

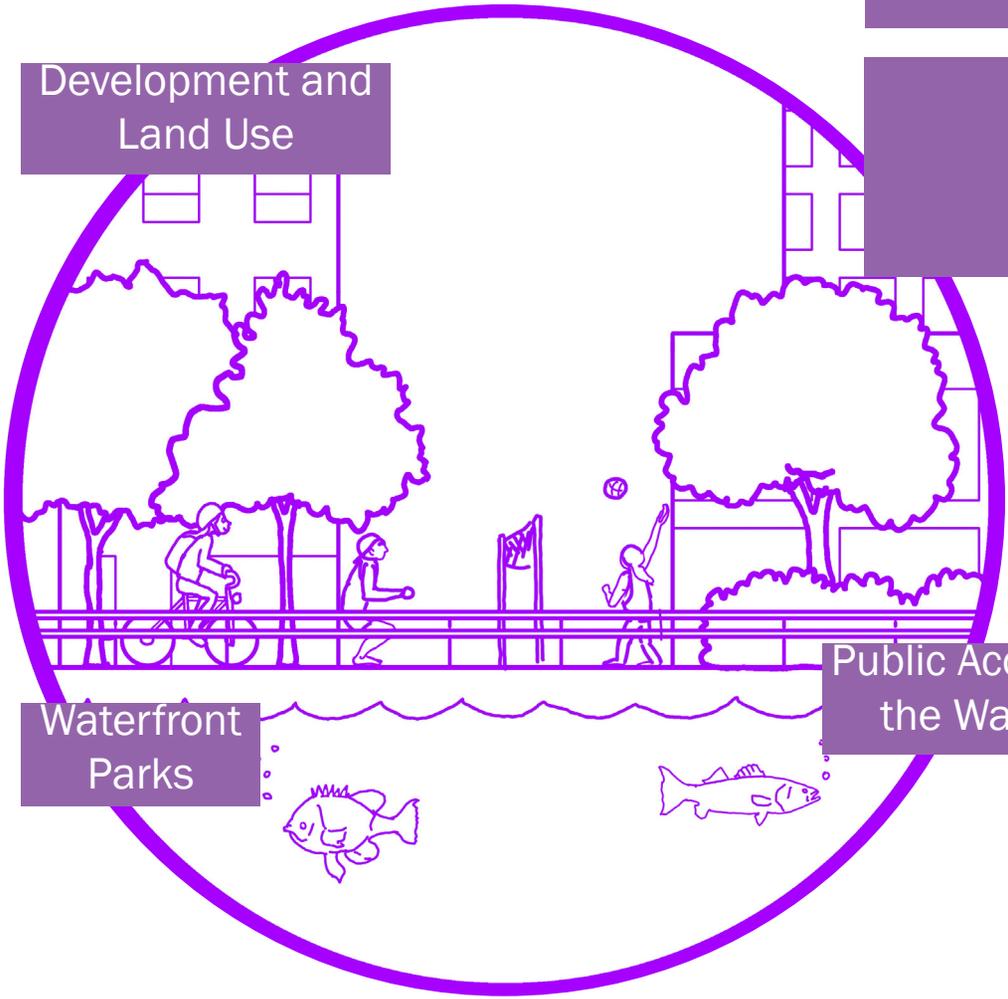
LIVING AND PLAYING AT THE WATERFRONT



Living and Playing at the Waterfront

Ensure waterfront redevelopment contributes to providing a diverse mix of housing and employment opportunities for New Yorkers.

Expand and improve the quality, accessibility, and mix of experiences along the city's waterfront public spaces.



Development and Land Use

Waterfront Parks

Public Access along the Waterfront

OVERVIEW

New York City has continued to transform its waterfront into a dynamic place to live, work, and play. While public parks enhance quality of life and offer a variety of recreational opportunities, development along the waterfront provides public open space as well, while also addressing many other critical citywide needs including jobs, housing, and services.

In the past decade, new public spaces along the waterfront have transformed previously inaccessible and vacant land into vibrant community spaces, providing recreation and access to the water. Newly built and improved parks, like Brooklyn Bridge Park, Hunter's Point South Park in Queens, and Concrete Plant Park in the Bronx, all provide unique recreational amenities and gathering spaces where access to the water had been very limited. New advocacy groups and conservancies are also engaged in stewarding and programming waterfront parks.

The city has also witnessed the redevelopment of underutilized waterfront sites that serve

the city's growing population and enliven the water's edge. A mix of strategies, including select rezonings, City capital investments, and public-private partnerships has enabled a range of productive, publicly accessible uses to take shape and helped NYC's waterfront become an ever more dynamic place.

Despite great strides in expanding access to the water, challenges persist. Many parts of the city continue to be underserved by safe and well-maintained publicly accessible waterfront spaces. At the same time, it will be important to balance waterfront public access with other considerations, like supporting a vibrant maritime industry, protecting natural resources, and maintaining private property rights is also a challenge to expanding access to the city's waterfront.





Progress/accomplishments

Since 2010, dozens of new parks and waterfront public spaces have been constructed, expanded, and improved. Many of these have become new flagship parks, such as Domino Park in Brooklyn, Governors Island, and the East River Waterfront Esplanade. While investments in resiliency have made our parks stronger and better able to manage flood events and sea level rise.

At the same time, through the strategic use of area rezonings and waterfront access plans, the City has worked with property owners to revitalize underutilized land citywide to add critically need housing, jobs, and acres of open space to complement City, State, and Federal park lands.



Opportunities

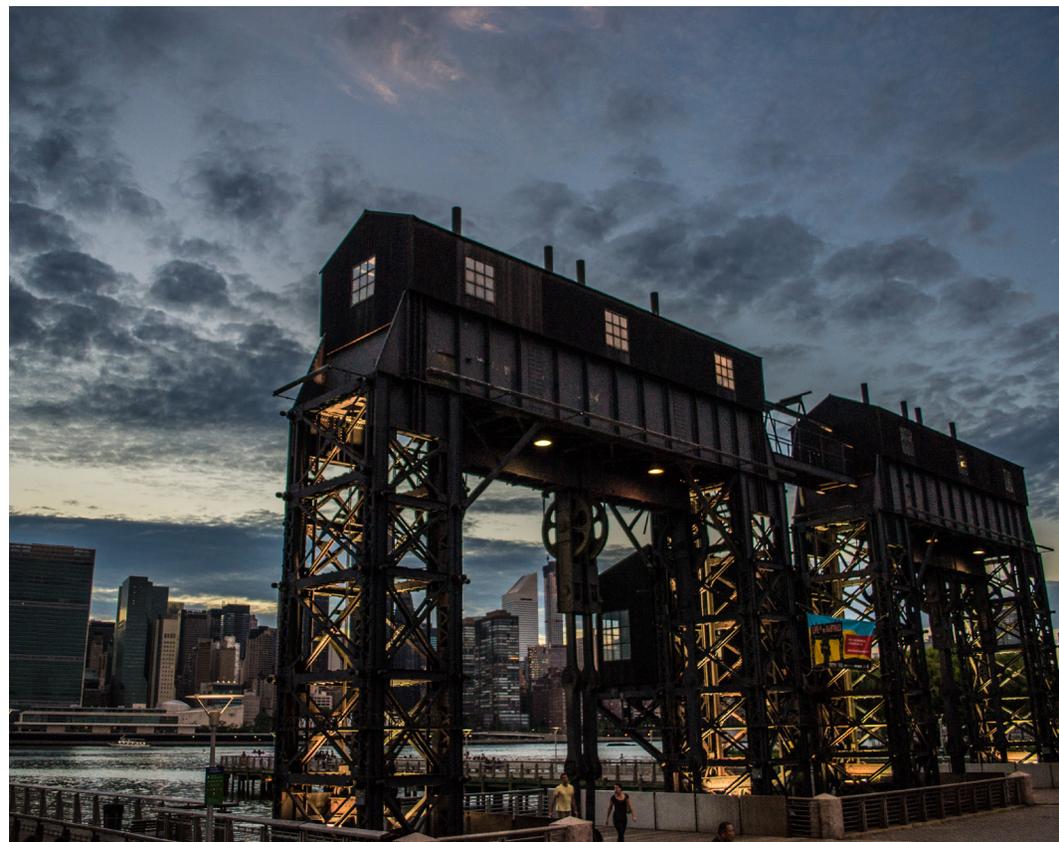
There are also many opportunities to promote the redevelopment of the waterfront to meet the future housing, employment, and recreational needs of residents. With advancements in the manufacturing, freight, and energy sectors, our city's waterfront industrial zones will remain important employment, infrastructural, and goods distribution hubs.

And as our city grows, climate science and zoning tools will help NYC make informed, long-term decisions about managing risks from flooding and sea level rise to ensure we are minimizing risks and limiting development in the most vulnerable areas.

Current Challenges

NYC has opened large portions of the waterfront to the public in recent decades with the creation of new parks and esplanades, but there are still gaps and barriers to public access. Because of the complexity of our waterfront and history of industrial use, many sites come with challenges. These include the need to provide new infrastructure, remediate contamination from former industrial use, and preserve historic buildings.

Furthermore, Hurricane Sandy in 2012 provided an urgent reminder that we need to adapt our waterfront and waterways to build climate resilience in response to existing and future climate hazards. And while public access may not be possible or even appropriate along every stretch of the waterfront, the City is committed to improving the connectivity along the shore and better connecting neighborhoods with their waterfronts.



Case Studies

Hunter's Point South Park, Queens:



Hunter's Point South Park is a 5.5 acre city park that provides a unique vantage point at the intersection of the East River and Newtown Creek. Its design incorporates the stormwater filtering and tidal wetland features common prior to industrialization of the natural shoreline.

Concrete Plant Park



Built on the site of a former concrete plant, this park provides public access along a largely industrial stretch of Bronx River. The park is heavily used and stewarded by its surrounding community, and includes a bike path, community gardens, and boat launches.

Port of Los Angeles, California



The Port of LA committed a 10% revenue funds towards public access on port land in response to local community demands. \$200 million was spent over the next 10 years to provide public access, incorporated into underutilized areas using pedestrian bridges to connect spaces disconnected by active industrial uses.

Schuylkill Banks, Philadelphia

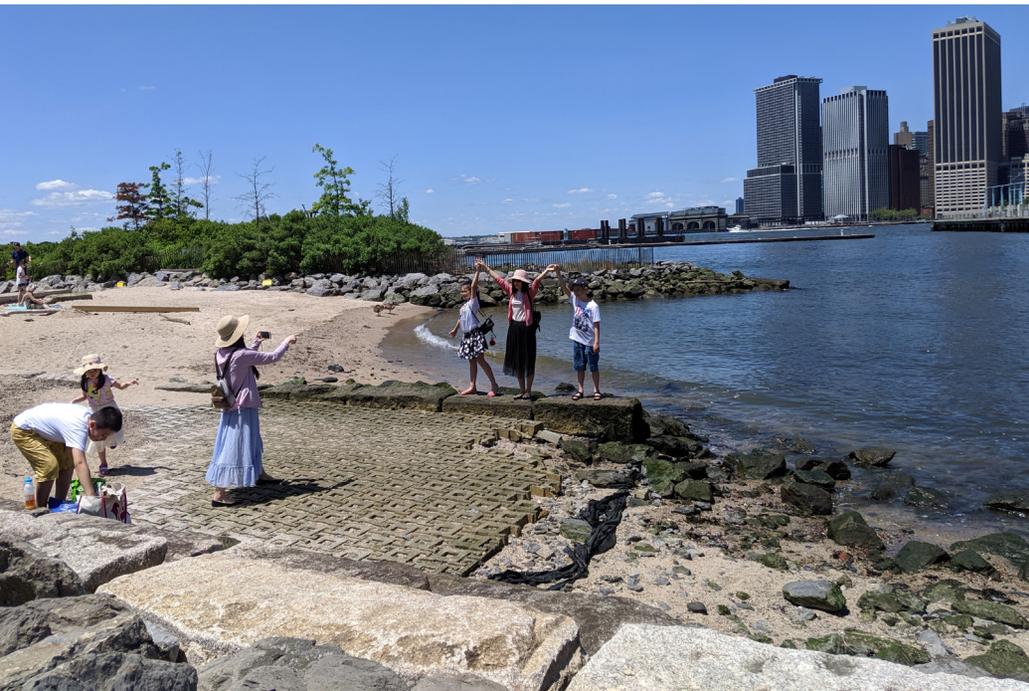


A portion of the regional Schuylkill River Trail, this waterfront pedestrian and bike greenway within Philadelphia runs along and over the river alongside historic rail lines where continued access was too constrained. The boardwalk-structure is expected to extend 8 miles within Philadelphia, connecting to riverside parks and adjoining counties beyond the city limits.

Discussion Questions

Where do you go to enjoy the waterfront now? What do you like about those places?

What kind of activities are important to you at the waterfront? What do you wish you could do on the waterfront that you currently can't do?





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