



Building and Sustaining Community Leadership

May 15, 2025

Connecting everyone to the outdoors™

Welcome!

Introduce yourself in the chat:

- Your name and pronouns
- Your city
- Your agency
- Your favorite thing about your city's park system



Agenda

- Session 2 Recap
- Challenge Review
- Supporting Sustained Engagement
- Guest Presenter: Park Pride, Atlanta, GA
 - Eli Dickerson, Director of Education
- City Team Reflection
- Action Planning



Objectives

- Explore your agency's role in building community leadership in your park ecosystem
- Understand the importance of relationship building for a stronger park stewardship system
- Revisit solutions for streamlining resources and identify strategies for operationalizing systematic changes



Unraveling Red Tape

What are the greatest barriers to community park stewardship faced by public agencies?

Permitting Requirements

- Outsized insurance & liability requirements
- Unclear or inconsistent rules & requirements
- Limited flexibility
- Individual processes for every event

Complicated Systems

- Opaque, difficult to navigate – lack of clear instructions or process for users and agencies
- Individual systems for each agency
- Designed for agency system, not user experience

Limited Staff Support

- Processes require staff discretion – potential for inconsistency & longer approval timelines
- Lack capacity & resources to properly support residents

Inter-Agency Coordination

- Users are responsible for coordination, rather than agencies
- Lack of integrated systems or shared infrastructure
- Limited capacity & relationships slow communication

Peer City Groupings

**Establish a
Citywide
Stewardship
Network**

*Baton Rouge, LA
Camden, NJ
Scranton, PA*

**Right-size
Support to
Stewardship
Groups**

*Baltimore, MD
Houston, TX*

**Interagency
Coordination
and Funding**

*New York, NY
Austin, TX
Philadelphia, PA*

**Build Social
Cohesion and
Community
Leadership**

*Raleigh, NC
Chicago, IL*

Community relationships facilitate the development of community identity, which is a foundation for building community power.

Community Power

Community Identity

Community Relationships



Supporting Sustained Engagement



Supporting Sustained Engagement

- Shared goals
- Collaborative work
- Capacity building
- Distributed leadership

Common Ground Framework Community Engagement Strategies





Breakout Reflection

- Think of your most dedicated volunteers or partners (past or present) – what keeps them engaged in your work?
- What opportunity do you see to build on the conditions that keep them engaged?



City Team Reflection

- Use the reflection questions on page 2 of the worksheet to consider how you might apply your takeaways from today's session to your work

Action Planning

Scan the QR Code or use the link in the chat to open the Action Planner

- Complete the reflection questions individually
- Check in with your city team after the session to review any shared action items



Responses will be sent to the email address you provide. Kate, Christina or Sophie can resend responses as needed.



Since 1972, TPL has protected 4 million acres of public land; created 5,364 parks, trails, schoolyards, and iconic outdoor places; raised \$93 billion in public funding for parks and public lands; and connected nearly 9.4 million people to the outdoors.

To learn more, visit [tpl.org](https://www.tpl.org).

Connecting everyone to the outdoors™

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Next Steps

- Submit your Action Planning Form
- Complete your assigned tasks
- Report-Out Slides & Recording

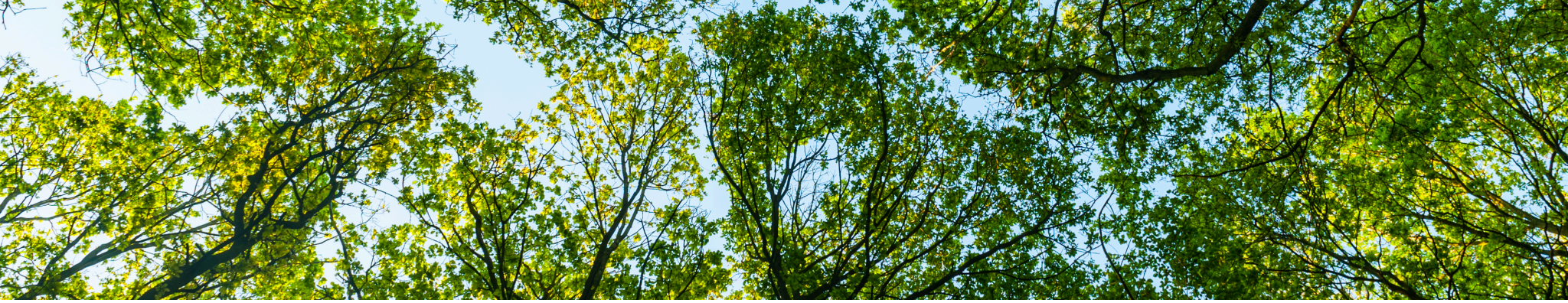
- **Session 4: June 26, 2025**

Making and Funding the Case for
Community Activation

Thank You!



Community Stewardship



Is a nonprofit organization that serves as a catalyst for Park Transformations. Park Pride helps communities enhance parks and greenspace through advocacy, volunteerism and capital improvements. We strive to help every community achieve their vision of a great park.

Key Ingredients

to building an inclusive and strong park ecosystem



- Park users
- Communities
- Neighborhood associations
- Government
- Local corporations/
Businesses
- Partner organizations
- Interest groups
- Religious institutions
- Neighborhood hubs
-and Staff!

Ingredients for successful Coalition Building

- Trust
- Power sharing
- Honesty
- Reliability
- Respect
- Knowing Lanes
- Playing the long game
- Flexibility



Park Stewardship Academy

Park Stewardship Academy is an educational and skill-building program for Friends of the Park group members that will support your passion for community and greenspace.



- Park People
- 3 month academy, 30-35 contact hours
- Largely focused on propping up existing community leaders, with extra support for newer leaders
- Grads get grant \$ for activation in their park



Capacity Building & Leadership Strengthening



Ingredients:

- AI (not that one)
- Diversity
- Respect & Empathy
- Storytelling
- Brave Spaces
- Stronger Together
- Letting it breathe
- Opening doors
- Two-way learning



Process:

- Marketing
- FOP pool of applicants
- Selection
- Site Visits
- Curriculum
- Graduation
- Post-graduation
- PSA Grants and beyond
- Guest speakers for PSA
- Other leadership opp's



Curriculum

- Storytelling
- Leading w/Purpose & Equity
- Park Programming
- Park History
- Engaging Electeds
- Team building
- Volunteerism
- Fundraising/Grants
- Art in Parks
- Advocacy
- FOP structure/gov.



So.....

How's it going?



Questions:

What's missing?

What would you include?

What would you remove?



Lessons Learned

- Marketing of program
- Cohort size (12)
- Leveraging external content experts/guest speakers
- LET THINGS BREATHE!
- Lean in to the fun
- The cohort is the magic
- Stay engaged after
- Define terms!
- Don't micromanage
(MH quote 1st year)

