

# BEST PRACTICES FROM 20 YEARS OF PARTNERSHIPS FOR PARKS



## Web Resources

**Partnerships for Parks** – Partnerships for Parks helps New Yorkers work together to make neighborhood parks thrive! <http://www.cityparksfoundation.org/partnerships-for-parks/>

**City Parks Foundation** – City Parks Foundation (CPF) is the only nonprofit organization to create programs in parks throughout all five boroughs of New York City. CPF enriches and connects New Yorkers through free and accessible arts, sports, education and community-building initiatives. <http://www.cityparksfoundation.org/>

**NYC Parks** - NYC Parks is the steward of approximately 29,000 acres of land — 14 percent of New York City — including more than 5,000 individual properties ranging from Coney Island Beach and Central Park to community gardens and Greenstreets. <http://www.nycgovparks.org/>

**Friends of Carroll Park** – Friends of Carroll Park is a nonprofit organization, founded in 1975, dedicated to improving the park for everyone. <http://www.carrollparkbrooklyn.org/>

**Marcus Garvey Park Alliance** – The Marcus Garvey Park Alliance is a not-for-profit community organization, formed in 2000, to make improvements to Marcus Garvey Park. Today they advocate for the park and the residents of the surrounding communities of East Harlem and Central Harlem. <http://mgpalliance.org/>

**Jackson Heights Beautification Group** – The Jackson Heights Beautification Group is a grassroots community organization of people who live and work in Jackson Heights, whose mission is to preserve, restore, revitalize and maintain the community of Jackson Heights. <http://www.jhbg.org/>

**New York Women's Softball League** – The New York Women's Sports League for all-female squads was founded in 1975 as one of the first leagues to further the support of women in sports in New York City. <http://www.nycsoftball.com/>

**Bronx River Alliance** – The Bronx River Alliance serves as a coordinated voice for the river and works in harmonious partnership to protect, improve and restore the Bronx River corridor so that it can be a healthy ecological, recreational, educational and economic resource for the communities through which the river flows. <http://www.bronxriver.org/>

## **Building a Park Community Group**

1. **Determine** the group's mission and goals for the park and the group from the start.
2. **Start** small: Build experience and group recognition through small, manageable projects before taking on long term goals such as a park renovation.
3. **Build** relationships - Determine what relationships your group members already have with park stakeholders and build upon those relationships. Develop new relationships by introducing the group and inviting others to participate. Connect with: Partnerships for Parks outreach coordinator, park manager and supervisors, city council representative, community board district manager and parks committee chair, community affairs' officers, local merchants, and civic leaders.
4. **Understand** NYC Parks - Know who the key people are that you need to keep informed, go to for approvals, and go to for assistance in reaching the group's goals. Your Partnerships for Parks outreach coordinator can give you a brief overview of the management hierarchy at NYC Parks.
5. **Host** events in the park - Notify the community about your group, recruit new members, raise money, and build the group's reputation and experience.
  - a. Delegate responsibilities- the larger the event, the harder it is for just one person to run.
  - b. Publicizing your event- Use diverse media outlets to reach the community.
    - i. Social Media- Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, community blogs, NYC Parks website
    - ii. Share flyers via email and in person with group members, community board, civic and religious groups, local schools and elected officials
    - iii. Post flyers in local businesses, libraries, and community centers
6. **Create** a group identity and structure
  - a. Develop a name, logo, e-mail address, Facebook page, website
  - b. Set up regular meetings- Group members can check-in, provide updates, and discuss upcoming projects and new ideas
  - c. Elected leadership- Determine the leadership structure through general membership votes
  - d. Committees- Delegate responsibility and get more done
  - e. Standardize communication- Use regular email updates to keep all members in the loop
  - f. Official group membership- Recognize members and keep people engaged in the group
  - g. Group records-Keep a file of all letters written or received, newspaper articles, old flyers, photographs, legal documents, memberships lists, and business cards. This will help your group to sustain your group through leadership changes.
7. When starting a group, always remember: Don't do it alone, do something do-able, and just do it!

