

PARK in a TRUCK

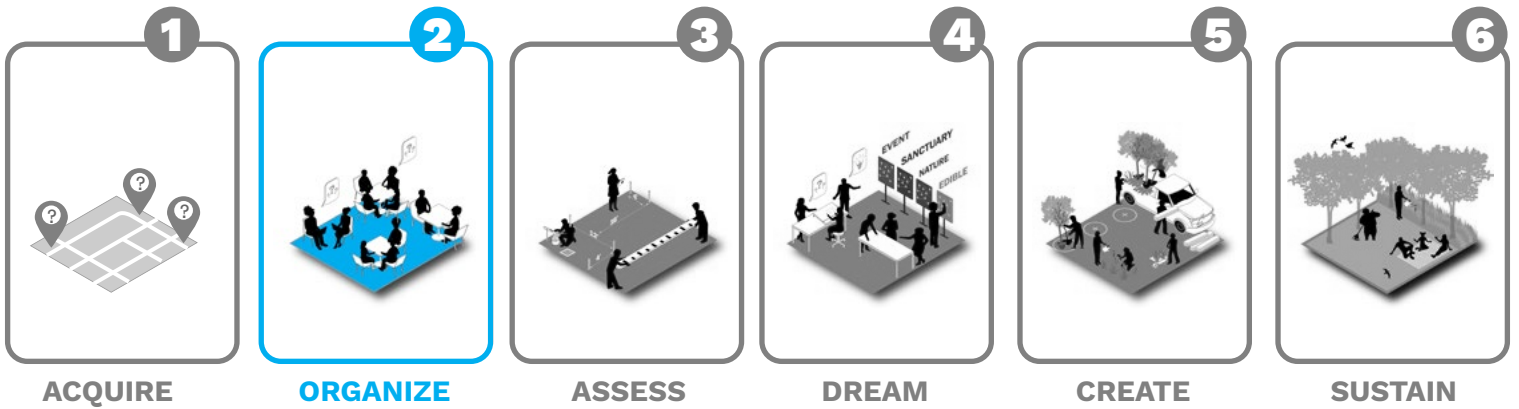
ORGANIZE

WORKBOOK



A do-it-yourself toolkit for neighborhood parks

The Landscape Architecture Program +
The Lab for Social and Urban Innovation
Thomas Jefferson University
Philadelphia, PA



ACQUIRE

ORGANIZE

ASSESS

DREAM

CREATE

SUSTAIN



PARK IN A TRUCK TOOLKIT - WORKING VERSION 1.0

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This toolkit is a working toolkit, a formalized process of how a few communities have bettered themselves through designing, building and maintaining their own park. As a working toolkit, it is a work in progress. It is not perfect, but it is a great start towards a complex issue distilled into a few chapters. This is the first of several versions that will be published. Behind the scenes many parks are being build, communities bettering themselves, and people reviewing this process. Each park built, each community meeting, and every trip to home depot - something is learned. All this knowledge gained contributes to this book continuously as a feedback loop. Also crucial to the next version is getting feedback from professionals, organizations, and most importantly, community members like you! Please share your thoughts, questions, or ideas with us!

Welcome to the Organize Workbook! This booklet assumes you have read the Park in a Truck Toolkit, and completed Workbook 1, and are ready to begin to organize your park group.

ORGANIZE CONTENTS



OVERVIEW
COMMUNITY ASSETS
NEIGHBORHOOD ASSETS
PARK COMMITTEE CHECKLIST

How do you rally a community and neighborhood to work together to build a park? This workbook will help you create a well-rounded park committee by building on your community's existing assets and strengths. Yes, it takes a village!



OVERVIEW

At the core of every successful Park project is a diverse and talented group of committed residents working together as a team. This Park Committee will lead your park creation effort. Ideally, these volunteers represent the various groups who will use the park—young, old, different racial and ethnic groups, professional, working class, homeowners and renters. They should look like your community. Additionally, think about their talents. Having people with different talents and experience—builders, legal knowledge, political connections, community organizers, clergy, social butterflies, etc.—will increase your chances of success.

Once formed, the committee's first task is to identify and document what is unique about your neighborhood and park site.

IDENTIFYING COMMUNITY ASSETS

Now let's think about the people in your neighborhood and their unique skill sets—do they like to cook? Organize events? Garden? Love history and could do research on the neighborhood? All of these can translate into valuable and useful skills to help get the park designed, built and maintained. You just need to list them so you know who you might tap to help with different jobs in the park process.

Below is a checklist to help you identify community assets. You can also have a sign up sheet at your first community meeting. Have folks fill out a sheet which lists possible skill sets available.

INDIVIDUAL ASSET LIST

- Project Manager to oversee building of park _____
- Organizing the park/design build process _____
- Carpentry _____
- Masonry _____
- Gardening/maintenance for park _____
- Planting trees,shrubs,flowers _____
- Helping to build the park _____
- Fundraising _____
- Bookkeeping _____
- Babysitting _____
- Food for meetings/building park _____
- Artist _____
- Photography _____
- Music for park build days- DJ _____
- Media outreach- facebook, instagram, twitter _____
- History Buffs _____
- Other _____

IDENTIFYING COMMUNITY ASSETS

Next list all citizen and local associations that might be partners and provide support both monetary and in-kind or where you might purchase locally for the park materials:

CITIZENS ASSOCIATIONS ASSET LIST

- Churches _____
- Block Captains _____
- Registered Community Organizations _____
- Community Design Collaborative _____
- Cultural Groups _____
- Other _____

LOCAL INSTITUTIONS

- Businesses _____
- Schools _____
- Parks + Habitat areas _____
- Libraries _____
- Hospitals _____
- Universities + Colleges _____
- Other _____

NEIGHBORHOOD ASSETS

Another critical step that is important to your park process is identifying what is unique about your neighborhood and park site. Take time to stop and look for the abundance of clues that makes your neighborhood special in its own way. Every neighborhood has inherent value born of its own history and culture. Identifying and tapping into these unique assets will strengthen your park project and inspire community ownership.

So how do we identify assets and strengths? Think about your neighborhood and the history and culture—what are the special places? Where do people like to congregate? Were there important events that happened in your neighborhood? What once stood where your park is located?

NEIGHBORHOOD PHYSICAL ASSETS

<input type="checkbox"/>	Places where people like to meet	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	Important events in the neighborhood	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	Important buildings	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	Special clubs	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	Landmarks	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	Streetscapes	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	Parks	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other types of open space	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	Murals	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	History	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	Unique aspects of your neighborhood	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	_____

ORGANIZE A MEETING

Holding a public meeting can be a really good way of building a campaign or getting more people involved in your group. Here are a few ideas to help your community group to organize a meeting that is interesting, accessible and runs smoothly.

KEEP IT SIMPLE

Running a discussion with members of the public, particularly if a lot of people show up, can be a bit daunting. Don't try to cram in too much. A public meeting is not the place to have complicated discussions about the structure of your group or the nitty gritty of your everyday organizing. Instead, use it as a way to share basic information about what you want to do, encourage others to share their opinions and ideas, and gain contact details of people who may wish to be involved in the future.

PUBLICIZE IT WELL

The design of your publicity material is important. Think about who you are hoping to attract to the meeting, and make sure your poster or leaflet will catch their eye and give them a reason to come along to your meeting.

Make sure the date, time and place of the meeting are clearly shown on the leaflet, and that it's clear what the meeting is about. Just as the plan for your meeting should be simple, the topic that you publicize should be simple and clear too. You might do the following to advertise:

- Flyers
- Posters
- Facebook posting
- Twitter announcement
- Advertise in local community newsletter or local paper

OFFER AN INCENTIVE

For some it is a big effort to arrange childcare or transport, so it's a good idea to offer an extra attraction if possible. This could simply be free refreshments, or perhaps a video or speaker about something to do with the group's aims or activity.

THINK ABOUT THE AGENDA

If people take the time to come along to a public meeting, it is because they really care about the topic being discussed. Although it is important to give people a chance to have their say, it is also your job to make sure that the meeting sticks to the topic. A good way of doing this is to prepare an agenda in advance. What you include in this will depend on the purpose and expected size of the meeting, but here are some ideas you could use:

- Welcome and introductions
- Explain who called the meeting and why
- Aims of the meeting
- Outline why the meeting has been called: to build a park, solicit help with building the park, park ambassadors etc.
- You may choose to have a couple of people who know a lot about the topic to begin the meeting by sharing some information and their opinions.
- You might consider someone who has been through the process of designing and building a park or someone from Jefferson

OPPORTUNITY FOR PEOPLE TO SHARE INFORMATION AND OPINIONS

There may be opposition to a park – let people have a chance to air their views. It's important to build consensus on the possible park location. Public meetings can be good opportunities to come up with initial ideas about action that could be taken on the issue in future. Allow some opportunity for people to share their ideas, but don't allow the meeting to get bogged down in nitty gritty details. Make a note of people's ideas.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN NEXT

Summarize the ideas that have been raised. If the meeting is small, this might be an opportunity to reach decisions about what action is actually going to be taken. Be sure to include discussion of what practical tasks need to be done, and who is going to do them.

CHAIRING THE MEETING

If your group has called the meeting, people will be expecting someone from your group to act as chair. Agree beforehand who will do this.

It is the chair's job to:

- Keep the meeting on topic
- Make sure people get a chance to have their say
- Let people know that their contribution is needed and valuable (so don't close off discussion too quickly)

Make sure the atmosphere of the meeting is as welcoming and open as possible.

Don't let the discussion go off at a tangent or get bogged down in little details, so do stop people once they have had a say. Don't let one or two people dominate.

TAKE MINUTES

Decide who will be taking minutes before the meeting. It is hard to take minutes and chair, so these roles should be done by different people. The minutes of your meeting don't have to be very detailed, but they should include a clear note of any decisions made at the meeting, and in particular who has agreed to take on which jobs.

GATHER NAMES AND ADDRESSES

Make sure you take contact details from everyone who wants to be kept in touch with the group – prepare a sheet in advance which you can pass round the meeting or have on a table at the door.

HAVE A PLAN FOR YOUR NEXT MEETING

Make sure you have already fixed a date and venue for your group's next meeting, and that you advertise this so that people can come along if they want to. It is useful to print some fliers with these details on, and your contact details, for people to take away.

Source: <https://www.resourcecentre.org.uk/information/the-agenda/>

ARE YOU READY?

How do you know if you have created a well-rounded park committee? The 'Organization Readiness Checklist' on the following few pages list the types of people and organizations you need in order to build a park. Read the list, and when you identify those people in your committee, check the box. Checking each box ensures your organization is ready to move on to the next chapter.

ORGANIZATION CHECKLIST

The most important aspect of organizing is to prove to yourself that you can orchestrate all that is needed for a neighborhood park. Complete the checklist to see if there are any gaps in your group's organization that you still need to address to ensure you can do all that is needed for a successful project.

	✓	✗
Have you formed a committee of dedicated neighbors to guide the overall park planning efforts?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does your organization have financial standing or line-of-credit to support park-related costs, such as property acquisition, maintenance, events, etc.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does your organization have the ability to raise funds necessary to sustain financial support for the park?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does your organization have the ability to generate neighborhood interest, organize events and other community engagement activities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does your organization have access to a variety of skills and experience, such as carpenters, masons, or other trades- who can offer their knowledge and experience during park construction and maintenance?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has your organization held initial meetings and community events to generate support and consensus for a potential park ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has your organization formed an online page for messaging, announcements and more on facebook, instagram or other social media platform? Have you created a hashtag for your park?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>