PARKS, PEOPLE, AND PARTICIPATION:

MODELS OF PARK GOVERNANCE AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Final Report – Part One

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This preliminary report into park governance models and community engagement briefly examines the value of municipal parks and community engagement, analyzes the major models of park governance used internationally that may affect community engagement, and sets out a framework for further research.

Significant preliminary findings suggest that:

- Parks play an important aesthetic, ecological, social, and economic function in a municipality
- Community engagement in parks may enhance, and add to, the social and economic value of parks with enhanced health outcomes, decreased crime, improved civic engagement, community bonding and bridging, as well as economic benefits, particularly through the generation of social capital
- Certain alternative governance models for parks appear to offer potential financial efficacy and community engagement benefits
- The Public, Non-Profit model appears to be an optimal model from a financial efficacy, community engagement, and general good governance perspective, utilizing government ownership of park land with some degree of non-profit and volunteer stewardship and management

Although we have conducted extensive research into specific sub-models of park governance in Toronto and New York we feel that significantly more research must be conducted before presenting this type of data or noting any patterns.

Part Two of this report will include:

- More in-depth information on various models and sub-models used internationally in Toronto, New York, Chicago, and London
- More in-depth information on the benefits, impacts and effects of community engagement in parks
- Functional analysis of user interaction with parks
- Stakeholder analysis

- Analysis and comparison of local geographic, economic, and government policy contexts, including fee policies, and their potential impacts on community engagement, with the utilization of GIS data
- In-depth information on sub-model structures, resource mobilization, and fundraising methods, as well as potential pitfalls
- Potential additional sub-model classifications based on contexts and patterns
- Critical design approaches to induce interaction with the built/natural environment

In addition, the Toronto Public Space Initiative's Technical Projects and Community Engagement Research Divisions will conduct preliminary research into the creation of a practical and accessible interactive educational 'Guide' to our research, as well as other resources, so as to maximize the usefulness of our findings to community stakeholders engaged in Toronto's parks systems now and in the future. The proposed TPSI 'Guide' on park engagement will reside in the public domain as an Open Educational Resource and will utilize the latest information technology capabilities in crowd sourcing, real time Open Data feeds, and collaborative community networking to create a 'living' document that can be updated by users on an ongoing basis with safeguards to ensure information accuracy.

1.2 Purpose of the Research
In 2010 Toronto City Council endorsed the development of a City-wide Parks Plan based on a number of principles, including community engagement. The Plan will guide the management and operations of parks in Toronto over a five-year period once finalized and approved. At present, the Plan's developers are analyzing data collected from public and stakeholder consultations held over the fall of 2011. The results will be incorporated into a report that will be presented to City Council sometime in 2012 ("Parks Plan", n.d.).

The Toronto Public Space Initiative is collaborating with York University's City Institute and the Visible City Project on this research project. Part Two of this research project will involve collaboration with Osgoode Law School's Critical Research Laboratory as well. The aim is to outline the value of municipal parks and community engagement therein, as well as to identify current park governance models and community engagement practices which are in use throughout North America and beyond with the goal of informing our understanding of the Toronto and GTA context in light of the Parks Plan.

<u>1.3 Research Team</u>

Dr. Isabel Cascante is a Division Manager of the Community Engagement Research Division for TPSI and holds a PhD in Latin American Literature and Cultural Studies from the University of Toronto. Her research interests in public space pertain to the democratization and empowerment of civil society and the public sphere.

Monica Resendes is also a Division Manager of the Community Engagement Research Division for TPSI and is currently a PhD Candidate at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at the University of Toronto. Her research interests focus on the development of collaborative learning environments that support knowledge creation as well as the design of innovative Open Educational Resources.

Jayme Turney is the CEO of TPSI and holds a BA High Distinction from the University of Toronto, where he specialized in Political Science, as well as an MA from York University, where he focused on political economy. His interests include understanding the intersection of public space policy and other subjects, such as democracy and community development.

Dr. Janine Marchessault is the Canada Research Chair in Art, Digital Media and Globalization. Her urban research has focused on the creative cultures of urban space and cartographies of place, with a lens on Havana, Helsinki, Berlin and Toronto. She is involved with York University's City Institute and is also the director of the Visible City Project which brings together interviews with artists, filmmakers, designers, and urban planners to talk about space/place.

Timothy Petrou is a Fellow at the Critical Research Laboratory in Law and Society at Osgoode Hall Law School. He is the director of the Co-operative Governance Initiative at the Laboratory; a research project that explores the governance dimensions of the co-operative enterprise model. Tim holds a B.Sc. in Environmental Science from York University, a J.D. from Queen's University Law School, and is currently pursuing his LLM at Osgoode Hall Law School. His LLM work focuses on regulatory theory and governance. Specifically, Tim looks at Environmental Assessment comparatively, and through a critical lens.

Juneeja Varghese is a Researcher for TPSI and has an MA in Science and Technology Policy from the University of Edinburgh. Her interests include facilitating community engagement in policy contexts.

Anjuli Solanki is a Researcher for TPSI and holds an MA in Urban Planning. Her research interests include community engagement, education, public program coordination, and public space dynamics.

1.4 Methods

Part One of this report has been informed by secondary literature reviews as well as primary informal stakeholder interviews. More research including primary explorations of international and local park governance models in action and in-depth interviews with parks managers and users will inform Part Two of this report.

2. VALUE OF URBAN PARKS

Common knowledge based on cultural norms and personal experience tells us that urban (and suburban) parks add "value" to a community. Galen Cranz's (1982) definition of municipal parks as landscaped formations that create opportunities for relaxation, enjoyment, and recreation activities for individuals is a traditionally accepted interpretation. However, even Cranz recognizes that new park models evolve in response to changing social needs in a changing social order. Today's parks, particularly those in large urban centres increasingly characterized by a politics of fear, disengagement, isolation, and social and financial inequality, are, in contrast, receiving increased attention as potential sites of social and cultural engagement, public participation, environmental protection, and economic capital. In short, the value of urban parks moves beyond the recreational and physical aesthetic to incorporate ecological, socio-cultural, and/or economic values.

Yet, for all their positive attributes, parks are often abandoned by cities and jurisdictions grappling with budget cuts and the introduction of austerity measures. This blatant disregard for the essential value of green space (beyond economic indicators) mistakenly assumes that parks are expendable and ultimately places communities in danger. In the words of landscape architect James Corner:

> In times of fiscal cutbacks, parks maintenance is first to be cut, and parks can quickly fall into states of disrepair and dereliction. When this happens, parks become the city's backyard, the venue of illicit use, violence, and dumping—the urban wilderness. Parks need stewards, involved constituents, intelligent managers, and fairly healthy budgets if they are to be effectively cultivated for future generations. (2007, p. 12)

The purpose of this report is to outline multiple options for models of park governance and community engagement, highlighting various outcomes for parks and adjacent communities. We accept Corner's call and, based on our research findings, act openly as park stewards who contend that, when understood and utilized as sites of community engagement and participation, municipal parks can and do contribute to the achievement of more comprehensive urban policy and public space objectives.

2.1 Aesthetic Value

Aesthetically, parks and green spaces have the power to beautify public and private spaces in cities. Evidently, as Isabella M. Mambretti (2011) points out, aesthetic perception is a complex, complicated, and ambiguous concept (p. 43). Studies have shown that individuals' aesthetic judgments regarding the beauty or ugliness of a park correlate largely to their overall preference for a space expressed simply in terms of likes and dislikes (p. 44). Not surprisingly, this preference concurs with the perceived security of space and feelings of personal safety at local levels (p. 45-46). Though some aspects of a built park environment, such as the permeability or impermeability of vegetation space arrangement, may at first glance appear to facilitate or hinder crime, we accept Mambretti's argument that ideal urban park landscapes should address two key yet potentially opposing needs: i) to provide a space for individuals to come together and meet other people and ii) to provide intimate spaces for private use and personal contemplation (p. 51).

Notwithstanding the important discussion taking place within the landscape architecture and planning fields around the aesthetics of safety and the evaluation of spatial typologies vis-a-vis perceived personal and objective safety of municipal parks, we do not engage in this exchange in the present policy report. Likewise, we steer clear of the debate over environmental aesthetics conceived simply as another use-value of human nature versus a new environmental ethics.[1] Instead, in this report we recognize and refer to the physical aesthetic in its most ordinary definition as pleasing or characterized by beauty. Although we certainly understand that aesthetics refers specifically to that branch of philosophy dealing with the nature of beauty, art, and taste or, in more scientific terminology, to "the study of sensory or sensory-emotional values [... and the science of] critical reflection on art, culture and nature" (Roslan & Nurashikin, 2012, p. 187) for our purposes, we take as a given that both organic and built green space is

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[1] For more on this debate, see Isis Brooks (2010). "Ronald Hepburn and the Humanising of Environmental Aesthetics," *Environmental Values.* Volume 19, pp. 265-271.

aesthetically pleasing in and of itself, some qualitatively or subjectively more so than others. Though admittedly reductive, this is the very definition the City of Toronto's Parks, Forestry and Recreation Services itself utilizes in its mission to provide Torontonians with "equitable access to ... *clean and beautiful parks*, open spaces, ravines and forests." ("Parks, Forestry and Recreation", n.d., emphasis added).

Notwithstanding the fact that the traditional pastoral view of municipal parks as visual assets that add an aesthetic-as-beauty quality to metropolitan neighbourhoods is indeed both accurate and legitimate, a new twenty-first-century view calls attention to parks' broader contributions to the urban social fabric, including ecological, social, and economic value (Walker, 2004). These contributions are considered in more detail below.

2.2 Ecological Value

The continued interest and call for action on global environmental sustainability since the last third of the twentieth century and into the twenty-first accords parks a relatively new role as sites of ecological integrity and sustainability. This environmental turn has led to a new understanding of the aesthetic value of the natural or "wild" habitat as autonomous and worthy in itself, thus paving the way for planners and authorities to preserve not only the aesthetic beauty of a park but the aesthetic value of nature itself (Roslan & Nurashikin, p. 188). In this vein, as Michael Boland correctly notes, the ecological park stands in contrast to the traditional pastoral urban park, which often requires high water, fertilizer, and pesticide input to landscape non-indigenous plant species. In his words, "Parks aren't [necessarily] sustainable, self-replicating, or ecological landscapes, though they may look natural to our eyes" ("Ecological Parks", 2001). In contrast, ecological parks recognize the need to look beyond mere aesthetic appeal to consider questions of "biodiversity, environmental justice, climate change, [and] habitat protection" ("Ecological Parks", 2001).

Though Boland places ecological parks in a category all their own (citing such examples as Alcatraz and San Francisco's National AIDS Memorial Grove in Golden Gate Park), ecological considerations that attempt to unify the dichotomy between nature and culture have begun to inform the construction and/or maintenance of more traditional municipal parks. In his Forward to *Large Parks,* Corner (2007) notes how parks are valued for their ecological functions--storing and processing storm-water; providing natural habitats for birds, plants, animals, and microbial life-- which essentially clean, refresh, and enrich life in the metropolis (p. 11). In this way, even

without being an ecological park *per se*, all parks have the potential to aid our urban environments' ecological sustainability.

2.3 Social Value

Social value of parks is perhaps the most accepted and widest-reaching of the four values identified in this report (aesthetic, ecological, social, and economic). As outlined above, urban parks were traditionally regarded as sites of passive recreation and relaxation. Though common knowledge has expanded beyond this limited paradigm to include considerations of economic capital, ecological sustainability, and aesthetic values, the social context remains paramount to our understanding of municipal green space. To be sure, the social benefit of parks has itself expanded beyond the recreational to include participatory community engagement, volunteerism, and health outcomes. As such, in his 2004 policy brief "Beyond Recreation: A Broader View of Urban Parks," the Urban Institute's Chris Walker perceptively states:

> This new view [of parks] goes well beyond the traditional value of parks as places of recreation and visual assets to communities and focuses on how policymakers, practitioners, and the public can begin to think about parks as valuable contributors to larger urban policy objectives, such as *job opportunities, youth development, public health, and community building*. (p. 1, emphasis added)

Parks programs designed specifically for youth help young people choose more rewarding paths to adulthood by fostering and developing their physical, intellectual, emotional, and social strengths (Walker, 2004 p. 2). Whereas some parks programs offer volunteer-based opportunities for youth to participate in parks maintenance projects, such as Chicago's Garfield Park Conservatory Alliance's Empowering Youth Initiative, which involves youth in designing a permanent horticultural display in the park, other programs include paid internships and work experience programs. The same Garfield Park Conservatory Alliance runs a two-year docent program aimed at developing teenagers' leadership and social skills in preparation for life after high school. Select docents are paid to explain exhibits to park visitors, an experience that can help them develop an appreciation for the skill sets needed to hold down a paying job in a tough economy. Of course, parks also provide similar work experience opportunities for adults, which we will detail more in section 2.4.

In terms of public health, because they serve as popular arenas for a range of recreational activities, parks are commonly connected to health outcomes, particularly for young children, youth, and the elderly. While some parks and recreational associations organize sport and recreation activities for paying participants, public parks provide ample space, opportunities, and free programs for all citizens to engage in healthy exercise. Walker cites a 1998 Cleveland study that shows that parks users aged 50 and older who used the city's parks systems "were found [to be] significantly healthier than non-park users and reported feeling 'renewed' after using the park, with greater frequency of use linked to better health. These active users also reported fewer physician visits" (p. 3).   There is no reason to believe that the same tangible health benefits so evident in the Cleveland study would not be reproduced in other urban populations. As park governance models may facilitate community engagement around recreational programming, and may thus enhance and increase such programming, such as with volunteer organized seniors walks, they too are relevant when considering health outcomes.

Finally, just as parks provide a physical space for skill-building programs and healthy recreational activities, they also serve as important hubs for social capital and community building projects, particularly when governed in ways that facilitate increased community engagement. Individual communities have their own needs, and parks can and do serve these needs to varying degrees. For Walker, parks "empower people to tackle community wide problems, embark on collective actions, and advocate effectively for their community" (p. 3). This type of connection-making and partnership-building among citizens increases a neighbourhood's *collective efficacy*--"people's connections with one another and their capacity to work together" (p. 3)--, which has been linked to numerous outcomes from decreased crime and isolation to increased health and well-being. In addition, other outcomes include increased voter turnout, volunteerism, and potentially improved economic activity (Walker, 2004; Putnam, 1995; Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, 2001). Even so, we concur with Walker and others, who call for further research into the social value of parks. Accordingly, The Toronto Public Space Initiative is currently examining the social value of parks in the Toronto context and will publish our findings in Part Two of this report, to be released later this year.

An international case in point underscoring the social value of parks is noted in a recent study out of the Netherlands that claims that urban parks promote social cohesion and intercultural

interaction within and among different ethnic groups, decreasing social isolation and creating a feeling of belonging and a sense of place for non-mainstream users (Peters, Elands, & Buijs, 2010). That parks provide important spaces to bring together newcomers and other at-risk groups (i.e. those suffering from depression and social isolation) is a recurring theme in the Australia's Parks Forum 2008 report *The Value of Parks*, which states that "this immense social value is part of the 'glue' of a healthy society" (Parks Forum, 2008, PDF, p. 10). Given our focus on park governance and community engagement and the potential for parks to play an increasingly fundamental role in fostering increased public participation in municipal areas, the most relevant part of the Parks Forum report signals a link among social engagement, volunteerism, and citizen participation in parks management, all of which support community well-being while building a strong sense of civic pride (p. 10). The studies are also illustrative of the role that parks may play in facilitating both bonding (within communities) and bridging (between communities) subsets of social capital, both of which may be important for the achievement of optimal social capital benefits and a more tolerant democratic society (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, 2001).

2.4 Economic

Finally, parks can provide cities and communities with quantifiable economic benefits (beyond those associated with increased social capital, or reduced health and social costs) through job opportunities, tourism benefits, and as spaces for economic activity.

As noted above, existing parks programs in the United States offer job training opportunities for youth through both volunteerism opportunities and paid internship programs. Parks may also help at-risk and unemployed and underemployed adults access the labour market through similar work experience programs. New York City's Prospect Park runs a welfare-to-work program that trains recent welfare recipients as parks maintenance workers (Walker, p. 3), and the highly participatory sub-model in Toronto's Dufferin Grove Park has helped at risk youth through skill building opportunities (Friends of Dufferin Grove Park, 2011, Chapter. 3).

The role of parks in the tourist industry may be significant as well, as parks may be home to tourist destinations or events and activities that attract and appeal to tourists as much as they do to locals. While it is difficult to estimate the exact tourism value in parks, one estimate suggests that the collective benefit of parks' tourism value in San Diego was approximately $40 million in 2006 (Harnik & Welle, 2009). Another estimate from the Trust for Public Land, a US

based non-profit, suggests that Seattle parks added over $30 million in collective benefit to the city in 2009 due to their tourism value alone (Trust for Public Land, 2011). In addition, there is the potential for positive community engagement in parks to enhance the visitor experience through the creation and maintenance of unique, vibrant and memorable events and activities such as the 'Community Suppers' found in Toronto's Dufferin Grove Park (Friends of Dufferin Grove Park, "Bake Ovens and Food", n.d.). More analysis is needed in this area as local communities may not want to be over-saturated with visitors due to limited capacities in any single park.

Parks can also act as spaces for certain types of economic activity, with farmers' markets being a prominent example. Most interestingly, a 2006 UNBC study suggests that there are highly local economic benefits to farmers' markets. At the time, the study found that British Columbians spent $65.3 million at farmers' markets, as well as $53.2 million at businesses located near the farmers' markets during operational days, representing a significant value to local economies ("Impact of Farmers Markets Pegged at 118.5 Million", November 9). In addition, these types of markets may act as incubators of small businesses by allowing new producers and products entry to markets with low costs and minimal barriers to entry, as well as networking opportunities (Sanderson, Gertler, Martz, & Mahabir, 2005). In addition to these benefits, there may be the potential for community fundraising and other community engagement activities in parks to have local economic benefits as well. Again, further research must be undertaken in order to substantiate claims of this type.

3. GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT CRITERIA

Though research and analysis/assessment of park governance and management models is to date limited (Hanna, 2006), some particularly impressive work dominates the existing bibliography. Most notable is the sound research of University of Waterloo Recreation and Leisure Studies professor Paul F.J. Eagles, who has identified and analyzed park governance criteria vis-a-vis the management models most typically applied to parks and protected areas the world over. Following Eagles, in this section of our report we i) define the key concepts of "good governance" and "management," ii) outline the 10 governance criteria applied to existing management models, iii) define the eight management models most commonly used by parks and protected areas, and finally iv) identify the models that come closest to the ideal conception of "good governance".

3.1 What is Good Governance?

Without a doubt, the notion of "governance" is complex and impossible to capture in one simple or simplistic definition. At its most rudimentary level, "governance" is aptly defined as "1. government; exercise of authority; control. 2. a method or system of government or management" ("Dictionary.com", n.d.). While this definition is not wrong per sé, a more nuanced understanding reveals all the complexities associated with the term. Canada's Institute on Governance has settled on the following working definition: "Governance determines who has power, who makes decisions, how other players make their voice heard and how account is rendered" ("Institute on Governance", 2011). This definition rests on the three dimensions typically included in a critical understanding of the concept: authority, decision-making, and accountability ("Institute on Governance", 2011). The responsibilities bound up with these dimensions of governance have been traditionally attributed to a mediating body within an organization whose role it is to negotiate between varying interests and to facilitate decision-making. Insofar as governance involves "steering" the decision-making process by an authoritative body, mediating entities within a group are strategic and goal-oriented, making both short- and long-term decisions about the direction of the larger group or organization. In the private sector, this is generally the role taken on by a special committee or a project management team. For public or non-profit organizations, a board of directors is typically responsible for making final decisions.

However, critics point out that the process of a single mediating entity "steering" an organization downplays the complexity of the decision-making process. They argue that such an understanding is not sufficient to describe contemporary governance approaches, as it implies too linear a dynamic of authority and control. Instead, they emphasize the highly contextual, fluid, and provisional nature of governance in which a multitude of agents and stakeholders play a role in determining outcomes (Jessop, 2003; Hanna, Clark & Slocombe, 2008). Indeed, partnerships between government and civil society groups is growing, and is increasingly being recognized as an effective means to help governmental agencies meet current governance challenges, as well as to develop innovative programs and policies (Bovaird, 2005; Edgar, Marshall & Bassett, 2006; Kettl, 2000). Similarly, public sector partnerships with non-governmental agencies can help bolster services, programming and funding. Toronto's Dufferin Grove Park and High Park, among others, provide local examples of such successful partnerships in this regard. Similarly, Ontario's management model for Provincial Parks features five distinct stakeholder groups, including park staff, private contractors, NGOs, parks' visitors,

and members of surrounding communities (Buteau-Duitschaever, 2009). Although such partnerships can result in a range of social and economic benefits, private and public sector agencies often adopt very different governance approaches, complicating the notion of any singular understanding of governance in practice. Similarly, the establishment of potentially beneficial public or private partnerships does not in itself guarantee effective governance.

Returning now to the notion of "good governance" across contexts, one particularly useful rubric was developed by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) in 1997. Since then, the UNDP's ist of 10 principles of governance has come to inform popular conceptions of "good governance" (Graham, Amos, & Plumptre, 2003). These 10 principles are interdependent, and, while various governance approaches might emphasize certain criteria in practice, each element is essential to the notion of good governance in general. In terms of advancing research that examines existing and emerging governance and engagement models, these 10 principles may provide a framework for assessing the quality of governance within a given organization or group. In the sections that follow, we briefly outline these 10 principles before exploring their application to the evaluation of governance models of parks and protected spaces.

3.2 Governance Criteria

As described above, the concept of "good governance" is complex and multi-dimensional. However, it can be explained as encompassing certain key principles, which, being interdependent, come together to inform a comprehensive understanding of the term. Table 1 provides a list of each governance principle coupled with a brief description.

Table 1. Ten Principles of Good Governance (UNDP)

Governance Principle	Overview
1. Public participation	Ensures that all parties' voices are heard and represented
2. Consensus orientation	The negotiation between various interests in efforts to reach general agreement on behalf of the whole
3. Strategic vision	The ability to look forward with a coherent plan, while also considering the social, cultural, and historical landscape of a given situation
4. Responsiveness to stakeholders	A productive and consistent system of response to public criticism or concerns
5. Effectiveness	The ability of a particular organization to actualize its

	objectives
6. Efficiency	Organizational capacity to utilize its resources most effectively, minimizing waste or expense
7. Accountability to the public and stakeholders	The extent to which stakeholders' concerns or requests are responded to, as well as the extent to which officials take account of their own roles, responsibilities, and actions
8. Transparency	The level of openness under which an organization operates, including sharing information and financial details to the public, the government, or both
9. Equity	The fair and equal treatment of cases and accessibility to the public
10. Rule of law	Abiding and enforcing legal regulations openly and fairly

A number of studies utilize these principles to examine the management of parks and protected areas (Hayes 2006; Shipley & Kovacs, 2005); however, research that evaluates various parks management models in accordance with these principles remains sparse (Hanna, 2006). As such, Eagles' 2008 report on the governance of recreation and tourism partnerships in parks and protected areas provides a necessary starting point for exploring how contemporary park governance approaches can be assessed in light of the principles of good governance. In this report, Eagles (2008) analyzes seven of the most commonly occurring governance models for parks and protected areas currently in practice around the world, plus an eighth, which represents a newly emerging and experimental model, in an effort to develop an evaluative framework that can be applied in a wide variety of contexts as well as to identify those models that emerge as reflecting the highest levels of good governance. We describe these models next, providing a brief description as well as a general overview of the strengths and weaknesses associated with each.

3.3 Management Models
In his report, Eagles proposes seven predominant governance models of parks and protected spaces. Each model is assessed according to the 10 UNDP principles of good governance described above. Table 2 summarizes Eagles' findings. The models are ordered from highest-scoring to lowest-scoring models.[2] In addition, the table includes a general description of each model, as well as a list of their relative strengths and weaknesses.

Table 2. Evaluation of models in accordance with good governance principles (Eagles)

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[2] The scoring methodology is as follows: Each principle merits five points in total, so that there is a maximum possible score of 50 points that can be attributed to each of the eight models being evaluated. The model that scored closest to 50 can be said to reflect the highest level of good governance, in accordance with this assessment framework.

Management Model	Description	Strengths	Weaknesses
1. Public, Non-Profit Combination	Government-owned; management and financing undertaken by a combination of private and public bodies—these include "Friends of" groups and local volunteer-run agencies; such groups are often contracted out and are involved in stewardship and education. Merited 41 points.	Accountability Consensus orientation Equity Effectiveness Financial efficacy Rule of Law Public participation Responsiveness Strategic vision Transparency	
2. Non-Profit Organization	Private, non-profit agencies take on ownership and management; growing rapidly in the UK, US, and Central America; emerging with more frequency in Canada and Australia; research shows that this model can help strengthen civil society due to its collaborative dynamic (Brown and Mitchell, 1999). Merited 40 points.	Consensus orientation Financial efficacy Equity Public participation Responsiveness Rule of law *Strategic vision (varies depending on context) Transparency	Accountability
3. National Park	The most commonly utilized form of conservation management; government owned and run; funded by taxpayers; commonly found in the US and Scandinavia (see Leivo, 2002); involves the greatest number of stakeholders, from international partners to local citizens. Merited 35 points	Equity Rule of law Strategic vision	Accountability Fiscal efficacy Responsiveness Transparency
4. Parastatal	Resources government-owned; managed by government-owned corporation; predominantly found in Africa; funding derived from user fees; many are high profile parks that operate as tourists attractions. Merited 35 points.	Consensus orientation Financial efficacy Public participation Responsiveness Rule of law Strategic vision	Accountability Equity Transparency
5. Public, For Profit	Government owned; management and fundraising shared by private and public agencies; private contracts may include running recreation/tourist services (food	Effectiveness Financial efficacy Rule of law Strategic vision	Accountability Equity Transparency

	stands, equipment rentals, etc); prevalent in US, China, New Zealand. Merited 35 points.		
6. Traditional Community	Private ownership and management; newly emerging and experimental model with little documentation or research; increasingly popular in Africa; taken up as an alternative to National Parks model in an effort to combat the social and cultural consequences that can occur when the establishment of parks and protected spaces uproot indigenous communities. Merited 30 points.	Responsiveness *Consensus *Effectiveness (*at medium levels*) Equity Financial efficacy	Accountability Public participation Rule of Law Strategic vision Transparency
7. Ecolodge	Private, for-profit companies own and operate parks; generally oriented towards conservation, eco-tourism; developing rapidly in South Africa and Central America; not much is known about the extent to which private companies protect the biodiversity of the areas under their ownership (Krug, 2001). Merited 29 points.	Financial efficacy *Responsiveness (*strong with respect to clientele, less so to broader society*) Strategic vision	Accountability Consensus Equity Public participation Transparency
8. Aboriginal and Government	Owned by aboriginal groups, managed by a governmental agency; growing acknowledgment of aboriginal land rights has resulted in the increase adoption of this management model; prevalent in Australia; due to wide range of stakeholder interests, this model is marked by challenges in communication and management. Merited 23 points.		Consensus orientation Effectiveness *Equity Financial efficacy Public participation Responsiveness *Rule of law (*varies with context*) Transparency

3.3 Conclusion: The "Best" Management Models in Practice

According to Eagles' analysis, there are vital differences in levels of good governance between these models. The public and non-profit combination model showed the greatest evidence of good governance, with all governance criteria scoring high save for transparency. In comparison, more privatized models appeared to be lacking in public participation and responsiveness, as well as transparency. Based on this assessment, it appears that government ownership of land and resources, coupled with management and operation conducted by, or with, non-profit organizations, is a particularly productive formula for financial efficacy, community engagement, and general good governance with respect to parks and protected spaces. The non-profit model also exemplifies ideals of good governance in practice,

as reflected by its second-place standing in Eagles' ranking. Situated in the middle of the spectrum are the national park, parastatal, and public and for-profit models. It is interesting to note that these represent the most commonly adopted management models. So, although the most frequently used models may not exhibit the strongest forms of governance, it is likely that these management frameworks are taken up due to familiarity with their form, political economic reasons, or a cultural or historical preference (Eagles, 2008). The lowest ranked model was the aboriginal and government combination, due in large part to the challenges this model presents with respect to negotiating the varying interests held among its various stakeholders.

In this analysis, each criterion was attributed equal importance. However, Eagles found that in practice, governance criteria were given notably different levels of consideration. The most evident criteria were, in order: financial efficiency, public participation, strategic vision, and responsiveness. The least evident criteria were accountability and transparency. A specific Canadian example reveals that attributing different weights to governance principles is likely the norm. For example, various stakeholders involved in the transformation of Ontario's Rouge Park from an urban green space to an official National Park likewise pinpoint fiscal efficiency as among the top criteria for the success of the park (StrategyCorp-Hemson Consulting, 2010). Thus, as Eagles suggests, attributing equal value to each criterion may not be valid in a practical context. A general finding that emerges from Eagles' analysis is that fiscal efficiency is lowest among parks that are wholly government-owned and run, due in part to centralized and inflexible budgets. The fact that financial efficiency appears, in practice, as the most-valued criterion of park governance, helps explain why alternative approaches are so often adopted in management models throughout the world. Articulating clearly defined criteria for governance is a first step in developing standards that could be used to evaluate park governance in a wide variety of contexts. In turn, this could assist in the development of sound policy dealing with community engagement and inform the creation of management approaches and models that embody ideals of good governance.

4. SUMMARY

Significant preliminary findings suggest that:

- Parks play an important aesthetic, ecological, social, and economic function in a municipality

- Community engagement in parks may enhance, and add to, the social and economic value of parks with enhanced health outcomes, decreased crime, improved civic engagement, community bonding and bridging, as well as economic benefits, particularly through the generation of social capital
- Certain alternative governance models for parks appear to offer potential financial efficacy and community engagement benefits
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As noted, although we have conducted extensive research into specific sub-models of park governance in Toronto and New York we feel that significantly more research must be conducted before presenting this type of data or noting any patterns.

5. NEXT STEPS

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- More in-depth information on the benefits, impacts and effects of community engagement in parks
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- Potential additional sub-model classifications based on contexts and patterns
- Critical design approaches to induce interaction with the built/natural environment

In addition, the Toronto Public Space Initiative's Technical Projects and Community Engagement Research Divisions will conduct preliminary research into the creation of a practical and accessible interactive educational 'Guide' to our research, as well as other resources, so as to maximize the usefulness of our findings to community stakeholders engaged in Toronto's parks systems now and in the future. The proposed TPSI 'Guide' on park engagement will reside in the public domain as an Open Educational Resource and will utilize the latest information technology capabilities in crowd sourcing, real time Open Data feeds, and collaborative community networking to create a 'living' document that can be updated by users on an ongoing basis with safeguards to ensure information accuracy.

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