Fairmount Park Conservancy
Centennial District

PHILADELPHIA, PA
ULI ADVISORY SERVICES
MAY 1-6, 2022
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- A multi-disciplinary membership organization with more than 45,000 members in private enterprise and public service

- What the Urban Land Institute does:
  - Conducts research
  - Provides a forum for sharing of best practices
  - Writes, edits, and publishes books and magazines
  - Organizes and conducts meetings
  - Directs outreach programs
  - Conducts Advisory Service panels
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FAIRMOUNT PARK

CONSERVANCY

THE JPB FOUNDATION
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ULI Panelists and Staff

Selected for their subject matter expertise to provide **objective, volunteer** recommendations

**Mike Higbee (Panel Chair)**  
OBE Advisors, LLC  
Indianapolis, Indiana

**Dionne Baux**  
National Main Street Center, Inc.  
Chicago, Illinois

**Sonja Ewing**  
Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission  
Prince George’s County, Maryland

**Wei Huang**  
NOVUS Real Estate  
Los Angeles, California

**Rachel MacCleery**  
Urban Land Institute  
Washington, D.C.

**Taylor Schenker**  
Urban3  
Asheville, North Carolina

**ULI Staff**

**Matt Norris**  
Senior Director, Building Healthy Places

**Barbra Gustis**  
Director, Advisory Services and Key Leaders

**Kelsey Steffen**  
Director, Advisory Services
The Assignment

CENTENNIAL CAMPUS
Should the Centennial District be understood and operated like a discrete campus?
What opportunities & incentives lend themselves to this approach?

GOVERNANCE
How might institutional partners and the City organize around a shared vision?
Should a formal partnership & governance structure be established?

EXPERIENCE
What digital and physical infrastructures are needed to make the District more accessible?
How might the District’s existing assets be managed and activated to create a relevant, vibrant, and welcome experience?

MOBILITY
How might the neighborhoods of East and West Parkside capture benefits?
What improvements & investments are needed to ensure benefits accrue equitably and do not accelerate displacement?

BENEFITS
How can partnerships promote an approach to mobility that prioritizes safety?
What off-park assets should the City consider leveraging to minimize the impact of event parking?
What We Learned
What We Learned
A LOT!

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>One</strong></td>
<td>The park is an incredible community and regional asset, but significantly under-resourced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Two</strong></td>
<td>Neighboring communities are underserved by the park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Three</strong></td>
<td>The park is disconnected internally and externally</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Four</strong></td>
<td>New structures and approaches are needed to ensure the park and neighborhood both thrive</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Park is a Community Asset that is Under-Resourced

- West Fairmount Park is beautiful and a one-of-a-kind asset to the neighborhood, city, and region
- The park has a long and storied history and is beloved by many, but...
  - Physical conditions are poor and programmatic offerings are conspicuously lacking
  - Conditions will continue to deteriorate in the face of inadequate investment (park needs funding of 4-5 times the current level)
  - There are too few amenities given the park’s scale and market reach
  - Lack of rules and enforcement add to systems of neglect and destructive behavior
Neighboring Communities are Underserved by the Park

- Communities do not feel heard or prioritized in decisions related to the park
- Neighborhoods are negatively impacted from recreation center closures and reduced programming – in some cases, citizens are picking-up the slack
- There is a lack of communication and coordination related to event scheduling and notifications, often resulting in inconvenience, frustration, and lack of trust
  - There are examples of meaningful local engagement, but these processes are not consistent, systematized, or well-documented
- Uses focused on regional park visitors are more prevalent than those focused on local communities; in consequence, residents bear the associated burdens and reap few of the benefits
The Park is Disconnected Internally and Externally

- The park lacks a cohesive identity
- Key stakeholders are insulated from one another, resulting in minimal collaboration
- Many park assets are physically fenced off, discouraging engagement
- Roads within and connecting to the park are viewed as unsafe for all users—whether walking, bicycling, or driving
- History is not adequately reflected in park assets, which is a missed opportunity
- There is no connection to the river or regional networks, other than for cars
- A unified vision for the park is needed
New Structures and Approaches are Needed to Ensure the Park and Neighborhood Both Thrive

- Accountability lines are unclear— who is responsible for what?
  - Stakeholders are committed to addressing park needs and opportunities but limited by resource and capacity constraints
  - The City must have effective partners if the park is to reach its potential
Guiding & Grounding Principles
Guiding Ideas for Panel

- **Center the Communities**
- **Embrace the Place**
- **Intentionally Communicate + Collaborate + Coordinate**
- **Build Trust with Incremental Successes**
- **Focus on Processes and Outcomes**
- **Work to Prevent Displacement**
Focus: West Fairmount Park

Geographic Scope

- **Our focus is West Fairmount Park as a whole (1,400 acres)**
- West Fairmount Park needs to be viewed holistically and coherently
- Zones or districts can be defined within the park
  - The Centennial Park District should be priority investment area
- Create and enhance linkages across the river with **East Park**
- Enhance *transportation linkages* and *prioritize safety* between the park and neighboring communities
Develop a Unifying Vision for the Park

Stakeholders must develop the vision. Elements could include:

▪ Establish as clear source of pride: a regional park with a local emphasis
▪ Honor the park and area’s unique history, people, and place
▪ Demonstrate actions that prioritize opportunities for neighbors
▪ Ensure outcomes benefit the local communities
▪ Amplify history— use effective storytelling
▪ Prioritize active uses, green space, safety, and sustainability
▪ Highlight inclusive and equitable engagement and outcomes
▪ Improve key connections to neighborhoods, local natural resources, and activity centers
▪ Value quality spaces that are safe, clean, and joyful

Healthy Place & Healthy People
Potential Park Zones

- Centennial District
- Active
- River
- Entertainment (Mann)
- Plateau/Vista
- Chamounix Recreation
Key Recommendations
Key Recommendations

- Pay renewed attention to West Park's historic significance and its regional and community roles
- Develop a unifying theme speaking to the park's future meeting regional and community expectations
- Expand number of “invested stewards” that are accountable for the park's ability to serve as a top tier Philadelphia asset
- Establish a permanent "fund development" organization responsible for determining deferred maintenance and capital improvement priorities and form financing partnerships to address them
Key Recommendations

Establish a new on-site community center as a “Hub of Opportunity” with diverse programming, including recreation, community services, & linkages to economic growth.

Establish a new organizational partner to advise & consent on park priorities and fund development.

Assign park programming scheduling to FPC along with the responsibility of ensuring all events are compatible with neighborhood and park operations.

Assign and hold FPC accountable for ongoing, consistent, and documented communication with park and community stakeholders.
Organization
Past Efforts

- FPC has invested $40M in the Philadelphia park system
- FPC took the lead and set up communication channels with the community
- Multiple master plans, specific plans, and economic development studies were prepared throughout the years
- Keystone Opportunity Zones and Federal Opportunity Zones were set up to attract private investment
- The remodel and reuse of the Ohio House is a model for the reuse of other buildings in the park
- Incremental street improvements were completed along Parkside Ave and trails in the park
- Advocacy alongside Philadelphia 250 to bring back political will and public awareness
Challenges and Obstacles

- Although multiple plans and studies were completed since 2002, very little has been executed.
- Who is responsible for what? Responsibilities between city departments, FPC, and other alliances have not been clear— a clear role and structure needs to be re-defined.
- Coordination and Communication between city departments and the community, institutional stakeholders and FPC, city departments and FPC, and even among government agencies are not well-established— an updated management system is needed.
- High-quality park service is a challenge— with scarce resources, the maintenance and safety of the park was largely insufficient.
- Without a clear identity, the park does not attract enough active users, leaving it as an under-utilized asset and amenity in the city.
- The community is frustrated by a lack of transparency in decision-making— trust has been lost.
Organization Chart

**Admin Support:**
- Maintenance and Security
- Planning and Design
- Capital Improvements
- Finance and Accounting
- Permitting
- Fundraising

**Fairmount Park Conservancy**

**MOU**

**West Fairmount Park Funding District Board Members**

**Advisory Committee**
- Neighborhood Groups,
- Schools,
- Other city departments,
- Other alliances

**Community Stakeholders**
- East Parkside, West Parkside,
- Wynnefield, Wynnefield Heights,
- At-Large Citywide leaders

**Institution Stakeholders**
- The Mann, Philadelphia Zoo,
- Please Touch Museum,
- Shofuso, PumpTrack

**City Leaders**
- City Parks & Rec,
- Councilmembers

**Decision-Making:**
- Governance/Communication
- Programming/Outreach
- Fundraising
- Public-Private Partnerships
- Marketing and Branding

**Government Support:**
- Political Will
- Communication with other city departments
- City-Wide Vision
- Public Funding
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responsibility</th>
<th>Philadelphia Parks &amp; Rec</th>
<th>Fairmount Park Conservancy</th>
<th>West Fairmount Park Funding District</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Governance and Communication</td>
<td>Consulted</td>
<td>Consulted</td>
<td>Responsible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private and Corporate Fundraising</td>
<td>Consulted</td>
<td>Execution</td>
<td>Decision-Making</td>
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<tr>
<td>Public-Private Partnerships</td>
<td>Consulted</td>
<td>Execution</td>
<td>Decision-Making</td>
</tr>
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<td>Project Planning &amp; Design Management</td>
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<td>Execution</td>
<td>Decision-Making</td>
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<tr>
<td>Capital Construction</td>
<td>Consulted</td>
<td>Responsible</td>
<td>Consulted</td>
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<tr>
<td>Programming/Engagement</td>
<td>Consulted</td>
<td>Execution</td>
<td>Decision-Making</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marketing and Branding</td>
<td>Consulted</td>
<td>Execution</td>
<td>Decision-Making</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security and Maintenance</td>
<td>Co-Responsible</td>
<td>Responsible</td>
<td>Consulted</td>
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<tr>
<td>Public Funding</td>
<td>Responsible</td>
<td>Co-Responsible</td>
<td>Consulted</td>
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Roles
West Fairmount Park Funding District

Create an Effective Development Fund!

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<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>One</strong></td>
<td>Develop a Memorandum of Understanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Two</strong></td>
<td>Develop an Effective Board of Directors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Three</strong></td>
<td>Hire Program Staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Four</strong></td>
<td>Fundraise Dollars to Support the Fund</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
West Fairmount Park Funding District

Effective Fund Development to Support Fairmount Park and the Surrounding Communities

The Panel is proposing the creation of a funding district to be administered by the Fairmont Park Conservancy. Through this fund, the anchor institutions and community-based organizations located in and around West Fairmount Park would work together in partnership with the City to equitably create value for the park and the surrounding neighborhoods, while producing a high-quality visitor experience that benefits everyone.

- Make this fund successful for everyone!!!
  - Enter into a formal agreement with the City
  - Develop a strong and effective board of directors
  - Hire program staff
  - Fundraise!!!
West Fairmount Park Funding District
Effective Fund Development to Support Fairmount Park and the Surrounding Communities

- Make this fund work and clearly articulate the expectations of partners
- Enter into a formal agreement with the City. An agreement between the City of Portland Maine and the Portland Parks Conservancy provides an example.
When crafting the MOU, be sure to consider:

- Who the stakeholders are and how much say will they have in planning and implementing the agreement
- Which partner will handle bidding and manage the construction of capital projects
- How maintenance will be divided between the partners
- How to protect private dollars from being misspent
- How donors will be recognized
West Fairmount Park Funding District
Proposed Fund Partner Roles

**Fairmount Park Conservancy**

- Convener!
- Fund administrator
- Provides administration and oversight of large capital improvement projects
- Grant manager supporting community programming
- Organizes and coordinates community volunteers
- Maintains a database of park assets
West Fairmount Park Funding District

Proposed Fund Partner Roles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community Stakeholders</th>
<th>Institutional Partners</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Engages &amp; informs the community</td>
<td>• Attracts people to the neighborhood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Advocates for new and/or improved park programming that reflects the community</td>
<td>• Serves the surrounding communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Participates in park programming, clean-ups, and beautification projects</td>
<td>• Generates funds for park operations &amp; maintenance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Sponsors community events &amp; programming</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
West Fairmount Park Funding District

Proposed Fund Partner Roles

**Elected Officials**
- Represent constituents' interests
- Community-led visioning sessions
- Identifies government cross-sector funding opportunities

**City of Philadelphia Dept. Of Parks & Recreation**
- Accountability-- enforces park access, maintenance, and security
- Funder
- Operations Agreement
- Landowner & leasor of land for park development
Funding
Without dedicated, predictable, and sustainable revenues, it will be impossible to make necessary investments in the park’s physical plant, operations, and programming.

City resources are constrained.

Institutional users such as the Mann, Please Touch, and Zoo contribute revenue to city budget, but resources are not directly available to park for maintenance and operations.

Most maintenance and capital spending for the park is drawn from city’s Park and Recreation or Streets budgets.
Where Philadelphia Stands on Parks

ParkScore Index

95% of Philadelphia residents can walk to a park in 10 minutes

...but...

Philadelphia spends only $73 per person on parks, 25% below the national average

Source: www.tpl.org/city/philadelphia-pennsylvania
Where Philadelphia Stands on Parks

Source: Trust for Public Land ParkScore

ParkScore Ranks (out of 100)
- Overall: 32
- Access: 93 (towards top)
- Equity: 67
- Amenities: 61
- Acreage: 45
- Investment: 31 (towards bottom)
## West Fairmount Park Funding Benchmarks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Funding Benchmarks</th>
<th>Min</th>
<th>Max</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Operating Costs per Acre (1,400 acres)</td>
<td>$4,000</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>West Park – Estimated Operating Costs</strong></td>
<td>$3,600,000</td>
<td>$9,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Operations per Person (pop. 70,000)</td>
<td>$40</td>
<td>$98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>West Park – Estimated Operations Costs</strong></td>
<td>$2,800,000</td>
<td>$6,900,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community-based FTE's per 10,000 residents*</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total possible FTE's dedicated to park</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>63</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

According to benchmarks, annual spending in West Park should be $2.8 to $9 mil
Current annual city funding for West Park is approximately $900k, and from FPC is $100k
Park Needs Dedicated, Diversified, and Predictable Revenue Streams

Traditional charitable donations should be augmented with a diverse set of revenue streams that capture revenue from park users for reinvestment.

Revenue sources can be built upon and grow over time.

Revenues can be used to enhance services, programming, and infrastructure, generating further revenue.

Operations | Maintenance | Programming | Capital Investment
Suggested Revenue Sources

- Continued allocation of public Department of Parks and Recreation dollars

- Surcharge on ticket sales or total revenues from park uses (the Mann, Zoo, Please Touch, Shofuso Japanese House)
  - 1-3% surcharge could generate $250k to $1.5 million annually

- Revenue from leases, concessions, and major event permits within the park
  - Leases and event fees from historic buildings and surrounding lands
  - Small scale and mobile concessions
  - Permitting fees from large-scale and multi-day events
    - Develop a regular cadence of local and signature events that engage visitors and generate revenues from ticket sales, vending, and other uses
    - FPC takes over permitting for major events

- Opportunity to reinforce neighborhoods with community-serving events, local vendors, etc.
Suggested Revenue Sources

- Regularize and monetize parking, solar powered electric vehicle charging stations
- Stormwater funding
- Transportation
  - City Streets Department
  - PennDOT
  - TIFIA (federal, long-term, low-interest rate loans)
- State Keystone Opportunity Zone
- Federal Opportunity Zone – Capital Improvements
Operations and Maintenance Budget Modelling

Modelling Assumptions

- Sourced expense and revenue metrics from National Recreation and Parks Association
  - Informed general budget ranges – for discussion and context only

- Key Assumptions
  - West Fairmont Park operations and maintenance budget substantially under-resourced
  - Additional revenue sources required if operations & maintenance budget deficit to be remedied
  - Target budget range $3-$5m annually for operations, maintenance, and general programming
# Operations and Maintenance Revenues

Budget scenarios for $3.6 to $9 million (line-item allocations per National Recreation and Park Assoc.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SOURCES</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th></th>
<th>Maximum</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Parks &amp; Rec (66%)</td>
<td>WFP (34%)</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Parks &amp; Rec (66%)</td>
<td>WFP (34%)</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Revenue</td>
<td>$2,196,000</td>
<td>$2,196,000</td>
<td>$5,490,000</td>
<td>$5,490,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Earned Income*</td>
<td>$828,000</td>
<td>$828,000</td>
<td>$2,070,000</td>
<td>$2,070,000</td>
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<td>Dedicated Levies</td>
<td>$288,000</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>$720,000</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>$720,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other Dedicated Taxes</td>
<td>$108,000</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>$720,000</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>$720,000</td>
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<td>Grants</td>
<td>$72,000</td>
<td>$72,000</td>
<td>$180,000</td>
<td>$180,000</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Sponsors</td>
<td>$36,000</td>
<td>$36,000</td>
<td>$90,000</td>
<td>$90,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>$72,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$180,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>$2,592,000</td>
<td>$936,000</td>
<td><strong>$3,600,000</strong></td>
<td>$6,930,000</td>
<td>$2,340,000</td>
<td><strong>$9,000,000</strong></td>
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*including surcharge on institutional uses
### New Model – Operational & Maintenance Revenues

Budget scenario for $5 million – supporting 900 acres (non-venue spaces)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SOURCES</th>
<th>Parks &amp; Rec</th>
<th>WFP</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Revenue</td>
<td>35% $1,750,000</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$1,750,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Earned Income*</td>
<td>35% $1,750,000</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$1,750,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dedicated Levies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Dedicated Taxes</td>
<td>15% $700,000</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$700,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grants</td>
<td>3% $200,000</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$200,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sponsors</td>
<td>10% $500,000</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$500,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1% $50,000</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>$2,500,000</strong></td>
<td><strong>$2,500,000</strong></td>
<td><strong>$5,000,000</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* including surcharge on institutional uses

Spending per acre $5,556
## Funding

### Key Recommendations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Utilize dedicated, diverse, revenue streams to incrementally improve and invest in the park</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Two</td>
<td>Key operational funding sources for the park to include city allocation, surcharge on institution revenues, leases, concessions, and events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three</td>
<td>Capital improvement dollars from philanthropic, private, city, state and federal sources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four</td>
<td>Reinforce economic development and opportunity in the communities via park investments</td>
</tr>
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Programmatic Elements
Develop a Cohesive Identity

West Fairmount Park and the West Fairmount Park Funding District

- Develop a mission and vision for the park with community and institutional stakeholders
- Establish and validate a brand with these key stakeholders
  - Develop coherent signage, branding, & communications
  - Elevate the UNIQUE history, elements, and features that make this park and place special
- Invest in initiatives that enhance the overall park experience through stakeholder collaboration
- Enhance connectivity—physically and visually within the park
- Make improvements that support a sense of pride and ownership from nearby community members through continual community engagement and communication
- Develop an annual programming calendar and cadence that is predictable, that meets both regional and local needs
Prepare Anti-displacement Strategies
West Fairmount Park and the West Fairmount Park Funding District

- Conduct extensive public engagement at regular intervals
- Collect and monitor data on rent, property taxes, and turnover within community stakeholder areas
- Follow best practices learned in other cities
- Collaborate with housing- and park-focused organizations
- Encourage community developers to pursue affordable housing projects and funding
- Integrate requirements into local policy, laws, and funding requirements wherever possible
Preventing Displacement

11th Street Bridge Park | Washington, DC

- A plan to create a first-class park that serves existing residents and preserves the neighborhoods they call home
- Advance affordable housing, creation of local jobs, and strengthen the bonds of culture that hold neighborhoods together
- As of 2021, over $60 million invested into the community, nearly matching the capital costs of building the Bridge Park
- The plan took shape after year-long intensive engagement with residents, which was essential to overcome skepticism and cultivate trust

Source: https://nextcity.org/urbanist-news/can-a-park-prevent-gentrification
Preventing Displacement
UCLA Institute of Environment & Sustainability

- Park and planning displacement-avoidance strategies should involve collaborations between park and housing organizations
- Community engagement can create opportunities for residents to educate local governments about challenges and opportunities for solutions
- Combine the creation and preservation of affordable housing with initiatives to create better-paying jobs for residents
- Integrate a requirement for displacement avoidance strategies into policies, laws and park funding implementation at all levels of government

Programming

Four Pillars of Programmatic Success in West Fairmount Park

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>One</th>
<th>Improve communication, both within the park and between visitors and relevant stakeholders</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Two</td>
<td>Allow history to guide the park narrative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three</td>
<td>Create transitional areas for engagement between public and restricted institutional park spaces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four</td>
<td>Prioritize special events that serve the community, the park brand identity, and historic narrative</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. Improve communication, both within the park and between visitors and relevant stakeholders

- Foster a **cohesive identity** for West Fairmont Park with signage, branding, communications
  - Include information about public restrooms, water fountains, concessions, picnic areas, etc.
- Develop an annual programming calendar and cadence that is predictable, that meets both regional and local needs
- Share events and general park information through publicly available website
  - Include public forum for community feedback and crowdsourcing maintenance complaints
Programming Pillars

2. Allow history to guide the park narrative

- Uplift the local history of women and Black Americans through signage and exhibits
- Utilize historic buildings to serve multiple functions and generate revenues
- Reflect local history from the lens of residents in park assets
- Prioritize hiring of community members for skilled, unskilled, and seasonal jobs
- Establish community-based safety programs
  - Develop Ranger / Park Police program
Programming Pillars

3. Create transitional areas for engagement between public and restricted institutional park spaces

- Allow institutions to activate public space with interactive installations
- Encourage fence removal wherever possible
- Activate the park with community-serving events and programs
- Run branded internal shuttle on the weekends
- Open some institution restrooms to the public during business hours
  - FPC to consider owning and operating a fleet of portable bathroom trailers
- Outdoor programming and activation at Welsh Fountain as a space for reprieve and water play
- Sliding scale programming at the Mann Center
Programming Pillars

4. Prioritize special events that serve the community, the park brand identity, and historic narrative

- Strategically convert streets to pedestrian-only uses on the weekends or a few times a month
- Events and temporary uses
  - Community Day
  - Parkside Day
  - Baseball tournament honoring the historic Negro League
  - Food truck festival
  - Farmer’s markets
  - Music
  - Art
  - Make it fun, prioritize the community
- Offer daycare, afterschool, and morning care programs through community spaces
- Prioritize events that meet community needs, lift-up local businesses

Image Credits: Camden Community Partnership
Historic Buildings

Develop a redevelopment schedule based on renovation and maintenance costs, and future use

- Area Welcome Center
- WFPFD meeting space / office
- FPC community outreach team offices
- Office spaces available for community meetings
- Museum space
- Park security / ranger housing
- Plant nursery / community gardener programming
- Workforce training / skill-building
- Special event space
- Bunkhouse for use by educational and youth overnight programs
Physical Investments
Characteristics of High-Quality Parks

1. High-quality parks are in excellent physical condition
   - Is the park well maintained?
   - Are park amenities in good condition?

2. High-quality parks are accessible to all potential users
   - Can people of all ages and abilities get to and around the park?
   - Do people know about the facility and what they can do there?
   - Is it free or affordable to use?

3. High-quality parks provide positive experiences for park users
   - Does the park provide a diverse range of amenities and activities?
   - Do all community members feel welcome and safe in and around the park?
   - Is the park comfortable to spend time in?

4. High-quality parks are relevant to the communities they serve
   - Does park design and programming reflect the culture and interests of community members?
   - Does the surrounding community actively use the park?
   - Do user demographics reflect the community?
   - Are community-based organizations involved in park decisions and operations?

5. High-quality parks are flexible and adaptable to changing circumstances
   - Does the park accommodate a variety of uses?
   - Are park features adaptable to evolving circumstances?
   - Does the park enhance environmental sustainability and resilience?
Focus on the Public Realm

1. Access & Connectivity
2. Recreation Amenities
3. User Experience
4. Infrastructure & Stormwater Management
5. Conservation, Natural & Cultural Resource Management
Focus on the Public Realm

High Impact, Near-Term Physical Improvements

- Enhance the ACCESS & CONNECTIVITY, and USER EXPERIENCE

- Selected inter-connected and highly visible INFRASTRUCTURE & STORMWATER improvements
  - Alignment with improvements in the public realm
  - Grant-funded

- CRITERIA FOR INITIAL PROJECT SELECTION:
  - Identity-building
  - Human-scale
  - Highly visible
  - High-impact
  - Near-term funding opportunities

Image Credits: Klyde Warren Park; Fernando Aguila; Jim Simmons; Rios Clementi Hale Studios; County of Los Angeles
Improve Access & Connectivity

GOALS

▪ Improve neighborhood walkability through a focus on access, crossings, & safety
▪ Reduce impact of automobiles using road diets, and where possible, road closures
▪ Invest in assets that highlight points of arrival and special physical "moments" in the park
▪ Build out a safe, robust, and separated pedestrian and bicycle circulation network
▪ Invest in connections to the river

HIGHLIGHTED PROJECTS

▪ Package the improvement of park roads, including road striping, intersections, new sidewalks and trails, and overall wayfinding and signage
▪ Prioritize the creation of formal entrances at the key intersections identified in the Philadelphia2035: West Park District Plan
Improve Access & Connectivity

Philadelphia2035: West Park District – Intersection Improvement Recommendations

Credit: Philadelphia2035: West Park District Plan
Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan
Proposed Bicycle Infrastructure
- Existing Bike Lane
- Proposed Bike / Buffered Bike Lane
- Proposed Shared Lane
- Proposed Climbing Lane
- Proposed Shared Roadway
- Proposed Sidewalk
- District Boundary

Philadelphia Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan
The PPD is preparing a Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan for the City of Philadelphia, improving pedestrian and bicycle safety and mobility is an important element of the City’s ongoing efforts to become more sustainable.
Improve the User Experience

GOALS

▪ Represent the identity and branding of West Fairmount Park and the Centennial District

▪ Provide amenities to support the identified uses

▪ Prioritize areas for family picnics, gatherings, and other permitted and non-permitted passive recreation events

▪ Make park use safe and comfortable, especially for children and seniors

HIGHLIGHTED PROJECTS

▪ Develop gathering places, water fountains, seating areas, and shade structures with playgrounds, ballfields, and other recreational amenities

▪ Construct multiple playgrounds, locating them for community use and coordination with the major institutions

▪ Define the key locations for gatherings-- highlight these locations for maintenance, expansion, and enhancement

▪ Develop and implement a public art strategy emphasizing kids, neighborhood identity, and local history & procure local artists
Improve the User Experience
Address Infrastructure & Stormwater Management

GOALS
- Develop and maintain the infrastructure necessary to support reliable operation of the park
- Support and enhance park use by residents of West Philadelphia through site improvements
- Sync major infrastructure improvements to include enhancements to the stormwater management systems and the public realm
- Identify opportunities for grant seeking, especially at the federal and local levels

HIGHLIGHTED PROJECTS
- Formalize and maintain parking areas for major uses, with appropriate stormwater management systems, lighting, and pathways for safe crossing
- Define the key roads and adjacent activity areas for strategic investment

Datong Wenying Lake Park Shanix, China
Address Infrastructure & Stormwater Management


https://www.phillippicreek.org/how-to-build-a-rain-garden-or-bioswale/

Image Credit: Thomas & Hutton: Oak Terrace Preserve, North Charleston, South Carolina
Recreational Amenities

GOALS

▪ Provide recreational amenities including fields, courts, and playgrounds in the park that reduce the deficits in the area and service the regional markets

▪ Align facility upgrades with programmatic opportunities

HIGHLIGHTED PROJECTS

▪ Actively engage in the Rebuild project for the Carousel Park Recreation Center and grounds, advocate for outdoor improvements

▪ Complete the improvements to the Welsh Fountain—consider waterplay near the Welsh Fountain or another appropriate location

▪ Partner with the city to update or convert the existing fields for games and tournaments, including improving field and turf conditions, seating, and shade to meet local and regional sport demands
Conservation, Natural, & Cultural Resource Management

GOALS

- Preserve and enhance ecosystem
- Protect the rare and endangered species
- Protect the historic and cultural resources
- Protect the viewshed to city center from the Belmont Plateau and the Mann Center

HIGHLIGHTED PRESENTED PROJECTS

- Interpret and curate the historic resources using an inclusive lens, reflecting the current residents and user
- Integrate active learning opportunities throughout the park through interpretive signage
- Complete a comprehensive historic assessment and maintenance strategy—prioritizing making the assets weather tight
Above: Three Bridges Milwaukee, Michael Espinoza

Left: Four Mile Run, Howard University Biology Class Visit June 2017

Image Credit: Adam Carr
The Finish Line
### Priority Actions and Timing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommendations</th>
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<th>18 Months</th>
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<td>June-August</td>
<td>September</td>
<td>March 2024 - December 2026</td>
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<td>Agreement P&amp;R and FPC Roles and Guiding Principles</td>
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<td>FCD - Initial Discussion - City/FPC</td>
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<td>Institutions/Community Discussions</td>
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<td>Preparation of Incorporation Documents (501c(3) status)</td>
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<td>Preparation of Memorandum of Understanding</td>
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<td>Board Member Identification and Formation</td>
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<td>Develop and Finalize Mission &amp; Vision</td>
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<td>FPC Hires Program Staff</td>
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<td>Initial Meeting</td>
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<td><strong>Identify 2023 - 2026 Capital Priorities</strong></td>
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<td>Develop Funding Strategy</td>
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<td>Implement Funding Strategy</td>
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<td>Receive proposed Operations/Maintenance 2023 Budget from FPC</td>
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<td>Formalize Communication Program</td>
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Summing Up

- West Fairmount Park is an incredible asset for the region and the community; however, it needs more stakeholder alignment and investment to meet its full potential.
- West Fairmount Park has the potential to be a cohesive place with world class amenities and facilities that serve regional and local visitors alike.
- With more sustained funding, a cohesive and inclusive vision, and new governance structures, the park can become a place that celebrates its unique history, preserves the ecosystem, and brings people together.

Thank you for inviting us into your community!

We can't wait to come back in 2 years (or 20!) and see what you've done here!
Stay Focused on These Ideas

CENTER THE COMMUNITIES

EMBRACE THE PLACE
PEOPLE + HISTORY + CULTURE + NATURE

INTENTIONALLY COMMUNICATE + COLLABORATE + COORDINATE

BUILD TRUST WITH INCREMENTAL SUCCESSES

FOCUS ON PROCESSES AND OUTCOMES

WORK TO PREVENT DISPLACEMENT
Thank you!

www.uli.org/advisoryservices