

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**MAYOR MICHAEL R. BLOOMBERG KICKS OFF THE TRANSFORMATION OF FRESH KILLS IN STATEN ISLAND**

*Mayor Calls on Public to be Part of Planning for New York's Newest Parkland*

Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg today announced the official kick-off of the \$3.38-million Master Plan process that will map out the future use of the 2,200-acre Fresh Kills site on Staten Island. The creation of a Master Plan will in two years create a blueprint for reclaiming the largest landfill in the country for public uses, and will begin with a public outreach program. The process to plan new uses for Fresh Kills will be conducted by a multi-disciplinary team led by Field Operations, a landscape architecture and urban design firm. Staten Island Borough President Jim Molinaro, City Planning Director Amanda M. Burden, Sanitation Commissioner John Doherty, Parks & Recreation Commissioner Adrian Benepe, elected officials and other civic leaders joined the Mayor at the College of Staten Island for the announcement to urge the public to take part in creating a vision for the future of the site.

"Today represents a significant milestone in returning the landfill to the public domain," said Mayor Bloomberg. "We are marking the beginning of a new era for the site, and the City is committed to moving ahead with the process of reclaiming this complex site, long considered by Staten Islanders to be a blight to the borough into an asset for generations to come. New Yorkers can look forward to a day when they can enjoy its open spaces and the recreational uses that will be provided here. The public will have the opportunity to participate in meetings and will be part of the transformation every step of the way."

"I want to thank Mayor Bloomberg for reaffirming that the specter of the Fresh Kills dump is indeed behind us," said Borough President Molinaro. "By moving forward with this Master Plan, Mayor Bloomberg sends a clear message to Staten Island that he is committed to ushering in a bright, new future for Fresh Kills."

"The Master Plan will provide a strategic blueprint for the creation of a scenic, ecological and recreational amenity on Staten Island that will benefit local residents and all who visit New York," said City Planning Director Burden. "As it is transformed from a landfill to an accessible landscape, Fresh Kills will also gain a new identity as an outstanding example of collaborative planning as the design is developed in response to the needs of the surrounding community and environment."

"This contract to plan the future of Fresh Kills confirms the City's commitment to the continued closure of the landfill," said Sanitation Commissioner Doherty. "We hope that this plan once developed will provide a template for other landfill and brownfield sites. The City intends Fresh Kills to be recognized internationally as a case study for landfill reclamation."

"The reclamation of Fresh Kills is the biggest expansion of the Parks system since the creation of the 5,000 Bronx parks network in the 1890's," said Parks Commissioner Benepe. "It will set a new standard for the transformation of former landfills into beautifully landscaped public parks. With its undulating topography, extensive wetlands and navigable waterways, Fresh Kills will provide New Yorkers with a vast array of recreational amenities, while it expands the rich habitat of the Staten Island Greenbelt and William T. Davis Wildlife Refuge."

Over the coming months the New York City-based Field Operations, led by landscape architect James Corner, will be acquiring greater technical knowledge of the landfill site, its ecology and recreational opportunities, and its roads and other infrastructure in order to refine the conceptual design. City Planning and the design team will initiate a public outreach program to identify local concerns and needs. This month interviews will begin with government officials and community leaders to learn their concerns and hopes for the future park. In January 2004, the first public meetings will be held to discuss the conceptual plan with the community and get feedback, which will be used to develop the Master Plan. The community has already made suggestions for active and passive recreation at Fresh Kills such as field and court sports, golf, boating, a nature preserve, greenways and equestrian trails. Another priority is the upgrading of existing landfill roadways to connect them to public streets; this, community leaders say, will help alleviate the Island's traffic congestion.

The consultant contract requires ongoing consultation and reporting with community participants as well as partners for the project, which include the Department of Sanitation, which is funding the Master Plan, the City's Departments of Parks and Recreation, and Cultural Affairs, as well as the Municipal Art Society, the State's Departments of State and Environmental Conservation, and the Staten Island Borough President. Incorporating land use and environmental/regulatory review, the Master Plan contract has 3 phases, the first of which officially begins today and

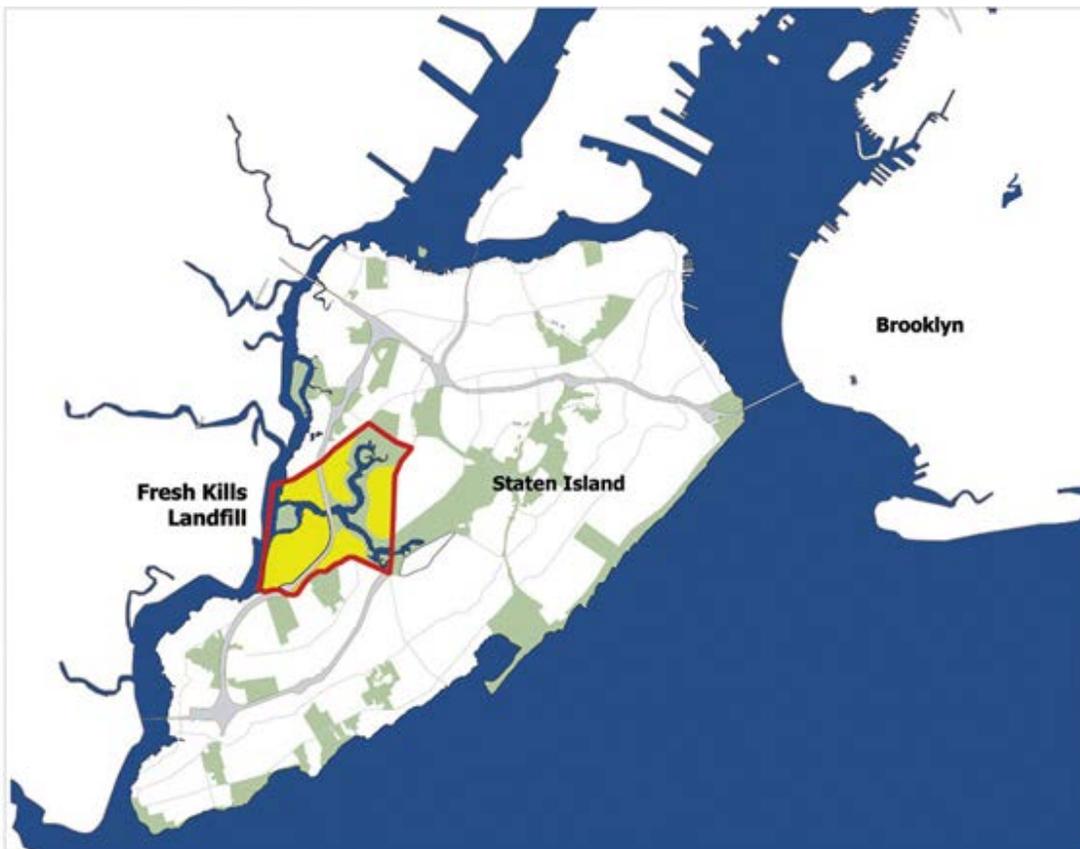
will be completed in June 2005.

- This two-year first phase includes community outreach, planning, design and regulatory services leading to the Proposed Master Plan. An Environmental Assessment Statement (EAS) and Public Scoping Document for the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) will be produced during this phase.
- Phase 2 covers work involved in the adoption of the Master Plan. It will take approximately 18 months to complete the environmental and land use review procedures (CEQR, ULURP and state and federal regulatory reviews) and a Final Master Plan.
- Phase 3 is implementation of the first elements of site redevelopment. The specifics will be decided as part of the Master Plan process.

The consultant is charged with creating a flexible plan for a safe and well-functioning environment that responds to the different topographies, engineering issues and ecologies of the Fresh Kills site. The Master Plan contract also calls for creation of financial and stewardship plans to facilitate implementation, management and operation of the site.

It is projected that some areas of Fresh Kills, with immediate planning and design, could be turned to beneficial use in as few as 5 years. Eventually, through construction in phases, it is envisioned that the site will be reborn as a park. The 2200-acre Fresh Kills site, located on the western shore of Staten Island, is almost three times the size of Central Park, and was officially closed as a landfill in 2001.

**Fresh Kills: 2200 acres on Staten Island**



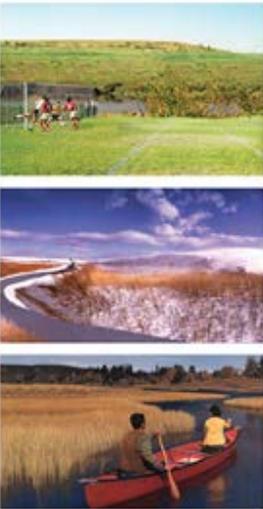
the Fresh Kills site



the city will build and grow a world class park at Fresh Kills



playing fields, cycling and boating



large open spaces - sky and meadow



## About City Planning

The Department of City Planning is responsible for the City's physical and socioeconomic planning, including land use and environmental review; preparation of plans and policies; and provision of technical assistance and planning

information to government agencies, public officials, and community boards.