



Park Partnership Initiative Vision, Mission, Values and Principles and Benefits

**“Protecting green space and enriching communities”
*in partnership***

Partnership Vision:

Citizens working in Park Partnership Associations and the Regional Parks Forum as individuals or groups in partnership with Metro Vancouver Parks Committee and Parks staff to:

- enable people of all ages and abilities to support and sustain Regional Parks;
- provide an active role in how Regional Parks are cared for, used and protected;
- expand Regional Parks opportunities for the broader community.

Together, these partners facilitate opportunities for all citizens to enjoy, shape and contribute to stewardship, conservation, education and recreation in Regional Parks.

Partnership Mission:

To build and sustain community, volunteer, partner, elected representative and staff support for the establishment and ongoing activities of Park Partnership Associations and the Regional Park Forum. These community-based associations and park partners help plan, manage and implement stewardship, conservation, educational and recreational activities in Regional Parks.

Partnership Values:

- trust, respect and integrity
- open, honest, inclusive and accessible processes
- shared vision, decision-making and responsibility
- inclusive decision-making by consensus
- listening to the voices of the community
- the cultural and ethnic diversity of our park communities
- ongoing learning opportunities
- creative, flexible and innovative processes and solutions
- non hierarchical processes and structures

Working Principles for Metro Vancouver and Partners:

1. Metro Vancouver and Park Partnership Associations work together on a continuum of partnering activities from consultation to joint agreements and participation in program delivery, through to collaboration and shared decision-making.
2. Metro Vancouver and Park Partnership Associations are jointly committed to providing care, recreational opportunities, stewardship, broad public access, educational benefits, and community and public participation in all regional parks.
3. Metro Vancouver has a statutory responsibility for regional parkland, facilities, infrastructure, parks staff, public safety and funding regional parks.
4. Park Partnership Associations and other partners in parks have individual roles, identities, responsibilities and accountabilities that are exercised within and outside of the partnership processes.
5. The responsibility of each Park Partnership Association is to maintain a park(s) as a public trust in partnership and transcends the interests or beliefs of any one individual or group at the table.
6. Partners' activities and ways of working respect union agreements between staff and Metro Vancouver and conform to all other relevant legal and contractual agreements signed by the Metro Vancouver .
7. Metro Vancouver Parks and Park Partnership Associations work with a variety of stakeholders that may include government agencies, non-profit associations, other groups in Regional Parks and private business corporations.
8. Individual and organizational learning and change are essential ingredients in the evolution of this partnership.
9. Conflicting opinions are supported because they allow staff and partners to constructively express and resolve differences.
10. Participatory decision-making is the preferred decision-making model because it is inclusive, encourages people to work together, and accommodates diversity.
11. Partners recognize that Metro Vancouver staff have professional responsibilities, authority and accountability and that the Partnership Initiative in no way is meant to replace staff with community volunteers in the management and operations of regional parks.
12. Park Partnership Associations are working towards being independent, self-supporting organizations that share common goals with Metro Vancouver Regional Parks.
13. Members of the general public will continue to have access to Metro Vancouver Regional Parks and elected representatives via open and direct communication channels.

BENEFITS

- A. Partnering arrangements provide citizens with:
- direct involvement in the operation, care and management of Metro Vancouver parks, (in step with the trend of more direct involvement in governance of public assets);
 - opportunities to share resources, promotional tools, ideas, volunteer expertise, skills, equipment and community contacts effectively
 - increased potential for expanded representation, a higher profile and a stronger voice for community interests, resulting in better access to agency, foundation and corporate support
 - improved prospects for equitable and integrated planning and operation of parks
 - savings in services (group insurance policies)
 - opportunities to achieve personal benefits and objectives
- B. Partnering arrangements permit Metro Vancouver to:
- deal with increased complexity and interdependence of issues and players by obtaining wide input and involvement from stakeholders
 - tap into the vast potential of volunteer and private sector resources and expertise
 - be service responsive
 - “empower” clients and stakeholders, by increasing knowledge of issues among partners, thus leading to a greater ownership of outcomes
 - receive continuous and immediate input from a knowledgeable and engaged citizenry to assist elected representatives with key political decisions and policy direction
 - make best use of available resources
- C. Mutual:
- together Metro Vancouver and partners will forge new relationships that build synergies in achieving park and community goals
 - community groups are encouraged to achieve their objectives on Metro Vancouver land, adding value to Metro Vancouver park land
 - parks become (seamlessly) integrated into community ownership and action
 - citizens become part of a “peer suasion” approach to modeling and monitoring appropriate behaviour in parks to provide a better experience for all park users and minimize use of enforcement techniques

This statement of partnership vision and high level intent evolved from the following documents and processes:

- Review of Partnership Initiative by Metro Vancouver Staff and Partners in 2000.
- Regional Partnership Steering Committee Guiding Principles Recommendations
- Administration and Governance work on Guiding Principles
- Partnership Development Workshop (Blue Binder)
- Metro Vancouver Parks Staff Program Management Group Discussion
- April 1997 Public Forum Handbook pages 21-25
- Alti Rodal Partnership Workshop

