



Ensure that all New Yorkers live within a 10-minute walk of a park

Since the launch of PlaNYC, the City has added 112 acres of new parkland, as well as improved access and amenities at existing parks and open spaces. But given the size of our city and the limited amount of available land, we cannot rely on new park construction alone to meet our open space needs. That is why we seek to make better use of underutilized open spaces—including schoolyards, streets, and parks—as publicly accessible areas for recreation. Our efforts to create more usable open space not only improve the quality of life of all New Yorkers, but also make the city a more attractive place for tourists to visit and for businesses and workers to locate.

Our plan for the future of open space includes the following initiatives:

Make existing sites available to more New Yorkers

- 1 Open schoolyards across the city as public playgrounds
- 2 Increase options for competitive athletics
- 3 Complete underdeveloped destination parks

Expand usable hours at existing sites

- 4 Provide more multi-purpose fields
- 5 Install new lighting

Re-imagine the public realm

- 6 Create or enhance a public plaza in every community
- 7 Green the cityscape



DPR works with students to create a design for a new playground at PS 69

Credit: NYC Department of Parks and Recreation

private partnership, the City has overseen the design of 123 schoolyard sites. Of the 185 total sites requiring capital improvements, six are now open to the public; 16 more will be completed by July 2009; and construction will start on an additional 50 by the end of 2009. The 254 playgrounds included in the program will provide additional needed play space for more than 360,000 children by 2030. Originally, the plan included a total of 290 sites, but due to budget constraints the City has reduced the program to 254 sites.

The City has made major progress on plans for eight new regional parks that will add or improve over 500 acres of park land. In the past year, we worked with local communities to complete preliminary designs for six of the eight regional parks projects, and we have set a goal of finalizing construction documents for all six by the end of 2009. Waterfront improvements began on Calvert Vaux Park in February and the site is scheduled for completion in 2011. We plan to begin the renovation of the historic McCarren Park pool this summer, with work scheduled to be completed by 2011. The City also expects to begin construction on Ocean Breeze Park in Staten Island this summer, which will include the Department of Parks and Recreation's (DPR) largest indoor track facility. Three regional parks: Far Rockaway Park in Queens, Fort Washington Park in Manhattan, and Soundview Park in the Bronx, have completed Phase I designs. The two parks under construction will create 452 construction jobs.

We are completing preliminary designs for the two remaining regional park sites. For the High Bridge, which connects parks in Manhattan and the Bronx, the City has selected a restoration specialist, who will develop a plan to restore the bridge as a pedestrian and bike path. Once restored, the bridge will provide easy access to Highbridge Park for residents of Mt. Eden and High Bridge in the Bronx, as

Open Space

OUR PROGRESS

Planted 174,189 trees and began construction on 16 playgrounds and on Calvert Vaux Park in Brooklyn

Over the last year, the City has made significant progress toward expanding the number of parks and acres of green space available to New Yorkers. We have planted over 100,000 trees, surpassing our annual planting target by 17 percent. By the end of this spring planting season, this will bring the number of total trees planted to 225,000. In the first year of the plan we built 93 new Greenstreet sites to enhance the New York streetscape—by the end of this spring we will have built 84 more. Planning for all eight regional parks is underway, and we have completed preliminary designs for six sites. Calvert Vaux Park in Brooklyn began construction in February of this year, and work will begin at the McCarren Park pool in Brooklyn this summer.

We are also leveraging our open space initiatives to create well-paying green jobs. The City hired 71 new tree maintenance staff, created a forestry and landscaping training program for young New Yorkers, and secured \$2 million in federal funding to provide full time jobs to the program's graduates. *See case study*

Make existing sites available to more New Yorkers

In PlaNYC's first year we opened 69 schoolyards that were ready for use as public playgrounds; over the last year, we have begun planning for 185 more schoolyards that require capital improvements before opening to the public. These sites will be renovated to include features like new play equipment, benches, water fountains, and trees. Working with the Trust for Public Land (TPL) through a public-



Opened in 1936 and closed in 1984, McCarren Pool will be rebuilt beginning in summer 2009

Credit: NYC Department of Parks and Recreation



Credit: NYC Department of Parks and Recreation

The MillionTreesNYC pilot training program is one of over 40 programs of the Mayor's Center for Economic Opportunity

well as provide stunning views of the Harlem River. The City has also initiated the preliminary design process for Highland Park in Queens.

Expand usable hours at existing sites

To meet growing demand, we are moving forward on our commitment to expand usable hours at our recreation facilities. In our original plan, the City pledged to install lighting at 36 fields by the end of 2009. Budget constraints have forced a reduction in the number of sites in the park lighting initiative by 11 fields. The City is currently installing lighting at 15 field sites citywide that will make possible evening use by local residents. In the coming months, we will complete final design on an additional 10 sites.

We are also making progress on converting asphalt play spaces into synthetic turf fields. Initially, the City pledged to construct 25 sites by the end of fiscal year 2009. Budget constraints have required us to reduce the number of sites and we will complete 21 fields by fiscal year 2013. The first site in the Bronx is under construction and should open later this year. Designs for 13 sites are complete and currently out for bidding. We expect to begin construction on those sites this summer. The remaining sites will have designs completed this spring.

Over the past year we have addressed concerns raised over the use of synthetic turf at certain fields. DPR, working closely with the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, has eliminated recycled tire infill in favor of lighter-colored materials, added more misting stations, drinking fountains, and signage to address heat-related issues and developed new testing protocols to ensure that all synthetic turf fields meet the highest safety standards. We are confident that this initiative will help to directly meet our goals of expanding usable playing hours. In addition, it will address the growing demand for active recreation across the city with safe and high quality playing fields in place of hard asphalt surfaces.

Re-imagine the public realm

We are making progress toward greening our streets and creating new public spaces. Last summer, the City launched the New York City Plaza Program, which enables community organizations to apply to have underused streets transformed into vibrant, social public spaces, particularly in neighborhoods that lack open space. In the program's first year, the City received applications from 22 nonprofit organizations and selected nine projects to move forward. In 2009 the City will work with these nine groups to create plaza designs and construction will start in the fall of 2010. This spring the City will initiate a second round of the program for an additional two to three sites. We will also soon open a new street-end plaza on Manhattan Avenue in Brooklyn and are advancing designs for over 20 additional sites.

In addition to these long-term plans to create plazas, we are making quick improvements in the public realm. In Manhattan at Madison Square, along Broadway between West 35th and West 42nd Streets, and in the Bronx Hub, we have rolled out immediate plazas by reconfiguring streets and delineating pedestrian spaces with planters, benches, and paint.

In addition to the 177 Greenstreet sites either completed or under construction since the inception of PlaNYC, the City plans to construct 40 new Greenstreets per year going forward: 20 each spring and 20 each fall. This is a reduction from the original goal of 80 Greenstreets per year, which was scaled back due to budget constraints. We are also piloting Greenstreets designs that can capture stormwater runoff as a part of comprehensive strategy to reduce the severity of combined sewer overflows.

Finally, we have made tremendous progress toward our goal of planting one million new trees across the five boroughs. MillionTreesNYC is a citywide, public-private initiative launched

CASE STUDY: MILLIONTREESNYC TRAINING PROGRAM

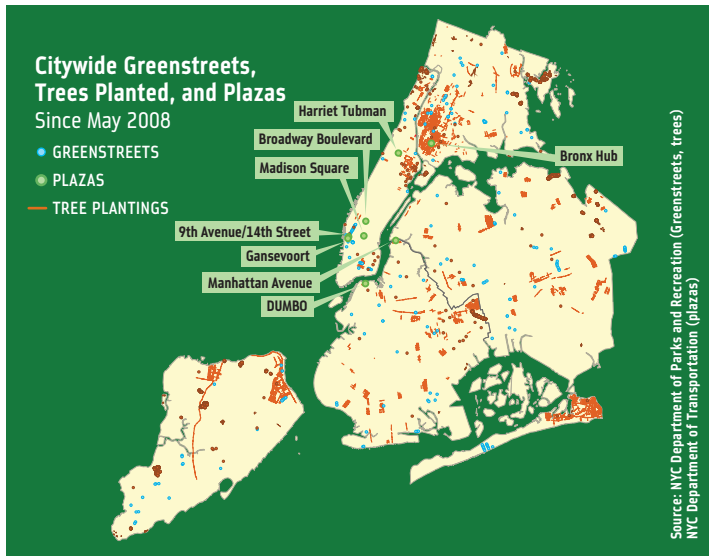
The MillionTreesNYC Training Program is a seven-month job training program offering forestry and horticulture professional development to young adults disconnected from the school system. In its first year, the program is giving 27 participants "green collar" training in forestry, ecological restoration, and landscape design and installation. This pilot program, which runs through May 2009, is one of over 40 innovative programs of the Mayor's Center for Economic Opportunity (CEO) to reduce the number of New Yorkers living in poverty, and is generously supported by the Altman Foundation.

Since the first day of the program, the trainees have demonstrated strong commitment and eagerness to learn. The trainees are recognized monthly for motivation, attendance, and for being "unsung heroes."

Here is what one of the trainees had to say about the Program:

"My name is Theoné Adonis Ash and I am a proud trainee of the MillionTreesNYC Training Program in which if it wasn't for your great intentions and vast resources, my colleagues and I wouldn't have been employed as aspiring Tree Care Specialists—for that I say, 'Thank You.' When I put my uniform on for the first time, it dramatically raised my sense of purpose. It feels good to know that there are men and women that are rooting for me to succeed and fly high."

Through our partnership with the U.S. Forest Service we secured \$2 million to help provide full time employment for the MillionTreesNYC trainees upon completion of the program.



The Madison Square plaza breaks up the longest crosswalk in the city with 45,000 sq. ft. of public space

by the DPR and the New York Restoration Project (NYRP). By the end of Spring 2009, MillionTreesNYC will result in the planting of 225,000 trees, including over 100,000 planted in the past year. We are now ahead of schedule in meeting the one million tree goal. The City could not accomplish this without help from thousands of volunteers who help plant trees during the spring and fall planting seasons. With NYRP, we have also launched a MillionTreesNYC training program, *detailed in the sidebar on the previous page*, to provide youth, ages 18-24, who are not in school or on a well-defined career path, with job training in the fields of horticulture, tree pruning and climbing, and ecological restoration.

Next Steps

We are on track to meet our goal of creating over 800 acres of upgraded parkland and open space spread across the city. Barring additional cuts to the City's capital plan, in the next year of PlaNYC we will aim to complete construction documents for an additional four regional parks sites; build an additional 40 Greenstreets across the city; complete improvements on nearly 70 schoolyard-to-playground sites; launch community design efforts for 22 new public plazas; and continue to expand our tree-planting capacity to achieve the levels we will need to finish planting a million trees by 2017.

We will also continue to use these projects as an opportunity to train workers and create green jobs. With the support of our partners and city residents, we can achieve our goal of making a park only a walk away from each New Yorker.

Open Space Progress

	INITIATIVE	PROGRESS SINCE APRIL 22, 2008	IMPLEMENTATION MILESTONE FOR DECEMBER 2009	2009 MILESTONE PROGRESS
1	OPEN SCHOOLYARDS ACROSS THE CITY AS PUBLIC PLAYGROUNDS			
	Open schoolyards as playgrounds in every neighborhood	Opened 69 schoolyards as playgrounds, completing commitment to open all Category 1 sites. Renovation completed on six additional schoolyard sites that are now open to the public after school and on the weekends, with an additional 16 to complete construction by the end of Spring 2009. Community meetings and design complete for 123 schoolyard sites to be reconstructed between Summer 2009 and Summer 2010	Open all Category 1 sites not requiring capital improvements	Complete
2	INCREASE OPTIONS FOR COMPETITIVE ATHLETICS			
	Make high-quality competition fields available to teams across the city	Began process of evaluating appropriate sites for high-quality competition fields across the city	Open fields up for community use on 43 fields	Delayed
3	COMPLETE UNDERDEVELOPED DESTINATION PARKS			
	Fulfill the potential of at least one major undeveloped park site in every borough	Preliminary design and draft environmental reviews in process for six regional parks projects. Calvert Vaux Park has approved Master Plan and began construction in February. Master Plan for McCarren Park Bathhouse approved by Landmarks Preservation Commission and construction to start Summer 2009. Ocean Breeze received Master Plan approval from the Art Commission in April. Soundview, Ft. Washington, and Rockaway Beach plans all received Phase I Art Commission approval	Complete community outreach and designs for all regional parks	On Time
4	PROVIDE MORE MULTI-PURPOSE FIELDS			
	Convert asphalt into multi-use fields	In Spring 2009, construction on first field will be completed and we will begin construction on an additional 16 fields. Due to budget constraints we will now complete 21 fields and the remaining 4 sites will have design completed by the end of 2009	Complete development of all proposed multi-purpose fields	Delayed
5	INSTALL NEW LIGHTING			
	Maximize time on our existing turf fields by installing lights for nighttime use	City completed design for 18 new fields and started construction on 15 field lighting sites. City identified an additional seven sites to receive new field lighting and will begin design on these sites this summer. Due to budget constraints we will now complete 25 sites	Complete installation of all proposed field lights	Delayed
6	CREATE A PUBLIC PLAZA IN EVERY COMMUNITY			
	Create a new or enhance an existing public plaza in every community	Launched New York City Plaza Program: City working in partnership with nine nonprofit groups to create new plazas, particularly in neighborhoods that lack open space. Advancing designs for over 20 additional plaza sites. Making quick improvements in the public realm by reconfiguring streets with planters, benches, and paint. Created immediate plazas in Manhattan at Madison Square, along Broadway between West 35th and West 42nd Streets, and in the Bronx at the Bronx Hub	Continue development of identified plaza initiatives and develop a process for community identification of potential new plazas	On Time
7	GREEN OUR CITYSPACE			
	Fill every available street tree opportunity in New York City	City celebrated year two of MillionTreesNYC in partnership with NY Restoration Project and planted "Tree 111,111" in October 2008. By the end of Spring 2009, MillionTreesNYC will have planted over 225,000 trees; 30,499 of which are newly planted street trees as of print date. DPR initiated strategy of full block planting and is focusing efforts on areas of highest need	Plant 15,000 street trees a year	Complete
	Expand Greenstreets program	The Administration completed the design and construction of 137 new Greenstreet sites since Fall 2007. At present, the City is completing site surveys for the next 40 Greenstreet locations it will construct in Spring 2009	Complete 240 Greenstreets	Delayed