

# Case Study

## Everett Crowley Park

### Summary

The involvement of Parks Canada – Canadian Heritage in the protection and maintenance of this urban wildlife site is based on expertise resident in the organization. This expertise consists of Parks Canada's knowledge and capacity to make sites accessible to visitors with disabilities while maintaining the ecological integrity of the site itself. The site is a municipal park in the City of Vancouver, basically ignored for some years but coming into renewed prominence as "green space" becomes a prime commodity in an area of booming development on a limited land base.

The partnership in this Case Study involves Professional and Technical Services in the Regional Office of the Department, the volunteer community-based Everett Crowley Park Committee, the City of Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation, and the City of Vancouver Planning Department.

Several other individuals and organizations are involved on the periphery of the existing partnership and play a role in influencing the directions and decisions taken by the above groups. Other organizations include the following:

- the Evergreen Foundation, a community-based provincially and privately funded organization whose mandate includes assisting communities in "greening" their environment;
- the Friends of Fraserview, a local community lobby group challenging the Parks Board and Planning Department to justify alterations to the municipal Fraserview Golf Course which forms part of a wider local ecosystem with Everett Crowley Park;
- NatureScape British Columbia, a naturalist organization funded by the province, Environment Canada and private donations which seeks to enhance and preserve the Georgia Basin ecosystem, of which both the park and golf course are integral areas.

Individuals interested in developing a sen-

sitive approach to access to the park include the following: Mrs. Everett Crowley and Lee Crowley, widow and son of the namesake of the park and private contributors to its development for access; Ian Waddell, former federal Member of Parliament and now local Member of the Legislative Assembly for the area.

### Background

The 40-hectare-plus Everett Crowley Park began life rather inauspiciously in the 1940s as a city and area refuse dump known locally as the Kerr Road Dump. Indeed, in some eroded areas of the park one can see automobile tires and similar refuse creeping up through the earth though much was removed by the early committee. As late as the early 1980s, the park was still a dropping-off spot for those wanting to clandestinely leave heavy household rubbish, such as used appliances, motors, and the like.

As the residential community surrounding the park began to expand and become more solidified and distinct, the "Champlain Heights area" began to evolve. More unorganized recreational activities began to occur in the park and less dumping occurred. Inside the park, a private entrepreneur requested and received permission to build a large earth hill approximately 25 metres high. The hill, which was later named "Mount Everett", was the staging point for the developer's hang-gliding classes and was a more convenient location than others further from the city core.

Then as now, the Board of Parks and Recreation used the site as a storage area for piles of surface fill, such as mulch, different grades of gravel, and sand. In addition, during later days of the landfill, roofers deposited excess tar, creating an environmental situation which has since been cleaned up due to pressure from the Everett Crowley Park Committee and the sensitivity of members of City Planning Department staff. Trail and path surfaces in the park continue to be a combination of asphalt roadways leading

filled in route  
dump closed in mid 60's  
40m hill in area

X 1985-86  
citizen action lead to ECP

1985-1986  
citizen action lead to ECP  
shop w/ mention of history booklet  
and CD process  
that requested ECP



to former dump areas, crushed gravel to permit access for fire and emergency vehicles, and natural bark mulch and clay used on most of the paths around the periphery of the park.

Across a busy urban thoroughfare (Kerr Avenue) is one of four municipal golf courses, Fraserview, a short 18-hole course with a pre-wartime clubhouse, a driving range, several stands of second-growth trees, an original stream bed from pre-development times, and its own collection of wildlife, including deer, coyote, and various species of bird, riparian, and insect life. Much attention has been focused on Fraserview and there has been some community hostility to plans proposed by the Board of Parks and Recreation and the Planning Department to upgrade the course, which would result in the loss of some stands of coniferous and deciduous trees.

### Community Profile

Everett Crowley Park is bounded on all four sides by residential or low-level industrial areas:

- on the south by South East Marine Drive, a major east-west artery in Vancouver with pulp and lumber storage yards, and a MacMillan Blodel lumber mill on the Fraser River;
- on the east by Matheson Avenue with residences and residential complexes (privately owned "strata corporations" and city-owned "coop's"), and 99-year-leased lands;
- on the north by Maquinna and 62nd avenues which are lined with established single-family accommodations dating from the 1950s and worth on average \$350,000; and
- on the west by Kerr Avenue which is also the eastern boundary of the Fraserview Golf Course.

One block south of Marine Drive is the north arm of the Fraser River, a busy commercial artery for forest product companies up-river and private boating access to the Strait of Georgia.

The Champlain Heights and Fraserlands areas are a combination of very recent and more established residential and industrial development. Champlain Heights is the more established of the two areas, with local schools, community centre, and community school. The City of Vancouver, faced with an ever-increasing need to provide developmental land, has purchased and cleared the formerly industrial strip of land between South East Marine Drive and the Fraser River and approved private development of the "Fraserlands" corridor. This area has seen construction of more than 1000 new housing units, with an estimated population increase of approximately 3500 new local residents. Fraserview Golf Course is directly north of the Fraserlands area across South East Marine Drive.

Both areas have "community associations" which represent community input to various organizations, such as schools, planning and development councils, the city council, and others. These local neighbourhoods, both the more established and the newer residents, are articulate in their viewpoints, actively value the "green space" Everett Crowley and Fraserlands provide, and are rather cynical about the role and success of government in the protection and preservation of the environment above developmental interests. The recently elected municipal party, which unanimously forms the city council, has often been accused of being more concerned with supporting the latter rather than the former. The "open voting" non-ward system of the City of Vancouver also means there is no one elected representative on city council to speak on behalf of these communities.

### Parks Canada-Canadian Heritage

Over a period of years, and through a variety of successes and failures, Parks Canada has developed an approach to providing access for persons with disabilities to natural settings while preserving the natural or cultural integrity of the site. Recently, with the assistance of a five-year funding pro-



gram from the Treasury Board of Canada and supplemented by Parks operating resources, Parks Canada completed a series of alterations and installations to parks and sites across the country.

These changes provided a high-quality and extensive system of gaining access to national parks and national historic sites for persons with disabilities. Features of this new level of access included architectural modifications to existing structures, construction of new accessible structures from privies to visitor centres, design and development of accessible trails and campsites, design and construction of accessible viewpoints, and development of accessible displays, including appropriate signage, display areas, and other messaging. During this process, Parks Canada also developed a series of "guides" for use by its own staff and others to assist in adapting or developing accessible features to natural and cultural sites.

Parks Canada has two accessible national historic sites in the Vancouver area: the Gulf of Georgia Cannery National Historic Site and the Fort Langley National Historic Site. A third accessible site, St. Roch, was recently turned over to the City of Vancouver to be run as a local accessible site under their jurisdiction. The Department of Canadian Heritage, of which Parks Canada is an integral part, also has expertise in the Regional Office through staff in the Professional and Technical Services Branch. This staff is responsible for providing field and policy support in a variety of areas, including "diversity", "ecological assessment", "continuous learning", and others.

Because Everett Crowley is a municipal site, Parks Canada-Canadian Heritage has no mandated responsibility for this site. As well, there is virtually no capacity of Parks Canada-Canadian Heritage to support the Everett Crowley initiative by direct funding of any sort. Involvement of the Department in this initiative began with one staff member participating voluntarily on the Everett Crowley Park Committee. This involvement

became formalized once studies of user needs were analysed, the need for accessibility to this site became clear, and the expertise of the Department was identified.

Through the extracurricular involvement of Parks Canada-Canadian Heritage staff, the organization has been involved in Everett Crowley Park from very early on. The world-class reputation of Parks Canada and their sensitive approach to issues around access are well known to members of the public, many of whom have visited at least one of the three local historic sites mentioned above. Since this initiative is clearly outside the mandate of Parks Canada, ongoing involvement is seen as a matter of choice, an example of a national organization contributing to the benefit of a local community. Also, it has been clear from the outset that the contribution of Parks Canada can only be in the domain of staff expertise, experience, and advice; there is virtually no possibility of funding from this organization. There appears little cynicism attached to the motives of Parks Canada which are voluntary and "extra-curricular" and which are of direct benefit to the community.

## Stakeholder Profile

The two City of Vancouver organizations involved in this partnership, the Planning Department and the Board of Parks and Recreation, are not always positively viewed by the public at large, nor by community environmental groups. The Planning Department is sometimes seen as being overly influenced by the "development-friendly" city council, which recently passed a by-law allowing any landholder to cut down one existing tree per year—regardless of its age—on condition of planting two new ones. This issue was part and parcel of a wider antagonism between long-standing city residents and newcomers faulted for building "monster houses" on the sites of previous smaller bungalow-type residences. The successes of the Planning Department, including a visionary plan called "CityScape" designed to prepare Vancou-



ver for the next millennium, usually go without mention in the heat of other discussions.

The Board of Parks and Recreation as a rule, operates on a public consultation basis. That is, it has a long-standing policy of open Board meetings and local open meetings in various locations around the city prior to decision-making. The Board also has access to the Planning Department and its staff in the preparation of information and action plans for issues before it. Unfortunately, both the Board and the Department suffer from a certain public cynicism towards bureaucratic processes and motivations. This cynicism even reaches as deep as challenging the expertise of individual staff, such as the calculations of the city's professional arborist regarding the number and quality of trees to be eliminated in the Fraserview Golf Course expansion.

The Evergreen Foundation has a strong record of community environmental development and consensus building. Their role is that of sensitive experts whose tasks are to identify ways communities can enhance their environments and to assist communities to set and reach appropriate goals. A singular task is the development of the community to the point that it can carry on "on its own", while the Foundation goes on to assist other communities in the development and achievement of environmental goals. In this role, the Foundation sponsored several field studies with local organizations and other environmental organizations. A significant contribution was the "Ecological Stewardship Project of Everett Crowley Park" (funded by Environment Canada's Federal Enviro Partners Fund). This project was instrumental in rekindling community interest and involvement through stream, bird, and park user surveys, tree plantings, pond and general clean-up, vegetative assessments, historical documentation, interpretative displays, an overall ecological assessment of the park, and creation of an updated interpretative brochure and park map. As well, the Foundation hosted com-

munity meetings, special events, open houses, Boy Scout initiatives, and other events.

The Friends of Fraserview is a collection of individuals committed to the preservation of the existing Fraserview Golf Course and to challenging the need and value of eliminating any existing flora on the course property. To these ends, they are assisted by other "Friends" organizations, such as the "Friends of Stanley Park". The Friends of Fraserview consist largely of individual home owners on the borders of the golf course and in the Fraserlands development directly south of the golf course. The Friends challenge the basis of the perceived need to upgrade the existing facilities, to increase the number of "tee-off's" from 94,000 per year (approx.) to 115,000 per year (approx.). The Friends dispute the actual number of trees the Parks Board says need to be cut down and support the premise that "two new trees do not equal one old-growth tree", a reference to the recent by-law. The Friends have been very successful in capturing local news media to make their points. Most recently, they were successful in getting the Board to reduce the number of trees to be cut by about one third.

## **A Particular Focus on the Everett Crowley Park Committee**

↓ The Everett Crowley Park Committee, by contrast, has achieved wide respectability amongst the various local interest groups. Committee members participate on a voluntary basis and are all residents of the neighbourhoods surrounding Everett Crowley and Fraserlands. Some are long-standing residents; some are relatively new to the area. Some have a general layman's knowledge of environmental issues; others are very well informed. The Committee has been successful in describing its goals to local residents through the local community bulletin and through interpretative displays at the community centre and shopping mall. As well, the Committee was very successful in raising community awareness to the con-



dition of Everett Crowley Park through its questionnaires and updates to local residences.

The Committee has also established its credibility as the prime vehicle on behalf of access to Everett Crowley Park. It has accomplished this in several ways:

- through members' long-standing commitment to access and park issues;
- through development of a comprehensive and clear approach to park use;
- through ongoing information distribution throughout the community;
- through "buy-in" from both the political and administrative branches of city government;
- through its capacity to acquire private funding to develop other enhancement projects and disabled access to the park; and
- through its capacity to integrate the issues of the various "voices" of the community.

The Committee's "vision" for Everett Crowley Park was recently put before the Board of Parks and Recreation for approval. The "vision" was a result of several months of community and Committee meetings, consultations with the Planning Department, and discussions with private donors for funding support. A "mission statement" with five elements was recently presented to the Board — it received a spontaneous five-minute ovation from the packed boardroom. They are as follows:

Mission Statement - to encourage stewardship of Everett Crowley Parks as an urban wilderness

1. Park Maintenance -to manage the Park to the benefit of the community while promoting natural habitat;
2. Recreation -to support "low-impact" recreational activities which are appropriate for a "natural" park setting;

3. Nature Education and Appreciation -to assist people to understand the natural process behind the Park's regeneration, and to appreciate and support the possibilities for improved ecological integrity in the Park;

4. Habitat Rehabilitation - to improve the habitat of the Park so that it supports a healthier mix of plants and animals;

5. Larger Ecological Context -to act with reference to local, regional, national, and international environmental challenges and projects.

### Media Activities

The larger media have been little used by the Everett Crowley Park group. Rather, local print and event activities have been the primary tools to distribute information to the community and to provide forums for feedback. Specifically, the local bulletin published through the Champlain Heights Community Centre has consistently carried information on the evolution and development of Everett Crowley Park. The interpretive displays at the Centre and local mall and schools have provided a pictorial focus on recreation, nature education/appreciation, and habitat rehabilitation activities as described above.

By choice, the Committee focus has stayed more local, focusing on special events, tree plantings, reclamations, and other events. The Committee is still concerned with over-use of the park's limited resources, its own cross of "sustainable usage."

The Everett Crowley Park Committee has benefited from publicity generated by The Friends of Fraserview Golf Course. Because of the Mission Statement and overall intent of the Everett Crowley Park Committee and the range of community input, there appears to be no sector of the community that does not see its issues addressed by the Committee. Moreover, the relatively well-established surrounding community, which includes four seniors residences and several schools, sees considerable value in pre-



serving this urban wilderness, while at the same time permitting a "benefit to the community". The reputation of Parks Canada—Canadian Heritage and the sensitive access typified by the local historic sites goes a long way in establishing a "comfort level" in the community that access for disabled and seniors will be managed well.

## Political Climate

The members of the Board of Parks and Recreation and staff from the Planning Department have received some rather harsh and, at times, unfair criticism for the approach taken by City Council.

In some instances, they have been condemned and challenged while attempting to carry through on a mandate supported through recent elections. They are often put in the position of "city hall bureaucrats and political appointees" versus "the tree-huggers".

Various "Friends" organizations have been able to capitalize on community feeling and electorate maturity and cynicism. They have also been more successful in capturing local media "sound bites" and in having their positions put forward in local print and news. They have also been able to "score some points" by prolonging the Board's consultation process and by stirring sectors of the community to participate in public meetings and events. Predictably, such activities have created a very positional posture by all concerned, resulting in limited progress on many issues.

The Everett Crowley Park Committee has none of this partisan positioning associated with it. In fact, the Committee appears to represent the best interests of all stakeholders:

- it represents public consolation and community activism to reflect the Board's mandate;
- it is committed to preserving and enhancing "an urban wilderness";

- it plans to facilitate sensitive and sustainable access for all sectors of the community;

- it has acquired private sector commitment for funding to provide access to the park environs;

- it has engaged the interest of multiple levels of political involvement from city councillors to MLA's; and

- it has created an opportunity for a diverse community to join together in a singular project to the benefit of all stakeholders.

Though the Everett Crowley Park Committee did not consciously set out to do so, it has established a multi-faceted working group whose essential and consistent focus is on the "Mission Statement". Through pulsing the community and establishing a working relationship respectful of all levels of input, the Committee has managed to integrate and address the primary issues of stakeholders while not becoming bogged down in confrontational or positional activities.

The Committee has been a driving force, has identified and supported "champions", and has generally been the "motors" of the process. It has provided consistency, funding activities, ongoing focus, political acumen, and a continuing representation of diversity; the Committee has achieved successes in a number of goals.

# Learnings

## Everett Crowley Park

**E**ngage the widest possible range of interested stakeholders from the beginning of the partnership. Though some groups and/or individuals may “drop off”, they will do so for several reasons: knowing their interests are being adequately represented; knowing they have had an opportunity to express their views and will have future opportunities to do so; knowing they do not share the issues of the partnership but that those issues do not endanger theirs.

**D**evelop a clear statement of goals, a “mission ” or “vision”, and share it as widely as possible, at least with all the initial stakeholders. Ensure there has been sufficient time for reflection by the stakeholders, and that their input has been incorporated as “issues” into the statement. At various points in the evolution of the partnership, consult again as widely as possible to ensure the interests of the stakeholder communities are still reflected and that the communities themselves know what’s happening.

**D**escribe outcomes in neutral, non-inflammatory terms that reflect the interests of the stakeholders. Consistently and constantly go back to these interests during discussions, as a means to stay on track and to reinforce the goals of the partnering activity. Ensure that the working relationship of committee members is always respectful of each other’s views and that this spirit of respect is evident in every activity of the group, from small group meetings to public presentations.

**I**dentify selected “champions” to move forward on issues, activities, events, and the profile of the partnership. Both individuals (e.g. the Everett Crowley family) and organizations (e.g. Parks Canada) can enhance the nature of the partnership with the community and stakeholders by their willingness to be involved in activities. Through their own success, credibility and commitment to the issues at hand, they lend this credibility to the goals of the partnership and can facilitate reaching the critical goals of the group.



# Lesson Plan

## Everett Crowley Park

### Introduction/Overview

### Video Role Play

### Reinforce Learnings

- 1) "buy-in" from municipal/provincial/federal government
- 2) how to solicit/interest/select/maintain involvement
- 3) how to look for funds/resources/contributions

### Focus on Macro Learnings/Skills

- 1) motivation/goals/interests for involvement ■▲●★
- 2) power balances, participation based on interests not control ■▲●★
- 3) clear statement of goals, mission, values, intent ■▲
- 4) sharing responsibility for maintaining progress equally among partners ▲★
- 5) identifying "champions" ▲

### Identify Micro skills

- 1) framing/re-framing ■●
- 2) positions to issues and interests ▲●★
- 3) defusing/re-directing anger ■●★
- 4) establishing commonalities between partners ■▲●★

### Demonstrate

### Designed Learning Experience

#### Role Plays ■

"R's Comment"  
"The Icy Relationship"

#### Discussion Topics ▲

Empowerment  
Inclusion  
Buy-in  
Champions

#### Skills Building

- CR, pp. 27-29; pp. 42-46
- ★ "Getting to Yes" Chaps. 1&3;  
p. 13, p. 15

### Identify Personal Learnings

### Debrief and Summarize

### Feedback from Each Site/Group

on-line

plenary

off-line

small groups

on-line

plenary



# Role Play—Observers' Worksheet

## Everett Crowley

The purpose of this Worksheet is to assist you to identify specific behaviours portrayed in each of the role plays in *Case Studies in Successful Partnering: Skills for Collaboration*. By identifying both verbal and non-verbal clues, you'll be able to pick out the kinds of language that signal certain types of behaviour.

Read the Worksheet to familiarize yourself with the elements you're going to be looking for in the role play. View the role play once all the way through. Re-play the role play and take notes to identify particular aspects.

### **Working from Interests not Positions**

What language indicates the "positions" of the enviro-activist and the bureaucrat members? What language does the Parks member use to identify the "interests" of the other two members?

### **Focusing on the Problem, not the Person**

What is some of the participants individuals use to attack one another? How are these attacks dealt with?

### **Acknowledging the Issues**

What language is used to acknowledge issues, interests, and goals? Which of these are identified as "shared"?



# Role Play–Partnering Scenarios

## Everett Crowley Park

Read the summaries below to familiarize yourself with the scenarios you're going to be looking at in the role play. View the role play once all the way through. Re-play the role play and take notes to identify particular aspects.

### 1. Depersonalizing the conflict within a partnership

You are at a meeting which was supposed to be a final review of a partnership project that has been underway for some time. There have been tensions among people during the course of the project but, for the most part, the team has struggled through it without really addressing the concerns. At the meeting, you notice that R is making comments that indirectly target you as a problem person on the team. You don't say anything but decide to talk to R afterward.

### 2. Building a collaborative relationship

Because of an argument several months ago, you and K have an "icy" but civil relationship. You are increasingly uncomfortable with this situation since you have to work with K quite frequently on committees. You would like to talk with K to see if something could be worked out so your dealings with each other could be more collaborative and respectful.

### 3. Develop your own role play

Identify a situation you were involved in that required you to demonstrate some of the skills used in this type of partnership. Develop a role play based on this information and "play it out" with another course participant.



# Discussion Topics

## Everett Crowley Park

Read the following topics to familiarize yourself with the elements you're going to be looking for in the "talking-heads" video segments.

### Empowerment

What are the creative ways partners can make contributions that don't require additional capital costs?

### Inclusion

What are the criteria that you use to determine inclusion in your partnership? Identify some ways that different partners were identified to be included in the partnerships. What other criteria/ways can you add that you use to identify inclusion as a partner?

### Buy-In

What are the most effective ways to ensure that all partners in the partnership are committed and on side? In other words, how do you achieve buy-in (internally and externally)?

### Identifying "Champions" of the Partnership

How do you identify people who have the interest, skills, and time to promote the partnership? What are some of the specific skills such people should have? How can "champions" support and promote the partnering relationship? What are some ways you can profile partnership successes?



# Additional Information

## Everett Crowley

### *Mission Statement from Everett Crowley Community Meetings*

#### **1. Park Maintenance**

*To manage the Park to the benefit of the community while promoting natural habitat.*

For example

- prevent fallen trees
- keep "lookout points" usable
- cut back berry bushes regularly
- trail maintenance
- parking lot lights
- signage
- water quality in ponds and streams - erosion issues
- install and empty garbage cans
- maintain benches
- pets/dogs (leashed? trained? other parks as models?)
- stewardship
- volunteerism
- vandalism
- community gardens
- issue of park status
- community building
- handicap accessibility
- zoning strategy / zoning and classes of parks generally
- communication
- benches and seating
- purpose of platform (modify?)

#### **2. Recreation**

*To support "low impact" recreational activities which are appropriate for a "natural" park setting.*

For example

- maintain trails for jogging, walking, recycling
- organize walking clubs
- develop guidelines for group events in park
- support current uses; restrict damaging uses
- consider needs of "birders"



- organize community celebrations of park
- useful to have active vs. passive defined formally? High impact vs. low
- nature escape type of recreation
- carrying capacity of park must be key (check definition)
- trail management (hierarchy of uses? Zonation)
- impact of pets
- handicap access
- community building
- \$\$ for Canada Day event? Other events? Event schedule? Control?

### 3. Nature Education & Appreciation

*To assist people to understand the natural processes behind the Park's regeneration, and to appreciate and support the possibilities for improved ecological integrity in the Park.*

For example

- develop nature walks for children, seniors, families, etc.
- develop a map of the park with species explained
- develop programs for observing and monitoring changes in the ecology of the park
- coordinate program of naturalist speakers
- what will be the boundaries of educational programs
- stewardship trust; tree-keeper program for youth?
- connect to schools/community centre
- impact of dogs/pets
- volunteerism
- community gardens
- park designation
- handicap access
- community building

### 4. Habitat Rehabilitation

*To improve the habitat of the Park so that it supports a healthier mix of plants and animals.*

For example

- build and install birdhouses for desired species
- plant species that will supply food for desired animals
- develop bird nesting area with less human contact
- restore stream to support fish stocks



- protect pond area from overuse by humans and damage
- increase water flows to pond and stream
- replace invasive plant species with native species
- ensure healthy tree replacement as alders die out
- monitor runoff water and gases from dumpsites
- inform community of animal population/impacts
- pond as special zone (education/dog guidelines)
- impact of dogs/pets
- volunteerism
- community gardens
- park designation
- handicap access
- community buildings

## 5. Larger Ecological Context

*To act with reference to local, regional, national, and international environmental challenges and projects.*

For example

- Vancouver Greenways Strategy
- link habitat with Fraserview Golf Course/ "Audubon"
- BCIT/ Burnaby Stream Rehabilitation Program
- Fraser River Environmental Management Program
- GVRD Livable Regions Strategy
- GVRD "Clouds of Change" (Co2 cycles)
- Pacific Northwest bird "flyover" spots
- Georgia Basin ecosystem (educate/enhance)
- BC Nature Trust
- Land for Nature-BC Nature Trust
- liaise with Burns Bog Society
- impact of dogs/pets
- volunteerism
- community gardens
- park designation
- handicap access
- community building