



# HOW-TO

# Walking Tour



## GET READY! Agree on your goals for using this tool.

Remember to work with your Partnerships for Parks (PFP) Outreach Coordinator (OC) when using input-gathering tools. Your OC can answer questions, offer suggestions, and help you work well with Parks throughout the capital process. To find your OC, visit the People Make Parks (PMP) Website.

## BEGIN PLANNING: AT LEAST 3 MONTHS BEFORE

- Review the Event Planning Tool, Timeline, and Checklist.
- Discuss your goals in using a Walking Tour. Use the questions below as a guide:
  - > WHY do we want to host a Walking Tour?
  - > WHO do we want to reach with a Walking Tour?
  - > WHAT feedback do we want to collect about our park with a Walking Tour?
  - > WHEN do we want to host a Walking Tour, so that the largest number of people can attend and comfortably move through the space?
  - > DO WE NEED to create a Walking Tour guide in multiple languages to reach non-English readers?

## ORGANIZE: AT LEAST 2-2 1/2 MONTHS BEFORE

- Discuss the information you want to gather with a Walking Tour. For example:
  - > Culture and History: How can the park capture what makes the community special? How can the park better tell the story of the neighborhood and its history? What important community members, places, themes, and/or events could be celebrated in the park?
  - > Sights, Sounds, and other Senses: What do you hear as you move through the park? What do you see around you, and what would you like to see? What does it feel like to travel through the park? Could anything be done to provide park users with a different sensory experience?
  - > Features: What features in the park are popular among park users and should be kept in a redesign? What features are less popular and could be changed or removed? What would you like to do in the park that you can't do now?
  - > Nature: What parts of the park connection users best to nature? Are trees and plants being used in the park to their best effect?
- Walk through the park, noting places where you'd like people to stop and provide feedback.
- Map out a tour route that includes approximately five to seven stops. Be sure the tour can be completed in approximately 20 minutes, in order to keep people's attention.
- Decide whether to make the tour a group-led or self-guided experience.
- Find a map of your park (see map source options below suggested materials).
- Map out a tour route that includes approximately five to seven stops. Be sure the tour can be completed in approximately 20 minutes, in order to keep people's attention.
- Decide whether to make the tour a group-led or self-guided experience.
- To add details to the map, refer to the Story Map tool how-to to learn how that's done.
- Make an enlarged copy of the map (approximately 3' x 4').

## SUGGESTED MATERIALS:

- > Walking Tour guides
- > Map of your park (8"x11")
- > Pens or pencils
- > Small, round, multi-colored stickers

## MAP SOURCES:

> **Google Maps**, which has satellite maps of what your park looks like now Zoom in to get a larger image that includes the park's basic outline and largest features.

LINK:  
<http://maps.google.com/>.

> **DOITT's City Maps Website**, which has pictures of the location where your park sits in the years (1924, 1951, 1996, 2006, and 2008). Zoom in to get a larger image of the park's basic outline and largest features. This site doesn't work with older versions of Internet Explorer:

LINK:  
<http://gis.nyc.gov/doitt/nycitymap/>.

> **Your OC**, Your Outreach Coordinator can work with Parks or their local Special Events office to help you get a map of the park.

## **ORGANIZE (CONT.):**

- Place stickers on the map to show where you want people to stop along the tour.
- Reduce the map to half of an 8" x 11" sheet to include in the Walking Tour guide.
- Draft text for the Walking Tour guide.
- Start the guide by introducing your group, providing background about the capital project, and explaining the purpose of the Walking Tour as it relates to gathering community input.
- Create a page for each stop along the tour. Include an illustration or photograph at the top of each page, so that those taking a self-guided tour know that they're at the right place.
- Below the photograph or illustration, include the questions for which you'd like feedback.
- Leave room at the bottom of each page for people to write notes and comments.
- Keep language simple, so that the largest number of people can understand it.
- Decide whether to create guides in multiple languages to ensure that the tour can be done by non-English speakers/readers

## **OUTREACH: ONE MONTH BEFORE**

- Practice leading the Walking Tour (or having people take self-guided tours) by inviting your OC and representatives from local organizations to a run through.
- Afterward, ask people for feedback about their experience.
- Based on that feedback, and your own observations, make changes to the activity as needed.

**GET SET!** Check last-minute details leading up to the event.

## **PREP FOR THE EVENT: 2-3 WEEKS BEFORE**

- Review the Event Planning Tool, Timeline, and Checklist to be sure your group is on track.
- Make enough copies of the Walking Tour guides for the number of people you think will participate.

**GO!** Host the event & make sure everyone is heard!

- Set up a table staffed with a member of your group and the Walking Tour guides.
- When people approach, explain the Walking Tour activity and how it relates to the capital project.
- Specific instructions:
  - > For self-guided tours: Give each person a guide, along with a pen or pencil, and invite them to take the tour, letting them know that it takes approximately 20 minutes to complete. Have people return the guides to you when they're done.
  - > For guided tours: Post a schedule to show the times at which you'll be leading guided tours. At the start of each, introduce yourself and explain the activity's purpose. Have people follow you through the park. At each stop, read the Walking Tour guide page aloud and have people write notes and comments in their guides. Be prepared to answer additional questions about the capital project. Collect the guides at the end of the tour.
- After the activity, explain to people how the Walking Tour guides will be shared with Parks and used to inform a new design. Let them know how they can stay involved with your group and the capital project going forward.
- Collect Walking Tour guides for review.

# RUN WITH IT! Explore and share what you learned.

## DEBRIEF: WITHIN 1-2 WEEKS

- Divide the guides equally among group members.
- Have each person review their guides using pre-determined categories such as "Suggestions," "Ideas," "Concerns," or "Feedback." Note how many times certain words, suggestions, or comments appear. Frequently occurring responses suggest that an issue or feature is important to many park users and should therefore be discussed in your summary.
- Meet to share notes and compare responses.

## ANALYZE AND DOCUMENT: WITHIN 1-2 MONTHS

- Read the Event-Planning Tool to learn what to include in your 1- to 2-page Walking Tour summary.
- Draft, review, and revise the summary, until you're ready to show it to your OC. With his or her help, further edit, if needed, to create a final version.
- If you've only used a Walking Tour to gather input, start planning future events or explore other tools you can use to discover what your community wants in a new park.
- Once you've gathered input using at least three tools, on different days, and/or from at least 50 people, depending on the size of your community and park, you should have enough information to write a full Visioning Report that can be shared with the community, your community board, and Parks.

