

Partnership Policy Operating Procedures



Division

Effective Date: October 11, 2021

Reviewed: October 11, 2021

Revised: Date

Authorization: _____
Division Manager or Assistant Director

(*Assistant Director for Department-wide procedures and Division Manager for Division procedures)

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Introduction

The purpose of this procedure is to set forth a consistent process for partnerships with individuals, for-profit and non-profit organizations.

The Parks and Recreation Department (Department) has established the following Partnership Policy:
It is the policy of the Department to enter into partnerships for facility maintenance, park maintenance, operations, programming, design and/or construction in a manner that is consistent with the City and Department’s values, vision, mission, goals, strategic priorities, and result in mutual public and Department benefit.

Vision

The Austin Parks and Recreation Department will be an innovative leader in parks and recreation experiences

Mission

It is the Austin Parks and Recreation Department's mission to inspire Austin to learn, play, protect and connect by creating diverse programs and experiences in sustainable natural spaces and public places.

Value Statement

The Austin Parks and Recreation Department promotes lifelong recreation, cultural, environmental, and educational opportunities for Austin's diverse communities. The Department values:

Inclusion

We strive to reflect diversity, equity and inclusion in all our programs and services.

Health and Wellness

We contribute to Austin's health and wellness by providing safe and accessible parks, facilities and programs.

Sustainability

We work to improve environmental and recreational functions and improve the connection between people and the environment.



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Accountability

We commit to being professionally accountable to our customers, to our partners, to one another and to ourselves.

Collaboration

We seek to strengthen partnerships between the City of Austin, private organizations, volunteers and community groups to efficiently provide recreational opportunities to our residents.

Customer Service

We provide a world class parks system through exceptional customer service and stewardship.

Partnership Process

A. Expression of Interest

In many cases the partnership proposal begins with the submission of a Community Activated Park Project proposal. The proposal form requires prospective partners to submit a brief form online providing information on the proposed project scope for investments or park/facility development or maintenance/operations arrangements that are in alignment with the Department's programs and objectives as well as Citywide goals. An online Community Activated Park Project (CAPP) proposal form is available on the Department website and the Partnership Manager's contact info is provided to assist with questions and submissions. Submissions over \$2,000 are reviewed on a quarterly basis and projects under \$2,000 are reviewed on a rolling basis.

Information on the Community Activated Park Projects program and a link to the online form can be found here: <https://austintexas.gov/department/community-activated-park-projects>

B. Proposal Requirements

In order for PARD to appropriately evaluate proposals for public private partnerships, whether solicited or unsolicited, the partnership proposal must include, at a minimum:

- A clear and complete description of the public purpose and outline of the expectations of the respective partners, sufficient to vet the proposal through an initial review process;
- Alignment with Department/City of Austin goals and strategic direction 2023;
- A description of how the proposal is aligned with the values, mission and priorities of the Department;
- Justification of why a partnership is the appropriate mechanism for delivery of the project or activities of the proposed partnership;
- A description of the proposed partner, including relevant experience and references, and the proposed form of the partnership;
- A business plan, including a market analysis of the proposed activities and a financial plan for the partnership, if relevant;
- A facility plan, if relevant;
- Performance standards and measurable objectives and outcomes; and
- Any other information required by the Department for staff to complete the evaluation of the initial submission.



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C. Partnership Proposal Review (CAPP)

Review Committee – A review committee comprised of appropriate staff given the nature of the partnership proposal is created to review the proposal. The committee may include:

- a. Applicable Assistant Director(s)
- b. Applicable Division Manager(s)
- c. Site Supervisor
- d. Park Planning – Landscape Architect
- e. Relevant Operations and Maintenance Staff
- f. Risk Management
- g. Partnership Manager
- h. Additional City of Austin staff, as applicable

Review Criteria - The following comprise some, but not an exhaustive list, of the criteria and/or conditions of a proposal that staff will consider in its evaluation of a specific partnership proposal:

- a. The proposal meets the guiding principles outlined in this Policy and is otherwise consistent with this Policy;
- b. The activities and terms of the proposal are acceptable for coverage of the Department's risk by the City of Austin;
- c. The proposed project is consistent with existing Department policy plans, or has been identified by the Department and/or Parks and Recreation Board for a potential partnership;
- d. The proposed project clearly designates the roles and responsibilities/risks and rewards of each partner;
- e. The proposal includes anticipated short and long-term costs to the Department in resources, including workload and CIP or operating and maintenance budget impacts;
- f. The proposed project includes a level of quality consistent with standards established by the Department for projects of a similar nature
- g. The proposed project addresses the public's interests with regard to access, affordability, customer service, hours of operation, and variety of programming,
- h. The proposed project has local ownership and/or leadership, and the proposal involves local leadership and beneficiaries in design and implementation;
- i. The proposed project has a high level of support and/or high likelihood of support for the partnership from the community and proposed users of the service or project proposed;
- j. The partnership provides opportunities for access for underserved communities;
- k. The private partner has experienced and, if applicable licensed professionals, dedicated to the project to support private sector responsibilities;
- l. The private partner has the financial capability, a sound financial plan and an appropriate level of experience to deliver the project and/or conduct the activities required of it in the partnership;
- m. The proposed project has a clearly identified and dedicated funding source to support the obligations of the private partner; The level of entitlements and rights of the private partner are supported by economic value consistent with such partner's contribution to the partnership in resources and risks;



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- n. The project proposal includes milestones to assure timely delivery of a partnership product;
- o. The output of the service can be measured and valued in a manner that allows the Department to easily determine compliance with the purpose of the partnership;
- p. The proposed project and activities are consistent with the Department and the City of Austin's environmental stewardship goals.
- q. The partnership activities and the partnership agreements have appropriate, crime prevention measures in place if necessary; and
- r. The Department has the resources and availability to effectively oversee the partnership, including design and construction of the project, and on-going activities of the partnership.

D. Partnership Configurations- Formalization of Partnerships

Prior to the Department's entry into a formal partnership, the essential terms of the Partnership will be presented to the Department Director or designee for approval. At the discretion of the Director, the partnership may be submitted to the Parks and Recreation Board for review and recommendation.

Partnerships will be reviewed and assessed based on the Department Partnership Configurations. Partnership Agreements, if applicable, will be based on the partner meeting the Partnership Configuration definition and criteria. Details of the criteria for each Partnership Configuration are provided in the Partnership Policy.

Partnerships must have formal written agreements and work plans that clearly state risks, responsibilities, mutual interests and expectations; and define roles, responsibilities and accountabilities for each partner. Partnerships can be in the form of one or more types of written agreements such as Community Activated Park Project agreement, parkland improvement agreements, programming, operations and maintenance agreements, joint use agreements and funding agreements.

E. Managing Partnerships

Partnership establishment, assessment, formalization and development of partnership agreements is managed by the Partnership Manager (Program Manager II – Park Planning Division).

Attachments:

PARD Partnership Configurations A-D

