Lexington Park Equity Accelerator

What is the Lexington Park Equity Accelerator?

The Lexington Park Equity Accelerator is a new collaborative project being led by LFUCG's Divisions of Parks & Recreation and Planning, CivicLex, and Seedleaf. It is supported by the national non-profit Trust for Public Land (TPL). This project is one of six across the United States that is part of TPL's 10-Minute Walk Accelerator program. Our accelerator is designed to do three things: (1) address disparities in access to public space and greenspace in Lexington; (2) help residents most impacted by these inequities understand how greenspace policy gets created; and (3) build new ways to bring these residents into the policy creation process.

Why is this important?

Greenspace and public space aren't just nice things to have in a community. Evidence shows that access to greenspace has significant positive effects on public health, climate resiliency, and more. Addressing inequitable access to greenspace in Lexington is a major priority in a number of important city plans, including the 2018 *Parks Master Plan,* the 2018 *Imagine Lexington Comprehensive Plan*, and the 2020 report from the *Mayor's Commission for Racial Justice and Equality.* This was further confirmed by results from the 2022 *On the Table.*

How will we do this?

This project is focused on centering the voices of Lexington residents. We will rely on a coalition of community organizations that are part of and advocate for historically underrepresented communities in Lexington. During the project we will: research existing planning policy related to these issues; create new ways to center community voices in greenspace planning and policy-making; develop new tools that support effective, resident-led advocacy; and, create engaging programming that educates on the value of green space to health and wellbeing.

Timeline at a glance

Phase One: Research
Summer/Fall 2022
Build community coalition; examine current local policies; hear from residents about their experiences.

Phase Two: Education
Winter/Spring 2023
Host community education workshops; policy process training & input gathering; marketing campaign.

Phase Three: Transformation
Spring/Summer 2023
Launch demonstration projects; deploy new policy processes.

LEXINGTON   CivicLex   Seedleaf *nourishing communities*   TRUST FOR PUBLIC LAND™
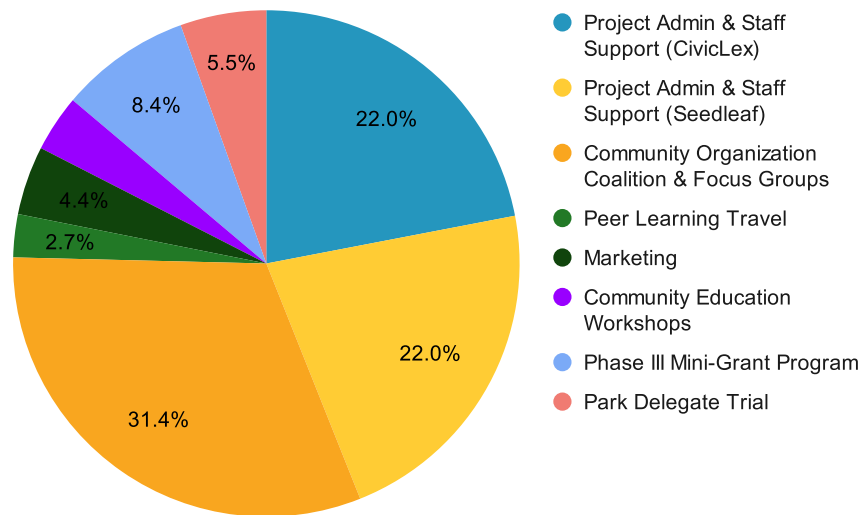
What are the main project goals?

1. Research, understand, and address how past and current local policies have led to inequitable community outcomes related to public space, greenspace, and connectivity.
2. Create more publicly engaged and demographically inclusive resident-led processes for decision-making and policy creation.
3. Identify strategies to ensure community views and priorities are included in key aspects of city park systems and long-term city planning related to connectivity and greenspace.
4. Connect residents most impacted by park disparities with the information and capacity to envision and advocate for policy change.

Where is the money going?

This project is supported by the Trust for Public Land (TPL) with a $182,000 grant for the project and an equivalent amount of in-kind technical assistance for LFUCG. Per TPL's program design, the city government is not allowed to receive funding, only technical assistance. A breakdown of the grant expenses is below.

Pie chart values: 22.0%, 22.0%, 31.4%, 2.7%, 4.4%, 8.4%, 5.5%

Legend:
- Project Admin & Staff Support (CivicLex)
- Project Admin & Staff Support (Seedleaf)
- Community Organization Coalition & Focus Groups
- Peer Learning Travel
- Marketing
- Community Education Workshops
- Phase III Mini-Grant Program
- Park Delegate Trial

What is the Trust for Public Land?

The Trust for Public Land is a nonprofit organization with the mission of "creating parks and protecting land for people, ensuring healthy, livable communities for generations to come". Since its founding in 1972, The Trust for Public Land has completed 5,000 park-creation and land conservation projects across the United States, protected over 3 million acres, and helped pass more than 500 ballot measures—creating $70 billion in voter-approved public funding for parks and open spaces.