

OUR WEST SIDE STORY

A brief history of the West Side and Hudson River Park

Pre-European Contact

The Original New Yorkers

Before New York, before New Amsterdam—there was Lenapehoking, the land of the Lenape, the original inhabitants. The Lenape people farm tobacco and conduct trade along the lower Hudson River.

19th Century

Canal Era

Hudson River waterfront transforms into one of the world's busiest working waterfronts due in part to the opening of the Erie Canal and the advent of the steamship. Oyster barges proliferate along the shoreline and oyster carts are as plentiful as current day hot dog stands.

Early 20th Century

All Aboard!

Some of the world's most celebrated ships—the *Lusitania*, *Carpathia*, and the *Normandie*—came and went from piers in Chelsea and Hell's Kitchen, transporting soldiers, celebrities, immigrants and more to and from Europe.

1973

West Side Highway Collapses

A section of the elevated West Side Highway collapses, bringing attention to NYC's deteriorated infrastructure and leading to plans for a never-built project called "Westway" that would have filled in a portion of the Hudson River to create an underground interstate highway.

1985

A Catchy Tale

New York State and New York City halt plans for Westway due to political pressure and community concerns, including impacts to juvenile striped bass. The State and City begin discussing alternative solutions for Manhattan's West Side waterfront and piers.

1998

A Park is Born

The Hudson River Park Act is signed into law—designating approximately 150 acres of land and piers and 400 acres of water as a major, new park and Estuarine Sanctuary—happy news for New Yorkers and the 70+ species of fish in HRPK.

2018

20 Years Young

Hudson River Park celebrates its 20th Anniversary, attracting 20 million visits each year. With 75% of the Park's 4-mile footprint complete, HRPK offers over 800 cultural, educational and family programs annually. HRPK's Estuary Lab conducts original research on oyster restoration and microplastics.

2019

#singleuseless

HRPK launches Park Over Plastic, a multi-year initiative to rid the Park of single-use plastics.

The River Project Merger

A pioneer in river research and educational programming, The River Project, merges with the Estuary Lab making the Pier 40 Wetlab an integrated part of HRPK's wildlife education.

2020 & Beyond

There's More to This Story

With the openings of Hudson River Park's Pier 26 (the first pier to feature an "ecological get down"), Gansevoort Peninsula, Pier 55, Pier 57 and Pier 97—the completion of HRPK is now in sight!