

**NEW YORK CITY – REGION 2
REGIONAL OPEN SPACE ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

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COMMITTEE MEETINGS

February 25, 2013; March 21, 2013; April 22, 2013; May 15, 2013

INTRODUCTION

The New York City – Region 2 Advisory Committee (RAC) for the New York State Open Space Conservation Plan convened four times over a twelve week period to review the status of previously listed properties and identify additional parcels to be included in a new regional Priority List for potential purchase under the State Land Acquisition Plan. In meetings lead by the regional offices of the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) and the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation (OPRHP), the Region 2 RAC also discussed the strategic importance of measures other than acquisition for preserving open space in New York City (NYC), where the cost of land is at a premium, noting in particular the successes that can be achieved through land transfers between public agencies and annexing new properties to already established public open space.

Recent estimates project that the population of the five boroughs will increase to nine million by 2030. Continuing to be relevant to the ongoing discussions about preserving and expanding the City's open space resources, the Mayor of New York City's report and planning document updated in 2011 called "*PlaNYC: A Greener, Greater New York*," which emphasizes that the supply of land is a fixed commodity in New York City, describes a range of issues related to sustainable development in the context of a growing population, and sets forth a proposed series of actions and recommendations to protect and improve the environment and quality of life in the five boroughs, still remains valid. This effort has been supplemented by revisions to the NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission Guidelines incorporating "Greening New York City's Historic Buildings: Green Rowhouse Manual," the NYC Department of Buildings Green Roofs initiatives and the NYC Department of City Planning's "Zone Green Text Amendments" and Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan all aimed at promoting sustainable communities. These recent requirements indicate the forward thinking of the quality of our city and the importance of open space in our neighborhoods. Certainly, this projected population growth would generate unprecedented

development pressure and could have a profound effect on the amount and quality of open space, parkland, and historic preservation resources within the City.

In preparing its recommendations for the 2013 Open Space Conservation Plan, the Region 2 RAC reviewed the successes and missed opportunities over the previous open space conservation planning cycles. Based on this review, there is increased concern that, due to the rising costs of securing waterfront land, inner city parks, and historic buildings for public use, the region will continue to lose properties on its Priority List at an ever accelerating pace. A significant dilemma for Region 2 is that the initial investment of public funds associated with securing lands for open space typically is not accompanied by adequate resources to maintain and manage the newly-acquired sites. Many sites recommended for transfer between government agencies for conservation purposes are not moved for this reason. This is particularly important when dramatic inflationary pressures continuously escalate the stewardship costs for these newly preserved properties as well as for existing preserved properties.

The impacts and after effects of Superstorm Sandy which hit the region in late October 2012 were a primary concern to the convened group. As with other large storm events over the past few years, New York City incurred significant coastal flooding and damage in many public parks and natural areas. Major portions of the City's coastlines were greatly affected by the storm, including wide expanses of public beachfront areas along with their protective dunes which were severely eroded. Areas of particular damage along the City's coastline areas included the South and Eastern Shore of Staten Island and along the Rockaway Peninsula. The substantial beach areas, as well as protective dunes, had previously buffered the waves and kept flood waters from entering the residential areas that are upland of the public beachfront areas. This event was a serious reminder that our protected open space serves many needs beyond a place to recreate.

In the 2010 New York State Sea Level Rise Task Force Report, a recommendation was made to modify the evaluation criteria of the State Open Space Plan, to include acquisition of coastal natural protective features. In the aftermath of Superstorm Sandy, the NYS 2100 Commission developed recommendations to improve resilience of our built and natural systems. These included a recommendation to acquire and protect land that may be prone to damage from climate effects, as well as land that may buffer or protect other lands from these risks. Consistent with these recommendations, Governor Cuomo has developed a program to buy-out homeowners who voluntarily wish to vacate their storm damaged homes. The properties would then remain undeveloped, adding to regional open space which will enhance natural infrastructure and add buffer capacity to adjacent neighborhoods.

In December 2012, New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg created the Special Initiative for Rebuilding and Resiliency (SIRR) to address long-term climate change resiliency in New York City and to build upon ongoing efforts under PlaNYC and lessons learned after Sandy. A comprehensive report will soon be released outlining actionable recommendations both for rebuilding the communities impacted by Sandy, increasing the resilience of infrastructure and buildings citywide, and addressing coastal protection. The report will provide recommendations

and projects to adapt parks and open space to provide community flood protection, necessary upgrades to allow for park facilities to resist damage due to flooding and strong wind conditions, and additional ideas to mitigate the impacts of climate change. Increasing the extent of protected wetland areas and implementing green infrastructure are also to be key components of the plan.

REGIONAL OPEN SPACE ACHIEVEMENTS

The Region 2 RAC took note of significant open space successes achieved since the last open space plan update was published in 2009. The Committee estimates that since the last report, at least 343 acres of land have been protected through acquisitions and/or transfers of government land for conservation purposes.

One of the key benefits of the New York State Open Space Conservation Plan process is that it not only guides the land conservation efforts of state agencies, but also provides a framework for cooperation with partners in other sectors of government and the nonprofit and philanthropic communities. Since the 2009 updated plan was adopted, tremendous progress has been made in protecting the properties listed on the 2009 Region 2 Priority List. While the State of New York, through DEC and OPRHP, took a strong leadership role on several of these projects, these land conservation efforts were greatly enhanced by the work of other organizations.

The Committee notes that no New York State Environmental Protection Fund (EPF) dollars have been spent in New York City for land acquisition since January 2001, with the purchase of East River State Park (former Brooklyn Eastern District Terminal). In this context, the amount of open space conservation that has been achieved is even more remarkable, and can be attributed to the work of the partners noted below as well as the resourcefulness of the state agencies in Region 2 in using federal grants, private financing, and environmental benefit funds linked to consent orders and legal settlements to successfully acquire land. The efforts of the following partners were instrumental in achieving these remarkable successes:

The City of New York: The City, through the Department of Parks and Recreation (NYCDPR) and the Department of Environmental Protection (NYCDEP), has its own robust land acquisition program that often overlaps with and complements the State's efforts. Since June 2009, NYCDPR has acquired 236 acres for open space and recreational use in the five boroughs. In furtherance of the City's Staten Island Bluebelt Program to preserve natural drainage corridors, including streams, ponds, and other wetland areas, NYCDEP acquired 60 acres to aid in stormwater management.

The Port Authority of NY & NJ: In 2001, the Port Authority initiated the Hudson Raritan Estuary Resources Program, allocating \$30 million in New York and \$30 million in New Jersey for habitat protection purposes. To date, the Port Authority has helped protect nine sites totaling nearly 395 acres in the two states, including nearly 45 acres added in New York since 2009.

The Trust for Public Land:

The Trust for Public Land is the nation's leader in creating city parks and green open spaces. In cities across America, The Trust for Public Land is working to ensure that everyone—in particular, every child—enjoys close-to-home access to a park, playground, or open space. In New York, The Trust for Public Land's work preserves and remediates green space, protects drinking water and local food sources, safeguards wildlife habitats, and helps connect people to the natural world. In Region 2, The Trust for Public Land most recently has teamed-up with NYS DEC, the City of New York and the Port Authority of NY & NJ to protect resilient landscapes including Pouch Camp in Staten Island (42.74 acres). An additional 1.25 acres (Jamaica Bay/Bch 88th St.) and 0.60 acres (Depot Place) have also been preserved since the release of the 2009 Open Space Conservation Plan.

Specific land conservation successes include, but are not limited to:

A. ACQUISITIONS

Waterfront Access

Bronx/New York Waterfront

- **Bridge Park, Bronx:** Four acres were added to the existing NYCDPR property located south of Roberto Clemente State Park. Two parcels totaling 3.345 acres were added through the transfer of city-owned property, and in 2011, a .687 parcel was donated to the City as an addition to Bridge Park. The donation was made possible through TPL in partnership with the Port Authority. In addition to Bridge Park, State Parks acquired the 2.1 DCAS lot adjoining Clemente to the south.
- **Harlem River Park, New York:** 1.19-acres of city-owned property between West 142 Street and West 145th Streets were transferred to NYCDPR in furtherance of the Manhattan Harlem River Greenway.

Jamaica Bay Protection Area

- **Sunset Cove Park:** A 9.375-acre waterfront parcel in Broad Channel and previously leased to a private entity for boat storage was transferred to NYCDPR in 2009 for the preservation and restoration of wetlands and to facilitate public access on the upland portion of the site.
- **The Beach 88th Street parcel, Queens:** The parcel fronting Jamaica Bay was donated to the City by TPL with funding authorized in 2001 by the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey as part of the Hudson-Raritan Estuary Resources Program.

Brooklyn/Queens East River Waterfront

- Between 2009 and 2010 12.6 acres of city-owned land were assigned to NYCDPR for purposes of the development of **Brooklyn Bridge Park**.
- In Williamsburg, Brooklyn the **North 5th Street Pier** was deeded to the City by a private developer, who will continue to provide funding to the City for maintenance of the pier in perpetuity. It should be noted that the pier incurred damage from Superstorm Sandy and repairs are required.

Staten Island Greenbelt

- **Pouch Camp** TPL purchased a conservation easement covering a 43-acre portion of the 120-acre property, made possible by a collaborative effort between the Port Authority, NYSDEC, and a New York City capital budget allocation. The conservation easement is held by NYSDEC.
- **Manor Road** In 2010 the City of New York acquired the two-acre property at the border of the Greenbelt to aid in the preservation of wetlands.

Staten Island Northshore Greenbelt

- A 15-acre portion of the Goodhue (a.k.a. The Children's Aid Society) property was acquired by NYCDPR; a 23-acre area remains to be acquired.
- An 11-acre city-owned property along the waterfront between Van Name and Van Pelt Avenues, Richmond Terrace Wetlands, was transferred to NYCDPR. This parcel was recommended for transfer to NYCDPR by the City of New York's Wetlands Transfer Task Force,

From the Additional Properties of Importance List:

- West Harlem Piers
- Port Morris/Randall's Island Connector & South Bronx Greenway (Block 2543 Lot 1 (p/o) and Block 2583 Lot 2 (p/o))

OPEN SPACE PLANNING ISSUES

1. **Improving Land Management Capability.** One of the guiding principles of the Plan is that the need for adequate management and stewardship must be taken into account in efforts to preserve open space. Unfortunately, the fiscal and human resources available to properly manage and improve new property assets have not been adequate. While Region 2 agencies such as the State OPRHP's Regional Office and NYCDPR may have large operations programs, they face significant challenges given the large number of park visitors and the urban context of these facilities. As a result these agencies find it difficult to absorb new properties that would help them meet their missions and provide a standard level of care without commensurate increases in maintenance program resources. Region 2 DEC plays an important role in acquiring open space priority parcels yet lack the resources for adequate staffing to address property management. Support for land management activity must improve if we are to rightfully label our open space conservation accomplishments as "successes."
2. **Conserving Precious Natural Resources.** In Region 2, the dynamic tension between environmental protection, natural resources management, and development pressures is an

especially complex and delicate challenge. For example, the Staten Island Borough President's representative objected again to inclusion of the Gulfport Marsh and Uplands as a priority site, based on the site's value as a location for potential economic development. The nomination of this site, it should be noted, included a recognition that some part of the upland (non-wetland) property may be suitable for development, noting that it may be appropriate to establish a corridor for access to an existing dock on the property that would accommodate some future water-dependent use on the eastern portion of the site near Gulf Avenue. The Borough President's objections illustrate that some careful balancing of economic and open space values is likely to be needed at this site. Discussed during the last planning process, The Port Authority, which serves in an advisory capacity to the Region 2 RAC, is advancing its project for the replacement of the Goethal's Bridge. The project is being carried forward with the proposed protection of forty city-owned acres along Old Place Creek, thereby demonstrating that updating the City's critical infrastructure can be done while protecting the City's natural resources.

Over the past 20 years, large industrial operations across the City have been closing, prompting land use and zoning changes that facilitate a variety of new development activities. A significant number of these sites are located on the waterfront or along inlets that provide ideal opportunities for public access to the shoreline and, in some cases, they have become wildlife habitat. In many of these areas, bird habitats have begun to revitalize, and in certain water channels increased fish populations have been detected. Potential opportunities to preserve or create waterfront open space in Region 2 continue to increase, particularly along the eastern shore of the East River, where local parks and pathways can be created. Establishment of bike and pedestrian trails along New York City's shoreline has long been a priority of Region 2, as successful acquisitions in the five boroughs have amply demonstrated. It should be noted that the Bronx Borough President's representative objected to the Mott Haven/Port Morris waterfront project nomination due to concerns about the potential for displacement of existing uses in the Mott Haven area. However, the committee supports the priority status for the Mott Haven-Port Morris Waterfront Plan because it would designate merely 20 acres of waterfront land as open space within the current 850 acre South Bronx Significant Maritime Industrial Area (SMIA), all of which is in a flood zone. The plan would preserve portions of the waterfront that have been unoccupied/underutilized for the last 20 years to help guard against the effects of climate change storm surges on the community and on the borough's electrical grid and other important infrastructure (noting that most of the Southern Bronx power plants are located in this area). The plan is also consistent with City Council residential rezonings of adjacent land, and sites within the plan have been included in the Vision 2020 NYC Comprehensive Waterfront Plan as well as recognized by the Historic Districts Council.

- 3. Ensuring Equitable Distribution of Open Space.** As the built environment increases to the maximum allowed by zoning across New York City, the higher population density that comes with it places more burdens on existing playgrounds and parks. Many of these amenities are already very heavily utilized, and they need significant cyclical maintenance and capital

improvements to handle increased use and wear. The amount of acreage devoted to public gardens and small parks must also increase to keep pace with this rise in the number of households. Fortunately, in Region 2 there has been continued interest in increasing the number of community gardens and expanding the amount of open space in underserved communities. The pressing need for open space in underserved neighborhoods across the City necessitates a continued focus on conserving, acquiring, or preserving smaller sites. While expending time and energy on securing such sites may not initially appear to be an efficient use of relatively scarce resources, in fact the acute lack of open space in these communities gives every square foot that is set aside far greater value as a public amenity, proportionally, than larger parcels in less densely populated areas.

4. Connecting and Augmenting Larger Urban Parks. Continuing efforts to reclaim or “repurpose” federal land once used by the military, and to rezone former industrial areas along the waterfront, has created a rare opportunity to design and build large new public spaces in the City. For example, Governors Island, large sections of the Brooklyn waterfront in Red Hook, Sunset Park, and in Greenpoint and Williamsburg, all have envisioned and featured significant open space components. It is important that, as redevelopment of these sites goes forward, implementation of the commitments to provide public amenities, such as open space and recreational areas, be closely monitored. Linear parks and greenways serve an important function in connecting residential areas to large urban parks, and similarly to small neighborhood parks, have a particularly high value in densely populated urban areas. The repurposing or reallocation of existing city-owned land, requiring no acquisition action or transfer of property, would be beneficial to encourage safe access to larger networks of open space, or in some cases, would facilitate waterfront access points through the development of street ends where they meet the water. Specific suggestions by committee members included the creation of on-street bike routes along Bronx River Avenue in the Bronx to facilitate short term connections to existing parks along the Bronx River corridor before longer term acquisitions of waterfront parcels may be possible. Additionally, nominations were put forward for improving pedestrian facilities within the existing street right of way north of Ferry Point Park to help facilitate safe pedestrian access to Ferry Point within the community and for creating access points to Westchester Creek. Enhancing the existing available open space within Co-Op City to facilitate canoe and kayak access to the Hutchinson River was also discussed amongst the committee members. Also in the Bronx, the idea of establishing a pedestrian bridge to join the eastern and western portions of the historic Old Croton Aqueduct Trail within Van Cortlandt Park would provide for a continuous trail experience.

5. Protecting Historic and Cultural Resources. The rezoning of industrial sites along the waterfront presents an opportunity to memorialize the industrial age here in New York City. A model for this is the sequential implementation and development of the High-Line Park, which makes use of elevated and abandoned rail lines to create a striking public amenity on Manhattan’s West Side. This has been remarkably successful. Using or adaptively re-using existing historic buildings and structures with open space and recreational uses, our waterfront and maritime history could be approached in the same creative manner. For

example, historic structures on Governor's Island, in New York Harbor and Fort Totten in Queens are both decommissioned military bases and are being re-developed for schools, non-profits as well as contextual new development to support the costs associated with management of these public properties for tourists and for the immediate neighborhoods. In our last report, it was hoped that the former Brooklyn Navy Yard, purchased by the City of New York in 1967, once known as America's premier shipbuilding facility, could be rescued and adapted in such a way. However, because of long lapses without maintenance funding, much of the historic fabric was deemed unsalvageable and recently demolished in favor of new development as an industrial park. This could have been an extraordinary opportunity for historic preservation and recreational use within the 300 acre site. Today, such large parcels are becoming rarer but this emphasizes the need for both greater public awareness and the urgency of taking action, even if smaller pieces could be purchased over time. Preservation of the remaining historic buildings, especially as they relate to open space conservation and waterfront access, should be made a priority by the City as re-using existing buildings is now an acceptable sustainable concept and preserves our architectural heritage as well.

6. **Facilitating Land Transfers.** Although the acquisition of privately-held lands for the purpose of open space conservation remains critical, many properties that are already publicly-owned through federal, state, and city agencies could be formally and permanently "repurposed" for recreational use. The relatively high-cost of land in Region 2 makes this kind of land transfer from public agencies an especially important mechanism for open space conservation - often entailing little or no cost for hundreds of acres. For instance, rail corridors such as the North Shore Railroad could be excellent candidates for conversion to recreational railway use. While obstacles sometimes exist to such transfers in the Region, such as the need to remediate environmental contamination or address public safety and security concerns, a limited number of transfers as identified in the attached list entitled "Suggested Government Properties With Potential for Inter-Agency Transfer for Public Open Space/Recreational Use" were achieved since 2006 as noted in the land conservation successes noted above. Many properties remain to be transferred as identified by the City of New York's Wetlands Transfer Task Force, charged with analyzing and identifying which city-owned properties should be transferred to other public agencies for preservation. Some properties on the Priority List could be made even more attractive and valuable as open space assets by coupling them with strategic land transfers.
7. **Responding to Climate Change** The devastating impacts of Hurricane Sandy and Irene have underscored the importance of adapting to a changing climate. New York State is likely to be visited by larger and more frequent hurricanes, nor'easters and other storms. Heat waves are also of concern, especially in densely-populated urban areas such as Region 2. Sea level rise will likely accelerate along the coastline. In 2013, 640,000 more people will be included in the City's revised flood evacuation zone mapping based upon updated storm surge modeling by the National Weather Service. Potentially double the number of buildings around the City will be considered at high risk of flooding as FEMA completes its first revision of base flood elevations in more than 30 years. New inundation and surge maps have already initiated changing land use discussions and will continue to as the City responds to future climate

change effects. As recognized by the Governor's 2100 Commission, open space conservation can play an important role in mitigating these hazards and protecting people and property. Protecting wetlands and other open spaces along shorelines can be instrumental in mitigating hazards in the coastal zone. Properly designed, these public spaces can absorb floodwaters and wave impacts, reducing exposure for residents, upland property and emergency service providers. They can enable wetland to retreat as sea levels rise, reducing erosion while sustaining fisheries and other important ecological benefits into the future. It is also important to note that green spaces can reduce "heat island" impacts, lowering local and ambient temperatures through shade and evapotranspiration.

Given these parameters, the Committee focused on those land acquisitions and open spaces that are along the rivers, harbors and coastal areas of New York City. The new Advisory Base Flood Elevation standards proposed by FEMA, reform of the federal flood insurance program, greater incidences of storms and increased perception of risk among coastal property owners is likely to result in increased opportunity for land acquisition along the coastline over time. While there was recognition that some parcels also have economic/development value, in general the Committee voted in favor of acquiring and preserving a number of important coastal and riparian parcels in our Waterfront Access and other categories. As this revision of the NYS Open Space Plan is being finalized, the initial phase of one of the most ambitious post-disaster property buyouts ever pursued is moving forward. The State intends to purchase more than 1,000 high-risk properties and demolish storm-damaged structures in order to permanently conserve these lands. Most of the properties identified in Region 2 are in Brooklyn and Staten Island. They could not be re-developed and instead would be left as natural buffer areas to protect against future storms. While we are not able to explicitly list these "buy-out" sites among our regional priority acquisition recommendations, clearly these properties represent important opportunities for expanding open space and providing storm protection and should be given priority consideration. Likewise, an ongoing study by NYCDPR will soon identify locations where vulnerable natural infrastructure, such as salt marsh habitats, may be able to migrate landward in response to rising sea level. These sites, once identified, should also be given priority consideration for preservation.

NEW YORK CITY FUNDING & POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

The Region 2 RAC recommends the following:

A. Improve Land Management Capability

1. Provide sufficient dedicated positions in Region 2 City and State agencies for the management of their public open spaces.
2. Increase EPF stewardship funding to the Region by:
 - a. Developing a companion program to the Open Space Conservation Plan to provide an initial EPF stewardship award at the time of property acquisition for immediate property needs (i.e. boundary marking, debris removal, proper access); and

- b. Giving priority to EPF stewardship funding requests for parcels acquired through the Open Space Conservation Plan.
3. Implement a campaign to foster public participation in land management by:
 - a. Encouraging formation of dedicated advocacy groups (i.e. "alliance", "conservancy" or "friends of..." organizations);
 - b. Promoting existing stewardship programs such as DEC's Volunteer Stewardship program; and
 - c. Conducting a regular public program of site management activities such as clean-ups, planting or ecological surveys.
4. Ensure availability of resources for environmental remediation of open space properties as needed.

B. Conserve Precious Natural Resources

1. Review the Open Space Conservation Planning Process to determine how the possible impact of anthropogenic climate change should be incorporated into future cycles, particularly with respect to buffering the potential impacts of sea level rise and extreme climatic events such as floods and hurricanes.
2. Develop guidance on how increased attention to stormwater management in urban areas should affect the design, acquisition, and conservation of open space in New York State. There are current new initiatives of eliminating hard surfaced pavements behind apartment buildings and rear yards, to alleviate excessive storm water at times when the storm drainage system are at capacity. This has the additional benefit of permitting rainwater and rainwater run-off to irrigate open space that can be used as green islands in built-up and inner city neighborhoods.
3. Allocate Environmental Protection Fund (EPF) money in a systematic way to ensure that Region 2 obtains a fair share allocation of EPF funds.

C. Ensure Equitable Distribution of Open Space.

1. Develop policy guidance to facilitate the establishment of dedicated funding revenue streams from State-authorized "payments in lieu of taxes" for the acquisition and management of open space parcels in underserved communities.
2. Establish a set of criteria or benchmarks by which to measure progress achieved in the equitable distribution of open space in underserved communities.
3. Increase the purchase of sufficient smaller parcels in underserved communities to achieve the benchmarks for equitable distribution of open space. [The State should expand or develop flexible cooperative models with the City to manage these smaller parcels, where appropriate and mutually beneficial, while ensuring accountability for proper management.]
4. Allocate EPF money in a systematic way to promote equitable distribution of open space based on community and population needs.

D. Connect and Augment Larger Urban Parks

1. Promote development of greenways that connect park lands.

2. Enhance the connections between park lands and residential neighborhoods.
3. Improve mass transit access to open space resources (for example, through strategic extension of bus routes).
4. Promote further establishment of greenbelts and bluebelts.
5. Create new streetends where they meet the City's waterways to provide opportunities for waterfront viewing and access, where appropriate.

E. Protect Historic and Cultural Resources

1. Allocate EPF money strategically to protect historic and cultural resources within or adjacent to open space areas.

F. Facilitate Land Transfers

1. Establish Regional Interagency Working Groups that meet regularly to evaluate state-owned lands within each region to determine whether they could be transferred to DEC or ORPHP (or appropriate local agencies) for use as open space.
2. Explore appropriate ways to maximize public access to publicly owned open space, including where those parcels are owned by agencies that are not specifically parks or environmental agencies.

G. Responding to Climate Change

1. Prioritize parcels for acquisition or government transfer that are located in high-risk flood and storm surge zones.
2. Explore funding opportunities to aid in the restoration and protection of wetlands that are on the government transfer list.
3. Continue to identify opportunities on federal, state and city lands to expand the urban tree canopy and coordinate new tree plantings with PlaNYC and Million Trees NYC.
4. Explore partnerships in education and research within new Cooperative Management Area at Jamaica Bay and support the establishment of the Jamaica Bay Science and Resiliency Center.

2013 PRIORITY PROJECTS NARRATIVE

WATERFRONT ACCESS

BRONX

MOTT HAVEN-PORT MORRIS WATERFRONT – The Mott Haven-Port Morris Waterfront Plan is consistent with three rezonings on adjacent land as well as Vision 2020 NYC Comprehensive Waterfront Plan; it provides a logical solution to climate change effects on the Significant Maritime and Industrial Area (SMIA) located within flood zones; and it gives the underserved

community access to designated open space to counteract health consequences caused by an oversaturation of highways and truck-intensive businesses. The plan consists of the following interconnected projects: Bronx Kill Waterfront Park, Park Avenue Boat Launch/Waterfront Park, Lincoln Avenue Waterfront Park (with Alexander Avenue Extension), East 132nd Street Pier, Historic Port Morris Gantries and a Waterfront Connecting Path.

BRONX RIVER GREENWAY – Creation of a greenway/trailway along the Bronx River from 172d Street to Hunts Point Riverside Park and Soundview Park. This corridor utilizing on-street greenway connections in the interim, while opportunities for direct waterfront parcel acquisitions are achieved, will connect with the existing 17 mile greenway/trailway to the Kensico Reservoir in Westchester County.

City Island Wetlands – A vacant Bronx shorefront area in its natural state with significant wetlands; will also provide public access to the waterfront.

- **City Island Gateway** – Located just east of the City Island Bridge, this private parcel is waterfront property that faces Pelham Bay Park and Orchard Beach to the north, and would make for an outstanding site for a community boat launch.

Putnam Railroad – A greenway through the northern Bronx using an abandoned railroad R.O.W.

Daylight Tibbets Brook – New Addition. Extending from Van Cortlandt Park along the Putnam Line to the Harlem River. This will create a greenway/bluebelt pathway connecting and interconnecting existing State trailways to other greenways.

Hudson River Greenway – Acquisition of College Point, a parcel on the Hudson River in the northern Bronx. The preferred route for the Hudson River Greenway will include 3.8 miles of Hudson River waterfront. The acquisition of this land will provide the only public park stop along the Greenway in the Bronx.

BRONX / NEW YORK

HARLEM RIVER WATERFRONT – The public access objective for the Harlem River area is to provide pedestrians and cyclists with opportunities to enjoy both banks of the river through expansion of waterfront parks and the creation of a continuous pathway within the city-wide greenway system. Bronx and Manhattan parks and greenways will be connected by existing bridges, including the non-vehicular historic High Bridge.

BRONX HARLEM GREENWAY – The five-acre Spuyten Duyvil/Penn Central Triangle properties could provide waterfront access at the junction of the Hudson and Harlem Rivers as well as wetlands preservation opportunities; the CSX-owned and city-owned parcels north of Fordham Road offering connection to the future Putnam Greenway; the 3.7 acre Fordham Landing property at the end of Fordham road, is a vacant, privately owned parcel that could provide additional waterfront parkland in an under-served community with a waterfront greenway

connection south to Roberto Clemente State Park; redevelopment of the waterfront areas at the south end of Roberto Clemente State Park would further extend waterfront parklands and greenway along a particularly scenic portion of the Harlem River Valley (Facing Manhattan's Highbridge Park) south to the Washington and Hamilton Bridges. The priority project also includes expanding the greenway southward alongside High Bridge Yards to connect with points south along the Mott Haven and Port Morris waterfront areas.

MANHATTAN HARLEM RIVER GREENWAY – Four privately owned industrial lots along the Harlem River in the Inwood section of Manhattan that would form a waterside promenade with fishing access.

QUEENS

JAMAICA BAY PROTECTION AREA – A premier coastal habitat including important marine and terrestrial ecosystems and bird sanctuary, under the primary stewardship of the National Parks Service and Gateway National Recreation Area. Located in Brooklyn and Queens, it is also an important element in the Atlantic flyway. The area includes, but is not limited to the following parcels, and other resources identified in the Jamaica Bay Watershed Protection Plan:

- **Hook Creek** – A freshwater creek and uplands within a large, city-owned tidal wetland in Queens.
- **LILCO Property at Beach 116th Street** – A large upland parcel that includes waterfront access.
- **Sea Girt Avenue Wetlands** – Tidal wetlands and ponds at the eastern end of the Rockaway Peninsula.
- **Spring Creek/Fresh Creek** – A freshwater creek on the Brooklyn/Queens border.
- **Brant Point** – Parcels adjacent to the New York City Department of Parks & Recreation's Brant Point Wildlife Sanctuary, identified in "Buffer the Bay Revisited," published by the Trust for Public Land and New York City Audubon Society in 1992; would help consolidate and buffer the City's preserve and provide public access to Jamaica Bay while preserving critical wildlife habitat.
- **Dubos Point** – Shoreline adjacent to the NYC Department of Parks & Recreation's Dubos Point Wildlife Sanctuary along Jamaica Bay, identified in "Buffer the Bay Revisited," published by the Trust for Public Land and New York City Audubon Society in 1992; would help consolidate and buffer already-protected City-owned land and provide public access to Jamaica Bay while preserving critical wildlife habitat.
- **Mott Peninsula** – Shoreline parcels on Jamaica Bay that were identified in "Buffer the Bay Revisited," published by the Trust for Public Land and New York City Audubon Society in 1992; would help provide public access to Jamaica Bay while preserving critical wildlife habitat.
- **Norton Peninsula** – Shoreline parcels on Jamaica Bay between NYC's Rockaway Community Park (former Edgemere landfill) and Bayswater Point State Park, identified in "Buffer the Bay Revisited," published by the Trust for Public Land and New York City Audubon Society in

1992; would help consolidate already-protected state and city land, and provide public access to Jamaica Bay while preserving critical wildlife habitat.

- **Northeastern Queens Shoreline** – Unique and critical natural resources areas representing some of the last contiguous coastal habitats in this area.
- **Udall's Cove** – A tidal wetland preserve connected to Long Island Sound through Little Neck Bay.
- **Udall's Ravine** – A ravine and stream corridor that are part of a larger wetland ecosystem.

KINGS / QUEENS

BROOKLYN / QUEENS EAST RIVER WATERFRONT – Open spaces and proposed greenways along the 20 mile waterfront from the Brooklyn Army Terminal to the Astoria Power Station will provide diverse and under-served neighborhoods with waterfront access and recreational opportunities. Properties include, but are not limited to:

- **Private properties needed to complete Bushwick Inlet Park**
- **Hallets Marina, Vernon Boulevard**
- **Con Edison, Northern Hunters Point.**
- **The Grain Elevator Property**
- **Bush Terminal Piers (government-owned parcels)**
- **Williamsburg Bridge Park** (pending the relocation of existing City facilities)

RICHMOND

GREAT KILLS HARBOR – NELSON AVENUE WATERFRONT ADDITION – Approximately 4 acres of wooded natural land near the waterfront to expand Nelson Seaside Park. The barrier and shoreline of the Great Kills harbor is under primary stewardship of the National Parks Service.

HARBOR HERONS WILDLIFE COMPLEX – This wildlife complex includes tidal and freshwater marshes, a pond, and creeks located on the west and north shores of Staten Island. The complex also includes four islands in New York Harbor. Together, these support the largest breeding population of colonial water birds in the northeastern United States.

- **Graniteville Swamp/Old Place Creek** – A diverse 30-acre swamp forest which includes a wide range of habitats, a tidal marsh, a cattail marsh, and freshwater ponds as well as feeding grounds for egrets and other wading birds (The New York/New Jersey Port Authority expressed concern regarding inclusion of this property on the priority list, in relation to its plans regarding the Goethal's Bridge).
- **Merrill's Creek** – A tidal wetland system north of Saw Mill Creek on the Arthur Kill.
- **Saw Mill Creek** – Tidal and fresh water marsh complex adjacent to Prall's Creek; includes critical habitat for State-threatened species.
- **Gulfport Marsh & Uplands** – Freshwater and tidal wetlands cover about 240 of the 625 acres of this parcel, a combination of two parcels previously known as the "GATX" and "Duke Energy" parcels and now known as the "380 Development" site. The site provides nesting and foraging habitat for several significant species. The site also provides some important open grassland habitat and a "corridor," or link, between Saw Mill Creek and Old Place Creek. Because the site includes a dock area that was used by tankfields in the past,

it may be appropriate to establish a corridor for access to that dock to accommodate some future water-dependent use on the eastern portion of the site near Gulf Avenue.

- **Little Fresh Kills** – A portion of 60 acres of upland and marsh buffering the shore against urban development can be protected by acquisition or conservation easement.
- **Neck Creek** – Tidal marsh area off the Arthur Kill.
- **Cable Avenue Woods** – Patchy wet and upland forest community of 28 acres threatened by imminent development.
- **Clay Pit Ponds State Park Preserve Additions** – Located adjacent to Clay Pit Ponds State Park Preserve. Northeastern Woodland and Englewood Boundary Tract sites would provide additional buffer for the Park and protect it from development.
- **Blazing Star** – Located off of Arthur Kill Road, this 12+/- acre property consists of shipwrecks, mud flats, salt marsh and upland woods including an historic cemetery. It provides significant habitat for many species of birds.
- **Sharrotts Road Shorelands** – A 17+/- acre site, consisting of woods, salt marsh and mudflats along the Arthur Kill. Tappens Creek, which originates in Clay Pit Pond State Park Preserve, flows through the property. A field of sunken barges lies off the shoreline, providing wildlife habitat.
- **Ellis Road** – A 57 acre property site.
- **Outerbridge Shorelands** – This 30+/- acre site consists of forested upland and tidal wetland shoreline along the Arthur Kill, north and south of the Outerbridge Crossing.
- **Kriescher Cove** – This property consists of woodland, salt marsh and mud flats along the Arthur Kill. The property provides habitat for colonial waterbirds, songbirds, amphibians and reptiles. Originally, the site included approximately 25 acres of open space, but much of it has been developed. There remains a 6-acre parcel in its natural state.
- **Port Mobil Swamp Forest and Tidal Wetlands** – This site consists of 50+/- acres of forest with rare Blackjack Oak, Persimmon & River Birch, ponds and shoreline surrounding Exxon Mobil's tank farm along the Arthur Kill. The property provides significant habitat for amphibians and reptiles.

NORTH SHORE WATERFRONT GREENWAY – This greenway utilizing a potential bicycle path route and existing and possibly future new open space areas would create a continuous public waterfront pathway along the Kill Van Kull from the area of Bay Street Landing, around the Staten Island Ferry, past Snug Harbor and to the area of the Goethals Bridge. This would provide for waterfront access and an added recreation element along the north shore of Staten Island.

NEW YORK CITY HISTORIC PRESERVATION SITES

- **Brinkerhoff Cemetery** – Site of an old Queens family cemetery in Fresh Meadows.
- **Commandant's House** – Located in Kings County on Little Street within the former Brooklyn Navy Yard. This house was built in 1807 and is currently on the National Register and New York City Landmarks List.

- **Klein Farm** – Located in Queens County at 73rd Avenue and 194th Street. The Klein Homestead was the last privately-owned working farm in New York City. It remains an important vestige of Queens County’s primarily agrarian past.
- **William H. Cornell Farmhouse** – Located in Little Neck, Queens, the site includes approximately 1.3 acres with a house and barn, plus outbuildings on an additional .25 acres on Little Neck Parkway.

INNER CITY/ UNDER-SERVED COMMUNITY PARKS – This project will provide open space and recreational opportunities in densely populated urban areas with limited or no open space resources.

- **Con Edison 15th Street Ballfields** – A much-valued recreational resource, now in private hands, in an under-served area of Manhattan near the East River.
- **Greening Gray Neighborhoods** – Several vacant lots that would provide much needed green space in the communities of Harlem, Hunt’s Point in the South Bronx and Bushwick, Brooklyn.
- **Jones Woods Playground addition** – Wooded 6-acre hillside with scenic views in an under-served Neighborhood.
- **Travers Park Expansion** – The site of the Queens Borough Toyota Car Dealership located at 77-12 Northern Boulevard in Jackson Heights, Queens, in a community that is greatly under-served for open space.
- **Nicholas Avenue** – 9.5 acres including some freshwater wetlands, located in the Port Richmond section of Staten Island.

LONG POND – Long Pond – A 90-acre natural wetland area on Staten Island; features knob and kettle topography and a diversity of habitats. **MIV Triangle** – This 5-acre parcel (block 6765, lot 1) located in Richmond County on Raritan Bay, would enhance public access to Raritan Bay shoreline.

STATEN ISLAND BLUEBELT – Located on the South Shore of Staten Island, this area serves as an alternative stormwater management system that incorporates existing streams and wetlands. Protecting these areas for stormwater conveyance will obviate the need for many miles of expensive sewer construction and provide aesthetically pleasing parks and greenways.

- **Richmond Creek Acquisitions** – A major drainage corridor; part of a freshwater wetland system.
- **South Beach Northern Wetlands** – Sixty-five acres of former salt marsh that provide local flood control and wildlife habitat and would enlarge the scope of similar adjacent state land.
- **Oakwood Beach Bluebelt** – Various parcels located in the southeast section of Staten Island, that would be appropriate for inclusion in the NYC Department of Environmental Protection’s program for alternative stormwater management using existing streams and wetlands, involving reduction in impervious surfaces, increased groundwater recharge and improvements to local habitat.

STATEN ISLAND GREENBELT – One of the largest urban nature preserves in the United States, this 2,500 acre natural area contains unique woodlands, wetlands, glacial ponds, open fields and one of the last remaining intact watersheds in New York City. The Greenbelt is a haven for wildlife and many migratory bird species.

- **Pouch Camp** – A large contiguous parcel containing the northernmost portion of the Greenbelt Watershed Preservation Area.
- **Reeds Basket Willow Swamp** – A heavily wooded environmentally sensitive site located at the base of a steep ravine; contains streams and a vernal swamp.
- **Great Swamp Forest Hill Greens** – This wooded slope would provide a buffer between a housing development and a protected freshwater wetland.

STATEN ISLAND WET WOODS – Moist hardwood forest in southern Staten Island that forms an intermediate community between maritime shrub forest and forested uplands. These properties contain ponds, streams, and wetlands and include:

- **Arden Heights Woods Additions** – An addition to a 183-acre wildlife sanctuary.
- **Blue Heron Park Additions** – Freshwater wetlands and wildlife habitat; contiguous with an existing city park.
- **Canada Hill Forest** – Thirty-three acres of scarce “Sandy Ground” oak barrens buffering mapped freshwater wetlands.
- **Corson’s Brook Woods and Woodlands** – Undeveloped portion of former Willowbrook State School under the ownership of the State through the NYS Office for People With Developmental Disabilities, a 30-acre west-facing wet woodland and uphill, adjacent 15-acre semi-mature woodland.
- **Outerbridge Ponds** – These 14-acres of pine-oak barrens and sedge ponds represent ecosystems rare in New York City.

STATEN ISLAND NORTSHORE GREENBELT – Goodhue a.k.a. The Children’s Aid Society – Located in northeast Richmond County. This 42+/- acre site consists of woods, freshwater wetlands and forms a link with Allison Pond, Jones Woods, to Snug Harbor. Twenty-three acres remain under threat of development.

2009 NEW YORK CITY PRIORITY CONSERVATION PROJECTS

ADDITIONAL PROPERTIES OF IMPORTANCE

BRONX COUNTY

- Bruckner Boulevard & Bronx River Ave
- Lafayette Avenue fur factory
- 1219 Gilbert Place*
- 1264 Lafayette Avenue*
- 740 Manida Street*
- Corporal Irwin Fisher– Playground
- Sedgwick Avenue
- Kingsbridge Crescent
- High Island
- Hudson River Greenway
- Melrose Commons
- South Bronx Greenway
- Westchester Creek

- Pugsley's Creek
- Riverdale Park Addition
- Highbridge Park
- Nelson Avenue Playground
- Hunt's Point Waterfront Access
- Co-op City Easement
- Port Morris/Randall's Island Greenway
- Community Garden/Webster Ave (210 St.)
- South Bronx Lowline
- Hutchinson River waterfront access
- City Island Gateway Project (Block 5636 Lot 149)

KINGS COUNTY

- Gowanus Creek Public Place
- Grand Street Park Extension
- 1480 Myrtle Avenue
- Bush Terminal Piers (privately-owned parcels)
- Loew's King Flagship Theatre
- Cross Brooklyn Railroad
- A. Chairantano Park Addition

NEW YORK COUNTY

- 225, 227, 231 West 122 Street
- Upper Hudson River Waterfront Harlem Piers (inland lots)
- Esplanade Gardens
- Con Edison site, 201-203 Street, Harlem River
- Bannock, Burn Realty site
- Paragon Cable site

QUEENS COUNTY

- Hunter's Point South (Queens West)
- Alley Pond Park Addition (Douglaston Pond)
- Flushing Bay Marine Promenade (Willet's Point)
- Downtown Flushing Waterfront (Willet's Point)

- Call-A-Head Properties
- Rockaway Shoreway across from LILCO property, Between Beach 113th and 116th
- RKO Keith's Theatre
- Steinway Mansion
- Brooklyn/Queens Greenway:
- Cypress Hills Cemetery Easement
- Steinway/Ravenswood Cemetery Easements
- Creedmoor Hospital Easement
- Forest Park Gateway Greenway

RICHMOND COUNTY

- North Shore Greenbelt:
- West Brighton Historic Houses
- North Shore Greenway Addition/Block 185,187
- Harbor Herons Wildlife Complex additions:
- Staten Island Industrial Urban Renewal Area
- Teleport Swamp Woods
- Little Fresh Kills
- Cable Avenue Woods
- Sandy Ground Historic Site
- Serpentine Art and Nature Commons
- Arbutus Woods Watershed
- South Beach Northern Wetlands
- Richmond Creek Easements
- Wolfe's Pond Park Addition
- Clove Lakes Park Addition
- West Shore Expressway Interchange
- Gabler's Creek (North & South)
- Poillon-Seguine-Britton House
- Conference House Park Addition: Killie's Creek
Twin Streams
Tussock Sedge Pond

SUGGESTED GOVERNMENT PROPERTIES WITH POTENTIAL FOR INTER-AGENCY TRANSFER FOR PUBLIC OPEN SPACE/RECREATIONAL USE

BRONX COUNTY

- Mott Haven–Port Morris Waterfront (A – Bronx Kill Waterfront)
- Mott Haven–Port Morris Waterfront (B – Park Ave Waterfront at Harlem River)
- Mott Haven–Port Morris Waterfront (C – Lincoln Avenue at Harlem River)
- Mott Haven–Port Morris Waterfront (D – Alexander Avenue at Harlem River)
- Mott Haven–Port Morris Waterfront (E – East 132nd Street Pier at East River)
- Mott Haven–Port Morris Waterfront (F – Historic Port Morris Gantries)
- Mott Haven–Port Morris Waterfront (G – Waterfront Connecting Path)
- Property on Exterior Street
- Bronx River Trailway
- LORAL site City lots
- Edgewater Road
- Croton Aqueduct Trail Linkage
- Highbridge Peace Park
- Brush Ave. (East Side)

KINGS COUNTY

- Brooklyn & Queens East River Waterfront
- from Brooklyn Army Terminal to Astoria Power Station (government–owned parcels)
- Halleck Street between Court & Clinton Streets
- Current police impound lot at Erie Basin Pier
- Upland area for Brooklyn Waterfront
- Greenway along Piers 7 – 10
- Wolcott Street end
- Diverter" property at Degraw and Columbia Streets
- Division Street end
- DEP Sludge Tank Relocation/Lumber Yard.
- Dupont Street, Greenpoint
- MTA lot at Commercial Street.
- Former Ports & Terminal Pier and Upland at 44th Drive, Queens
- Vernon Boulevard at 31st Ave, Astoria, Queens

- Brooklyn Navy Yard – Officers' Row
- 562 Gates Avenue
- Marion Street
- Saratoga Square Urban Renewal Area

NEW YORK COUNTY

- Croton Aqueduct Gatehouse at 113th Street
- Croton Aqueduct Gatehouse at 135th Street
- Harlem Beach
- Lot formerly containing Hamilton Grange
- Community Gardens
- W. 119th St. between Adam Clayton
- Powell Blvd.& St. Nicholas Ave.
- St. Nicholas Ave. & Frederick Douglas
- Blvd. between 119th and W. 120th Sts.
- W. 127th& W. 128th Sts. – St. Nicholas
- Ave. & Frederick Douglass Blvd.

QUEENS COUNTY

- Bergen Basin
- Fort Totten
- Port Authority Ballfield
- Creedmoor Historic Buildings
- Notts Landing
- South Jamaica Neighborhood Park
- Langston Hughes Library Open Space
- Thurston Basin
- Flushing Airport Wetlands
- Nassau Expressway Right of Way
(See also Brooklyn & Queens East River Waterfront, listed under Kings County)

RICHMOND COUNTY

- Arlington Marsh
- Willowbrook State School Woodlands
- North Shore Railroad
- Old Farm Colony
- Richmond Parkway Right of Way
- Willowbrook Parkway Right of Way
- Northern Sea View
- Fresh Kills Landfill