

THE PLAN

Re-Green. Parks and promenades would create a cascade of waterfront playfields, playgrounds, habitats, fishing piers, boat launches, meeting places, and picnic areas.

City plans add 43 acres of active parkland; the community plan envisions an additional 29.5 acres. Both would feature a scenic esplanade, but the community's plan would also feature baseball and soccer fields; basketball and tennis courts; and a continuous, multi-use greenway connected at both ends to regional greenways.

An enlarged and reconfigured Barge Park would mark the north end of the river promenade at Newtown Creek. It would be created not through public purchases, but through land swaps and consolidations involving a private development site, the Metropolitan Transit Authority's bus lot, city land, and existing parkland.

The Northside Olympic Park would serve both Greenpoint and Williamsburg by expansion to the former Continental Iron Works site and additional parcels on Quay Street. The Bushwick Creek Inlet can provide small boat access to the river, commemorate the history of the USS Monitor and shelter a bird and wildlife sanctuary, where a suspension footbridge would highlight views of, but not disturb, the wildlife.

At the river park's south end (and outside the rezoning area), a new "Under the (Williamsburg) Bridge Park" would bring people down from Broadway and South 6th Street, to the water where parking lots and underutilized land now reside, and could eventually feature a marketplace in historic buildings. The site's Department of Transportation (DOT) maintenance facility would be relocated to other city property, just up South 5th Street.

When the power plant adjacent to Grand Ferry Park is decommissioned, expand the park! Every safe opportunity to increase direct contact with the river should be seized (more natural shoreline, less bulkhead and railings).



Wherever practical and safe, boat launches and fishing access would be provided. Pockets of habitat would be safeguarded up and down the river. A playground would be found every half-mile. Water taxi/ferry stops would link this waterfront to the whole city.

Re-Connect. This is above all else a neighborhood park system. A weaving shore walk would bind the sequence of parks and plazas. It would have unifying alignment, lighting, foliage, and dimensional standards, but otherwise would allow diverse designs responsive to each site's particulars. Everywhere, it would be open and welcoming to the public.

The continuous river promenade will take decades to complete, as it involves the acquisition or redevelopment of over 30 privately-owned properties. A bikeway and walkway along River Street (Williamsburg), through Northside Olympic Park, and along West Street (Greenpoint) will link waterfront access points to each other and to other portions of the regional Brooklyn Waterfront Greenway. This alignment would feature a dedicated bicycle route, slowed traffic, pedestrian-scaled lighting, and street trees.

Key street access routes should be developed with street-end parks and river overlooks now that would be later melded into the river promenade. In time, all cross-streets would feature lush tree canopy, river park views, and safe pedestrian crossings (traffic signals, striated crosswalks, bump outs) especially along Kent Avenue and Franklin Street, a heavy truck route.

Re-Joice. The river park would not only meet needs, it would celebrate the assets and diversity of Greenpoint and Williamsburg. Linked and multi-purpose parks would invite a mix of age groups, ethnicities, new and long-term residents, regional visitors, and local workers. Design and programming would be multi-cultural and celebratory. Let the wetlands grow! Reuse industrial buildings and keep industrial artifacts! Promote community art, events, and riverfront cafes!

Enable people to get down to the water!

NEXT STEPS

Ambitious? Yes! Doable? Yes!

Parks are gaining momentum. In 2001, New York State acquired six acres for East River State Park. The city has promised to acquire 28 more acres around that core, with or without the 2012 Olympics. The City of New York/Parks and Recreation is committed to renovating several existing parks. The proposed rezoning includes mandates and incentives for promenades and plazas. However, unless the park acreage is increased beyond that proposed, the community will find itself in 10 or 20 years in the middle of another park crisis. The difference being any land that could have been used as parkland will be covered by buildings.

Key elements can be initiated now:

- **Barge Park:** Expand the parkland base through land swaps (see map), renovate Right Triangle playground, build new park house.
- **Continental Iron Works:** Pursue National Landmark status for and acquisition of the Continental Iron Works site where the USS Monitor was built.
- **Under-the-Bridge Park:** Engage the NYC DOT about relocation of their waterfront parking lot and eventually other facilities.
- **River Promenade:** Build street-end parks starting with Huron, renew Transmitter Park and the India/Java Street pier/promenade to provide riverfront access now and test ideas for the future. Prepare detailed design guidelines.
- **Connections:** Start with street trees, safe street crossings, and a River/West Street bikeway and walkway linking areas to each other and the rest of Brooklyn via the Brooklyn Waterfront Greenway. Engage NYC DOT.
- **Wildlife:** Provide public education on the more than 50 species of birds documented to date in the area. Collaborate with Parks Department to design pockets of natural habitat.
- **Boating Facilities:** Create offshore mooring fields and continue to explore options for a kayak boathouse and small boat launches.
- **Noxious Uses:** Stop the power plant; rid the riverfront of other noxious uses.

SPONSORS

This plan does not belong to any one group. It was informed by a number of community workshops, most recently dealing with park programming. Its foundation is the neighborhoods' "197a" plans, each drafted through a grassroots process and approved by the New York City Council.

The two sponsors are: **Greenpoint Waterfront Association for Parks and Planning, Inc. (GWAPP)**
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GWAPP is grateful to **New York City Councilmember David Yassky** and the **NYC Department of Parks and Recreation** for their support of this initiative.

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Other participants include the Community Board One Rezoning Task Force (Parks and Open Space Subcommittee), the Barge Park Pals, and Newtown Creek Monitoring Committee. Consultants are Phillips Preiss Shapiro Associates, planners; Fox & Fowle, architects; and RG Roesch, landscape designers. Technical assistance providers include the Audubon Society, Office of the Brooklyn Borough President, and Urban Divers.

Generous support for this community open space plan was provided to TPL by the **J.M. Kaplan Fund** and the **Rockefeller Brothers Fund**.

Give us a call! Get involved!

Greenpoint/Williamsburg Open Space Plan

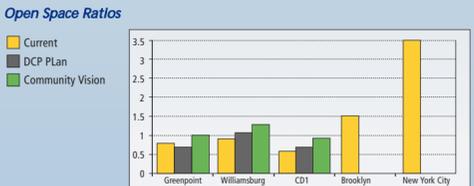


A park poor community envisions its waterfront of the future.

THE NEED

Brooklyn Community District One's population is 160,000, equivalent to a small American city, with 38,000 in Greenpoint and 44,000 in Williamsburg living proximate to the waterfront (west of the Brooklyn Queens Expressway). With city-proposed rezoning, massive development will bring the district's total population to as much as 200,000 within the lifetime of today's youth.

Community District One currently ranks near the bottom of the list in open space per capita, with .06 acres per 1,000 residents. While the rezoning proposed by the city adds significant new park space, the population increase that will come with it will result in a "new" open space ratio of only .07 acres per 1,000 residents. This means that after a population increase of 25 percent and a waterfront newly occupied by 22 high-rise towers the community will be back where it started; seriously underserved for park space. The community envisions an additional 29.5 acres, distributed equally to both neighborhoods. This yields the following telltale ratios, all of which should be compared to the City Planning guideline of 2.5 acres and the citywide average of 3.5 acres per 1,000 residents.



More than statistics are at stake. There is just one soccer field for a community district with 38,000 school-age kids. McCarren Park, the only park of any size, is exhausted from overuse. Lack of tree canopy has always been a problem. Greenpoint is burdened with a notoriously unfair number of waste transfer and sewage facilities, as well as the largest underground oil spill in the history of the United States. Extreme need, not just extraordinary opportunity, drives the community's park plan.



Existing Barge Park - The only parkland for all of North Greenpoint.

THE VISION

Waterfront: From the Navy Yard to Newtown Creek in north Brooklyn is a two-mile sweep of waterfront (equal to the distance from Houston Street to 34th Street in Manhattan).

Communities seeking East River access: Behind eroding piers and abandoned shipping terminals lie two thriving neighborhoods with virtually no access to the river.

Housing Redevelopment Imminent: New York City is rezoning vast swaths of Williamsburg and Greenpoint and boldly proposes a 1.7-mile river promenade with new waterfront housing and parks on former industrial properties.

A Vision Generated by the Community: Residents and civic organizations, starved for open space and fearful of the loss of affordable housing, have joined to build on the city's proposal to better meet the needs of these neighborhoods.

A Vision of Park Equity: The community vision creates destination parks in both neighborhoods, mindful that, under the city's proposal, Greenpoint will receive nearly all of the new housing while Williamsburg will receive the bulk of the parkland.

A Vision of Anchor Parks Linked by the River Promenade: In addition to the Northside Olympic Park hub conceived by the city, the community aspires to additional anchor parks along the waterfront, linked by the promenade to each other and other parts of Brooklyn.

A Vision of Multiple Parkland Uses: The community sees possibilities for active and passive recreation, boating, restored bird and wildlife habitat, water transit, fishing, and commemoration of a rich waterfront history.

IMPROVEMENTS POSSIBLE NOW! Enhance pedestrian and bike amenities along north-south neighborhood streets to improve access immediately up and down the waterfront.

Press ahead with opportunities for park enhancements at Barge Park, Transmitter Park, and East River State Park.

Create street-end parks where the street grid meets the river starting with Huron Street.



Active recreation at an expanded Barge Park will provide needed sports fields.



The past can be preserved while the water's edge is celebrated.



A pathway can link open space before the completion of the river promenade.



Residents shared their ideas for the waterfront at a TPL - GWAPP sponsored workshop.



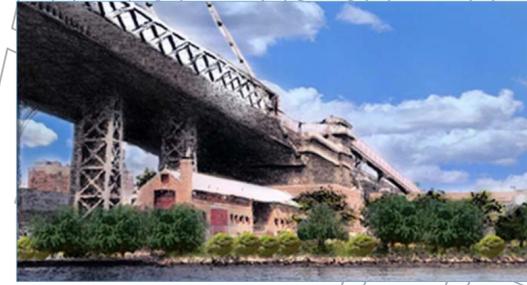
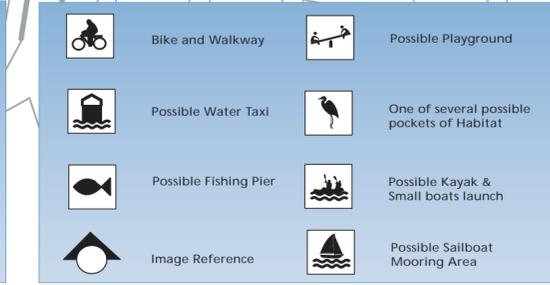
Even without official access, the community finds ways to the water's edge.



see enlarged map on opposite side

Help us to re-green, re-connect and rejoice at our new riverfront

THE TRUST FOR PUBLIC LAND | GREENPOINT WATERFRONT ASSOCIATION FOR PARKS AND PLANNING
PHILLIPS PREISS SHAPIRO ASSOCIATES - FOX & FOWLE ARCHITECTS - R.G. ROESCH LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS



Greenpoint/Williamsburg Open Space Plan

1 The Under-The-Bridge-Park: Plaza and water features will create a meeting ground on the water.

2 T-shaped fishing piers will replace deteriorated and missing fishing piers while facilitating community recreation.

3 Bushwick Creek Inlet: Suspension bridge across bird sanctuary will unify the park system.

4 River/West Streets: North - south bicycle and pedestrian route will provide access now along the riverfront, while the shorewalk is completed.

5 Street End Park: One of ten key places to feature an overlook park even before the shorewalk is built.

6 Barge Park: The preferred option identified by the community to triple parkland where most needed.