Public Space and Resilience: Inspiring Accelerators

Kathy Blaha, KBA Consulting
Deb Guenther, Mithun
Connie Chung, HR&A Advisors
Pittsburgh / EcoDistricts Summit 2019
PUBLIC REALM AND RESILIENCE: NEW CIVIC NETWORKS
ECO DISTRICT CONFERENCE
NOVEMBER 5, 2019

Kathy Blaha Consulting: Strategic Park Partnerships
Public Parks and Climate Change

The role of parks and public space is shifting. They are no longer seen as something nice to have, but rather as a vital system within the city’s overall network of infrastructure.
Parks and Community Resilience

Parks offer a place to boost community resilience. Climate adaptation planning can benefit from re-positioning that links to core community issues and needs.
Collaborative Approaches Are Vital

Climate adaptation planning can catalyze new collaborations and coordination and create a platform for social interaction.
Equitable Process

Key to planning efforts is the idea of ‘procedural equity’ - the extent and robustness of public and community participation in planning and decision making.

Kathy Blaha Consulting: Strategic Park Partnerships
New Networks: Civic Fusion

Blending government-led initiatives with nonprofit, neighborhood and philanthropy partners can maximize project assets.

Kathy Blaha Consulting: Strategic Park Partnerships
Successful Engagement

Creating a space for strong partnerships between civic entrepreneurs – foundations, technologists, community organizers – and
Key Workshop Questions

- At what stage of climate adaptation planning are you in your community?
- Are the right people at the table?
- Is the focus on the right issues?
- What will it take to be successful?
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Develop a community vision for the Tacoma waterfront and action plan for Ruston Way.
Technical Analysis —
Sea Level Rise is impacting Ruston Way today.
Today
By 2100, sea level is projected to rise at Ruston Way by 1.5' to 4.6'.
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Storm Impact
By 2100, sea level is projected to rise at Ruston Way by 1.5' to 4.6'.
By 2100, sea level is projected to rise at Ruston Way by 1.5' to 4.6' Up, Away Or Float
By 2100, sea level is projected to rise at Ruston Way by 1.5' to 4.6'.
By 2100, sea level is projected to rise at Ruston Way by 1.5' to 4.6'.
There are no “one size fits all” solutions for Ruston Way
Time to build your waterfront —
A Dream Waterfront
Our Ruston Way Waterfront
Urban League Sisters in the City
Ruston Way Vision:

A Welcoming Waterfront

This plan is welcoming of all who walk, by welcoming users that represent different backgrounds, beliefs, and interests. While walking and cycling are a great way to reduce the Ruston Way footprint, the plan for the pedestrian promenade with the citywide and regional street network will ensure safety and accessibility. The Ruston Way Vision provides for increased walkability and connectivity of the waterfront along with the user’s edge and change.

Adaptation of Valuable Places

The vision for Ruston Way is to be a place that promotes the adaptation and recycling of valuable placemaking elements. Furthermore, these places should be clearly identified and enjoyable experience for all users.

Direct Multiple Benefit Solutions

Major investments in infrastructure are being required to respond to impacts from sea level rise. The Ruston Way Vision provides for multiple social, environmental, and economic benefits in the short and long term.

A Natural Waterfront

Ruston Way should continue to develop natural ecosystems along the waterfront. Key and estuaries, especially, are unique habitats that have critical natural systems. These changes are not only important to protect and enhance these ecosystems, but also provide ongoing and experiential value to visitors.
Process > Outcome
Who are the existing community leaders?

What technical information exchange could happen to make resilience relevant day-to-day?

What design processes are happening in your community and how could they support dialogue around wealth building?
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Increasingly, cities are creating equitable investment strategies to provide quality amenities and neighborhood parks that benefit all.

Minneapolis, MN  
Equity-based criteria inform investments

Miami-Dade, FL  
Master Plan identifies underserved communities

Los Angeles, CA  
Needs assessment highlights funding inequities

Washington, D.C.  
11th Street Bridge Park planning engages vulnerable communities
An equitable park strategy focuses on addressing equity in all phases of park planning, funding, and implementation.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Planning</th>
<th>Funding</th>
<th>Implementation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Park Equity Assessments</td>
<td>Broad Engagement</td>
<td>Equitable Investment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Premise: Equal access to parks and outdoor space</td>
<td>Tool: Continuous engagement with community partners</td>
<td>Goal: Address historic disinvestment by seeking equitable investment outcomes</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Implementation: Ensure park-catalyzed development benefits existing community</td>
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Case Study: Restoring Pittsburgh Parks | The RPP initiative aims to reinvest equitably in parks across the city.

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<td>Citywide needs assessment, integration with community planning</td>
<td>Parks Listening Tours, community survey over 5 months</td>
<td>Focus on 18 highest-need parks, increased maintenance standards across the city</td>
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<td>Neighborhood park investments that create local employment opportunities</td>
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Investment in parks is an investment in Pittsburgh’s ability to manage flood risk and stormwater.

81% of Pittsburgh parks acreage is located in priority sewersheds*

Over 80% of Pittsburgh’s CSO** reductions can be addressed in just six of the 30 highest priority sewersheds

Source: Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy, PWSA, ALCOSAN

*A sewershed is an area of land where all the sewers flow to a single point. Priority sewersheds include the 55 sewersheds identified by PWSA as those that generate the highest volumes of stormwater runoff as well as Saw Mill Run sewershed.

**A combined sewer overflow (CSO) occurs when rain causes the sewer system to reach capacity and overflow, discharging a mix of stormwater and sewage.
The plan will allocate over $55 million more that could support green infrastructure improvements in parks throughout Pittsburgh.

* $44 million is the combined total of maintenance and rehabilitation funds that would be allocated in the first six years, as well as the allocated funding for capital improvements in 4 priority parks located in highest priority sewer sheds.
Along with green benefits, parks are social infrastructure, as seen in the successful restoration of August Wilson Park in Pittsburgh’s Hill District.
It’s located on the edge of the Lower Hill, the site of both urban renewal activity and more recent, community-focused thinking about revitalization.
As the Civic Arena site planning progressed, local institutions made complementary investments in social and community assets.

2008 - Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh

2010 - Greenprint Plan
2011 - Kauffman Center
2012 - Thelma Lovette YMCA
2014 - Jeron X. Grayson Community Center
2014 - Energy Innovation Center
2016 - August Wilson Park
August Wilson Park has become an important hub and anchor location for local organizations that:

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<th>Keep children, youth, and seniors active and engaged.</th>
<th>Provide opportunities for community members to learn and create.</th>
<th>Bring the community together.</th>
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<tr>
<td>Ozanam Basketball Clinic</td>
<td>Art in the Park for Seniors</td>
<td>Hill District Block Party</td>
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Case Study: New Orleans Gentilly Resilience District | Parks can create multiple benefits, especially when connecting an entire vulnerable district.
At present, the Gentilly Resilience District (GRD) envisions four projects, each of which provide a variety of benefits.

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<th>Climate Resilience</th>
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<td><strong>Urban Water</strong> – transforming water from a threat into an asset in the public realm through park improvements, Blue-Green Corridors &amp; Parklands, and the Neighborhood Network</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Reliable Energy &amp; Smart Systems</strong> – enhancing grid reliability and asset monitoring</td>
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<th>Community Enhancement</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Community Adaptation Plan (CAP)</strong> – adapting private property for storm water management through LMI homeowner resilience retrofit programs</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Workforce</strong> – providing work and training opportunities for local residents</td>
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We use a 4-step framework to identify funding sources to cover operating costs to realize economic benefits generated by the GRD.

**Approach to Identifying Funding Sources:**

1. **Benefits**
   - *What gets better?*

2. **Beneficiaries**
   - *Who benefits?*

3. **Funding Mechanisms**
   - *How do they pay?*

4. **Feasibility Analysis**
   - *What is required?*

   1. Identify the **benefits** that will be generated
   2. Determine the **beneficiaries** that will experience these benefits
   3. Identify potential **funding mechanisms** to monetize these benefits
   4. Assess the **feasibility** of each funding mechanism and make recommendations
There are two groups of beneficiaries and benefits that can provide funding for GRD’s O&M through these different tools.

### Recommended Funding Tools

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<th><strong>Tax Based Tools</strong></th>
<th><strong>Stormwater Infrastructure Based Tools</strong></th>
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<td><em>Fiscal benefits for the City and neighborhood improvements for residents</em></td>
<td><em>Stormwater infrastructure benefits for Sewerage and Water Board</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Dedicated Tax Revenue</strong> or <strong>Special Assessment</strong></td>
<td><strong>Shared Maintenance Agreement</strong> or <strong>Drainage Fee Set-Aside</strong></td>
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Community Enhancement | The CAP also considers ways to involve homeowners in the investments so they can see earlier benefits.

The Community Adaptation Program (CAP) will provide **residential stormwater management improvements** to owner-occupied single-family homes with household incomes at or below 80% of Area Median Income.

NORA expects the program to divert and detain stormwater runoff on up to **200 properties** with an average grant award between $10,000 and $25,000.
Key Lessons Learned

1. Make a compelling benefits case
2. Use data
3. Localize your strategies
4. Equitable investments lead to equitable outcomes
Workshop Questions

1. Who will benefit from investment?

2. What data can you marshal to make the case for investment?

3. How will the funding entities need to work together?
TIME TO WORKSHOP!

Who are the existing community leaders?

What technical information exchange could happen to make resilience relevant day-to-day?

What design processes are happening in your community and how could they support dialogue around wealth building?