

Grant Information

Grantee:	The Centre for Local Research into Public Space	Grant ID:	105125
Grant Amount:	\$100,000	Grant Term:	24 months
Application Type:	1 - Single Application		

Report on Grant Expected Results and Performance Indicators

Year	Expected Results	Performance Indicators	Achievements	Notes
Year 1	Expanded database capacity	<p>-Research data is enriched</p> <p>-A friendly, accessible "How do I..." section in connection with each of the issues addressed is added</p> <p>-A function that allows users to comment and add information, a kind of local version of Wikipedia relating to public commons, is developed</p> <p>-The "issues and stories" section of the database will have an additional 50 -70 user-contributed records to the end of the first year, cross-linked to the relevant laws, policies, guidelines, etc.</p> <p>-The database will have an additional 300-400 searchable, indexed and cross-linked records based on staff reports, council minutes, and related legislation documents</p>	<p>The research data has had about 200 records added. Moreover the data has been consolidated into a single dataset (documents) which is much easier to access (search and sort). Also these documents can be organized into administrator-created topics, whereby individual documents can be placed in several topics. This allows for very expressive organization options.</p> <p>This section has been added as a Topic (folder). The "How do I..." sections are way behind in posting – that is, there are 12 more "How do I..." subjects for which we have much material but it's still being sorted and having pictures added. Two new researchers joined or team about three weeks ago to work on getting these sections ready and publishable. This is a current priority for us, especially with the new city permit rules.</p> <p>The "Add a comment" functionality is available on our website: www.publicrules.ca. There is also a "blog" capacity, which will allow interested parties to contribute a running stream of information. Our webmaster has completed a graduated system of who is allowed to post, edit, set up new sections, etc. This was a harder task than he anticipated but it works well and is ready for us to invite users.</p> <p>All sections of the database have been combined, with very flexible capability of organizing documents in easily added topics (like folders). In the meantime (as mentioned above) about 200 new records have been added. The issues and stories are in the queue to be organized into the "how-do-I-..." subjects, see above.</p> <p>About 200 new items have been added to the database. the rights-based system is in place (needs technical and user-acceptance testing). Another 124 in the queue.</p>	
Year 1	Working in collaboration with local park users and City of Toronto staff, the findings of Elinor Ostrom, 2009 Nobel Prize Winner in Economics are applied to urban parks. In particular, Ostrom's lifetime study of diverse, collaborative approaches to using common resources will guide collaborative project work on ten projects in fourteen parks. The intent and proper application of laws, policies, guidelines, and procedures will be clarified for park users, who will be supported in adapting them to facilitate increased community access to urban parks.	<p>Models for strengthening neighbourhoods using existing laws and policies are explored. Community earnings and benefits include:</p> <p>- Playgrounds in three parks (Crombie Park, Dufferin Grove, Wallace Emerson) will be more accessible for all abilities, and more attractive to families because of better staffing and some new activities.</p> <p>- Good staffing and small performance events will be supported in part by funds raised through new community cafés and skate lending in two rink clubhouses (Giovanni Caboto Rink, Christie Pits Rink) and one new café in a playground with a wading pool (Vermont Park). These cafés will be a collaboration between park users and part-time rink or playground staff. In these three parks there will be more neighbourhood pickup sports (including bicycle polo, cricket, lodgeball, ball hockey), which will be more inclusive because people involved in those activities will not have to pay to play.</p> <p>- Two of the city's many unused or under-used park field houses (MacGregor Park</p>	<p>1. Dufferin Grove is partway there, with added accessibility features at the adventure playground. We're still not finished our on-site research through visits by disabled children and youth (and their parents). We also got the City to train and hire an autistic youth to work in the playground alongside other staff. Crombie Park had to be cut from the list because our contact family moved away. Wallace Emerson is getting an accessible play centre for their winter indoor playground, currently being built by our consultant. We worked with a developmentally disabled teen at MacGregor Park and then hired her to come and work in the program at Dufferin Grove. We regard these new hires as a step in the right direction of better staffing. We also got involved with the Oriole Park playground renovation (mixed us with many accessibility features – but that was mainly to learn more, for us to convert into DIY principles for less affluent neighbourhoods).</p> <p>2. We got this done at two rink clubhouses and one new park fieldhouse with a wading pool, just as we intended – but different ones than those we had on the list. We did a Giovanni Caboto clubhouse design charette with an at-risk class from Carlton Village Middle School, but the Etobicoke administrative region made it clear they did not want to follow up. Vermont Park was unexpectedly scheduled for construction, so nothing could be added there. Christie Pits was in the news because of new permit restrictions. These restrictions upset the residents' group so much that they began making plans for reducing their volunteer work. Instead, we were able to collaborate with a city councillor to get kitchen plumbing and wiring put into Wallace Rink clubhouse and Campbell Rink clubhouse (it's also a playground fieldhouse in summer). A private donor was found, to let us equip the kitchens and purchase more skates to lend out. At MacGregor Park, new wiring and additional gifts-in-kind (appliances) made a spring/summer/fall cafe possible. The fieldhouse also became a staging area for more outdoor cooking fires, combined with arts and performance events. Free sports activities supported at these locations include BMX jumps, bike polo, tetherball, soccer, and drop-in skating (skating increased hugely with the arrival of the cafes). In order to use donation income through food at these places, we have met frequently with the city and with recreation staff to work out a cash-handling system that can funnel extra revenue to city programs. These planning sessions are still ongoing, but the donation transfers to the City program budget have begun.</p> <p>3. Valleyfield clubhouse is in the Etobicoke administrative district and therefore also restricted. Macgregor Park not only got a cafe (see above) but also got turned into an occasional art gallery with at-risk and disabled kids' involvement. The Greenwood Rink clubhouse took the place of Valleyfield clubhouse, with a once-a-week family corner all during the winter (scrubbed, donated furniture, art supplies, mini-cafe). The changes have not yet been publicized on our database, nor included in our workbook. However there has been media attention (the Star and the Globe did media pieces referencing our work). There were also a number of invitations to meet with other community groups, who wanted to discuss similar projects. We were able to help one of</p>	

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use park field houses (MacGregor Park, Valleyfield Park) will be scrubbed and repaired, accessibility barriers removed in cheap but ingenious ways, and the buildings made available as part-time neighbourhood clubhouses and staging areas for diverse park activities. These changes will be publicized through the database and the workbook and possibly the media, attracting the attention of other park users and park staff, including management.

- One new bake oven (Bell Manor Park) will be built with active collaboration between: park users, a nearby community health centre, local park staff, and Parks management. The building of this oven will test the potential of replacing centrally-generated policy with collaboration among the groups mentioned (using Elinor Ostrom's principles).
- Three parks (Thornclyffe Park, MacGregor Park, Greenwood Park) will have local events involving the use of home-cooked food, with support and monitoring from park users, a public health inspector, and park staff.
- One rink (Greenwood Rink) will have unusually well-informed collaboration between the city's Capital Projects staff, front-line rink staff, and rink users. In this way they can shape their rink renovation so that winter social space is enhanced for that neighbourhood, without increasing the cost. This will include joint follow-up during the building stage.
- One park (Dufferin Grove Park) will have a playground bio-toilet built for one-quarter of the cost of a conventional public toilet, and park users will have a sophisticated understanding of the steps to building and maintaining it, and about how to the building code and new environmental regulations match up.
- The "helmets-for-pond-hockey" policy will be opened for negotiation at five outdoor artificial ice rinks (Glen Long, Regent Park, Harry Gairey, Dufferin Grove, and Ramsden) drawing both youth and adults, skaters and rink staff, into an active consideration of the principles of good risk management.
- Eight unorganized neighbourhood groups (park users at Greenwood Park, Monarch Park, Earls court Park, MacGregor Park, St.Lawrence Park, Susan Tibaldi Park, and two more not yet identified, intentionally leaving available slots) will have permission and support to carry out free, publicized, open-to-all activities in parks. Their experiences will be documented on the database, with a "how do I..." focus.



-A how-to "workbook" about the projects is produced and projects are documented on the database.

-a 44-page illustrated workbook will be half done by the end of the first funding year. The parts that are ready will be

a number of invitations to meet with other community groups, who wanted to discuss similar projects. we were able to help one of the groups (Orchard Park) to get the use of their park field house as a staging area for a winter natural ice rink.

4. Bell Manor park faced so many Etobicoke administrative obstacles that they gave up trying to get an oven for now. Instead we worked with the Thornclyffe Women's Committee to write a joint grant for a tandoor oven, from the Transportation Department's "Beautiful streets" program. They received \$1500, and also the City laid down a concrete base for the tandoor. Because progress was very slow, we got a private donour to fund a portable tandoor, which was used with great fun at community events at R.V. Burgess Park while awaiting the permanent structure. We also began to use it at Dufferin Grove, to trade expertise between the two locations. City policy staff devised a bake oven policy which will make groups pay to use the ovens even if they paid for the ovens. Because it is difficult for most working people to take time off to do deputations at City hall, we contracted a videographer to canvass oven users about the proposed oven policy. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NhPlcXh-FYM>. His video was posted on the web and also played for city councillors. Attempts at collaboration with City staff about policy did not succeed to date, despite involvement of all existing public ovens users.

In addition to our work re the tandoor oven, we were asked to work with staff and volunteers from LAMP (Health Centre) to help them set up a temporary bake oven for their farmers' market at Toronto Community Housing, for the summer. This worked out well and LAMP says they'll try to get a permanent oven now.

The difficulty of the Bell Manor oven project made us realize that public/community bakers need to get support and to exchange experiences. So we set up a new website, called publicovens.ca, and undertook a "guest baker" project, baking at almost every public oven in the city: <http://publicbakeovens.ca/wiki/wiki.php?n=PublicBakeovens.FrontPage#guest>

5. All three parks (Thornclyffe, MacGregor, and Greenwood) had events using food, with either direct public health involvement or support mediated through our researchers. All involved collaboration with city recreation staff and volunteers.

6. There were seven meetings (two of them public meetings) about the Greenwood Rink renovation. We also helped curate two large information displays that were up in the rink clubhouse all winter, and one temporary display at a giant community campfire. Rink volunteers helped explain the displays. Result: changes were made to the existing plans to allow for the addition of a larger community social space and some cafe/ kitchen capacity. Building is due to begin in spring 2012, and then our follow-up will resume.

7. The City hired two consultants to do a feasibility study of the bio-toilet, which was near completion when our OTF grant started. The study concluded that if the project took account of all possible regulations – if the City "threw the book at the project" – this simple bio-toilet would cost over \$130,000 to build. The study's conclusion signalled a long delay, or permanent stop, for the project. We curated a summer-long information display about the issue. But for now we have to declare defeat.

What remains is to learn from the experience by creating a workbook section using Ostrom's principles. This is a project to learn from mistakes, or from unhappy experience – which is often a good way to learn something. Due in early spring.

8. We held four meetings with city staff to consider the helmets-for-pond-hockey policy. During this time, the city staff kept changing, right up to the top. The Parks director was transferred, then the Recreation director took a new job in Vancouver. The moves caused delays in gaining approval for setting up the consultations at the five rinks.

At the same time, helmet problems became a hot topic in the media, and therefore public discussion on the issue began to shift. Also, our cityrinks.ca website-use climbed steeply (we had to contract a stronger web server), and so our postings on the helmets/risk issue entered public discussion more broadly. Small discussions took place at Ramsden, Harry Gairy, Regent Park and Dufferin Grove.

However, we are not satisfied with the number of people we engaged in consideration of risk and youth/usage issues. We now want to resume and broaden our rink visits. The rinks open at the beginning of December and we have our schedule of rink visits ready.

9. Greenwood Park strengthened their permission for free events, open-access events, building on the principles established through their community campfires.

Neighbours of Monarch Park, Phin Park, and Withrow Park met with us and with each other to support free open-access events, with varying success. Neighbours of Susan Tibaldi Park and MacGregor Park had good success with their open-access events. We also collaborated with the following other groups to do such events:

- Cedar Ridge
- Pelham Toronto Community Housing
- Wallace and Campbell Parks
- Dufferin and Alexandra Park (skateboard groups)

The following groups asked us to help them have free, open-access community events but they didn't succeed:

- East Lynn Park
- Healey Willan Park
- Dovercourt Park
- Christie Pits

This issue may now coalesce into a larger one citywide since City Council appears to have resolved that all community volunteers should pay to donate their work – bakers should pay to bake with kids in community ovens, musicians should pay to give free concerts etc. Our group's experience with having open-access community events may offer examples of alternative approaches, as we get into the home stretch of writing it all up in our lagging "how do I..." material.

The "how-to" items are not yet up on the website in any satisfactory way. But we have now started working with extra researchers to help accelerate this task.

This overlaps with the previous "how-to" booklet. The research is more than half-done, but the writing is not. The writer is practising by publishing one chapter a week (now up to 20 chapters) [http://dufferinpark.ca/aboutus/wiki/wiki.php?n=DufferinGrovesInTrouble?Article=ist+about+a+single+how-to+case+\(Dufferin+Grove\)](http://dufferinpark.ca/aboutus/wiki/wiki.php?n=DufferinGrovesInTrouble?Article=ist+about+a+single+how-to+case+(Dufferin+Grove)). This practice exercise will influence

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year. The posts that are ready will be posted on the database, and linked to the other CELOS websites, to invite comments and changes.

in. Each time a person reviews a subject about a single item to date (within CELOS), the process creates an instance of the Ostrom workbook, but it won't be the same text.

Year 2

More people participating in the database, a kind of local "wikipedia".

-Participation increases as reported by Google analytic.

Year 2

Completion of sub-projects scheduled to take longer than a year

-The bake oven will be ready to operate at Bell Manor Park, the bio-toilet will be ready to start up in spring 2012, the Greenwood Rink plan will be ready for construction in spring 2012, with a working group in place for active collaboration throughout the process.

-A larger number of rink users will have a sophisticated understanding of risk management.
-Risk management-related external posts on the database will have broadened to include playground replacement, campfires, folk dancing, small performances, and food.

Year 2

Completion, printing and distribution of workbook.

-All booklets except for five copies will be in people's hands, and will have been favorably reviewed.

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-Suggestions for changes and additions will be posted on the database. If there is a demand, revisions will be made to the workbook and the revised copy will go to Eva's Phoenix for a second print run.

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