Case Studies: Nominal charges to fund parklands

Implementing small, nominal charges, levies or taxes on residents' bills to fund parklands has been effectively utilised in various regions. Notable case studies include:

Boulder, Colorado: 0.25% Sales Tax for Parks and Recreation[1]

- In 1995, Boulder voters approved a 0.25% sales and use tax dedicated to funding parks and recreational services.
- This tax was set to expire at the end of 2015 but was extended in 2012 through a ballot measure, ensuring its continuation until December 31, 2035.[2]
- The revenue from this tax supports various initiatives, including park development, recreation center renovations, and land acquisitions for mountain parks.
- As of 2024, the 0.25% Parks and Recreation tax is part of Boulder's total sales and use tax rate of 3.86%.[3]

Brisbane, Australia: Bushland Preservation Levy

Brisbane City Council imposes a Bushland Preservation Levy on ratepayers, calculated at 3.5% of general rates. This levy funds the Bushland Acquisition Program, which has protected over 4,400 hectares of significant ecosystems since 1990. The program focuses on purchasing land that supports rare and endangered species, unique habitats, and ecological corridors.[4]

I have also attached a resource from research Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board and City Parks Alliance completed in 2021 that researched innovative techniques and strategies to address funding gaps for capital and maintenance for neighborhood park systems.

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[1]See: https://cityparksalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Closing_the_Gap_Funding_Report.pdf?pdf=report&utm_source=chatgpt.com

[2]See:https://library.municode.com/co/boulder/codes/municipal_code?nodeId=TIT3RETA_CH2SAUSTA

[3]See:https://stories.opengov.com/cityofboulderco/published/IR3j5mPow_3?utm_source=chatgpt.com

[4] See: https://www.brisbane.qld.gov.au/clean-and-green/natural-environment-and-water/biodiversity-in-brisbane/protecting-the-natural-environment/bushland-preservation-levy

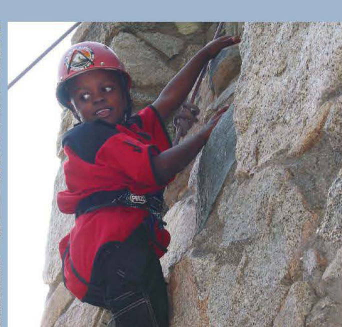
Closing the Gap:

Public and Private Funding Strategies for Neighborhood Parks

Minneapolis
Park & Recreation Board

CITY PARKS ALLIANCE

October 21, 2015

CONTENTS

In the summer of 2015, the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board and City Parks Alliance researched innovative techniques and strategies to address funding gaps for capital and maintenance for neighborhood park systems. This report is a culmination of this work and is based on an extensive literature review and interviews with park professionals from eleven urban park systems: Boulder, Colorado; Chicago, Illinois; Denver, Colorado; Indianapolis, Indiana; Minneapolis, Minnesota; New York, New York; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Portland, Oregon; San Francisco, California; Seattle, Washington; and Toronto, Ontario.

The report is divided into two parts. In Part I, you will find an overview of various funding strategies that park systems around the country use to fund their parks. These strategies represent a range of approaches to park funding, drawing on both public and private funding sources. Some of these strategies have been used to fund neighborhood parks, while others have generally been applied to signature parks. Some of them are already in place in Minneapolis, while others have potential to be adapted for the MRPB. It is important to note that only some of these strategies are appropriate for the Minneapolis Parks and Recreation Board, while others are not.

Part II contains a collection of 11 case studies including Minneapolis that highlight park systems around North America and the unique funding strategies implemented to generate revenue for their parks. The section begins with an overview of the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, detailing its funding streams and strategies. It continues with a collection of case studies that illustrate differing methods of funding. The first section of Part II looks at public funding mechanisms that fund the entire park system in cities including Boulder, Portland, Seattle, and Toronto. The second section of Part II illuminates ways that public-private partnerships are utilized to fund entire park systems in Indianapolis, New York, and Chicago. The final section of Part II explores unique funding mechanisms implemented in New York, Philadelphia, San Francisco, and Denver to fund a single park or pieces of the larger park system.

Districts to fund park development and improvements:

Special Service District: Under Minnesota Law, businesses or property owners within a designated area can request that a city authorize a Special Service District (SSD). Within this district, property owners and businesses pay a service charge that is used for special services, such as public improvements, operations, and maintenance. The revenue generated by SSDs is managed by the city. Minneapolis has several successful SSDs, including the Nicollet Mall District, the Hennepin Theater District, and the Chicago Avenue Mall District.

Business Improvement District: This public-private partnership collects additional taxes from businesses within a designated area. The fees are used for public improvement projects, based on the notion that a well maintained public space will increase commerce for local businesses. Generally used in downtown areas, a Business Improvement District (BID) is a useful strategy for pooling revenue to support a common goal. Unlike an SSD, BID funding is managed by a nonprofit corporation created through the District. BIDs that have a role in park management have been successful in Philadelphia's Center City, Washington, DC's Downtown and in Bryant Park in New York City.

For an example of how BIDs are used to fund parks, see the New York City Case Study.

For an example of how BIDs have been adapted to fund neighborhood parks, see the San Francisco Case Study.

Tax Increment Financing Districts: Tax Increment Financing Districts (TIF) capture increases in property tax revenue within a designated geographic area and allocates it for a specific public improvement purpose. TIF revenue has been used towards park acquisition, maintenance, and improvements in certain cities. In the past, Millennium Park in Chicago received revenue from the Central Loop TIF and Portland, Oregon used a TIF to fund Pioneer Courthouse Square and Jamison Square.

For an example of a special district to fund park developments, see the Seattle Case Study.

Sales and Use Tax:

Some cities and states allocate a percentage of local or state wide sales taxes specifically for parks. A general sales tax applies to a broad base of goods, which means that "a substantial amount of revenue can be generated with a relatively low tax rate. This keeps the burden on households low." (Walls, 2013, p11)

Other Minnesota cities have allocated local sales tax to park acquisition and improvement, including St. Cloud and Saint Paul (Trust for Public Land, 2008). 0.25 percent of Boulder sales tax revenue goes to open space and mountain parks while 1/10 of a cent of sales tax from St. Louis City, St. Louis County and St. Charles County funds the Great Rivers Greenway in St. Louis, Missouri. City parks in Kansas City, Missouri are funded with a half-cent sales tax and state parks in Minnesota and Arkansas are partially funded by a dedicated sales tax (Walls, 2014b).

For an example of how sales tax is used to fund city parks, see the Boulder case study.

General Obligation Bond:

General obligation bonds are a tool used by local governments to borrow money. The bonds are guaranteed by the governing body's full faith and credit and backed by property tax revenues. The city can use revenue generated from the sale of the general obligation bonds to fund a park project and repay the bonds and interest with property tax revenue. According to The Trust for Public Land (2008), 17 cities with populations over 300,000 passed general obligation bonds dedicated to parks between 2000 and 2008.

For an example of how a general obligation bond is passed and used to support parks, see the Portland Case Study.

Levy on Property Tax:

Public agencies around the country receive funding through property tax revenues. State laws vary on how these funds can be used – whether they can be applied to operating costs or capital investments. 58% of the Seattle Park District's 2015 budget came from property taxes. In Minneapolis, the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB) certified tax levies for 2015 constitute 18% of the City of Minneapolis' total tax.

Public funding strategies

Special Purpose Levies:

Public agencies, including parks, can receive funding through a tax levy designated for a specific purpose and generally for a limited period of time. This could be a one time, special purpose levy implemented for a limited time period, like the levy implemented in Seattle in 2008. Byer and Bound (2012) noted, however, that this levy was "not a permanent, sustainable source of funding since it expires unless reauthorized at the polls" (p. 43). Other cities have implemented a special purpose levy with a regular schedule for renewal so that the city is held accountable for delivering what is laid out in the levy.

"Capitalizing" Maintenance Costs:

Levies and bonds for new projects do not always account for the ongoing maintenance and operations funding that will be needed by those projects. By capitalizing maintenance costs, cities include those anticipated costs into the specific levy or bond proposal and then set the funding aside in an endowment to cover future costs (Rizzo, 2014; Byer & Bounds, 2012).

For an example of capitalizing maintenance costs, see the Toronto Case Study.

Park Dedication Fee:

A park dedication fee requires that a portion of any housing or commercial/industrial development be dedicated to public use, in the form of parks, recreation facilities, playgrounds, etc. Alternatively, the development may pay cash in lieu of a land dedication, which would be put in a special fund and used for future park acquisition.

Zoning Strategies:

Zoning techniques allow the city to benefit from the real estate industry and use the funds for capital or maintenance. Two zoning strategies of interest include:

Zoning incentives and bonuses: Zoning incentive programs offer developers and property owners incentives to either a) incorporate certain public amenities into their development plan or b) contribute to a special park endowment or public improvement fund. By doing so, developers or property owners are allowed to bypass certain zoning limitations.

Transfer of Development Rights: The Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) allows property owners in designated areas to sell the development rights from their land (sending site) for use on another site (the receiving site). The sending site is then protected as an open space under a conservation easement and can be used as a public space.

For an example of zoning strategies and TDR, see the New York and Toronto case studies.

Development Impact Fees:

Development Impact Fees (DIF) are one time fees assessed on residential or commercial development based on the theory that growth pays for growth. Revenue garnered from IDFs are allocated towards public infrastructure, including parks. The Portland Parks and Recreation Department established such development fees, called a System Development Charge in Oregon, in 1998; funds from this revenue are used for land acquisition and capital improvements.

For an example of how IDFs are used, see the Portland and Toronto case studies.

Public-Public Partnerships:

With other city agencies: While public funding for parks remains limited, Christopher Rizzo (2014) suggests that there are increasing amounts of public funding available for other sectors, including storm water control and climate resiliency, transportation, affordable housing, and public health. Some cities are partnering with other agencies to fund park acquisition, improvement, and maintenance. The Seattle Parks and Recreation Department has partnered with Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) on solid waste and water quality projects. They have also partnered with SPU and the local utility agency on conservation projects (Byers & Bounds, 2012). The New York City Parks Department is partnering with the Department of Environmental Protection, the city's water utility agency, to integrate green infrastructure into their neighborhood parks.

For an example of public-public partnerships with other city agencies, see the Funding For Neighborhood Parks Case Study.

With the state – Public Benefit Corporations: Several states have established Public Benefit Corporations (PBC), state-run entities that mobilize the power of private corporations for public benefit. Several PBCs in New York City have played a role in park development, including the Battery Park City Authority, whose mission is to "plan, create, coordinate and maintain a balanced community of commercial, residential, retail, and park space within its designated 92-acre site" (Battery Park City Authority, nd).

Parking Fees:

Specific parks and park systems can generate revenue from parking fees. In some cities, fees paid to parking meters and lots are collected to the city general fund and then distributed. In these cases, the city may dedicate some of this revenue directly to parks. Other park systems maintain control over their parking meters and lots and receive all the revenue they generate. Some parks in Chicago generate their greatest revenues from parking fees (Harnik, 1998, p. 5). For example, the Chicago Park District owns several parking garages, including the lot at Soldier Field, home of the Chicago Bears.

Programming Fees:

Charging fees for usage of programmatic aspects of park and recreation services is one of the most common strategies for raising non-tax revenue. Park systems often implement fees for the usage of park utilities such as skating rinks and golf courses. Recreation centers charge for use of fitness centers and participation in various programs, including summer camps and other youth programming.

Programming fees and equity

Some park professionals have concerns about the equity of charging fees for park usage. Some strategies used to address these concerns include:

Voluntary Fees: In New York City, parks offer suggested donations for the use of a recreation center. In this way, those who can afford the donation can contribute, but those who cannot afford it, are not obligated to do so.

Scholarships: Some park systems provide scholarships for those who cannot afford fees to access recreation programs and park facilities.

Work/Volunteer programs: Some park systems offer the opportunity for residents to work or volunteer for the park in exchange for access without paying the fees.

Finding sponsors to offset program costs: Some parks and park systems raise funds from corporate and individual donors that enable the park to offer programming at low or no costs.

Contractual Fees:

Parks are very suitable venues for special events. When private entities host events on park property, whether it is a public event like a concert or marathon or a private event like a wedding, the park agency generates revenue through the established contract. The Chicago Park District maintains contracts with several private entities that host concerts and events throughout their park system, generating significant funding for the entire park system.

Concessions:

Many urban park systems find it is more profitable to have outside entities run services for patrons such as restaurants, ice skating rinks and golf courses. Park systems can generate revenue through a leasing agreement or through a percentage of sales. Such concessions may increase the visitor rate, thereby enabling the park system to generate additional revenue through parking fees. Strategies for park concessions include:

"Bundle" concession packages: Chicago Parks require food service bidders to submit a "bundled" application in which they would provide concessions for a flagship park as well as a neighborhood park.

Offer community sensitive concessions, products and services: Dolores Park in San Francisco contracted with "the empanada lady" in a historically Latino neighborhood.

Brand neighborhood parks to reflect the community demographics: Market community-based concessions, develop local events tailored to the community needs and interests, and promote local hiring and procurement policies in neighborhood parks.

For an example of fees and concessions, see the Chicago Case Study.

Outsourcing:

Some park systems have found it economical to outsource maintenance responsibilities and janitorial services to private entities. Chicago Park District has outsourced a significant number of services, reducing the number of departments within the Park District from 13 to 6 (Harnik, 1998). Indianapolis outsourced the maintenance of their large parks to private contractors and contracted with local churches to maintain their 24 neighborhood parks.

For an example of outsourcing, see the Indianapolis Case Study.

Private funding strategies

Philanthropy & Corporate Sponsorships:

Contributions from donors and private entities play an increasingly large role in funding city parks. Fundraising and the management of funds is generally undertaken by nonprofit organizations such as conservancies, foundations and friends-of-parks groups. Most cities have a mix of park organizations that fundraise for parks throughout their system. For example, in Chicago, the downtown signature park, Millennium Park, is supported by a nonprofit corporation that raises money for the park. While the city of Chicago retains ownership of the parkland, Millennium Park Inc. oversees all park operations, maintenance, and programming. The Chicago Parks Foundation is the philanthropic arm of the Chicago Park District. They are leading Mayor Emanuel's Chicago Plays! initiative to renovate 325 playgrounds throughout the city in five years. The High Line in New York City relies heavily on private donations raised by Friends of the High Line.

Conservancies: Conservancies "are private, nonprofit park-benefit organizations that raise money independent of the city and spend it under a plan of action mutually agreed upon with the government" (Harnik and Martin, p6). That is, conservancies may be involved in fundraising as well as management of the park funds they raise. In some cases, conservancies actually take a leading role in managing, programming, and maintaining the park too. Most conservancies fund capital for a single, signature park in a city through extensive fundraising. They rely heavily on corporate sponsorship, grants, and individual donors.

For examples of philanthropy from conservancies, see the New York City and Philadelphia Case Studies.

Corporate Sponsorships:

There has been a recent move towards private and/or corporate sponsorship for park infrastructure and events. Park systems are often able to raise money from private entities that sponsor the construction and/or improvement of a public facility. Park events such as tournaments, races, runs, or concerts serve as income-generating activities wherein the sponsoring company(s) covers the cost of the event and proceeds go to the park system. Sponsorships benefit the donor in providing public recognition and advertising space. Sponsorships can take different shapes:

Sponsored event: In Chicago, the Lollapalooza music festival is sponsored by a collection of private entities that pay for the cost of the event in exchange for advertising rights. The event generates $2.9 million for the Chicago Park District.

Free-to-the-public event: In Saint Paul, Minnesota, Wells Fargo sponsors WinterSkate, free ice-skating at the Landmark Plaza.

Sponsored Facility: In Portland, Oregon, Pioneer Courthouse Square raised over $500,000 by selling bricks imprinted with donors' names.

Advertising: In New York City, Modell Sporting Goods paid for new basketball backboards in the parks in exchange for a logo on each backboard.

Naming Rights: Several banks made donations to the Millennium Park in Chicago. The banks are memorialized in the park through sites such as SBC Plaza and Bank One Promenade.

Exclusive Product Placement: In 1998, Pepsi was the official drink of the Portland, Oregon park system, buying the right to be exclusively sold at kiosks and concession stands in the parks. At the time, Portland was receiving about $25,000 annually from Pepsi.

For an example of corporate sponsorships, see the Chicago case study.

Cities across the country implement varying strategies and techniques to fund their park systems. As these case studies illustrate, many cities turn to public funding mechanisms such as taxes, bonds, and levies to generate revenue for maintenance, operations, and capital funding. Boulder, Colorado maintains a 0.25 cent city sales tax for city parks and Portland, Oregon issued a general obligation bond to fund capital improvements in select neighborhood parks around the City. Other strategies rely on public-private partnerships through non-profits, the private sector, and other non-governmental entities to fund entire park systems. The Chicago Park District relies on corporate sponsorship of events and parks to fund their park system while Indianapolis, Indiana outsources maintenance to private contractors. This collection of strategies also highlights public-private partnerships such as non-profits and conservancies to fund individual parks or segments of the park system.

Each case study highlights one or two strategies used by a specific city. Some mechanisms contribute to the entire park system, while others fund a specific park or element of the park system. Within each case study, you will find an overview of the city's park system, their assets, governance structure, and funding information. You will then find a detailed outline of the specific funding mechanism, the implementation process and how it is utilized in that city.

It is important to note that the process of implementing each funding mechanism and its success is intricately tied to the context in which it is administered. That is, a funding technique imported to one city may not demonstrate the same result as it did in another city – the political, social and cultural environment must be considered in assessing the strategy's viability for a particular park or park system.

Case Study: 0.25 Cent Sales Tax for the Boulder Parks and Recreation Department

Boulder Parks and Recreation Department Structure and Funding Overview

The Boulder Parks and Recreation Department was established as a department of the City of Boulder in 1961. Of the 1,800 acres of parkland in Boulder, 1,490 acres are developed for use and 313 acres are reserved for future parkland development. The park system consists of neighborhood parks (under 20 acres), community parks (under 100 acres), city/regional parks (up to 300 acres), and civic spaces. The entire system includes 288 acres of managed turf and irrigated park lands, 15 miles of greenway trails, 43 athletic fields, 49 playgrounds, 36 park shelters, and an additional 47 mixed courts used for basketball, handball, or skate parks (City of Boulder, 2014, p. 26)." The Department of Open Space and Mountain Parks in Boulder, a separate city department, preserves, manages, and maintains 45,000 acres of open space parkland around the city.

Like many park systems around the country, the Boulder Parks and Recreation Department receives funding from several sources. Their largest revenue stream $10,208,261 (40%) comes from their Recreation and Activities Fund (RAF), generated primarily from user fees and other recreation program and facility revenues. RAF revenue funds maintenance and operation of recreation, fitness, and sports facilities and programs. 28% or $7,145,783 of the funding is generated from a 0.25 cent sales tax assessed in the city of Boulder. 18% or $4,593,718 of their total budget comes from the General Fund (property tax, sales tax, fees), monies meant to fund park and forestry operations and department administration. 11% or $2,807,272 comes from a Permanent Parks and Recreation Fund generated from a 0.9-mill property and development excise tax, used for capital improvement and land acquisition. 2% or $510,413 comes from the Lottery Fund, "a special revenue fund that accounts for state conservation trust fund monies allocated to local governments based on population" (City of Boulder, 2014, p. 74). The state dedicates these monies to parks, recreation, and open space site maintenance and capital improvements.

Sales Tax

The second largest revenue stream, making up $7,145,783 (28%) of their funding, is generated by a 0.25 cent sales tax assessed in the city of Boulder. This city tax was first approved by voters in 1995 with a scheduled sunset in 2015. The tax was initially envisioned as a funding source for development and maintenance of new parks, but as economic conditions changed, the tax revenue became an essential source of funding to supplement the General Fund allocation for ongoing maintenance, operations, and administration for the entire park system. Revenue from this tax is allocated to four categories, outlined in the original ballot language, as follows:

Fast Facts

City population:	97,000
Acres of parkland and water:	1,800
Total annual park spending:	$ 25,520,653
Number of parks or properties:	63
Percent of population with walkable park access:	67%
Percent of city that is parkland:	10.9%
Spending on parks and recreation per resident:	$ 263.00
Park playgrounds:	40

(City of Boulder, 2014)

*Funding Sources**

Recreation and Activities Fund:	$	10,208,261	(40%)
0.25 Cent Sales Tax:	$	7,145,783	(28%)
General Fund (property tax, sales tax, fees):	$	4,593,717	(18%)
Parks and Recreation Fund:	$	2,807,272	(11%)
Lottery:	$	510,413	(2%)

** Note the percentages do not add up to 100% due to rounding error.*

Case Study: 0.25 Cent Sales Tax for the Boulder Parks and Recreation Department

1. Parks Acquisition. The initial language placed a limit on the total maximum acreage that could be purchased with the tax revenue. This clause was removed in the 1998 elections.
2. Repayment of bonds used to acquire park land.
3. Seven specific Parks and Recreation areas specified in the ballot:
   i. Development, operations, and maintenance of the land purchased or constructed with the proceeds of the bonds
   ii. Renovation and refurbishment or replacement of four pools
   iii. Renovation and replacement of recreation facilities, playgrounds, mountain park trails, and the Civic Center Park Complex
   iv. Improvements to recreation centers and development of new recreation projects
   v. Maintenance of a community park site in north Boulder
   vi. Development of a mountain parks environmental education program
   vii. Renovation of city owned historical and cultural facilities
4. "Remainder" dedicated for parks and recreation purposes as interpreted by the city attorney. As General Funds were reduced over the years, the acceptable definition of 'remainder' expanded. As was noted in the 2005 evaluation of the tax, "the category 'remainder' has grown over the years due to reductions in the general fund transfers" such that planning expenditures, too, were covered by the 0.25 cent sales tax (City of Boulder, 2006, p. 10).

In 2006, City Council carried out a compliance analysis of the 0.25 cent sales tax, determining that the use of funds generated by the tax was in compliance with the ballot language. The analysis found one outstanding project, but noted that this project was scheduled for completion by the sunset date of 2015. A Parks and Recreation Advisory Board continued to monitor the tax and made the recommendation for its renewal on the ballot for 2012. Their recommendation recognized that without this revenue stream, Boulder parks would experience a $1.6 million dollar reduction in funding for park maintenance, the elimination of $1 million of renovations and refurbishment, and a reduction of 25 of the department's 128 full time employees.

In 2012, three years before its sunset date, the 0.25 cent sales tax was renewed with 85% voter approval. The tax was recognized as a critical element of the Parks Department funding, providing 48% of funding for administration and operations and 40% of capital improvement funding. The tax is currently set to expire in 2035.

In 2014, the Parks and Recreation Department of Boulder, Colorado published a master plan that provides strategic guidance and policy direction for the Department. The Parks and Recreation Master Plan is a result of 18 months of community outreach and engagement meant to facilitate community engagement with nature, health, and wellness and ensure that parks and open spaces in Boulder maintain the community's desired quality of life. Throughout the public engagement that took place as a part of the 2014 strategic planning process, community members and civic leaders consistently expressed a desire to focus on maintaining and improving current park assets over construction of new parks.

Case Study: General and Enterprise Funds in Minneapolis, Minnesota

Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board Structure and Funding Overview

The Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB) is a semi-autonomous agency with an independently elected governing body created by the Minnesota State Legislature and a vote of Minneapolis residents in 1883. The agency bears responsibility for governing, maintaining, and developing the Minneapolis Park System.

The park system is comprised of regional parks and neighborhood parks. Regional parks are larger in size, have fewer physical amenities and serve a population that expands beyond Minneapolis residents. Regional parks receive local, state, and federal funding.

Neighborhood parks, in contrast, are smaller and have large numbers of physical amenities, including all of its 49 recreation centers and two of its water parks/pools; the majority of the its 397 athletic fields, 112 playgrounds, 121 tennis courts, and 63 wading pools are in these parks. The 157 neighborhood parks in the MPRB serve Minneapolis residents and receive local funding only. (Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, nd)

Funding Mechanisms

General Fund: By state law, the MPRB has the authority to levy its own taxes within the parameters set annually by the Minneapolis Board of Estimate and Taxation. Additionally, with the City of Minneapolis acting as the MPRB Treasurer, the MPRB issues and sells bonds under the full faith and credit of the City. The General Fund is comprised of property tax revenues, Local Government Aid, and other revenues (fees and fines).

Ninety-six percent of funds from the General Fund contribute to the operating costs of the MPRB. Included in this is a management fee paid to the City of Minneapolis for "benefit administration, financial systems, and other services" (Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, 2015, p. 74). The remaining four percent comprise capital expenditures.

Tree Preservation and Reforestation Levy: The eight year Tree Preservation and Reforestation levy was established in 2014 to address threats to the urban forest due to Emerald Ash Borer and tree loss due to storms.

Enterprise Fund: The MPRB Enterprise Fund is a self-supporting fund that houses business-type operations. The MPRB golf courses, concessions, ice arenas, permits, Sculpture Garden, parking operations, and Wirth Winter Recreation are major operations within the Enterprise Fund. In 2015, revenue generated by Enterprise Fund activities comes from the following three sources: 68.2% from charges for services; 16.9% from parking lots and meters; and 14.9% from commissions and rents. Included in this

Fast Facts

City population:	400,070
Acres of parkland and water:	6,790
Total annual park spending:	$ 87,942,462
Number of parks or properties:	251
Number of neighborhood parks:	157
Number of regional parks:	22 (94 properties)
Percent of population with walkable park access:	95%
Percent of city that is parkland:	16%
Spending on parks and recreation per resident:	$ 223.00
Park playgrounds:	112

(Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, 2015)

Funding Sources

Property Taxes	$ 50,994,300*	(58%)
Enterprise	$ 9,304,955	(11%)
Capital Projects	$ 8,951,000	(10%)
Local Government Aid	$ 9,133,360	(10%)
Other Revenue	$ 9,558,847	(11%)

** Budgeted property tax revenue based on a 98% collection rate.*

revenue are contracts with private vendors including food vending, excursion boats, boat rentals, and bicycle rentals. Income from these operations is intended to provide funds for rehabilitation, construction, and improvements of enterprise assets as well as cover enterprise fund debt service and depreciation expenses.

Capital Improvement Fund: The Capital Improvement Fund includes revenue from several local, state, regional, philanthropic, and federal sources and reflects the MPRB's allocation of funds toward capital improvements for regional and neighborhood parks and park assets. The regional park system receives funding from the Metropolitan Council, the State's Parks and Legacy Trail Fund, and the Minnesota Lottery in addition to local and federal funding.

Capital funding for the neighborhood park system is through net debt bonds and pay-as-you-go capital funds. Pay-as-you-go capital funds are allocated from the General Fund (which is primarily comprised of property tax dollars) to capital improvements by the MPRB through the annual budgeting process. Net Debt Bonds is the debt mechanism used by the city of Minneapolis to finance their capital improvement program (including part of the MPRB neighborhood parks program). Debt Service on the bonds is paid through the annual property tax levy of the City of Minneapolis. Today, the neighborhood park system is significantly underfunded with millions of dollars of backlogged maintenance, repairs, and capital improvements.

Case Study: Implementing a Metropolitan Park District in Seattle, Washington

Seattle Parks and Recreation Structure and Funding Overview

Seattle Parks and Recreation (DPR) manages a 6,541 acre park system, constituting 11% of the City's land. The park system includes 465 parks and natural areas, 38 green spaces (795 acres), 185 athletic fields, 130 children's play areas, 38 neighborhood playgrounds, 25 miles of boulevards and 120 miles of trails. It also manages 26 community centers, 8 indoor pools, 2 outdoor pools, 9 swimming beaches, 4 environmental education centers and an outdoor stadium.

DPR funding is a combination of tax dollars from the City's General Fund and revenue from other sources including use fees and rental charges. Seattle has generated additional funding support from voter-approved bonds and levies, grants, and City real estate excise tax. In 2014, Seattle voters approved the creation of a Metropolitan Park District (MPD), which provides a new taxing district and revenue source to fund parks. MPD's taxing authority will begin in 2016.

The Parks Legacy Plan and the Metropolitan Park District

In 2014, Seattle voters approved a proposition establishing a Metropolitan Park District (MPD), the 15th MPD in the state of Washington. Under Washington law, the MPD is a special taxing district "created for the management, control, improvement, maintenance, and acquisition of parks, parkways, boulevards, and recreational facilities" (Revised Code of Washington, 35.61.010).

The MPD is governed by the Seattle City Council, and all parks will remain the property of the Council. As Ken Bounds explained, "it is neither metropolitan nor is it a separate district." The MPD shares the same borders as the City of Seattle and all funding to the MPD goes through the same process as other funding for the City. The MPD provides access to new property tax revenue streams that are not in competition with other City departments, enabling Parks to increase their funding by a minimum of approximately $47 million per year. Importantly, a clause in city ordinance 124468, which established the MPD, requires that MPD funding cannot supplant general fund funding, specifying that the level of general fund funding for the MPD cannot fall below the 2014 budget level, plus CPI increases annually.

What Led to the Metropolitan Park District?

Prior to the establishment of the Park District, the Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation received the majority of its funding from the following three sources:

(1) The General Fund, allocated by the Mayor and City Council; (2) Charter Revenues derived from a 1967 City Charter amendment that dedicated 10% of revenue from fines, licenses, and penalties to the Parks Department; and

Fast Facts

City population:	652,405
Acres of parkland and water:	6541
Total annual park spending:	$ 216,827,932
Number of parks or properties:	465
Percent of population with walkable park access:	92.3%
Percent of city that is parkland:	11%
Spending on parks and recreation per resident:	$ 298.00
Park playgrounds:	150

(Harnik et. al, 2015, Seattle Parks and Recreation, 2015/16)

Funding Sources

General Fund (taxes, fines, fees):	$ 96,470,348	(45%)
User Fees, Sales, Rentals, Donations:	$ 59,178,584	(27%)
Capital Funds:	$ 61,179,000	(28%)

(3) income generated by the Department of Parks and Recreation from fees, concessions, and other charges.

The Mayor and City Council of Seattle distribute the General Fund in a biennial budget process. In this allocation, the DPR competes with other departments including Police, Fire, Transportation and Libraries for their share of the funding. Over time, the General Fund revenue allocated to the DPR had decreased. In 1968, 50% of the DPR budget came from the General Fund; in 2010, it was 35.7% and by 2014, it was 10%.

Since 1968, Seattle voters have approved a series of bonds and levies that invested large amounts of capital into the Parks and Recreation Department. The 1968 Forward Thrust Bond Issue funded over 70 new parks and facilities, including the aquarium. A 1991 levy, which was renewed in 1999, provided a total of $36 million to renovate and expand old recreation centers and build new ones.

The 2000 Pro Parks Levy, which ended in 2008, was the only ballot measure that provided funding for maintenance and operations. These bonds and levies were not sustainable funding mechanisms – they required renewal by public vote every six to eight years. Additionally, with the exception of the 2000 Pro Parks Levy, these revenue sources contributed to the expansion of the system without providing funding for necessary maintenance and operations to keep the park system running.

It was the combination of limited general funds, periodic need for renewed ballot measures, the declining economy, and the growing awareness of a $267 million backlog of major maintenance projects, which continued to increase annually, that sparked the Parks Legacy Plan and, ultimately, the establishment of the Metropolitan Park District.

Creating the Metropolitan Park District

In 2012, the DPR took steps to close the gap in their funding and address the millions of dollars backlogged in major maintenance projects. This process was the beginning of the Parks Legacy Plan (PLP), a comprehensive six year strategic plan that outlines what needs to be done in the future to maintain the legacy of Seattle parks. The PLP established a framework for a sustainable parks and recreation system and a "strategic direction for the future to ensure that our parks and facilities are accessible, full of opportunity, and financially and environmentally sustainable" (Seattle Parks and Recreation, 2014b, p.v). The strategic process of developing the PLP, which ultimately established the Park District, took place over 18 months in the following six phases:

Phase 1: In 2012, DPR created a shared vision, mission, and values statements.

Phase 2: From 2012-2013, DPR shared with the community what Parks and Recreation does, who they serve, and how they are funded. DPR conducted a citywide survey, an analysis of national and regional park trends, and six public outreach meetings to gather from the public what they want to see moving forward.

Phase 3: In May 2013, DPR established the Parks Legacy Citizens' Advisory Committee "to evaluate the need for a composition of a potential ballot measure to fund operations, maintenance, development and acquisition of parks and recreation facilities, and programs" (Seattle Parks and Recreation, 2014a, p.1). After many meetings, extensive research, public hearings, public meetings, and reading written comments, the Legacy Committee recommended a "$57 million annual package that fixes our well-loved yet worn parks and facilities, and extends programs and services that support and enhance the lives of the people of Seattle" funded through the creation of a Seattle Park District (Seattle Parks and Recreation, 2014a, p.1)

Phase 4: In May 2014, the Seattle Mayor and City Council put the establishment of a Metropolitan Park District on the August 2014 ballot.

Phase 5: Once the measure was on the ballot, independent organizations, including the Seattle Parks Foundation, Forterra, and the Seattle Zoo and Aquarium, began educating the public about the Metropolitan Park District and campaigning for support of the ballot measure.

Phase 6: In August 2014, the residents of Seattle voted in favor of establishing a Metropolitan Park District.

The MPD, which derives its funding from property taxes, represents the largest amount that the voters of Seattle have agreed to tax themselves. It is important to note that this levy is in perpetuity, with only extreme circumstances by which it can be revoked. As such, it was a contentious issue and passed with approximately 53% of the vote during an August primary with nothing else on the ballot. Moving forward, the Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation will focus heavily on accountability, providing spending plans and detailed reports on the progress of the MPD. They have established a 14-person Citizen Oversight Committee that will meet regularly and hold DPR accountable to the Parks Legacy Plan. The MPD provides for the management, control, improvement, maintenance, and acquisition of parks, boulevards, and recreation facilities. The MPD is able to levy $.33-$.75 per $1,000 of assessed property value. During the first year of the levy it will generate $47.9 million based on a levy rate of $.33 per $1,000 of assessed property value. To address concern that a successful ballot measure might result in the supplanting of the parks department general fund support, City Council passed an ordinance that guaranteed future general fund support to parks at the same level as in 2014 plus the rate of inflation each year.

Case Study: Zoning Laws to Support Park Development and Maintenance in Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Toronto Parks, Forestry and Recreation Structure and Funding Overview

The Toronto Parks, Forestry and Recreation Division is a city agency responsible for managing the city's 19,768 acres of parkland. The Division manages 1600 parks, including 858 playgrounds, 676 sports fields, 55 basketball courts and 52 half courts, 93 splash pads, 106 wading pools, 23 beaches, and 4 stadiums. Parks, Forestry and Recreation also operates 134 community centers, 63 indoor pools, 59 outdoor pools, and 40 arenas and indoor skating rinks with 48 ice pads.

Zoning Laws to Support Parks

In Toronto, when property is acquired, for either residential or commercial use, legal provisions exist that require the developer to pay Development Charges, Education Development Charges, and Park Levy Fees to the city.

Development Charges include a basic fee that is assessed on each development to pay for city services that will be needed because of the development. That is, the developer has to pay for the development of any additional services or amenities such as a cross walk, a traffic signal, or a park. Development Charges contribute to the funding of growth-related capital costs for services including, but not limited to, parks, civic improvements, fire, health, library, roads, sanitation, and stormwater management. The 2015 city budget included $1,325 million in development charges (note that these funds are not restricted to parks).

In addition to the Development Charges, which contribute to a range of public services, Toronto also requires that developers set aside a piece of land for parkland (parkland dedication). Alternatively, the developer can pay cash-in-lieu of a parkland dedication, which is the Park Levy Fee. These fees are paid prior to the issuance of a building permit and constitute a percentage of the market value of the development of lands.

The funds collected through the Park Levy Fee must be used for parks, but can be used for parks throughout the district. Funds can be used immediately or can be put aside in a dedicated fund and can be used for land acquisition or park improvement.

When the Parks Department builds a new park, it also builds a percentage of the cost into the general budget for ongoing repairs and operation. If the increased general budget request is not approved, the Parks Department will not build the new park as it will not have the funding to maintain and operate the new park. Currently, land acquisition and park construction, along with all other park activity and budget request, is aligned with the 2013-2017 Park Plan. This plan was endorsed unanimously by City Council. Therefore, there is support to approve a general fund request and allow for the development of new parks that are included in the plan.

Fast Facts

City population:	2,615,060
Acres of parkland and water:	19,768
Total annual park spending:	$ 571,205,000
Number of parks or properties:	1,600
Percent of population with walkable park access:	*not available*
Percent of city that is parkland:	12.7%
Spending on parks and recreation per resident:	$ 263.00
Park playgrounds:	858

(Toronto Parks, Forestry and Recreation, 2014 and 2015)

Funding Sources

Property Taxes	$288,900,000	(51%)
Capital Funds	$152,605,000	(27%)
User Fees	$ 76,200,000	(13%)
Reserves	$ 17,400,000	(3%)
Sundry Reserves	$ 12,500,000	(2%)
Federal Grants and Subsidies	$ 10,000,000	(2%)
Interdivisional Recoveries	$ 7,500,000	(1%)
Transfers from Capital	$ 5,500,000	(1%)
Provincial Grants	$ 600,000	(less than 1%)

Case Study: System Development Charges and General Obligation Bonds in Portland, Oregon

Portland Parks & Recreation Structure and Funding Overview

The Portland Parks & Recreation (PP&R) park system is a city agency that reports to the Portland City Council and Mayor. PP&R maintains 11,656 acres of land; included in that acreage is 3,526 acres of developed land, consisting of 212 parks, 7,901 acres of natural areas, and 230 acres of undeveloped land. Park assets include 128 playgrounds, 156 miles of regional trails, 13 indoor pools, and 14 community and art centers. They also maintain 229 basketball hoops, 123 tennis courts, 123 baseball/softball diamonds, and 111 soccer/football fields.

Capital funding for PP&R comes from two primary sources: general obligation bonds and System Development Charges (SDC). System wide maintenance, operations, and administration is funded through the General Fund with supplementary revenue coming from fees and charges. Today, the General Fund (taxes, fees, service charges) makes up 60% or $68,161,125 of PP&R's funding stream.

System Development Charges and General Obligation Bonds

System Development Charges (SDC) are "one-time fees assessed on new development to cover a portion of the cost of providing certain types of public capital facilities to address impact created by new development" (Portland Parks & Recreation, 2015). Under Oregon Law, SDCs can be put toward a range of public services, including transportation, water, sewage, and parks. In 1998, the City of Portland authorized the establishment of a System Development Charge for PP&R. As PP&R Assistant Director Warren Jimenez explained, "growth pays for growth." As the City of Portland grows, there is an increased need for parks and recreation facilities. The growth in park facilities is supported by city development growth.

SDC funds contribute to capital improvements to both neighborhood parks and larger parks that offset the impact of new development. SDC fees may be used toward the expansion or increased capacity of existing recreation facilities, community centers, aquatic centers, play areas or picnic areas. They can also be used for land acquisition, to develop new parks, or increase playability, durability, and the life of existing facilities (Portland Parks & Recreation, 2015a). For 2015-2035, the potential revenue for the SDC is $552 million.

The PP&R revises the SDC fee structure every five years by reviewing the level of service, funds needed to acquire and develop parks, as well as population and employment growth projections. The five year review, developed by a Park SDE taskforce over a couple of years and approved by City Council, ensures that sufficient funds will be available for PP&R.

Fast Facts

City population:	609,456
Acres of parkland and water:	14,442
Total annual park spending:	$ 141,460,137
Number of parks or properties:	212
Percent of population with walkable park access:	83.6%
Percent of city that is parkland:	17.7%
Spending on parks and recreation per resident:	$ 253.00
Park playgrounds:	128

(Harnik et. al, 2015, Portland Parks & Recreation)

Funding Sources

General Fund (taxes, fees, service charges):	$ 54,782,127	(39%)
Bond Revenue:	$ 17,056,810	(12%)
Fees and Miscellaneous:	$ 45,526,047	(32%)
Interagency and Fund Transfers:	$ 6,631,548	(5%)
Fund Balance (incl. SDCs and Parks Trust Funds):	$ 17,193,605	(12%)

General Obligation Bonds

In 2014, Portland voters authorized a $68 million Parks Replacement Bond for urgent repairs and capital costs, including ten to twenty play areas at risk of closure, pool improvement, and rehabilitation of restrooms, roofs and other deficient structures and equipment. The bond measure was the culmination of five years of work, beginning with internal conversations looking to solve the maintenance backlog issue. PP&R saw that as the economy began to improve after the recession of 2008 and the existing 20 year bond was set to expire in 2015, there was an opportunity to bring this conversation to the community.

Community Conversations: Community engagement was an essential element in passing the new bond measure. PP&R began by assessing the willingness of the community to support such a bond measure, through polling and community-wide meetings. Once general support for the bond was established, PP&R carried out a comprehensive education campaign, focusing on two important themes: (1) By positioning the new bond as a renewal of the 1994 bond, PP&R could promise voters that there would be no increase in parks property tax rates; and (2) They also emphasized that the bond renewal at the existing tax rate would focus on basic and urgent needs. PP&R went out with an emphasis on repair and replace, investing in playground structures, bridge replacements in trails, and pools. They also focused on removing access barriers in the parks. From these meetings, PP&R heard from the community that restroom maintenance in particular parks was necessary, and they added that to the bond measure.

Passing the Bond: Once the measure was placed on the ballot, an external team ran the campaign with support from Portland Parks Foundation and The Trust for Public Land. After five months of campaigning, the ballot measure passed at 74%.

Oversight: The bond measure included the formation of an independent oversight committee made up of five community members appointed to three-year terms by the City Council. The Parks Replacement Bond Community Oversight Committee will monitor program progress and financial metrics, making annual reports to the City Council and general public. The Committee met for the first time in June and will submit their first report in September 2016.

Repairing and Replacing: Getting to Work Soon after the ballot measure passed, PP&R began implementing the repairs. In the first six months, they made new hires and began the design and planning work necessary. Within the next six months, they will ramp up the construction phase and begin the repair and replace process. Though they passed a 20-year bond, PP&R hopes to complete the designated projects within five to seven years.

Case Study: Efficiency through Competition and Outsourcing in Indianapolis, Indiana

Indianapolis Department of Parks and Recreation Structure and Funding Overview

The City of Indianapolis Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) is a department of the city that reports to the City Council, created in 1895. DPR operates and maintains 11,168 acres of parkland including 208 parks, 126 playgrounds, 232 athletic fields 60 miles of greenway trails, 21 aquatic facilities, 117 tennis courts, 93 basketball/multi-use courts, 16 family centers, and 15 spray grounds. Its parks are divided into three categories: regional parks, large parks with open, natural settings as well as facilities and nature centers; community parks, which are smaller than regional parks and place a larger emphasis on facilities such as recreation centers; and neighborhood parks, usually three acres or smaller, meant to serve the immediate surrounding neighborhood with assets including basketball courts and playgrounds.

Efficiency through Competition and Outsourcing

As Mayor of Indianapolis from 1992-2000, Stephen Goldsmith challenged his staff to rethink how they provided government services. He saw that government resources were shrinking, staff morale was low, and wanted to make a change. His call for innovation emphasized the power of competition to generate greater efficiency in city government.

Maintenance of Regional and Community Parks

The Department of Parks and Recreation applied the mayor's call for competition to park maintenance. Until that point, DPR did all park maintenance in house (including mowing the grass, picking up trash, cleaning the hard surfaces, trimming around trees and play equipment). Following Mayor Goldsmith's call for competition, they issued an RFP open to private companies and current government employees to mow regional and community parks in the Indianapolis park system. According to Joe Wynns, Deputy Director of Operations of the DPR at the time, the introduction of competition through this RFP motivated the government maintenance providers to improve their services so that they would be competitive with private contractors. After reviewing the bids that came in, DPR issued a mix of private and public contracts to conduct park maintenance, introducing a hybrid public-private maintenance model.

Outsourcing some of the mowing to private companies enabled DPR to reallocate human and capital resources to other projects, thereby increasing efficiency across the Department. As Wynns explained, "If I can have the private sector do [maintenance] and the public sector do something else, I can be twice as efficient without asking City Council for extra money." Further, by allocating some of the maintenance to private companies, DPR decreased their cost of gas, wear and tear and maintenance of mowing equipment.

Fast Facts

City population:	843,393
Acres of parkland and water:	11,168
Total annual park spending:	$ 16,560,099
Number of parks or properties:	208
Percent of population with walkable park access:	31.6%
Percent of city that is parkland:	5%
Spending on parks and recreation per resident:	$ 24.00
Park playgrounds:	126

(Harnik et. al, 2015, Indianapolis City Council, 2013)

Funding Sources

Parks General Fund (taxes, fees, permits):	$	14,718,798	(85%)
Federal Grants:	$	841,300	(10%)
Consolidated County:	$	1,000,000	(5%)

According to Wynns, introducing an element of competition also boosted the morale of government employees. It helped them see that they were providing a high quality service that could compete with the private sector. Ultimately, by creating competition for the same product, the privatization of government services allowed for greater efficiency within DPR.

Neighborhood Parks and the Church Park Initiative

In addition to regional and community parks, DPR has 88 neighborhood parks within its system. These small parks (5 acres or less) do not have recreation centers, but rather host assets including playgrounds, shelters, tennis or basketball courts, and water spray areas. While government employees conducted maintenance for some of the regional and community parks, there were significant inefficiencies in having them maintain these small parks. Public maintenance staff spent more time and resources travelling between the small parks, loading and unloading their materials, than they did actually conducting maintenance services.

Instead of issuing an RFP, DPR strategically solicited neighborhood associations, businesses, churches, and other organizations to maintain the neighborhood parks. DPR established guidelines and contracts with those offering maintenance services to ensure it upheld DPR standards.

In particular, DPR set aside $60,000 annually for their Church Park Initiative, a unique effort that "reconnected communities to their parks, provided an opportunity for churches to make money, saved the city in maintenance costs, and allowed the parks department to spend more money on capital equipment" (Project for Public Spaces, 1997). Through this program, churches received grants from the City to conduct maintenance of the parks and run summer programming. The churches were able to conduct maintenance at lower costs than the city by using their own equipment and generating a volunteer base for mowing.

Having a church presence in urban neighborhood parks provided an opportunity for churches to extend their work with youth and homeless populations in the area. It also enabled DPR to extend their offerings into underserved neighborhoods that did not have recreation centers. At the time, DPR was offering summer programming in 15 recreation centers, but no programs were offered in neighborhood parks. The additional programming from the Church Park Initiative doubled the amount of summer programming to 30 programs across the city.

By involving the local community in neighborhood parks, the city saved money on mowing equipment and fuel along with a range of other expenses. These savings enabled DPR to make capital improvements in small parks around the city. It also transferred power to local communities by empowering them to take ownership over their parks while being held accountable to certain standards.

Indianapolis Parks Today

New leadership in Indianapolis, including a new director of the Department of Parks and Recreation, resulted in significant changes. Today, the majority of park funding comes from property tax revenue. The department is heavily privatized and all park maintenance has been centralized under the Department of Public Works. Swimming pools, too, are maintained by Public Works and golf courses are run by private management companies.

The primary responsibility of the Department of Parks and Recreation is now the implementation and oversight of recreation activities. DPR partners with several organizations, including the YMCA, the National Junior Tennis League, and the National Federation of High School Sports to offer programs in park facilities. Other local organizations, like the Citizens Energy Group and Butler University, contribute to rehabilitation and beautification of the parks while the local Lilly Endowment and three Friends Groups provide funding for capital projects.

Case Study: Community Parks Initiative in New York, New York

New York City Department of Parks and Recreation Structure and Funding Overview

The New York City Department of Parks and Recreation (NYC Parks) is a mayoral agency that stewards approximately 29,000 acres of land –14% of New York City. It operates over 800 athletic fields, almost 1000 playgrounds, 550 tennis courts, 66 public pools, 48 recreation facilities, and 14 miles of beaches.

The vast majority of funding for neighborhood parks comes through a well-defined city budgeting process wherein funds are distributed across all City agencies.

Community Parks Initiative

The Community Parks Initiative, an element of the NYC Parks Department Framework for an Equitable Future, is a "comprehensive investment in the smaller public parks that are located in New York City's densely populated and growing neighborhoods where there are higher-than-average concentrations of poverty" (NYC Parks, 2014, p. 10). The initiative targets 55 neighborhoods across the five boroughs, rebuilding 35 neighborhood parks and conducting other physical improvements in another 20.

The initiative aims "to develop a different model of parks that will serve a range of demographics from children to seniors," explained Liam Kavanagh, First Deputy Commissioner at NYC Parks. These parks will provide a broad range of services to the residents of a given neighborhood. In addition to capital funding put towards rebuilding sustainable parks, the initiative also allocates funding for ongoing maintenance and increased programming for children and adults. NYC Parks is also focusing on community outreach and partnerships to facilitate community engagement and ensure long-term sustainability of the initiative.

The vast majority of the $130 million funding comes directly from the City's capital budget, with about $20 million coming from grants and elected city officials. Funding for maintenance comes directly from the NYC Parks maintenance budget. To support this initiative, NYC Parks has focused staff time and commodities in the targeted neighborhoods to ensure its success. NYC Parks has also partnered with several other city agencies, most notably the Department of Environmental Protection that is contributing about $36 million to integrate green infrastructure into the projects and implement resilient park designs. Ongoing partnerships with city agencies and local friends groups will support the sustainability of the initiative over time.

Fast Facts

City population:	8,405,837
Acres of parkland and water:	39,006
Total annual park spending:	$ 1,364,246,406
Number of parks or properties:	1900
Percent of population with walkable park access:	96.6%
Percent of city that is parkland:	14%
Spending on parks and recreation per resident:	$ 162.00
Park playgrounds:	1,666

(Harnik et. al, 2015)

*Funding Sources**

General Fund:	$ 347,000,000	(73%)
Other:	$ 19,000,000	(4%)
Capital Funds:	$ 42,000,000	(9%)
Federal (HUD Community Development Funds):	$ 2,500,000	(1%)
Intercity Sales:	$ 55,000,000	(12%)
Federal Other:	$ 5,500,000	(1%)
State (Grants):	$ 4,000,000	(1%)

** Funding sources do not include those that are attributed to debt services, pensions, benefits and settlements.*

Case Study: Funding the Park System through Special Events and Programs in Chicago, Illinois

Chicago Park District Structure and Funding Overview

In 1869, the Illinois State Legislature established three independent park commissions around Chicago. By 1930, 22 independent park districts existed within the city. In 1934, the Park Consolidation Act consolidated the 22 park districts and created the Chicago Park District (CPD), an independent government agency. CPD owns more than 8,400 acres of green space and a range of assets and amenities including 593 parks, 26 indoor pools, 51 outdoor pools, 26 miles of lakefront, and 23 swimming beaches. Ten museums are located on CPD property including the aquarium, planetarium, art museum, and zoo. As a government agency separate from the City, CPD administers its own bonds.

Funding the Park System through Special Events and Programs

Several of Chicago's most popular public spaces are owned by the Chicago Park District (CPD), attracting residents and visitors throughout the year. Chicago parks host some of the largest events in the city; Soldier Field, owned by CPD, is home to the Chicago Bears NFL team as well as other sporting events, concerts, and activities. The Park District hosts many of Chicago's museums and all ten harbors. Its public-private partnerships generate a large portion of CPD's operating budget, which is distributed across the entire park system to fund general maintenance and operations. These big-ticket events, which are hosted in signature parks and major facilities, allow the park system to maintain and operate small parks and keep program fees in neighborhood parks low. Revenue from special events is about 25% of CPD's budget.

Grant Park, Lincoln Park, and other downtown parks host special events throughout the year, like Lollapalooza, Taste of Chicago, and the Air and Water Show, along with runs, races, and walks. These events are run by private agencies with contractual agreements with CPD. While contractual agreements vary by event and partner, the contracts generally require the partnering agency to provide their own security, fencing, trash and recycling removal, and any park maintenance necessary from the event. Through these events, CPD receives a flat fee for renting the space, a percentage of ticket sales, and revenue from concessions. In 2014, Lollapalooza alone brought in $2.9 million. Similarly, CPD issued 36% more special event permits than in the previous year, resulting in $1 million in additional revenue. The revenue generated from these events goes directly into CPD's general fund and is distributed across the system. The revenue generated from these special events is put into the general operating budget and allocated to maintenance and operations across the park system. Unlike other park systems, the income from special events does not need to be used for the parks that generated the revenue but, rather, supplements other parks (including neighborhood parks) to ensure low cost and free programs and events.

Fast Facts

City population:	2,718,782
Acres of parkland and water:	8,400
Total annual park spending:	$ 448,580,770
Number of parks or properties:	593
Percent of population with walkable park access:	92%
Percent of city that is parkland:	9.1%
Spending on parks and recreation per resident:	$ 167.00
Park playgrounds:	593

(Harnik et. al, 2015, Chicago Park District, 2015)

Funding Sources

Property Tax:	$260,176,847	(58%)
Personal Property Replacement Tax (PPRT):	$ 44,858,077	(10%)
Privatized contracts:	$ 76,258,731	(17%)
Park fees:	$ 31,400,654	(7%)
Other:	$ 17,943,231	(4%)
Long-term Obligation Fund	$ 13,457,423	(3%)
Grants:	$ 4,485,808	(1%)

Case Study: Funding the Park System through Special Events and Programs in Chicago, Illinois

Soldier Field is run by a management company that works with partners to organize concerts, sporting events, and other special events. In recent years, CPD has made an effort to expand their sporting events by hosting professional and college hockey games, an international Rugby competition, and the CONCACAF Gold Cup (soccer competition). In 2014, they hosted several headliner concerts including Beyonce and Jay-Z, One Direction and Luke Bryan. In renting out the space, CPD receives a percentage of all ticket sales and generates revenue from concession stands and parking. In the case of Soldier Field, some of the funding is put back into capital expenditures within the venue itself. The remaining funds, however, are allocated to the general fund.

Chicago Plays!

Historically, the Chicago Park District conducted major maintenance on about 15 playgrounds a year, including the repair or replacement of playground equipment and surfaces. In reviewing this process, CPD recently realized that if it made some minor changes to the way it was renovating playgrounds, including changing the surface of the parks to woodchip, it could bring the cost down from approximately $500,000 to $125,000 per playground. In 2013, Chicago Parks Department and Mayor Emanuel launched Chicago Plays!, a five-year initiative that will renovate 325 playgrounds. With the reduced cost of playground renovation, the District was able to allocate the same amount of General Fund funding to cover the cost of more playground renovations.

The Chicago Parks Foundation, the philanthropic arm of the Parks Department, has partnered on the initiative to raise additional private funding to supplement the cost of the repairs. The Foundation is approaching donors and corporations to sponsor renovations in select playgrounds. In these playgrounds, the donors will receive limited marketing space to recognize their contribution.

Case Study: Supporting Neighborhood Parks through Friends Groups in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Philadelphia Parks and Recreation Structure and Funding Overview

The Philadelphia Parks and Recreation Department (PPR) maintains and operates 10,300 acres of parkland, approximately 13% of the city. It manages 131 neighborhood parks across five geographical districts, with recreation centers and swimming pools spread throughout. The city also operates seven watershed parks, which are largely natural land.

Historically, two separate departments within Philadelphia city government managed Philadelphia's parks and recreation centers. The Fairmount Park Commission, established in 1867, operated parks in the city with a special emphasis placed on protecting land and drinking water. The Philadelphia Department of Recreation, created in 1951, oversaw cultural and physical recreation activities and facilities. In 2008, 73% of voters approved a Charter amendment merging the Fairmount Park Commission and Department of Recreation to create Philadelphia Parks and Recreation.

Philadelphia Parks and Recreation has five main sources of capital funding, including funding from City Council, partnerships with other city agencies, partnerships with the State, and philanthropy.

PPR partners regularly with the Philadelphia Water Authority to build green infrastructure in Philadelphia parks. For every one inch of stormwater that is managed through a particular PPR project, the City Water Authority will contribute $150,000. Additionally, PPR regularly applies for funding from the Community Conservation Partnership Program grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources. Through this matching grant program, PPR receives approximately $1 million dollars annually for specific capital programs in neighborhood parks across the city.

Philadelphia Parks and Recreation applies for grants from local foundations to fund specific capital improvement projects. The Fairmount Park Conservancy (FPC), the principle non-profit partner of PPR, also raises funds from corporate sponsors and other donors for capital projects for neighborhood parks, recreation centers, and the city's seven watershed parks. In particular, FPC supports a network of 87 registered Friends Groups. The groups range in size and capacity, provide hundreds of hours of volunteer work, and some even raise money for capital improvement projects in their parks.

Supporting Neighborhood Parks through Friends Groups

Unique to the Philadelphia park system is its vast network of 87 Friends Groups that support smaller neighborhood parks around the 10 districts of the city. Friends groups are described as follows:

Fast Facts

City population:	1,553,165
Acres of parkland and water:	10,815
Total annual park spending:	$ 80,253,798
Number of parks or properties:	177
Percent of population with walkable park access:	92.3%
Percent of city that is parkland:	13%
Spending on parks and recreation per resident:	$ 57.00
Park playgrounds:	248

(Harnik et. al, 2015, Philadelphia Parks and Recreation)

Funding Sources

General Fund (taxes, fees, permits):	$ 57,711,883	(72%)
Fairmount Park Trust:	$ 11,258,781	(14%)
Other (fees and grants):	$ 11,283,134	(14%)

Case Study: Supporting Neighborhood Parks through Friends Groups in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

> Friends groups are community-based volunteer groups that are primarily established to support and advocate for a specific park area in the Philadelphia Parks and Recreation system. Friends groups create welcoming community green spaces and positive experiences with nature at the neighborhood level. Successful Friends groups also engage with community residents and external partners to achieve these goals and serve as the "community voice" for the park. Typical Friends group activities include park cleanup and beautification days, fundraising events, organizing recreational and educational programming, advocating for park improvements and publicizing important park issues. (Philadelphia Parks and Recreation, 2014, p2.)

The Friends groups span high and low income neighborhoods, serve diverse communities, and manifest in multiple shapes and forms with varying levels of capacity. Some Friends groups hold 501(c)3 status, while others are informal entities. Some conduct major fundraisers and maintain thousands of dollars in the bank. The Friends of Bardascino Park raised about $2,500 for a new water fountain while Friends of Rittenhouse Square raised around $300,000 for maintenance and park improvements annually. Other Friends groups focus on community gardening, cleaning, and other maintenance efforts mostly conducted through volunteer time. As Jennifer Mahar, Director of Civic Initiatives at the Fairmount Park Conservancy (FPC), explained, "there is no pressure on what the Friends group model should be. The one thing we are passionate about is that neighbors are caring for their park in whatever way that works for them."

Friends groups are supported by a Stewardship Program maintained through a partnership with the Fairmount Park Conservancy and Philadelphia Parks and Recreation. The Stewardship Program hosts regular meetings for Friends group representatives five times a year. In addition to sharing updates from Philadelphia Parks and Recreation and the Conservancy, these meetings provide space for Friends groups to network, discuss issues they are facing, and share information. The Stewardship Program hosts an annual conference for Friends groups with a variety of workshops, often led by Friends group leaders. Topics have included: how to get volunteers out to a work day, how to set up your own 501(c)3, how to run a successful special event, or how to raise money for your park. The program also runs an annual park tour, which brings Friends groups all together to visit specific neighborhood parks. During this tour, Friends groups host their colleagues and share their successes, challenges, and future aspirations. This provides an opportunity for Friends group leaders to observe other parks – sometimes in neighborhoods they've never visited – and to learn from each other. Finally, the Stewardship Program hosts an annual end-of-year party to celebrate their accomplishments. Jennifer Mahar attributes the success of the cross-agency Stewardship Program to the close relationships that exist between FPC and PPR. When asked about how they achieve a successful partnership, Jennifer Mahar said the following: "We do everything together. It's muddy and it's homegrown and that's how we succeed."

The Fairmount Park Conservancy, provides two specific funding opportunities for Friends groups: Programming Grants and Physical Improvement Grants. These funds are generated through corporate sponsorships and total approximately $80,000 annually. Programming Grants support programs including movie nights, art classes, yoga, tai chi, concerts, and Shakespeare in the Park. These programming grants enable Friends Groups to develop programming that fit the unique needs and interests of their own community. Physical Improvement Grants provide funding for the maintenance or repair of physical assets. Recently FPC funded the Malcolm X Memorial Park to replace two damaged benches. These unique benches are specialized for the park and not the city standard benches, which would make their replacement difficult for PPR.

Love Your Park Day is a collaborative park program carried out by the FPC, the PPR, and Friends groups across the City. This bi-annual event includes a city-wide park clean-up day, supported by corporate sponsorships developed by FPC to provide gardening tools, mulch, and compost. The volunteer day is followed by programs and events throughout the parks, such as movie nights, plant sales, yoga lessons, and craft fairs. This event brings out 4,000 volunteers in over 80 community events across Philadelphia to support the beautification and maintenance of neighborhood parks.

Case Study: Green Benefit District in San Francisco, California

San Francisco Recreation and Parks Department Structure and Funding Overview

The San Francisco Recreation and Parks Department (RPD) was established in 1950 with the merger of the City Park Commission and Recreation Commission. RPD manages 4,113 acres of recreational and open space. It administers 220 neighborhood parks, 179 playgrounds and play areas, 82 recreation center and clubhouses, 72 basketball courts, 151 tennis courts, 59 soccer fields, and 9 swimming pools.

The RPD has three main sources of revenue: the Open Space Fund, the General Fund Subsidy and Savings, and Earned Revenue. The Open Space Fund, which accounts for 28% of the 2014-2015 budget ($45.7 million), comes from property tax. Established in 2000, this measure allocates 2.5 cents of every $100 in property tax paid in San Francisco "to provide enhanced park and recreational services and facilities" (San Francisco City Code, §16.107). The General Fund (taxes, fees, permits) comprises 34% of the budget, approximately $50.2 million in 2014-2015. The remaining 38% of the budget, or $61.4 million, comes from revenue generated from a range of sources, including parking fees, program fees, concessions, permits and facility rentals, stadiums, golf, and marina slips.

Green Benefit District

On July 31, 2015 the San Francisco Board of Supervisors unanimously approved a resolution to establish the Dogpatch and Northwest Portrero Hill Green Benefit District, the first Green Benefit District (GBD) in California. A GBD is a neighborhood-based property assessment district voted into existence by property owners within the district. Revenue generated from the GBD is used for neighborhood parks, open spaces, the greening of streets, and beautification.

The GBD model is based on the Community Benefit District (CBD) model, a public-private partnership in which "local property owners are levied a special assessment to fund improvements in their neighborhood" (City and County of San Francisco, nd). CBDs, similar to Business Improvement Districts, are typically established in commercial corridors to provide an array of neighborhood services, including security, maintenance, entertainment, and programming. There are currently fourteen CBDs in San Francisco, including the Union Square CBD.

Unlike CBDs, the GBD aims to improve residential neighborhoods. The process of establishing the Dogpatch and Northwest Portrero Hill Green Benefit District (DNPHGBD) emerged holistically through conversations among community leaders who wanted a way to improve maintenance of existing green spaces including parks, conduct capital improvements in public spaces, and fund the creation of new open spaces, parks, and gardens. They formed

Fast Facts

City population:	837,442
Acres of parkland and water:	5,693
Total annual park spending:	$178,699,938
Number of parks or properties:	220
Percent of population with walkable park access:	99%
Percent of city that is parkland:	19%
Spending on parks and recreation per resident:	$229.00
Park playgrounds:	179

(Harnik et. al, 2015, San Francisco Recreation and Parks Department)

Funding Sources

General Fund (taxes, fees, permits):	$58,215,868	(33%)
Bond and Other Funds:	$16,053,073	(9%)
Open Space Fund:	$47,855,780	(27%)
Yacht Harbor Fund:	$ 4,528,225	(3%)
Golf Fund:	$14,900,508	(8%)
Department Generated Funds:	$36,275,230	(20%)
Other:	$ 871,254	(less than 1%)

a committee in 2012, established the boundaries of the district, and conducted engagement and outreach to garner support for the idea. District property owners signed a petition in support of the GBD, and the City and County of San Francisco (CCSF) voted to approve a resolution of intent. CCSF then sent ballots by mail to all property owners within the district. The measure passed with 76% of the votes and the GBD was formed.

According to the management plan (Dogpatch and Northwest Potrero Hill, 2015), the primary services of the GBD are fourfold: (1) Maintenance, including tree care, graffiti patrol, and trash and debris removal; (2) Capital improvements, which will constitute 32% of the budget; (3) Accountability, Transparency & Citizen Services, which includes the management of the GBD's finances, contracts for services, and improving communication with the public through a web-based application; and (4) Operations and contingency reserves, which covers insurance, accounting, audits and financial reviews.

Revenue from the first year of the GBD will be put primarily towards the establishment of the GBD infrastructure and operation, including developing a comprehensive mobile application that will allow property owners in the district to access a comprehensive mobile and web-based application for crowd sourced reporting of maintenance and operation needs.

In establishing the GBD, there was concern that the increased revenue for the district could supplant the funding the district receives from the San Francisco Recreation and Parks Department. The management plan calls for the "maintenance of existing services at verifiable 'baseline' service levels" and that "the Board of Supervisors will confirm and guarantee a baseline level of service equivalent to that being provided in similar areas of the city" (p5). As the GBD was only recently established, it remains to be seen how GBD funds will be spent and if, in fact, RPD will continue funding the neighborhood's parks at the same level.

Case Study: Revenue Sharing in Denver, Colorado

Denver Mountain Parks Division Structure and Funding Overview

The Mountain Parks Division (MPD) is a division within the Denver Parks and Recreation Department that operates and maintains the Mountain Park System of Denver. It oversees 22 parks and 24 conservation areas, totaling 14,000 acres of land. The entire park system exists outside the Denver city limits, contributing to its unique funding challenges. MPD assets include ski lodges, picnic areas, and trails. While the MPD constitutes about 70% of the Parks and Recreation Department total acreage, they receive only 1% of the Department's operating budget and 3% of the capital improvement budget (City of Denver, 2008, p. 39). MPD had a dedicated funding mechanism, a mill levy, which was cancelled in 1956. They now rely on funding from the Parks and Recreation Department along with other public partnerships, revenue generated from admissions fees and programs, and a surcharge on tickets sold from Red Rocks Park that contributes to personnel costs across MPD.

Revenue Sharing through Red Rocks Amphitheater

The Red Rocks Amphitheater sits in the heart of Red Rocks Mountain Park, 868 acres of natural parkland on the eastern slope of the Rocky Mountains. The park itself is a destination for tourists and locals alike, boasting extensive hiking trails, unique geological formations, and a 200-mile panoramic view of Denver (Denver Parks and Recreation, nd). The Amphitheater hosts hundreds of concerts each year with seats for almost 10,000 people. Ballets, operas, graduations, and weddings also take place in the majestic Red Rocks Amphitheater.

While the Red Rocks Park is owned and managed by the MPD of the Denver Department of Parks and Recreation, the Amphitheater is owned by the Denver Department of Arts and Venues (A&V). The Mountain Parks Division has 22 accessible parks and 24 conservation areas total 14,000 acres and comprises one of the most expansive and unique park systems in the West. Hosting concerts in Red Rocks Park takes a toll on the park, but for years, DPPR did not receive any revenue from the Amphitheater to support the required maintenance.

In 2008, MPD developed a new Master Plan, which called for additional funding for the Mountain Parks Division. After a series of negotiations, MPD and A&V signed a Memorandum of Understanding that provided a portion of ticket sales to support the park. Each ticket sold at the Red Rocks Amphitheater includes a $0.45 surcharge which goes directly to the MPD. In the first year of its implementation, the surcharge generated $175,000 for the Parks Department. In 2014, DDP received $350,000 from Amphitheater ticket sales.

Fast Facts

City population:	649,495
Acres of parkland and water:	5,884
Total annual park spending:	$ 156,274,656
Number of parks or properties:	46
Percent of population with walkable park access:	83.6%
Percent of city that is parkland:	7.9%
Spending on parks and recreation per resident:	$ 240.00
Park playgrounds:	246

(Harnick et. al, 2015, Denver Parks Budget)

Funding Sources

General Fund (sales and property taxes):	$ 98,453,033	(63%)
Capital Improvements:	$ 35,943,170	(23%)
Enterprise Funds:	$ 10,939,226	(7%)
Special Revenue Funds:	$ 10,939,226	(7%)

Case Study: Revenue Sharing in Denver, Colorado

Revenue from the Red Rocks Amphitheater ticket surcharge provides operational support for the entire Mountain Parks Division, the majority of which goes towards personnel costs. Of the $350,000 generated from the Red Rocks surcharge, $250,000 went to staffing. This new funding stream supports the entire ranger program in the MPD. Prior to the Red Rocks surcharge, Mountain Parks had one seasonal ranger. Now they have six seasonal rangers and two full time rangers.

Bob Finch, Director of Natural Resources at the Denver Department of Parks explained the success of the surcharge as follows: "It's an economy – it's a large economy based around concerts. If the economy didn't exist, we wouldn't be able to get an incremental piece of it. With parks, we often don't create a sustainable economy. If we can create economies that generate revenue, a piece of that can go to parks. If there are no fees, there are no sales and there's no way to generate revenue."

Case Study: Conservancies, BIDs, Development Obligation Model, and Transfer of Development Rights and Zoning Incentive Hybrid in New York, New York

New York Department of Parks and Recreation Structure and Funding Overview

The New York City Department of Parks and Recreation (NYC Parks) is a mayoral agency that stewards approximately 29,000 acres of land – 14% of New York City. They operate over 800 athletic fields, almost 1000 playgrounds, 550 tennis courts, 66 public pools, 48 recreation facilities, and 14 miles of beaches.

The vast majority of funding for neighborhood parks comes through a well-defined city budgeting process wherein funds are distributed across all City agencies.

NYC Parks has developed innovative funding approaches that have served its major parks well. The following case studies address these different models.

Model 1: Philanthropy (Conservancies)

The Central Park Conservancy is the leader of the philanthropic model across the park world. It was established in 1980 by New York City residents and came under the leadership of Betsy Barlow Rogers, who facilitated a large-scale fundraising campaign to fund the restoration and renewal of Central Park. The Central Park Conservancy is a non-profit organization with a contract from New York City that gives it the legal obligation to oversee all aspects of park maintenance, capital improvements, and restoration. The Conservancy raises 75% of the park's $65 million annual operating budget from private contributions, membership fees, and special events.

While the Central Park Conservancy may be the most famous of the conservancies, this model has been adopted in parks across New York City including the Prospect Park Alliance and the Riverside Park Conservancy. Like the Central Park Conservancy, these non-profit organizations were established by local activists with the goal of repairing the deteriorating historic parks through private-public partnerships and fundraising. They are non-profit organizations holding contracts with the City to provide a variety of supportive services from programming to maintenance and management of the park.

Model 2: Business Improvement District Model

Several parks within New York City generate funding through Business Improvement Districts (BID). The BIDs generate money through assessments on property owners in a designated area and revenue generated from events and concessions. They are non-profit management companies that oversee entire neighborhoods, including but not always limited to parks. As Liam Kavanagh, First Deputy Commission of NYC Parks notes, this model is "limited to areas that are willing to tax themselves to attract more business and tourists."

Fast Facts

City population:	8,405,837
Acres of parkland and water:	39,006
Total annual park spending:	$ 1,364,246,406
Number of parks or properties:	1900
Percent of population with walkable park access:	96.6%
Percent of city that is parkland:	14%
Spending on parks and recreation per resident:	$ 162.00
Park playgrounds:	1,666

(Harnik et. al, 2015)

*Funding Sources**

General Fund:	$ 347,000,000	(73%)
Other:	$ 19,000,000	(4%)
Capital Funds:	$ 42,000,000	(9%)
Federal (HUD Community Development Funds):	$ 2,500,000	(1%)
Intercity Sales:	$ 55,000,000	(12%)
Federal Other:	$ 5,500,000	(1%)
State (Grants):	$ 4,000,000	(1%)

** Funding sources do not include those that are attributed to debt services, pensions, benefits and settlements.*

Case Study: Conservancies, BIDs, Development Obligation Model, and Transfer of Development Rights and Zoning Incentive Hybrid in New York, New York

The 34th Street Partnership is one of the most ambitious BIDs in the nation. It receives no funding from taxes nor does it actively engage in any fundraising efforts, yet it successfully manages and maintains the public spaces of Herald and Greeley square along with sanitation, security and horticulture of a 21-block area. Other BIDs in NYC that manage parks include the Bryant Park Corporation and the Union Square Partnership.

Model 3: Development Obligation Model

In this model, tied to the city's zoning codes, a developer is required to provide certain public services or improvements, including parks. The specific requirements of the developer in building the park vary by park, but generally the developer is expected to provide capital funds to build the park as well as the ongoing maintenance and operation of the park. In some cases, the developer actually builds the park while, in other cases, the developer provides funding to the Department of Parks and Recreation to build the park. Under this model, the constructed park belongs to the Department of Parks and Recreation and is subject to their rules and regulations. In the case of residential development, it is common for the developer to collect fees from the residents that contribute to the ongoing park maintenance, but this is not always the case.

This model was used recently to build Riverside Park South, the result of a large new residential community. The park extends Riverside Park from 72nd Street to 59th Street on the west side of Manhattan and includes three basketball courts, two handball courts, and a soccer field along with community gardens, an esplanade and multiple walkways. This park was built and is maintained by the development company.

Model 4: Transfer of Development Rights and Zoning Incentive Hybrid

New York City implemented a hybrid Transfer of Development Rights and Zoning Incentive program to help fund the High Line, a park in West Chelsea built on an unused elevated train track. The City rezoned West Chelsea and created an incentive for developers to buy there. They allowed developers to exceed the normal limitations on height or density in exchange for a contribution to the High Line Improvement Fund. Owners of development sites under the High Line could buy 1.0 FAR (floor area ratio) of development rights in exchange for a $50 per square foot contribution to the High Line Improvement Fund. The development rights were then transferred to a different area within West Chelsea. As Rizzo (2014) notes, however, "the hybrid TDR/incentive scheme is limited: the transferred floor area is restricted to commercial development and can only be used after the site owner has sold its existing development rights to eligible receiving lots in the Special West Chelsea District" (p. 6). Liam Kavanagh, First Deputy Commissioner, NYC Parks, explained that this model has not been used elsewhere yet, but could be considered for other neighborhoods.

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