyond just the City of Montreal.
- The Table de concertation du Mont-Royal has been instrumental in shaping a shared vision for the common good of the mountain and in incorporating this vision in individual

stakeholder projects on Mount Royal. It also provides a forum for rich debate and influence on critical projects with profound implications for the future of Mount Royal.

- Les amis also partners with local municipal divisions, universities, hospitals, cemeteries and organizations around governance and protection of Mount Royal. They partner with organizations within Quebec and beyond around nature conservation, environmental education, outdoor and culture programs, advancement of knowledge, innovation and best management practices
- No accountability measures listed.

Structures

- Les amis de la montagne is a registered charitable organisation.
- Board and/or staff structure (e.g., roles, terms)
 - [Staff roles](#) fall under the following: office of the executive director, finance and administration, Mount Royal Park Visitor Services, Cafe des Amis, conservation and education, philanthropic development, public affairs
 - “Since its creation in 1986, Les amis de la montagne has drawn its strength, expertise and influence from its [Board of Directors](#). Hailing from academia, philanthropic foundations and the corporate world, its committed members steer our course and help advance our mission to protect and improve the exceptional space known as Mount Royal.”
- Relationship with City (e.g., shared staffing)
 - Les amis does not appear to have any official shared staffing; however, there is a park ranger that bridges the gap between Les amis and the City. “In 2015, the Bureau du Mont-Royal hired a full-time [Park Ranger](#), who ensures that Mount Royal Park is well maintained and used in ways that protect parkland integrity. The Park Ranger, with whom Les amis liaises on a daily basis, plays a vital role in effectively coordinating the different City departments, boroughs and services involved in the Park including the police and fire departments.”

Visitor Experience

- Les amis de la montagne has separate branding, but Mount Royal still functions as a city-owned park and has City of Montreal signage on-site.
- Les amis has their own social media accounts.
- The website for the park is branded Les amis but hosted on the official quebec government extensions (e.g., .qc.ca)

Highlights/Challenges

- The governance relation between Les amis and the City of Montreal has existed for 30 years and is the strongest of its kind in Montreal. This relationship exists through a five-year framework agreement, including biannual reports through which Les amis present upcoming programming and a breakdown of accounts.

- 100% of revenue from programs and services is reinvested into the conservation and protection of the Mount Royal Park. The more lucrative programs support the less profitable, but essential, programs on the mountain.

Park Typology



Source: Mark Lowenstein, *Great Runs in Montreal*

Age

- The mountain had been used by Indigenous peoples as burial sites, then as cemeteries for early settlers of Montreal. Over time, institutions and hospitals have been established on the mountain.
- The City of Montreal made the necessary land purchases for the future park in 1872 and commissioned renowned landscape architect Frederick Law Olmstead in 1874 to design the park. The space was designated as a park in 1876.

Size and general use

- 230+ hectares, regional destination park and tourist attraction

Important amenities and facilities

- Gift shop and mobile vendors, three food outlets (Cafe des Amis), winter sports equipment rentals (more of a service), sledding and tubing tracks, cross country ski trails, pavilion, artificial skating rink, four seasons children's playground, information and welcome centre.

Neighbourhood

- The neighborhood is primarily institutional with cemeteries, universities, hospitals located on the mountain. Mount Royal is surrounded by residential neighbourhoods and several nearby commercial strips.

Important proximities

- In addition to the institutions located directly on the mountain, many [partner organizations](#) are involved in governance and protection, nature conservation, environmental education, outdoor and cultural programs, advancement of knowledge, innovation and best practices on the mountain.

Toronto comparison

- High Park
- Toronto Islands Park

St. Charles River Society, Quebec City

Website: societerivierestcharles.qc.ca/

Facebook: [/SocieteRiviereSaintCharles](https://www.facebook.com/SocieteRiviereSaintCharles)

Instagram: [@societerivieresaintcharles](https://www.instagram.com/societerivieresaintcharles)

Governance Model

Financial

- Annual revenue/expenditure
 - Operating budget: approximately \$1 million (2018)
 - Majority of this budget comes from municipal contracts in addition to a small percentage that comes from grants, revenue and contracts with Parks Canada.
 - No detailed financial information could be found

Operating Agreements and Group History

- The St. Charles River Society is a non-profit organization that works to highlight and promote the St Charles River, its linear park, and its heritage to residents and tourists through park management, animations, and awareness activities while respecting sustainability principles.
- The Society was formed in 2000 to ensure the maintenance of the St. Charles River, which had been renaturalized and restored from its former concrete banked design. The Society is subcontracted by the City and holds private contracts with local governments for park maintenance.
- The Society started small, building trust with local government, through an initial fee for service contract to run a program engaging marginalized youth to assist with trail maintenance.
- Since then the Society has expanded their services to include waste management, horticultural services and winter maintenance, and now are the main maintenance service provider to the City. They also plan [events](#), manage an environmental brigade, run a cross-country ski program and an environmental water patrol to advise residents and businesses along the river.
- The Society does not receive municipal grants or subsidies, but is funded through contracts signed with the City. The majority of these agreements are for three-years in duration at a time.

Structures

- The St. Charles River Society is a non-profit and was established in 2000.
- Board and/or staff structure
 - Board of Directors consisting of 11 members
 - Staff, includes 45 staff of which 10 are year-round and 35 are seasonal

Visitor Experience

- The Society has a unique [website](#), branding and uses [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) for social media platforms.
- The Society also runs a visitor's centre (Maison Dorion-Coulombe)

Highlights/Challenges

- The Society places high importance on providing an exceptional service-and retaining their trusted employees- in order to continue the working relationship with the City of Quebec.

Park Typology



Source: Trip Advisor

Age

- Park was re-naturalized, infrastructure was installed and cleaned up in late 1990's / early 2000's
- The Society was established in 2000, first contract with the Quebec City was 2002

Size and general use

- 32 kms of riverside trail for hiking boating

Important amenities and facilities

- Marina Saint Roch
- Swimming pool and sports and activity centre: [Collective Space](#)
- The Maison Dorion-Coulombe acts as the headquarters of the Society as well as a visitors center, exhibition space, and historical property.
- Skate and Slide / Cross-Country Skiing at Parc De La Pointe-Aux-Lievres
 - Two heated pavilions, food services, skate sharpening and rentals.

Neighbourhood description

- Runs through three Quebec City neighbourhood boroughs: Cartier-Brébeuf National Historic Site, and Wendake First Nations

Important proximities

- Cartier-Brébeuf Park
- Parc De La Pointe-Aux-Lievres
- Kabir-Kouba Waterfall
- Chaveau Park

Toronto comparison

- Ravine system
- Waterfront
- Toronto Islands Park

Jim Deva Plaza (and Plaza Stewardship Program), Vancouver

Website: jimdevaplaza.ca

Twitter: [@jimdevaplaza](https://twitter.com/jimdevaplaza)

Governance Model

Financial

- The City of Vancouver has provided grants to the West End Business Improvement Association for plaza stewardship of approximately \$40,000. The BIA matched those funds through its own budget from its local business assessment and contributions from a developer (Hollyburn Properties).
- No other financial breakdown can be found in terms of overall operating costs. Additionally, it's unclear whether event permits for the site are fed into general city revenues or back to the plaza specifically.

Operating Agreements and Group History

- Jim Deva Plaza was first created as a pilot project street-to-plaza conversion of one block of road space reallocated as public space at Dave and Bute Streets in downtown Vancouver. Temporary design details (tables, chairs, and lighting) as well as community events helped distinguish the space. The result was that over [80% of people surveyed](#) by the city at the pilot's end wanted to make the space permanent. It was redesigned permanently in 2016.
- Stewardship of the plaza is a partnership between the City of Vancouver and the West End Business Improvement Association (WEBIA). First conceived through a pilot project in 2015 that is now feeding into a larger "plaza stewardship strategy" the City is developing for multiple sites.
- The City is responsible for overall maintenance and garbage collection. A [2016 event permit guide states](#) City is responsible for assessing/approving any permitted events in the space, but there is a specific Jim Deva Liaison Coordinator with a non-City email (info@jimdevaplaza.ca) that helps to coordinate and process the requests. Non-profit/community event permits are \$100 and for-profit/commercial event permits are \$200. However, the City launched a subsequent [Share a Square pilot program](#) more recently to reduce barriers for small community group programming that waived permit fees for certain activities.
- WEBIA provides additional support for extra maintenance, management and programming for the plaza through the City grants, financial contributions from a developer, and their own funds. The WEBIA also works with a contractor who manages the movable tables and chairs in the space.

Structures

- Jointly operated through a partnership between the City and the WEBIA.
- The plaza is overseen by an Oversight Committee that includes the City, BIA, and local stakeholder and organizations. This committee is involved in the decision-making and governance of the plaza.
- A “Plaza Coordinator Liaison” position was created, housed within the WEBIA, to facilitate the relationship between all partners and the public. However, it’s unclear whether this position is still in effect.

Visitor Experience

- Both the City and the WEBIA have pages highlighting the plaza; however, the City’s pages often point to content on the [WEBIA website](#), which is where the event calendar and applications to host special events (outside of the Share a Square pilot) can be found.
- The WEBIA runs a dedicated twitter account (@jimdevaplaza) sharing information about the plaza as well as a website (www.jimdevaplaza.ca)

Highlights/Challenges

- The City is currently undergoing a more robust plaza stewardship strategy that builds on the learnings from the Jim Deva Plaza stewardship pilot. Feedback from the stewardship pilot (from a [2017 city report](#)) included:
 - The community partnership model requires a high level of commitment from staff and partners.
 - More active use of a space leads to an increased level of garbage collection, micro-cleaning and other maintenance related duties.
 - Having a range of activities in the space requires promotion and adds to overall experience in the space.
 - It is important to find an appropriate balance of noisier, special event programming with other times when the plaza is available for passive uses, such as with movable tables and chairs.
- It seems the City was hoping to stimulate more community programming by developing the no-cost Share a Square pilot for events, allowing community members to by-pass the more expensive regular permitting process at the city.

Park Typology



Source: West End BIA

Age

- The plaza was constructed in 2015 from a roadway reallocation pilot.

Size and general use

- The plaza is one city block and completely hard-surface serving a residential and retail/commercial strip.

Important amenities and facilities

- The plaza contains movable chairs and tables, a large megaphone as a quasi-stage of public performances, and specialized lighting.

Neighbourhood

- The plaza is situated at the heart of the West End, a high-density residential neighbourhood of mostly towers. The plaza fronts onto Davie Street, a busy commercial and retail corridor with restaurants, bars, and shops.

Important proximities

- The plaza exists within the WEBIA area. It is near English Bay beach and walking distance from other downtown attractions in Vancouver, such as Robson Square.

Toronto comparison

- Cloud Gardens and Temperance Street
- Sugar Beach North

References

- [Plaza Stewardship Strategy Update 2017](#) - City Staff Report

Rotary-Mattamy Greenway / Parks Foundation Calgary, Calgary

Note: Not much was available specific to the greenway, so we outlined what we could from the Parks Foundation Calgary below with any information about the Greenway itself that we could find.

Website: parksfdn.com

Twitter: [@parksfdncalgary](https://twitter.com/parksfdncalgary)

Facebook: [/parksfdncalgary](https://www.facebook.com/parksfdncalgary)

Instagram: [@parksfdncalgary](https://www.instagram.com/parksfdncalgary)

Governance Model

Financial

- All financial information provided is specific to the Parks Foundation Calgary and not specific to the Rotary-Mattamy Greenway.
- Revenue (2019): \$12,288,837
 - Contributions: \$9,061,768 (76% of total revenue)
 - Government: \$3,037,673
 - Corporations: \$444,585
 - Individuals: \$814,188
 - Other not-for-profit: \$4,765,322
 - Investment Income - realized: \$1,322,925
 - Investment Income - unrealized: \$1,520,004
 - Other Income: \$384,140
- Expenses (2019): \$9,524,410
 - Project Costs: \$8,218,436
 - Saddledome Grants: \$343,337
 - Administration \$942,258
 - Amortization: \$20,379

Operating Agreements and Group History

- Parks Foundation Calgary, founded in 1985, works by connecting private philanthropy and donations to parks projects, resulting in over \$200 million invested in parks throughout its history.
- The Foundation has a number of current projects listed on its website, that include options for donations right on the project pages, such as the [Quinterra Legacy Garden](#).
- The Foundation also hands out a [number of grants](#) to fund park projects across the city.

- The completion of the Rotary-Mattamy Greenway was the Foundation's largest project to date. It cost \$50 million and connects 55 communities across the city. Land for the Greenway was mostly municipal land.
- From a [Canadian Business Journal](#) article: "Funding comes from many different sources, including government, corporate sponsors, and individual donors. Parks Foundation Calgary works with developers as well, as they often link the organization to those needed green spaces."

Structures

- Entity used
 - Foundation / Non-Profit
- Board and/or staff structure
 - Board of Governors with 15 members, including the Director of Parks for the City and members from the financial and business community in Calgary.
 - Staff: CEO, Executive Assistant, Controller, Accounting Manager, Programs Director, Marketing Coordinator, Communications and Development Coordinator, and Project Management Coordinator

Visitor Experience

- The Foundation has their own website and four social media platforms.
- The Foundation maintains a guide to trails and routes for the Rotary-Mattamy Greenway on its [website](#).

Highlights

- The Foundation is involved with [Flyover Park](#)--a proposed public space underneath an elevated roadway.

Park Typology



Source: Calgary Parks Foundation

Age

- Park: 2019
- Parks Foundation Calgary: 1985

Size and general use

- The greenway links parks, natural areas, green spaces, valleys and neighbourhoods. It is an urban pathway that encircles the entire City of Calgary – connecting 55 communities through an urban parks system.
- 138 km long and connecting with 1000 kms of trails

Important amenities and facilities

- The Rotary-Mattamy Greenway includes interpretive centers, hiking and cycling trails, specialty dog parks, wetlands, provincial parks, riverways, sports facilities, public washroom facilities, parkways and roadways. Key attractions include: Stoney Trail, Bowmont Park, Bowness Park, Bow River, Fish Creek Provincial Park, Rotary Nature Park and Southeast Wetlands.

Neighbourhood

- The neighbourhoods surrounding the Greenway include a mix of residential and commercial areas and include the neighbourhoods of NW, SW, NE, SE Calgary - Rocky Ridge, Signal Hill, Cranston, Forest Heights, Saddle Ridge and more.

Important proximities

- Calgary Airport, VIA rail train station, Fish Creek Provincial Park

Toronto comparison

- Ravine system
- Green Line
- Meadoway

References

- [Parks Foundation Calgary Website](#)
- [City of Calgary Parks and Recreation](#)
- [2019 The Parks Foundation Calgary Financial Statements](#)

River Valley Alliance, Edmonton

Website: www.rivervalley.ab.ca

Twitter: [@RiverValleyPark](https://twitter.com/RiverValleyPark)

Instagram: [@rivervalleyalliance](https://www.instagram.com/rivervalleyalliance)

Facebook: [/rivervalleyalliance](https://www.facebook.com/rivervalleyalliance)

Governance Model

Financial

- RiverValley Alliance got approximately 98% of its operating funds through municipal grants and contributions in 2019. Information on capital budgets and allocations are available in the annual report (linked below).
- Operations revenues (2019): \$742,679
 - Alberta Environment and Parks grant (operations): \$500,000 (67%)
 - Municipal shareholder contributions: \$230,000 (31%)
 - Unrestricted interest: \$7,658
 - Amortization of deferred capital asset contributions: \$3,850
 - Donations/sponsorship: \$1,171
- Operations expenses (2019): \$700,741
 - Salaries/benefits: \$489,814 (70%)
 - Administration/general: \$126,383 (18%)
 - RiverFest: \$47,665 (7%)
 - Communications/branding: \$27,366 (4%)
 - Professional fees: \$9,738
 - Amortization of capital assets: \$5,775

Operating Agreements and Group History

- RVA was formed as an agreement in 1996 between seven municipalities that border the North Saskatchewan River and formalized into a not-for-profit organization in 2003. The goal is to provide a singular voice to help connect people to and along the North Saskatchewan River Valley--both physically through trails and boat launches and socially/culturally through programming and engagement.
- RVA is responsible for the planning, funding, and development of capital works along the river valley through a 1/3 funding model between the federal, provincial, and municipal governments. The municipality whose jurisdiction the project falls within is then responsible for ongoing maintenance.
- The RVA also engages people in the valley system through events and activities, including a larger RiverFest in 2019.
- As the RVA website states: "The RVA speaks on behalf of its shareholders as one voice to both provincial and federal governments for grant funding, which allows the

municipalities to undertake large infrastructure projects that benefits their community as well as the whole region.”

Structure

- RVA is a not-for-profit organization that is made up of seven “shareholder” municipalities around the river valley, which includes the City Edmonton.
- RVA has five core staff members including an executive director, finance manager, digital media specialist, marketing and communications manager, and administrative coordinator, as well as a sixth summer student position.
- RVA is overseen by a board of directors that includes nine elected representatives from member municipalities and seven directors at large. There are four internal committees including governance, implementation, finance, and community engagement. RVA also recruits volunteer “ambassadors.”

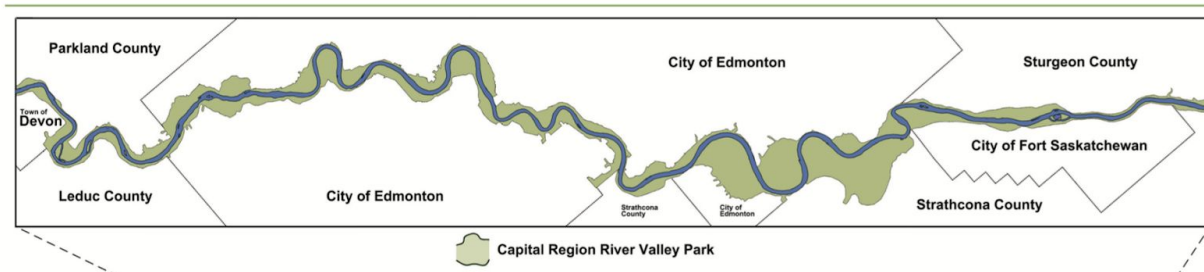
Visitor Experience

- RVA has their own social media and communications presence, including a coherent brand identity, for promoting the river valley throughout its member municipalities. However, it’s unclear whether this branding extends to the river valley itself in RVA branded wayfinding or logos along the trail and valley system.
- RVA runs [“how-to” blogs](#) on their website and [printed and digital brochures](#) that showcase different trail lengths and walks and what people can expect to find to help encourage people to get out on the trail.

Highlights/Challenges

- RVA launched a [volunteer ambassador](#) pilot program in March 2019 and had over 80 people sign up. These volunteers promote the organization and the river valley on social media and in their communities and lead/support trail activities and events. For example, RVA ambassadors helped organize a trail walk to showcase newly completed projects to the public.
- RVA undertook 13 projects under the first phase of its [capital plan](#) between 2012 and 2017 valued at \$90 million, including pedestrian bridges, boat launches, and trail development.
- RVA builds relationships with private landowners for access as 40% of the river valley park is privately owned.

Park Typology



Source: RiverValley Alliance

Age

- N/A

Size and general use

- River valley park and trail system, covering roughly 88km in length and 18,000 acres of land.

Important amenities and facilities

- Runs through seven different municipalities and includes trails, parks, and boat launches.

Neighbourhood

- Various different neighbourhoods throughout the seven municipalities, including urban and more rural areas.

Important proximities

- Adjacent to Edmonton's downtown core, the RVA built a funicular to increase access from downtown into the river valley.

Toronto comparison

- Ravine system
- Waterfront trail system

References

- [2019 Annual Report](#)
- [2019 - 2024 Strategic Plan](#)

VanDusen Gardens, Vancouver

Website: www.vandusengarden.ca

Twitter: @VanDusenGdn

Governance Model

Financial

- Revenue (2019): \$1,946,000
 - Membership Dues: \$407,810 (21%)
 - Donations: 378,829 (19%)
 - Bequests/legacies: \$359,447 (18%)
 - Vancouver Foundation endowment: \$228,992 (12%)
 - Education programs/course fees: \$275,465 (14%)
 - Fundraising: \$160,844 (8%)
 - Investment revenue: \$62,906 (3%)
 - Parks Board revenue sharing: \$40,815 (2%)
 - Misc: \$31,517 (2%)
- Expenses (2019): \$1,759,000
 - Programs, education and library: \$570,189 (33%)
 - Administration: \$407,534 (23%)
 - Development: \$208,098 (12%)
 - Membership services: \$175,900 (10%)
 - Marketing: \$120,494(7%)
 - Volunteer Engagement: \$122,024 (7%)
 - Garden enhancements: \$18,178
 - Fundraising supplies: \$99,112 (6%)
 - Amortization: \$24,376 (2%)
 - Loss on capital assets: \$6,512
- Notes
 - In 2019, the VBGA made \$65,000 from a volunteer-driven plant sale, which is likely grouped into fundraising.
 - Parking is limited on site, but free
- Admissions (VBGA members get free admissions)
 - VanDusen Gardens
 - Adult: \$8.20 - \$11.50 depending on season
 - Senior/youth: \$5.75 - \$8.05 depending on season
 - Child (5-12): \$4.10 - \$5.75 depending on season
 - Four years or younger free
 - Bloedel Conservatory
 - Adult: \$6.90

- Senior/youth: \$4.70
 - Child (5 - 12): \$3.45
 - Four years or younger free
- Membership fees
 - Available at a number of rates ranging from \$38.25 for seniors to \$166.32 for a family of four. More information [here](#).
 - Membership has grown from \$372,000 to \$408,000 in 2019 for a total 11,860 members.
- Rentals
 - Bookings are available for the visitor's centre, several indoor rooms, the conservatory, and permits for wedding and commercial photographer
 - Rentals are operated by the Vancouver Park Board and it's unclear whether revenues go directly to the gardens or into general revenues
 - Facility rental rates and information can be found in [this brochure](#).

Operating Agreements and Group History

- Jointly operated between the Vancouver Park Board (a separate entity from the City of Vancouver that is overseen by elected commissioners) and the Vancouver Botanical Gardens Association.
- VBGA is a registered charity formed in 1966 by a group who advocated for the creation of a botanical garden on the site of a former golf course, which eventually became the VanDusen Gardens in 1975. In 2015, the VBGA pursued accreditation through the Imagine Canada Standards Program, which sets governance, management, and fundraising standards for non-profits. Other than the VBGA extending their partnership to become a joint operator of the Bloedel Conservatory on the site in 2013, the roles have largely stayed the same since an agreement formed 1994 (however the most recent 2019 annual report recognizes a need to update the agreement):
 - Park Board is responsible for facility and collection maintenance and management of facilities, events, rentals and marketing.
 - VBGA is responsible for volunteer and membership engagement, social media, [programming](#), [children and adult education](#), and maintaining the library and resource centre. This includes trained volunteer guides that operate tours from April to October, help gather seeds, staff information desks, and assist with fundraising plant sales.
- VBGA program offerings include: school programs, Indigenous workshops, forest bathing walks, and more. The organization partners with other groups, such as Vancouver Avian Research Centre and UBC Farm, to provide other unique program opportunities for its members.

Structure

- VBGA is a registered charity with an 18-member board of directors including a president, vice president, treasurer, and secretary.

- VBGA is a membership-based organization with currently nearly 12,000 members contributing \$400,000 to the group's budget in 2019. Members receive unlimited entry to the botanical gardens and conservatory, event discounts, exclusive tours, reduced education rates, priority registration for children's camps, and discounts to restaurants/attractions around Vancouver.

Visitor Experience

- VBGA runs its own website for VanDusen Gardens and social media accounts as well as offering on-site tours and info centre staffed by VBGA volunteers. In 2019, over 870 people volunteered over 4,300 hours with the organization which resulted in nearly 7,000 visitors participating in educational programs.

Highlights/Challenges

- In 2019 the VBGA hired consultants to conduct a business review and governance model review to update the joint operating agreement between the VBGA and the Park Board. The intended completion date for this work was end of 2020, but it's unclear if COVID-19 impacted this timeline.

Park Typology



Source: VanDusen Gardens

Age

- Opened in 1975 on what was a former golf course

Size and general use

- 55 acre botanical garden with a collection of native and exotic plants

Important amenities and facilities

- Visitor's centre including a cafe and gift shop completed in 2011
- Shaugnessy Restaurant adjacent to the garden entrance
- Hedge maze
- Variety of botanical garden areas

Neighbourhood

- Largely low-density single-family residential neighbourhood

Important proximities

- Bloedel Conservatory and Queen Elizabeth Park (adjacent green space)
- BC Children's Hospital
- Vancouver College
- Oakridge Centre Mall (up for redevelopment with new park on top of mall)

Toronto comparison

- Cloud Gardens
- Allan Gardens
- Centennial Park & Conservatory
- Edwards Gardens

References

- [2019 Annual Report](#)

Notes

- Substantially less information is available about the operating costs and structure of the Park Board's role as it's not publicly reported through the annual report. All the financial information presented here is for the VBGA.
- There were no staff listed for VBGA so it's unclear whether there are paid staff roles within the organization or if it's entirely volunteer-run.

Riverwood Conservancy, Mississauga

Website: theriverwoodconservancy.org

Instagram: [@yourriverwood](https://www.instagram.com/yourriverwood)

Twitter: [@yourriverwood](https://twitter.com/yourriverwood)

Facebook: [/yourriverwood](https://www.facebook.com/yourriverwood)

Governance Model

Financial

- Revenue (2019): \$1,294,550
 - Grants: \$895,529 (69%)
 - Donations: 113,676 (8%)
 - Events, fundraising, sponsorships: 164,260 (13%)
 - Program fees: 89,848 (7%)
 - Honoraria: 14,381
 - Other: 16,856
- Expenditures (2019): \$1,256,572
 - Salaries and wages: 813,728 (65%)
 - Purchased services: 117,585 (9%)
 - Program expenses: 127,250 (10%)
 - Fundraising: 78,141 (6%)
 - Administration: 113,287 (9%)
 - Comms and marketing: 3,338
 - Amortization: 3,243
- Membership fees:
 - Annual adult memberships are priced at \$35 and different rates are available for families, seniors, and youth. Memberships are also available for non-profits and businesses. Full details [here](#).

Operating Agreements and Group History

- The Riverwood Conservancy (TRC) was founded in 1985 as the Mississauga Garden Council. The park is [co-owned](#) by the City of Mississauga and Credit Valley Conservation (CVC), which purchased the property in the late 1980s to early 1990s from a private owner. The site's history includes being previously used as First Nations trading grounds, agricultural lands, and a family's vacation property.
- TRC is a [Registered Community Group](#) with the City of Mississauga. It operates out of a heritage building in the park. In 2019 and 2020, TRC [received \\$331,859](#) through the City of Mississauga's Community Group Grants. The City's website indicates it is a multi-year agreement, but doesn't specify the length or terms.

- The City is responsible for operations, maintenance, and capital improvements of the park at large. TRC takes on a programming and fundraising role, although they also assist with conservation work, such as invasive species management and the [restoration of a pond](#) in partnership with Credit Valley Conservation. TRC programs are mainly focused on nature education, stewardship, and gardening.
- TRC volunteers are responsible for maintaining three gardens in the park, including the 2-acre MacEwan Terrace Garden, and the Enabling Garden where TRC offers special horticultural therapy programming for people with diverse abilities.
- No accountability measures listed

Structures

- TRC is a registered charity. It is volunteer and member-based, with members receiving access to special events, reduced rates on TRC programs, and voting privileges at the AGM. TRC has four higher profile 'patrons' listed [on their website](#) (e.g. Hazel McCallion), though details are not available about the role/level of funding these individuals provide.
- TRC has 16 staff members, including fundraising roles and coordinators dedicated to specific programs (full directory available [here](#)). TRC has a [Board](#) of 6 executive committee members, and 12 directors.
- TRC does not appear to have any shared staff roles or dedicated liaison at the City. However, the local city councillor is listed as a "special advisor" to the Board.

Visitor Experience

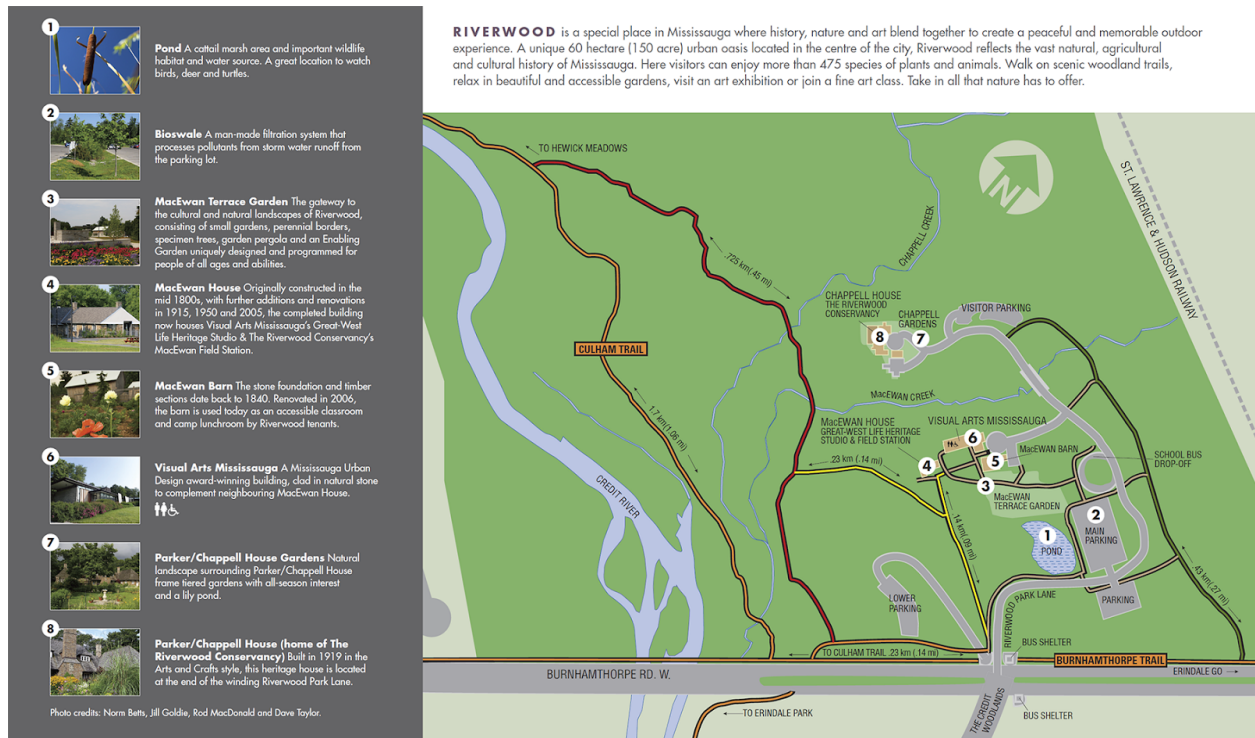
- The group has its own website and social media accounts (Instagram, Twitter, Facebook). They also have a dedicated marketing specialist on staff.

Highlights/Challenges

- The City's 2012 [Living Green](#) plan (which recommended the creation of the now-existing Community Grant Program that TRC receives) provides insight into the benefits the City sees in working with TRC:
 - "Community-based organizations like the Riverwood Conservancy are often able to build the networks and private-sector partnerships that are essential for achieving municipal strategic objectives. The funding program would acknowledge the very important work and high level of commitment delivered by these environmental groups, as well as their efficiency and competency in delivering environmental programs."
- In June 2020 TRC [received a 3-year \\$213,800 grant](#) from the Ontario Trillium Foundation to support expansion of programs related to conservation, wildlife tracking and citizen science. This grant replaces a previous 3-year grant TRC had received from OTF for a similar amount.
- Although TRC is mainly focused on programming and fundraising, their stewardship and gardening activities help with park maintenance and upkeep.

- The group is able to leverage grants and private donations to support the park, although a large chunk of their funding seems to come from government grants, which comes with risks to the group's sustainability if they are unsuccessful in securing grants in the future.

Park Typology



Key features/amenities in Riverwood. Source: [TRC website](#)

Age

- The site has a rich history, and has been a public park for the past ~30 years.

Size and general use

- 150 acres. Urban nature preserve with rich ecological and historical features.

Important amenities and facilities

- Heritage buildings, including one that the Riverwood Conservancy operates out of
- MacEwan Terrace Garden: a two-acre perennial garden opened in 2012
- 3.5 km of trails
- Enabling Garden and sensory path
- The most biodiverse part of the Credit Valley Watershed with many unique natural features (e.g. Credit River, wetlands, meadows, mature trees, migratory birds, etc.)

Neighbourhood description

- Centrally located, adjacent to residential Erindale neighbourhood, connected by a trail to U of T Mississauga. Erindale GO station is across the street from the park.

Important proximities

- Credit Valley Conservation [partners with TRC](#) on invasive species management and other volunteer conservation efforts within the park
- Visual Arts Mississauga is the only other organization that operates out of a building in the park, and hosts exhibitions and events on-site. It's unclear if/how they partner with TRC.

Toronto comparison

- Toronto Islands Park
- Ravine System

Notes

- The details of the lease/agreement for the building that the TRC operates out of are not available – unclear if this is a revenue source for the City.
- The Government of Canada, Credit Valley Conservation, and others are listed as 'major supporters' in TRC's 2019 Annual Report, though the details around these funding arrangements are unclear.

Friends of the Living Prairie, Winnipeg

Website: friendsoflivingprairie.org

Governance Model

Financial

- Although financial statements are not included in the [Annual Report](#), it gives some indication of the group's revenue sources:
 - Friends of LPM hired five summer students through grants from Canada Summer Jobs and the Urban Green Team ([provincial grant](#)), including two Green Team positions contributed by the Assiniboine Rotary Club.
 - They raised approximately \$2,500 through two events: their winter wildlife speaker series, and their monarch butterfly festival.
 - Friends of LPM built a new trailhead interpretive sign costing \$11,500 and funded by a city grant, and recently received an unspecified grant to build a new park entrance over the next two years
 - Received a \$1,000 TD Park People grant
- [Membership fees](#): \$15 per individual per year, \$20 per family or classroom. They had 132 members in 2019. Members receive discounts on seed purchases and workshops, and receive a newsletter and invitations to special events.

Operating Agreements and History

- The LPM is a City-owned nature park and preserve for the endangered tall grass prairie. An informal volunteer group of LPM supporters has existed since the 1970s, however the group became incorporated as a non-profit in 2010 with the support of the City. Their focus is on conservation of this unique environment, through education, engagement, fundraising, and volunteer stewardship.
- City staff at LPM run an interpretive centre and educational programming. Friends of LPM supports and augments City-led educational programming, fundraises for special projects, hosts events, conducts volunteer-based habitat maintenance programs, and does outreach to promote the LPM to new audiences.

Structures

- Group is a registered non-profit, but not a charitable organization.
- Includes a Board of 10 people.
- The Living Prairie Museum has a staff of five people, including a museum director and education coordinators, who are employees of the City but work closely with the Friends group. It's unclear if Friends of LPM has any permanent paid staff roles, though they hire seasonal student positions (five students were hired in summer 2019).
- The city's Park Services Administrator is a board member.

Visitor Experience

- Friends group runs a separate website and has its own logo.
- Social media accounts ([Instagram](#), [Facebook](#)) for the Living Prairie Museum are run by the City of Winnipeg.

Highlights/Challenges

- Group works very closely with the City staff based at LPM, and Friends of LPM have received City funding for park improvement projects (such as new [interpretive trailhead signage](#)).
- A key advantage of Friends of LPM seems to be their ability to hire summer students to help with park maintenance/stewardship work and programming.

Park Typology



Source: City of Winnipeg

Age

- Preserve was established in 1968

Size and general use

- 13-hectare (32 acre) nature preserve of endangered tall grass prairie. Attracts locals and tourists, given the rare ecosystem.

Important amenities and facilities

- Interpretive centre open from spring until October, staffed by LPM (City) employees
- Trail system with self-guided programming

Neighbourhood description

- Located in the St. James-Assiniboia suburb of Winnipeg—a primarily residential area near the western periphery of the city.

Important proximities

- Very close partnership with staff of the Living Prairie Museum (City-run).

Toronto comparison

- Toronto Islands Park
- Meadoway
- Ravine System

Notes

- Financial statements not available online

U.S.

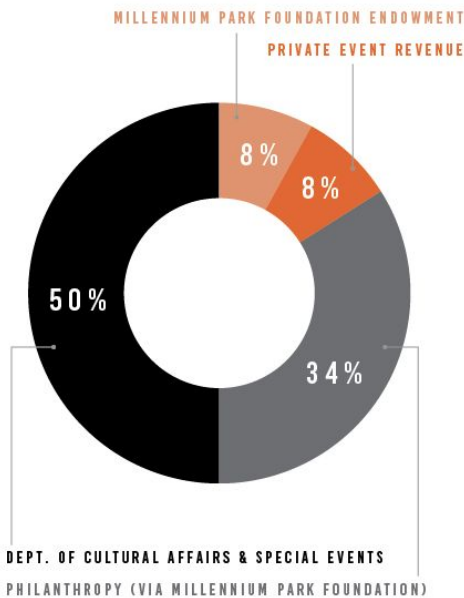
Millennium Park, Chicago

Website: millenniumparkfoundation.org

Governance Model

Financial

- Operating funding for Millennium Park is provided by the City and the Millennium Park Foundation (see breakdown in chart from [undated source](#) below). City funding for the park is through the Department of Cultural Affairs, and uses funds available through the Municipal Hotel Operators' Occupation Tax.
- Millennium Park Foundation [2018 Financials](#):
 - 2018 Revenue: \$895,992 (note that 2018 revenue was exceptionally low, revenue was between ~\$3-4 million annually in the previous five years)
 - 2018 Expenses: \$3,767,016
 - Breakdown of revenue/expenses could not be found
- 2019 [City expenditures](#) on Millennium Park:
 - Operations and maintenance: \$8,251,481
 - Programming: \$1,382,183



Breakdown of operating funding sources from [undated source](#).

Operating Agreements and Group History

- Millennium Park Foundation (MPF) was established in 1998 to fundraise from private donors for the construction of the new signature park. Opened in 2004, the park cost \$490 million total, with \$270 million in public funds and \$220 million from philanthropy via MPF.
- The city owns and operates the park, and the city's Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events offers park programming. MPF continues to fundraise and provide operational support, including curating art within the park and augmenting existing park programming. No information could be found about the specific terms/nature of the agreement between the city and the MPF.

Structures

- Millennium Park Foundation is a private non-profit organization.
- They have a Board of 16 people (interesting to note that 14 are men). They have 9 staff members according to their [2018 tax filing](#), though only two are listed on their website (executive director and administrative assistant).
- There do not appear to be any shared staff roles between the city and the MPF.

Visitor Experience

- MPF has its own website, but does not appear to have its own social media accounts. MPF's website links to city-run social media accounts for Millennium Park ([Twitter](#), [Facebook](#)).

Highlights/Challenges

- City's leverage of hotel tax as a funding source is unique, and interesting given that the park is a major tourist attraction.
- City funded park construction through the privatization and sale of a 99-year lease to the parking garage that the park sits on for a one-time payment of [\\$563 million](#). This privatization [resulted in](#) increased parking fees for park visitors.
- According to [this source](#), the city was anticipating that MPF would fundraise enough to cover the full costs of operating the park, however this didn't pan out—the article suggests it's easier to fundraise for public art than park operations.
- According to [this source](#), a 2005 study found that buildings adjacent to the park generated an additional \$10 million in taxes and \$24 million in sales tax compared to before the park was built—though this also highlights the gentrification of the surrounding area.
- Interesting to note that the city and MPF were [involved in a lawsuit](#) earlier in 2020 related to suppressing free speech in the park, after private security stopped groups from distributing materials. MPF argued that the park is a special, curated space that should be exempt from usual free speech protections—the judge ruled against them, potentially highlighting how the role of private organizations can take away from the 'publicness' of the place.

Park Typology



Source: Associated Press

Age

- Opened in 2004

Size and general use

- 25 acres. Signature downtown park and major tourist destination.

Important amenities and facilities

- Cloud Gate Sculpture (aka the Bean)
- McDonalds Cycle Centre (indoor bicycle parking with showers, lockers, etc. for daily commuters)
- Outdoor arts and cultural event venues (e.g. Boeing Galleries, Pritzker Pavilion - hosts Grant Park Music Festival, Harris Theatre for Music and Dance)
- Exelon Pavilions - generate solar power to offset park's electricity use
- Crown Fountain - large fifty foot tall water structure
- Lurie Garden - 5-acre green space with dedicated volunteer group that leads garden tours
- McCormick Tribune Plaza and Ice Rink - free outdoor skating
- Park is located on top of a parking garage with capacity for 4000 cars
- More details about amenities [here](#)

Neighbourhood description

- Dense, downtown, mixed-use area

Important proximities

- According to this [undated source](#), Grant Park Symphony Orchestra raises ~\$4.5 million per year to support programming at Millennium Park.

Toronto comparison

- Rail Deck Park

References

- This [City Parks Alliance piece](#) highlights some interesting takeaways from the Millennium Park case study.

Governors Island, New York

Website: govisland.com

Governance Model

Financial (for Friends of Governors Island - [source](#))

- 2019 Revenue: \$1,250,481
 - Net revenue from special events: \$601,032 (48%)
 - Contributions and grants: \$611,008 (49%)
 - Welcome Center sales and other income: \$13,641
 - Donated rent and services: \$24,800
- 2019 Expenditures: \$1,334,686
 - Program services: \$918,303 (69%)
 - Management and general: \$185,494 (14%)
 - Fundraising: \$230,889 (17%)

Operating Agreements and Group History

- Governors Island operated as a military base for almost 200 years, and was a Coast Guard base until 1996. In 2003 the federal government transferred ownership of the island to the city and state, though the state backed out of its ownership role in 2010. It's now owned by the Trust for Governors Island (see below).
- There are three primary groups involved in operating Governor's Island:
 - [The Trust for Governors Island](#) - A non-profit organization created by the city, that has [a contract](#) with the city to manage the planning, development, and operations of the island. The Trust owns 150 acres of the island and is responsible for directly delivering some island services. Its mandate includes activating the site with non-profit, educational, and commercial activities to attract the public as well as long-term tenants. It receives grants from the city, and also accrues revenue from leasing the properties it manages on site, though according to [this source](#) it currently generates no significant income.
 - [Friends of Governors Island](#) - A non-profit organization and "designated fundraising partner" of both the Trust and the National Park Service. Runs visitor services, programming (including volunteer activities) and fundraising. The Friends was founded as the Governors Park Alliance in 1995 (when Governors Island was still functioning as a Coast Guard base) to advocate for opening up Governors Island to the public. It became an incorporated nonprofit in 2014.
 - [National Park Service](#) - Federal bureau that owns, operates, and programs a 22-acre portion of the island as a national monument containing historically significant features like Castle Williams and Fort Jay.

Structures

- The Trust for Governors Island has a board of 13 members who are appointed by the mayor, “[four of whom](#) are nominated by local officials”. Staffing structure is unclear, as only the President/CEO is listed online.
- The Friends of Governors Island has a board of 23 members. Staffing structure is unclear, as only the Executive Director is listed online.

Visitor Experience

- The Governors Island website contains information about the Trust, Friends group, and National Park Service. The Trust & Friends group don’t appear to have distinct branding or social media accounts—appear to be part of a cohesive “Governor’s Island” identity.

Highlights/Challenges

- When the federal government transferred ownership of the island to the city in 2003, it placed [requirements/restrictions](#) on how the site can be developed. Highlights include that 90+ acres must be for public benefit, 40+ must be parkland, and all revenue generated on site must be put back into the island.
- Development of the island is still in its relatively early stages. A key priority of the Trust is to bring in more non-profit and commercial tenants in the coming years. The [website states](#) that the development of the Park and Public Space Master Plan for the island will be developed “when funding becomes available.”
- Just announced in September 2020, a key piece of the vision for Governors Island is to integrate a [Centre for Climate Solutions](#) that would bring together “researchers, educators, advocates, innovators and policymakers to create, test and implement the solutions our urban environments need today and in the decades to come.”

Park Typology



[Map](#) of key features/spaces on Governors Island.

Age

- Island itself opened to the public in 2005. First phase of the new park space, a 30-acre section, opened to the public in 2014. An additional section called ‘The Hills’ opened in 2016.

Size and general use

- The island is 172 acres in total. Used by locals, tourists, and tenants (though there are [only a few tenants](#) right now, this will be a more significant user group as the Trust works to expand tenancy).

Important amenities and facilities (see map above)

- First phase of the park [includes](#): a 6-acre plaza, pathways through a 10-acre “grove of hammocks and trees”, and a 14-acre ‘play lawn’ featuring two ball fields.
- The Hills (opened in 2016) is an area of the park featuring man-made hills that reach 70-feet above sea level, providing views, art installations, pathways, rich vegetation, and play elements like slides built into the hill.

Neighbourhood

- Island! Park space with educational, non-profit, and commercial tenants.

Important proximities

- Four [current tenants](#) are:
 - The Lower Manhattan Cultural Centre (arts organization)
 - Billion Oyster Project (environmental organization restoring oyster population and biodiversity in NYC through citizen engagement)
 - Urban Assembly New York Harbor School (550-student high school with focus on maritime education)
 - QC Termé (a day spa and first commercial tenant)

Toronto comparison

- Toronto Island Park
- Centennial Park

Pioneer Courthouse Square, Portland

Website: thesquarepdx.com

Twitter: [@thesquarepdx](https://twitter.com/thesquarepdx)

Instagram: [@thesquarepdx](https://www.instagram.com/thesquarepdx)

Facebook: [/PioneerCourthouseSquare](https://www.facebook.com/PioneerCourthouseSquare)

YouTube: [The Square PDX](https://www.youtube.com/TheSquarePDX)

Governance Model

Financial

- Latest annual reports posted online are from 2015-2016 only. Revenue and expenses listed below are from that report as an example.
- Revenue: \$2,213,503
 - Event Programming: \$732,516 (33%)
 - Programming In-Kind Donations: \$505,228 (23%)
 - City of Portland: \$362,515 (16%)
 - Tenants: \$354,369 (16%)
 - Grants and Contributions: \$134,748 (6%)
 - Parks In-Kind Maintenance: \$112,382 (5%)
 - Investment Income: \$11,745
- Expenses: \$2,138,538
 - Events & Sponsorship: \$1,110,486 (52%)
 - Property Management: \$211,386 (10%)
 - Janitorial & Maintenance: \$292,381 (14%)
 - Administrative: \$216,234 (10%)
 - Security: \$182,516 (9%)
 - Depreciation: \$52,320
 - Capital Expenditures: \$17,422
 - Fundraising: \$48,694
 - Investment Fees: \$7,099

Operating Agreements and Group History

- The group's "...[mission](#) is to activate and enrich the environment of the City of Portland's premier public Park and gathering space for the benefit of Portland's community members and visitors."
 - Works with a team of staff, the help of community volunteers and private sector contributions. In 2015-2016, they generated 79% of the park's annual operating revenue.
 - Unclear when the organization was formed--park opened in 1984.
- Government funding and/or transfers

- \$362,515 (16% of revenue) in [2015-2016](#)
- Organization is [responsible for](#) improving quality of onsite services and amenities, developing signature event programming, pursuing new revenue opportunities, establishing administrative resources, and support the public-private partnership with City of Portland to:
 - increase fundraising capacity, “clarify and seek agreement on Park maintenance roles and responsibilities” and achieve stable funding for operations.

Structures

- Pioneer Courthouse Square of Portland Inc. is a private 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.
- Board of trustees and staff structure:
 - Board of trustees contains a minimum of 25 elected members, who are representatives of the community, the region at-large, and downtown businesses. Board members serve two consecutive three-year terms.
 - The City Commissioner in charge of Portland Parks & Recreation holds a seat on the board. The president of the board may appoint non-voting Honorary Trustees and Ex-Officio Trustees with support from the board.
 - Board meetings are open to the public, held every other month.
 - Seven staff members, responsible for marketing and events, administration and operations (Note: this may be out of date as the group has not provided an updated impact report for some years).
- Works in partnership with the City of Portland through a public-private management model; however, couldn't find any information/evidence of this relationship on the City's website.

Visitor Experience

- In 2015-2016, PCS had 340 programmed days, including 68 Protests, 53 Cultural Festivals, 38 Concerts, 20 Markets, 11 Runs/Walks, 8 Fundraisers, 5 Movies, 5 Rallies
- Pioneer Courthouse Square is a city-owned park, but the non-profit organization has branding that is distinguished from the city's Parks and Recreation department.

Highlights/Challenges

- Nearly 10 million annual visitors (2015-2016 annual report), Portland's [most visited](#) public park.
- In 2014, Portland residents voted to support a \$68 million Parks Replacement Bond, which included \$10 million to renovate Portland Courthouse Square. This included repairs to stoa columns, waterproofing underneath the brick pavers, repair and replacement of an HVAC system, restroom renovation and accessibility upgrades.
- PCS has an ongoing fundraising campaign where supporters can purchase personalized bricks for \$125 to be engraved in the square. Supporters receive a Certificate of Brick Ownership signed by the Mayor of Portland. Nearly 80,000 Portlanders have supported the campaign, with funds raised supporting maintenance and programming.

Park Typology



Source: ChatterBlock

Age

- Park opened 1984, organization seems to have been formed years later. Renovations completed in 2017.

Size and general use

- Town square or plaza-style park, known as “Portland’s Living Room”
- Highly-programmed, events almost daily, strong tourist draw.

Important amenities and facilities

- Accessible restroom, fountain, plaza, statue/public art, and wifi access.

Neighbourhood

- Primarily a commercial neighbourhood in downtown Portland.

Important proximities

- [Partners](#) include municipal and state civic agencies (i.e. Portland Police, Fire, Water Bureau, Oregon Department of Transportation, etc.), some media partners, “wellness partners,” and marketing communications and website partners.

Toronto comparison

- Berczy Park

Klyde Warren Park, Dallas

Website: klydewarrenpark.org

Twitter: [@klydewarrenpark](https://twitter.com/klydewarrenpark)

Instagram: [@klydewarrenpark](https://www.instagram.com/klydewarrenpark)

Facebook: [/Klydewarrenparkdallas](https://www.facebook.com/Klydewarrenparkdallas)

Governance Model

Financial

- Estimated annual operating budget: \$5.2 million
- No audited financial statements or annual reports appear to be available online.
- [Sponsorship packages](#) are posted online for the park's major events soliciting sponsors from \$5,000 to \$25,000.
- Foundation runs a [membership program](#), which includes members-only parties, VIP access to signature events, complimentary valet parking, and more. Memberships start at \$500.

Operating Agreements and Group History

- The Woodall Rodgers Park Foundation was formed in 2004 following grants and funding from private donors, the real estate council, and a local bank for feasibility studies for decking over a freeway to create a new park. The Foundation led the development from design to completion. It took three years from deck construction to park opening in 2012 and cost \$110 million. Of that total cost, just over 51% was public funding while the balance was privately raised funds through the Foundation.
- The park is owned by the City of Dallas and private operated/managed by the Foundation. The Foundation also runs all programming, fundraising activities, and operates full-time public safety officers on site.

Structure

- Board of directors of 18 members, including former politicians, executives in the financial sector, and community volunteers.
- Foundation employs 16 staff members including a president, VP of finance and admin, VP of operations, special events manager, park operations manager and assistant, event operations manager, marketing manager, community engagement director, programs director, office assistant, donor relations director, guest services manager, and external events manager.
- Foundation includes a "Corporate Council" consisting of members of the corporate community who care about the park and act as "ambassadors" to the business community.

Visitor Experience

- Foundation runs the park's website, which includes its own branding and social media accounts.

Highlights/Challenges

- A new three-story enclosed special events pavilion is part of a [new phase of development](#) for the park, meant to provide an important ongoing source of revenue for park operations and ensure park programming remains free. Construction will start in 2021 and finish in 2024. The funds were privately raised from \$60 million in donations.

Park Typology



BEFORE AFTER

Source: *Landscape Performance Series*

Age

- Opened in 2012

Size and general use

- 5-acre park built over eight-lane freeway creating destination park in downtown. Welcomes one million visitors per year.

Neighbourhood

- High density downtown area. Park connects Uptown neighbourhoods with the city's arts and business districts.

Important amenities and facilities

- Dog park, fitness classes, food trucks, various green spaces and event spaces. No organized sports are allowed.

Important proximities

- Museums, cultural facilities (opera house, symphony), major hotels and financial towers.

Toronto Comparison

- Rail Deck Park

Notes

- Because no financial statements are available online, it's unclear how much the Foundation receives from the government, if any, towards its ongoing operations.

Rose Kennedy Greenway, Boston

Website: rosekennedygreenway.org

Twitter: [@hellogreenway](https://twitter.com/hellogreenway)

Instagram: [@rosekennedygreenway](https://www.instagram.com/rosekennedygreenway)

Facebook: [/rosekennedygreenway](https://www.facebook.com/rosekennedygreenway)

YouTube: [Rose Kennedy Greenway](https://www.youtube.com/RoseKennedyGreenway)

Governance Model

Financial

- The Greenway operates through a public/private funding model that sees the Greenway Conservancy fund itself through earned revenue as well as government supports from the State of Massachusetts through the Department of Transportation (MassDOT), which owns the land the park is situated on.
- In 2018, a new Business Improvement District was established to lessen government support, which had previously been approximately \$2 million per year.
- Revenue- Operations (2019): \$6,599,477
 - Earned revenue: \$1,643,639 (25%)
 - Contributions (BID): \$1,252,000 (19%)
 - Contributed income: \$909,975 (14%)
 - Endowment: \$697,321 (11%)
 - Government Support (MassDOT): \$625,000 (9%)
 - Event revenue: \$492,892 (7%)
 - Government Support (City of Boston): \$281,741 (4%)
 - Government grants: \$16,500
 - In-kind revenue (private): \$304,556 (5%)
 - In-kind revenue (public): \$252,727 (4%)
 - Other income: \$123,126
- Expenses- Operations (2019): \$6,238,352
 - Programmatic: \$4,918,779 (79%)
 - Administrative: \$560,232 (9%)
 - Fundraising: \$759,341 (12%)
- Revenue- Capital (2019): \$2,992,032 (various sources, including government support)
- Notes
 - Largest source of earned revenue is the food truck program and beer/wine gardens.

Operating Agreements and Group History

- The Greenway Conservancy has sole responsibility for the operations/maintenance, programming, and funding of the Rose Kennedy Greenway. Previous to 2018 it had

obtained one year leases on the site from the landowner (MassDOT), but in 2018 it signed a 10 year lease agreement.

- The Greenway Conservancy was formed in 2004 and tasked with raising funds for an endowment for the Rose Kennedy Greenway, which was opened to the public in 2008. The park is built on top of a buried downtown expressway. The Conservancy assumed operational responsibility for the park in 2009.
- The Conservancy has a dedicated horticultural, events, public art team. The greenway hosts free, temporary public art installations along its route and is assisted by a special [Public Art Advisory Group](#). A rotating set of programming and events take place on the greenway (430 free events in 2019) and the gardeners care for pollinator habitat, bee hives, and seasonal gardens along the route.

Structure

- The Conservancy is an incorporated non-profit organization.
- Greenway's board of directors includes 20 members, including those from the development and financial sector and a community advocate.
- Greenway employs six management staff members including an executive director, programs and community engagement director, finance and administration director, public art curator, and development director. Under this management team, RKG employs six gardeners, nine operations/maintenance staff, five program staff, one public art staff member, three administrative staff, three development staff, and two outreach staff.

Visitor Experience

- Greenway employs uniformed "park rangers" which provide information and also look out for those "who may need medical care or social services, and are prepared to refer them to the appropriate care facility or social services agency."
- Greenway offers free wifi.

Highlights/Challenges

- Financial sustainability has been a challenge for the organization, which runs an expensive park and was funded half through state funds since 2008. The 2008 agreement for the park had the State cover half of the greenways cost--an agreement that ended in 2012. Subsequently, the State's transportation department MassDOT, which owns the land the park is situated on, had been contributing \$2 million per year to operations. A new financial arrangement was created under threat of MassDOT pulling their annual funding and In 2018, a Business Improvement District was established to financially support the Conservancy, which now provides the majority of the funds for the group.

Park Typology



Source: Wikipedia

Age

- Opened in 2008

Neighbourhood

- Thread through the downtown core of Boston including the financial district and high density commercial, office, and retail. The park is within short walking distance to the waterfront area and a number of attractions (listed below)

Size and general use

- A 2.4km 17-acre linear park built on top of a buried expressway, with a number of different programmable areas with a variety of designs, including hard-surface, water features, gardens, and lawn.

Important amenities and facilities

- Greenway carousel, public art displays, six fountains/water features, gardens, food stands/trucks

Important proximities

- Quincy Market--large outdoor shopping area, aquarium, boston harbour/waterfront, city hall and plaza, and Post Office Square (public park).

Toronto Comparison

- The Bentway
- The Green Line
- Rail Deck Park
- David Crombie Park
- University Avenue Park

References

- [Partnership seeks to put the Greenway on firmer financial footing.](#) WBUR news. June 2017.
- [Too Many Parents? Governance of Boston's Rose Kennedy Greenway.](#) Harvard Kennedy School of Government.
- [Annual Report 2019](#)

Emerald Necklace, Boston

Website: emeraldnecklace.org

Twitter: [@emnecklacebos](https://twitter.com/emnecklacebos)

Instagram: [@emeraldnecklaceconservancy](https://www.instagram.com/emeraldnecklaceconservancy)

Facebook: [/theemerlandnecklaceconservancy](https://www.facebook.com/theemerlandnecklaceconservancy)

Governance Model

Financial

- Revenue (2019): \$2,289,975
 - Grants/contributions: \$2,210,037 (97%)
 - Investments & Other Income: \$79,938
- Expenses (2019): \$2,421,016
 - Justine Mee Liff Fund —Party in the Park* \$476,906 (17%)
 - Development & Administration \$546,754 (23%)
 - Education & Youth Programs \$184,364 (8%)
 - Park Events and Visitor Services \$369,123 (15%)
 - Maintenance, Restoration & Volunteers \$601,164 (25%)
 - Olmsted Tree Society Tree Management Program \$242,705 (10%)
- Grants/philanthropic contributions are 97% of total revenue
 - The grants and contributions section of the Emerald Necklace financial reporting for the fiscal year of 2019 include the Emerald Fund (55% of total), the Olmsted Tree Society (0.16%) and the Justine Mee Liff Fund / Party in the Park event (44%).
 - The Emerald Fund is the annual giving program for the conservancy.
 - The Olmsted Tree Society works to preserve and maintain trees in the Emerald Necklace and is in partnership with the conservancy's public partners: Boston Parks & Recreation, Brookline Parks and Open Space and the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation. Since 2013, when the society was established, contributions to the Society have provided over \$1.7 million dollars to support conservation, new planting and education.
 - The Justine Mee Liff Fund / Party in the Park event is an annual fundraising event to honor the legacy of former Parks Commissioner, Justine Mee Liff and provide support for capital improvements, landscape restoration and other specialized activities.

Operating Agreements and Group History

- The Emerald Necklace Conservancy operates as a private / public partnership. They operate their own programming and partner for maintenance and some operations. In

addition, they partner for some programming and activation (see new 2019 programming [Pond Life Exploration in partnership with Mass Audubon's Boston Nature Center](#)).

- Park activation and programming is managed by the Emerald Necklace Conservancy, while park maintenance is managed by Boston Parks and Rec department, with a small portion belonging to the Department of Conservation and Recreation.

Structures

- The Emerald Necklace park is managed by the Emerald Necklace Conservancy - A private non-profit stewardship organization.
- The EKC is governed by a Board of Directors. The Board consists of 30 positions, including: Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer, Clerk, 2x Life Trustees, 24 Directors
- The EKC Park Overseers are a committee within the Conservancy's Board of Directors. The Park Overseers liaise with the institutions, organizations and friend groups that sit within, or close to, the park. The Park Overseers represent external parties and advocate for policies, projects and funding and contribute to programming. This working groups help to set priorities, work plans, and work on projects in three areas: Access, Restoration & Maintenance, and Education & Outreach. Park Overseers' Working Groups meet six times a year or more often if necessary.
 - There are 23 park overseer organizations (ex. Boston society of landscape architects, Fenway Civic Association, Franklin Park Zoo, Friends of Jamaica Pond).
- There is also a stewardship council (14 members), a Rose Garden Advisory Committee (7 members) and a Project Review Committee (9 members)
- There are 9 staff members: President, Visitor Center Assistant, Volunteer Engagement and Policy Coordinator, Field Operations Coordinator, Director of Education, Events Manager, Finance Manager, Development Associate, Director of Development and External Relations
- The Emerald Necklace Conservancy operates as a non-profit and holds close governance relationships with the Boston Parks & Recreation Department, Brookline Parks and Open Space and the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation. The Boston Department of Parks and Recreation department manages the maintenance of the Emerald Necklace Parkland. Brookline Parks and Open Space Division, a department within the town of Brookline. Brookline is a town in Norfolk County, Massachusetts and is a part of Greater Boston. Brookline's Park and Open Space Division manages Olmsted Park West and the Riverway. Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) manages the Emerald Necklace Parkways, which are categorized as protected roadways and protected under the Massachusetts Historic Parkways Initiative.
- Volunteers (2019): 1,092 volunteers, 2,882 hours

Visitor Experience

- The EKC offers a range of services, educational opportunities, programming and events, including guided tours, a mobile tour guide, volunteer opportunities and youth programs.

The park's Shattuck Visitor Center is open to the public year-round and was originally built and designed in 1882, the building originally served as one of the pair of pump-stations that managed the flow of water from Stony Brook into the Muddy River. In present day, the building acts as an educational resource, and a gathering place for the community and provides free maps, visitor information services and exhibits about the parks. In 2019, the Visitors Center had 3,915 guest visitors and there were 455 visitors on docent-led tours.

- The Conservancy enhances the visitor experience through a strong digital platform and presence. The EKC has a very active website, with unique branding and logos and has social media presences on these platforms: Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Flickr.

Highlights/Challenges

- In 2019, the EKC hosted the 16th Annual Party in the Park, raising over \$990,000 for special landscape restoration projects throughout the Emerald Necklace, supporting projects for the Olmsted Tree Society, the Conservancy's Tree Management Plan and the Heritage Tree Program.
- Recent Capital funding campaign for Charlesgate Park (started with a seed grant from The Lawrence & Lillian Solomon Foundation), and raised \$650,000 in project specific fundraising efforts in 2018-2019.

Park Typology



Source: Emerald Necklace Conservancy

Age

- Built 1860's (designed by Frederick Law Olmsted Sr).
 - 160 years old
- Emerald Necklace Conservancy was founded 1998.
 - 22 years old

Size and general use

- 1,100 acres
- Various uses including passive areas, gardens, pathways for walking/cycling and areas for sports and recreation.

Important amenities and facilities

- The Emerald Necklace includes a visitors center, fields, riverways, sports facilities, public washroom facilities, parkways and roadways. Key attractions include:
 - Boston Common and Public Garden, Commonwealth Avenue Mall, The Fens, Forsyth Park, The Riverway, Olmsted Park, Jamaica Pond, Jamaicaaway, Arborway, Arnold Arboretum, and Franklin Park.

Neighbourhood

- The neighbourhoods surrounding the Emerald Necklace include a mix of residential and commercial areas and include the boroughs of Jamaica Hills, Mission Hill, Longwood Medical and Academic Area, Central Village, High Street Hill, Brookline Village.

Important proximities

- Fenway Park, Harvard University

Toronto comparison

- Ravine system
- Meadoway
- Core Circle parks (e.g., Rail Deck, Bentway, Green Line, Don River Valley Park, etc.)

References:

- [2019 Annual Report](#)
- [2019 Financial Statement](#)
- [Emerald Necklace Website](#)
- [City of Boston, Parks and Rec Department](#)
- [City of Boston Open Space Plan, 2015-2021](#)

U.K.

The Royal Parks, London

Governance Model

Financial

- Total Income (2018-2019): £50 million
 - Events: £13.3m (27%)
 - DMCS Fee for Service: £10.5m (21%)
 - Charitable Activities: £6m (12%)
 - Catering: £5.8m (12%)
 - Other: £5.4m (11%)
 - Estates: £4.3m (9%)
 - Donations and Grants: £2.8m (6%)
 - Car Parking: £1.9m (4%)
- Total Expenses (2018-2019): £40.8 million
 - Heritage, protection and conservation: £25.4m (62%)
 - Support costs and depreciation: £8.9m (22%)
 - Trading Costs: £2.4m (6%)
 - Recreation, sports and culture: £2.6m (6%)
 - Education: £1.2m (3%)
 - Fundraising Costs: £0.3m

Operating Agreements and Group History

- The Royal Parks are owned by the Sovereign as an actor for the Crown and the Secretary of State for the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), who has had management power over the public lands since the establishment of the Crown Lands Act in 1851.
- The Royal Parks was established as an independent charity in 2017, under a contract for the provision of services between the Royal Parks and the DCMS. The Royal Parks was given a 10 year management contract to pursue and operate as an independent body. It is the responsibility of the Royal Parks to manage, maintain and program the parks.
- The DCMS provides the Royal Parks a fee for service and the charity can bid to the government for additional capital funds for landscape, asset and infrastructure improvements within the parks. The Royal Parks has the freedom to raise funds using

the operational assets in the parks and has a range of commercial income opportunities, alongside additional grants and contributions.

- The Royal Parks and the DMCS have a “Barter Agreement”, which outlines that the charity is allowed to use the park assets for commercial purposes and the Royal Parks pays a fee to the DCMS for access and use. The DCMS then pays the Royal Parks the same amount for providing the services of running, maintaining and programming the parks.
- The Royal Parks also has two wholly owned trading subsidiaries, TRP Trading Company Limited and the Royal Parks Foundation Trading Company Limited, which are primarily used for commercial trading activities.
- Accountability Measures
 - Audit and Risk Committee
 - Nominations and Remuneration Committee
- Government funding and/or transfers
 - Operates under a substantial grant from the government
 - Operates under a Contract for Provision of Services between the Charity and the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, but is independent of the UK Government.

Structures

- Entity
 - The Royal Parks is a charity.
 - Previously, the parks were managed by both the Royal Parks Agency, a part of the Department for Culture, Media and Sport and the Royal Parks Foundation Charity. In 2017, the Royal Parks Agency joined with the Royal Parks Foundation Charity to form the new and current charitable structure of “The Royal Parks.”
- Board and/or staff structure (e.g., roles, terms)
 - Parks Board of Trustees (non-executive and unpaid)
 - 11 members
 - Senior Management Team
 - 6 members, including: CEO and Directors of Commercial, Resources, Communications/Engagement, Estates/Projects, and Parks.
 - Staff
 - Approx. 146 full-time employees (2017-2018)
 - The Charity has formal consultation and negotiation arrangements with two trade unions.
 - Volunteers
 - 2,300 volunteers (2017-2018)
 - 127,000 hours (2017-2018)
- Relationship with City
 - The lands on which the 8 Royal Parks sit are lands owned by the Monarchy of the United Kingdom. The crown provides public access “by the grace and favour of the crown” and the public has no legal right to use the park.

- The Royal Parks has a specific police unit assigned that operates under the London Metropolitan Police.

Visitor Experience

- The Royal Parks hosts over 77 million visitors each year, have their own dedicated police task-force and thousands of staff and volunteers. They have separate (yet “Royally aligned”) branding and logo - with the overarching “Royal Parks” brand. The Royal Parks has an extensive [website](#) and social media platforms through [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Youtube](#).

Highlights/Challenges

- In 2019, the Royal Parks was awarded £725,000 from People’s Postcode Lottery for “Mission: Invertebrate” - a project that supports the discovery and protection of invertebrates and supports educational and conversation opportunities. Other invertebrates boosting projects included introducing 25,000 pollinator friendly plants in the Parks.

Park Typology



Source: Daily Express

Age

- 169 years

- The parks became public land with the Crown Lands Act in 1851, previously they were used as hunting and recreation for the Royal family.

Size and general use

- 5,000 acres, various uses:
 - Bushy Park, 445 hectares (1,100 acres)
 - Green Park, 19 hectares (47 acres)
 - Greenwich Park, 74 hectares (180 acres)
 - Hyde Park, 142 hectares (350 acres)
 - Kensington Gardens, 111 hectares (270 acres)
 - Regent's Park, 166 hectares (410 acres)
 - Richmond Park, 955 hectares (2,360 acres (9.6 km²))
 - St. James's Park, 23 hectares (57 acres)
- Not parks but other public spaces managed by the Royal Parks:
 - Brompton Cemetery
 - Victoria Tower Gardens
 - Grosvenor Square Garden

Important amenities and facilities

- Eight Grade 1 listed landscapes, one World Heritage Site, one Special Area of Conservation, one National Nature Reserve and two Sites of Special Scientific Interest.
- Facilities for swimming, yoga, tennis, football, rugby and other team games.
- The Hub in The Regent's Park, the largest open air sports facility in London.
- 13 children's play areas
- 59 Cafes and Restaurants

Neighbourhood

- The area surrounding the Royal Parks is a mix of residential, commercial and public lands and includes such London boroughs as Kensington, Knightsbridge, Camden Town, Covent Garden, Westminster, and more.

Important proximities

- Buckingham Palace
- Clarence House
- Whitehall
- London Zoo
- Westminster Abbey
- University of London

Toronto comparison

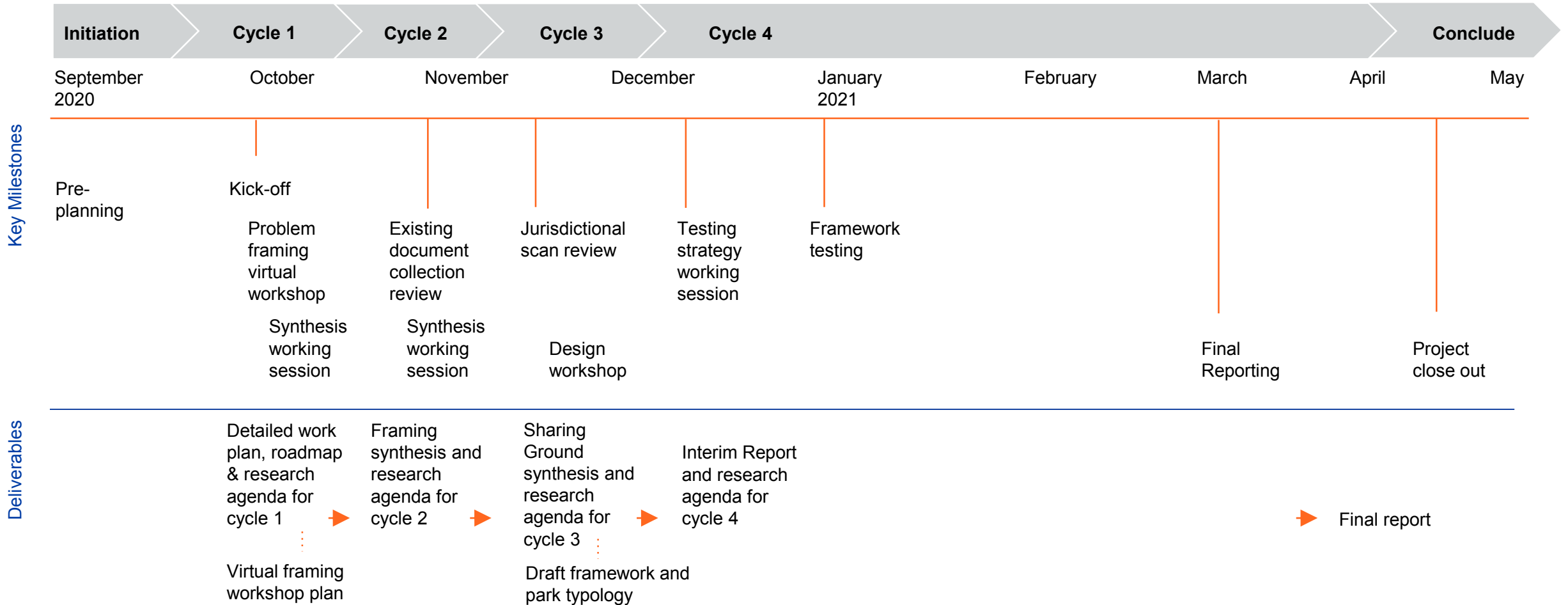
- Ravine system

References

- [2019 Annual Report](#)
- [Royal Parks Website](#)
- [Gov.UK Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport](#)
- [2018-2021 Volunteer Strategy](#)

D. Project Roadmap

Project Roadmap – Collaborative Governance Report



E. Summary of Ideas Generated

Summary of Ideas Generated (Sample, from Mural exercise)

Test Card Strategyzer

Test Name Graded insurance scheme workshop	Deadline Deadline: Feb 14, 2021
Assigned to Assigned to: Doug	Duration Duration: 2 weeks

STEP 1: HYPOTHESIS

We believe that

A graduated insurance requirements will reduce pains for community groups while acceptable to legal liability risk. Critical:

STEP 2: TEST

To verify that, we will

Create a template of a spectrum of different insurance amounts matched with different types of activities and show community groups and legal. Test Cost: Data Reliability:

STEP 3: METRIC

And measure

Community group: see amounts as viable for the activity and group capacity. Time Required:

Legal: to what extent agree the risks are acceptable.

STEP 4: CRITERIA

We are right if

Community group and legal can come to alignment on acceptable liability requirements.

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Test Card Strategyzer

"Typologies Slider"	Deadline
Christine lead input, Doug attributes list, MSL test	Duration

STEP 1: HYPOTHESIS

We believe that

A list of "partnership attributes" around a particular park site or park network will create a Typology that will guide the application of collaboration models appropriate for the site. This process will also relate to the Desired Outcomes for the site. Critical:

STEP 2: TEST

To verify that, we will

-Create the list of attributes (Doug will start, Google doc)
 -Create a list of half-dozen or so CG models (e.g. PFR "regular" O&M, PFR partner with hybrid, City Internal Collaboration model, Entry - Non-Profit, Entry/Utility/Community)
 -Create the list of Desired Outcomes
 -Test process? MSL Data Reliability:

STEP 3: METRIC

And measure

Time Required:

STEP 4: CRITERIA

We are right if

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Test Card Strategyzer

Value of Partnership Value Report	Deadline
Will do this test together as team - MSL will refine test plan - action with rest of team.	Duration

STEP 1: HYPOTHESIS

We believe that

Partnership Value Report will attract new partnership opportunities by clearly communicating the impact and benefits of existing partnerships. Develop an internal culture at the City for more long term collaboration. Increase appetite or willingness to contribute funds to park projects with long term collaboration. Critical:

STEP 2: TEST

To verify that, we will

create a prototype of the report that also creates a narrative around the value in addition to performance measurement (Results based accountability). Data Reliability:

Economic impacts: Art industry is very good at communicating these. Showing Value. Connect to Performance Measurements (Accountability) - not targeted, only yearly Improvement. Ongoing

STEP 3: METRIC

And measure

Whether this prototype is sufficient as demonstration of a Partnership Value Report (Could the prototype be scaled up)

The measures ID'd in the prototype are the most valuable. Is it persuasive? (if not, what could we do?) For the right audiences? Qualitative questions: Effective communication? Examples. If not: What could we have said? Before / After scales (What would it take to get to a 10?)

Questionnaire
 - Specific Questions
 - Why we're asking
 - Easy to fill out

STEP 4: CRITERIA

We are right if

"Put their money in" exercise. Buy-in - which one gets most money none.

Prototype is useful. "Wasn't aware, hadn't realized, didn't know" comments.

Readers feel we have effectively communicated the value proposition. Over time the numbers change. Internal city resources are put towards partnership development

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Test Card Strategyzer

Enhancing and Clarifying the Intake Process	Deadline
Team to mock up an optimal intake "flow", MSL to test (?)	Duration

STEP 1: HYPOTHESIS

We believe that

A clearer, more accessible, and more transparent Intake process will reduce the barriers to engaging PFR in potential partnership projects and enable PFR staff to add value to partnership projects instead of overcommitting resources to ad hoc approaches. With mutually understood expectations, process steps, and resources, both internal and external parties can focus on what's important - the outcome. Critical:

STEP 2: TEST

To verify that, we will

Develop a mock-up of an optimal Intake workflow. Identifying things like key milestones, anticipated timelines, divisions of responsibility, and inflection points. Circulate the mock-up for review and comment from PFR staff and selected external stakeholders (as available) with partnership experience. Test Cost: Data Reliability:

STEP 3: METRIC

And measure

Whether and to what extent reviewers feel that the proposed intake workflow would address the "pain points" previously identified through interviews and research.

Whether and to what extent a formalized workflow can sufficiently accommodate the diversity of partnership types into which PFR enters.

What additional resources (staff / dollars / integration with other documents) would be needed to implement a formal process policy change Time Required:

STEP 4: CRITERIA

We are right if

Internal reviewers feel that the proposed workflow is both helpful and realistic.

External reviewers feel that the proposed workflow is accessible, clear, and would help them navigate entering into a partnership with PFR / the City.

After implementing / testing the Intake workflow, more partnerships are facilitated more efficiently and/or internal staff and external partners communicate process improvements.

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