Community of Practice: Community Power

Power mapping for sustained park equity

November 9, 2023
The Common Ground Framework

**Community Power:** A community’s capacity to employ democratic processes to pursue their self-determined vision, regardless of identity or status.
America has a community power problem

1/5 Of Americans that trust the government to do what’s right

3x Increase in Americans that report lacking a single individual in their life who serves as a close confidant

58% Percent of Americans report feeling lonely some or all of the time

81% Percent of major metropolitan areas that are more racially segregated in 2019 than they were in 1990
“Every moment is an organizing opportunity, every person a potential activist, every minute a chance to change the world...”

Dolores Huerta
## Parks are powerful social infrastructure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>66%</td>
<td>Increase in social ties for Americans who live near parks and green spaces</td>
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<tr>
<td>3x</td>
<td>Increase in voting participation among park organizers in 2018 case study project in Washington State</td>
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<tr>
<td>19%</td>
<td>Boost in community trust for local governments that invest in their parks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58%</td>
<td>Increase among people public meetings, if they also volunteer for environmental orgs</td>
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An ecosystem of social infrastructure
How can we build community power?

A community’s capacity to employ democratic processes to pursue their self-determined vision, regardless of identity or status.

**Democracy in the community**

Contributing to a healthy democracy is a community project

→ Voting
→ Calling representatives
→ Petition signing
→ Mutual aid
→ Volunteering

**Democracy in the parks**

Parks are an entry way for communities to practice a local scale of democracy

→ Taking a survey
→ Attending public meetings
→ Stewardship groups
→ Event organizing
→ Advocating at city council
Power building strategies

- Include community members in strategic decision-making
- Support the establishment of park stewardship groups
- Transfer knowledge on navigating public processes

Impacts of community power

- Resilience to effects of climate change and the pandemic
- Lower crime rates
- Resistance to green gentrification
- Trust in local government
- Community organizing for local issues
Visualization exercise:

Imagine a current project where you’re in the stage of trust building
Track sessions

- **January 18 | Participatory planning:** How can parks transform community vision into reality?
- **March 14 | Civic education:** How can parks engagement be a bridge to civic participation?
- **May 9 | Park stewardship:** How can we strengthen the capacity of friends of groups and their community?
- **July 11 | Social resilience:** How can parks serve communities in times of crisis?
PowerPoint resources

TPL Primary Logo

TPL Icons
PowerPoint resources
TPL Icons Continued

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