

Riverfront Resource Guide #1:

PARTNERSHIP BUILDING

The key to successful projects is successful partnerships. Riverfront projects, with their multitude of stakeholders, property owners, funding sources, required permits, and design constraints are no exception. Building the right team will enable you to build consensus and strategically align your riverfront goals with available resources.

To start the partnership building process, you will need to develop your project understanding (the what, why, and where) and identify potential stakeholders (the who). By understanding your project, you will identify the scale and scope of your project needs. Your project needs will directly impact who you engage to be a partner. Below are questions to ask as you begin this process:

- 1. What are the objectives and the time frame of the project?** (for example: "In two years, design and construct, a destination riverfront park that will appeal to multiple generations")
- 2. Why is this project important?** ("The project will provide needed park space and will increase economic development opportunities.")
- 3. Where is the project located?** ("The project is located on city property on River Street.")
- 4. Who are the key stakeholders?**
 - Who owns the land? Is the land owned by a city/state, a private land owner, or an institution?
 - Who are the community leaders? Is there a city council member who will champion the project?
 - Who from the community is already involved? Are there organizations which have worked on past riverfront projects/opportunities? (for example: non-profits, "friends of" groups, waterfront planning organizations, boating associations, community development corporations)
 - Who has potential financial resources in the community? Is there a local foundation, institution, or corporation that would be interested in being involved?
 - Who will be the future users of the project? Who lives in the adjacent neighborhoods?

Once you identify your project understanding and your stakeholders, it's time to convene your partners. Depending on the project and politics, it might be necessary to both meet one-on-one and in groups with key stakeholders. To strategically coordinate, start by mapping out the stakeholders. Sketch out how the stakeholders relate to each other and to the project. Ask yourself: Who will be supportive? Who might be hesitant? You may choose to reach out to stakeholders who require special attention through preliminary informal phone conversations, in-person meetings, and walking tours of the project site. Group meetings could include brainstorming sessions, goal setting workshops, group site tours, and open community meetings.

Follow the next steps below to start building successful partnerships:

Next Steps Checklist

- Develop your project understanding (see what, why, where)
- List potential stakeholders (see who)
- Draw and analyze a stakeholder map
- Conduct one-on-one stakeholder meetings
- Convene stakeholders for group meeting(s)
- With all stakeholders, develop and confirm specific project goals and objectives
- With all stakeholders, develop and confirm a project time-frame with deadlines and assigned responsibilities
- Convene stakeholders on a regular basis for project check-ins

Riverfront Resource Guide #2:

FUNDRAISING

Fundraising constitutes raising money for a project and is necessary in order to take a riverfront project from idea to reality. Fundraising for riverfront projects creates the opportunity for government agencies, foundations, individuals, and companies to invest in public waterfront amenities. There are two basic types of funding available: public and private. Public funds are provided by public agencies such as state governments or redevelopment authorities. Private funds are provided by private individuals, foundations, and companies.

Since each riverfront project is unique, you might need to seek either public or private funds or a combination of both. Both public and private funds come with requirements. If you are seeking public funds, keep in mind that you will be required to demonstrate a direct public benefit, and hire vendors for design and construction through an open, public review process. Refer to your local procurement

requirements. Public funds also often require a monetary match (for example: a state grant will provide \$100,000 but you are required to match the funds with \$100,000 of additional funds from another source). Private funds, while more flexible, may require recognition in the form of signage and media. Some funding also requires a charitable organization (ie: 501 c3) to accept and manage the money.

Both public and private funders will require funding goals and the demonstration of measurable outcomes. These outcomes and goals can be specific to documenting public benefit, economic value generation, diversity of users, and environmental gains. It is important to track before and after metrics (images, pedestrian counts, and property value analysis) to be able to prove the impact of any financial investment. See sample funding sources below.

Sources of Public Funding

Federal Resources (regional offices)

- Army Corps of Engineers
- US Fish and Wildlife Service
- Environmental Protection Agency

State Resources (regional offices)

- Department of Community and Economic Development
- Department of Environmental Protection
- Department of Transportation
- Department of Conservation and Natural Resources
- Fish and Boat Commission

County/City Resources

- City council
- City planning department
- City parks and recreation department
- Local redevelopment authority
- Business improvement districts (BIDs)
- Neighborhood improvement districts (NIDs)
- Community development corporations (CDCs)

Sources of Private Funding

Individuals

- Major gifts
- Annual pledged donation
- In-kind donation (volunteer hours, products, services)
- Bargain sale (property)

Foundations

- Community foundation
- Private family foundation

Corporations

- Corporate foundations
- Corporate sponsorship
- In-kind donation (volunteer hours, products, services)

Riverfront Resource Guide #3:

DESIGN + CONSTRUCTION

Planning for a riverfront requires a cohesive vision for the design of riverfront amenities such as plazas, trails, boardwalks, shelters, playgrounds, and performance spaces. A design vision will set the groundwork for community engagement, cost estimates, and construction schedules. In a project's early stages, design vision can come from community members and volunteers. As a project progresses toward construction, it is necessary to engage design and construction professionals to ensure the feasibility and legality of a project. If you are working on public land (owned by city, county, or state), keep in mind that vendors for design and construction will need to be selected through an open, public review process. Refer to your local procurement requirements.

Follow the next steps below to start the design and construction of your riverfront project:

Next Steps Checklist

- Convene a small group of community members and volunteers to brainstorm riverfront ideas and to gather feedback. Review any existing planning documents to ensure the project aligns with existing goals and initiatives.
- If working on public land, follow the local procurement requirements to issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) to landscape architects or civil engineers. If working on private land, consult a landscape architect or civil engineer.
- Hire a landscape architect or civil engineer to develop a concept design, cost estimate, and construction documents.
- If working on public land, follow the local procurement requirements to advertise a bid to contractors and hire a contractor to construct the project.
- Once complete, plan a ribbon cutting event and enjoy!

Riverfront principles to follow

- Design and construct riverfront projects with high-quality materials to ensure longevity.
- Connect adjacent neighborhoods to the riverfronts by limiting physical and/or visual obstacles to and from the river. Maintain clear sight-lines.
- Ensure accessible groundfloor connections to the riverfront and prominent riverfront entrances within buildings.
- Integrate environmental sustainability into the design, operation, and maintenance of riverfront projects.
- Support healthy environments along the rivers by repairing and enhancing the natural environment, managing stormwater on-site, and incorporating measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and lessen air pollution.
- Activate riverfronts for the use and enjoyment of the public with programming and public amenities (for example: trails, open spaces, walkways, kayak launches, water taxi docks, benches, lighting, bike racks, bike repair stations, bike share stations, public art, water fountains, dog runs, phone charging stations, etc.).
- Promote the use and enjoyment of the ground floor of riverfront properties by providing facilities of public accommodation (for example: cafes, restaurants, retail spaces) as well as ground floor public amenities (for example: bike storage, kayak storage, public restrooms, lobby seating).
- Incorporate wayfinding signage for public access to the riverfront.
- Design multi-use trails to be 10 ft-14 ft wide. The minimum paved width should be 10 ft. Wider paved widths, 11 ft to 14 ft, are recommended in locations that anticipate high pedestrian and bicyclist traffic.

USEFUL RIVERFRONT DESIGN RESOURCES

- Riverlife's Guide to Riverfront Development (2014)
- Riverlife's Riverfront Design Committee Riverfront Design Goals (2017)