

Anacostia Park and Community Collaborative: Our Network Principles

Network Principles

Confirmed by the APACC Business Assembly on Friday, July 12, 2019

These are guidelines that embody the culture of the Anacostia Park & Community Collaborative and serve as a set of operating agreements among network members.

We Build Community Power

- **We create, support and advance policies, plans and initiatives that benefit Wards 7 and 8 communities.**
- **We focus on building relationships:** with each other, with Ward 7 and Ward 8 residents and with partners.
- **We build bridges between communities and government agencies** to ensure programs, policies and funding align with people's priorities and needs.
- **We foster citizen planners** — people who love where they live and help shape and preserve neighborhoods and build ownership over local places.
- **We focus on implementation** - we advocate for our goals but avoid making "wish lists" that we cannot implement.
- **We are committed to co-learning** with and from each other through introspection, critical self-reflection, and humility to accept that we do not have all the answers.

We Elevate Voices

- **We ensure that the voices, experiences, and needs of historically marginalized people are heard, validated and met.**
- **We are dedicated to diversifying and increasing the participation of community-based organizations and residents who have not traditionally been involved in the overlap of water quality, neighborhood development, and green space.** We work with community residents to develop common agendas, speak openly disagreements, and identify and focus on shared priorities - which will continuously inform our common policy agenda.

- **We promote equitable participation in civic life and work to eliminate all forms of exclusion, discrimination and exploitation.** We ensure people have access to relevant information and materials in a timely and accessible manner, format and language they can understand; and help facilitate effective, meaningful and safe participation and dialogue with decision-makers.
- **We are committed to racial equity** and ensuring that those most impacted by structural racism have full access and involvement in the planning and implementation of community projects, institutional policies, and environmental practices that impact their lives.

We Empower Ourselves

- **We are committed to shifting power** to communities that have been structurally disempowered over time.
- **We are committed to racial justice in our work**, and to developing and operating under anti-racism principles.
- **We are committed to diversity, inclusive of gender and ethnicity, in the selection of Steering Committee candidates**, and ensuring that at least 60% of the network leaders and staff with decision-making power are people of color that are representative of the Ward 7 and Ward 8 community we serve.
- **We take initiative.** Any group of two or more voting members can take action in the name of the Anacostia Park & Community Collaborative. We ask for advice -- not permission -- from each other to make this happen. To make decisions, we ask ourselves, "does this embody our values and principles, and bring us closer to our common goals and vision?" If yes, we simply do the work that is exciting and makes sense.
- **We share resources.** We will share resources and expertise with each other when appropriate, particularly to support participation on collaborative efforts with Wards 7 and 8 community-based organizations (CBOs).

We Hold Government Partners Accountable

- **We hold elected officials accountable** and prevent local agencies and institutions from "backsliding on commitments" as well as protect civic space along the Anacostia River.
- **We advocate for robust and equitable engagement strategies.** We advocate that planners and projects leads engage communities meaningfully through dedicated consultations, events, meetings, workshops and activities that accommodate the expectations, realities and needs of the audience (such as providing childcare services).
- **We advocate for ongoing, continuous public engagement instead of one-off campaigns and events.** Decision-makers and those in positions of power should be

prepared to listen and provide feedback to people on how their input or participation has been taken into consideration.