

I. CHESTER COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION GRANT PROPOSAL SUMMARY SHEET

Date 9/13/2018

Contact Information

Organization Name: Fairmount Park Conservancy
Address: 1617 John F Kennedy Blvd, Suite 1670
Philadelphia, PA 19103
Phone: 215-988-9334
Website: myphillypark.org
Year Incorporated: 1992

Executive Director Name: Jamie Gauthier
Exec. Dir. Email: jgauthier@myphillypark.org
Board of Directors Chair: John K. Binswanger
Primary Contact Name: Kim Jordan
Contact E-mail: kjordan@myphillypark.org

Has your nonprofit ever applied to the Community Foundation? Yes ___ No Not Sure ___
Has your nonprofit ever received funding from the Community Foundation? Yes ___ No Not Sure ___
___ Donor Advised Fund(s) ___ Fund for Chester County ___ Don't know/Not sure

Field/s of Interest:

Arts, Culture & Humanities Environment/Animal Welfare ___ Education
 Health ___ Human Services ___ Religion

Organization Information:

Geographic Area Served: Philadelphia and the entire Philadelphia park system

Describe Population Served and Annual Number of People Served: The Philadelphia park system is a public park system that is free of charge and open to the general public, therefore visitors to neighborhood parks are not tracked and we do not collect data on overall park usage. We serve millions of Philadelphia residents and visitors each year.

Mission: Fairmount Park Conservancy is a nonprofit that brings parks to life. We improve and steward Philadelphia's parks, enhance their historic and cultural assets, and support the communities they serve.

Proposal Summary: The Conservancy respectfully requests **general operating support** from the Chester County Community Foundation to sustain our current programmatic efforts, which are described in more detail in the application.

Annual Budget \$8,968,959

82 % of budget for program expenses

10 % of budget for administrative expenses

8 % of budget for fundraising expenses

100 % total

28 # of Full-Time Equivalent Paid Staff

26 # of Board Volunteers

3,709 # of Active Non-Board Volunteers

14,000 # of Volunteer Hours

Top 3-5 funding sources:

John S. & James L. Knight Foundation, ArtPlace America Community Development Investments, Saint-Gobain Corporation, TD Bank, Joanna McNeil Trust

Grant Amount Requested from the Community Foundation: We request general operating support in the amount of \$5,000 but contributions of any amount would be greatly appreciated.

II. CHESTER COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION GRANT PROPOSAL NARRATIVE

1. Organization's history, goals, key achievements and distinctiveness

Fairmount Park Conservancy is a nonprofit organization that supports Philadelphia's parks. We lead capital projects, restore natural lands, preserve historic structures, and engage communities through park stewardship and civic initiatives including meaningful arts-based interventions. We believe that parks can serve as catalysts for positive change throughout the city, and in the important role parks play in people's lives as places of joy, recreation, and social connection. Unlike many other park nonprofits, which focus on a single park or restricted geography, the Conservancy works throughout the Philadelphia park system, over 10,200 acres of land that includes neighborhood parks, watershed parks, meadows, and forests, in addition to recreation centers, pools, playgrounds, and historic houses and monuments.

Since 2009, the Conservancy has led the comprehensive revitalization of the 87-acre Hunting Park in North Philadelphia through more than \$4.5 million in community-driven capital improvements and programmatic interventions that have had a substantial impact on the health and safety of the community.

In 2012, we took on an expanded role within the neighborhood parks, launching a formal Neighborhood Park Stewardship Program through which we have grown a network of more than 115 neighborhood park groups, mobilized thousands of citizen volunteers through city-wide service days, and contributed significant resources to neighborhood park improvement projects and programming efforts.

Since 2013, we have offered six weeks of free summer programming at The Oval, a pop-up park on eight acres of public space at the base of the Benjamin Franklin Parkway attended by nearly 500,000 residents and visitors over its first five years.

In 2015, the Conservancy was one of only six organizations selected from across the nation to participate in the ArtPlace America Community Development Investments program, which challenged us to incorporate arts and cultural strategies into our core work to enhance and activate the Philadelphia's parks and recreational spaces and led us to establish a dedicated Arts & Culture program.

In 2018, we held the grand opening for Phase I of *Centennial Commons*, a park-within-a-park at the Parkside Avenue edge of West Fairmount Park and one of five sites that constitute the *Reimagining the Civic Commons* pilot initiative in Philadelphia led by the Conservancy. For the other four projects – Bartram's Mile, Reading Viaduct, Lovett Library & Park, and the Discovery Center – the Conservancy has deployed capital funds and provided additional resources and programming support through the Civic Commons Collective established through the initiative, which has since expanded to include major projects in Akron, Chicago, Detroit, and Memphis.

In addition to these ongoing projects and programs, we promote and participate in a growing array of health and wellness programs including We Walk PHL, Farm Philly (the city's urban agriculture program), and the annual Senior Strut, lead historic preservation efforts at more than 40 historic properties and other cultural resources in Fairmount Park, develop and execute events for 18 historic houses that populate East and West Fairmount Park, and host dozens of special events for our members and supporters each year, including guided hikes, runs, and kayak tours.

2. Funding request

The Philadelphia park system provides health benefits through access to nature and protection of the watershed, opportunities for recreation and play, and connects us with our past through its historic and cultural assets. These benefits are not only for Philadelphia residents but are experienced by millions of visitors each year, who come to experience Fairmount Park's cultural institutions, gather for picnics, walk with family members on the trails of the Wissahickon, or visit one of the park's historic mansions all decorated for the holidays. The Conservancy works throughout this park system, to enhance and preserve it, and requests general operating support grants in the amount of \$5,000 to help us carry out our ongoing programs focused on volunteer efforts in Philadelphia's neighborhood parks, health and wellness, natural lands conservation, and historic preservation, though contributions of any amount would be welcomed.

Our Neighborhood Park Stewardship Program operates throughout Philadelphia's vast network of neighborhood parks, representing a cross-section of Philadelphia residents and hundreds of acres of well-used but under-resourced parkland. Through this year-round program, we work with 115 Park Friend Groups and thousands of volunteers to engage residents in environmental stewardship, beautification efforts, and community-focused programs. Our model of park stewardship is responsive to community needs and demonstrates the capacity for engaging park users, community members, and volunteers on a day-to-day basis. We work closely with Philadelphia Parks & Recreation to provide support and resources by organizing skills trainings and quarterly meetings that build capacity of our volunteers; by offering equipment, tools, and assistance in navigating and locating city resources; and by participating in community meetings and events at neighborhood parks.

Our health and wellness programs include: We Walk PHL, free walking groups at 10 city parks carried out in partnership with the Department of Public Health and neighborhood volunteers that encourages physical activity and positive park use; guided hikes, runs, bike rides, and yoga or meditation events throughout the park system, focused on areas where the Conservancy has recently undertaken physical improvement projects such as the Trolley Trail; and FarmPhilly, the city's urban agriculture program, which supports over 65 projects on Philadelphia parkland including 20 community gardens, 38 youth gardens, and 10 orchards and urban farms. The Conservancy supports FarmPhilly's Carousel House Farm in West Philadelphia and has worked to connect neighbors in West Philadelphia with this active farm and its efforts to educate residents about how to grow food in urban spaces and healthy cooking options, including the seasonal Parkside Fresh Food Fest that took place over the summer at the newly-completed *Centennial Commons* space.

We preserve culturally significant buildings and manage 40 historic park structures throughout Philadelphia through our historic preservation program, and protect the environment through stewardship of the city's meadows, forests, and waterways. Over the past year, we undertook 52 historic preservation or restoration projects, created 3,475 feet of sustainable trails, held a dozen homeowner workshops for neighborhood residents, and invested over \$5 million in Philadelphia's parks and historic park structures. In the past year the Conservancy has undertaken restoration projects including: the removal of invasive plants and re-introduction of native species in the forests surrounding the Horticulture Center in West Fairmount Park; removal of invasive vines and the re-seeding of Bittersweet Meadow and Cliff's Meadow with native wildflowers; and further advanced the Trolley Trail multi-use trail network which will ultimately be five miles in length and help protect the delicate ecosystem of the surrounding woods and animal habitat.

3. How impact and results will be demonstrated

The Conservancy takes care to examine and share the impact and results of our work in a variety of ways. For instance, we track volunteer participation at clean-up days, number of active Park Friend Groups, trees planted and given away, bags of leaves or trash collected, pounds of food grown, feet of trail created, attendance at events, number of events held, and more. Beyond collecting statistics such as these, we regularly post pieces on our blog detailing ongoing or completed Conservancy projects with compelling photography and interviews of partners and community members. These articles are also shared via our 30,000 combined social media followers and may be highlighted in our weekly newsletters that have over 35,000 subscribers. Increasingly, we have worked with videographers to document and share our successes, allowing those who have partnered with us, or benefited from our work, to share their stories. Finally, each year we create an annual "Report to the Community" which provides an overview of our projects and programs from the preceding year, available online or in print form upon request.

III. ATTACHMENTS

E-mail or mail this support information

1. Copy of 501 (c) (3) federal tax-exempt letter
2. List of Board of Directors, with their affiliations
3. Most recent annual report and financial statement, audited if available
4. Itemized organizational operating budget with actual results for prior fiscal year and current fiscal year to date
5. If capacity building initiative, itemized budget (including external consultant's proposal, if applicable)
6. Current strategic plan. If your nonprofit does not have a current strategic plan, explain why.

If Philanthropy Network of Greater Philadelphia's Common Grant Application is used, the Community Foundation's Summary Sheet MUST accompany application. Available at www.chescocf.org

E-mail completed proposals to grants@chescocf.org

Please contact Kevin Baffa or Beth Harper Briglia at (610) 696-8211 or grants@chescocf.org if you have any questions. Thank you.

Chester County
COMMUNITY FOUNDATION
*Connecting people who care with causes that matter,
so their legacies make a difference.*