

HRPK Advisory Group

HRPK Friends Advocacy Update

November 10, 2020

1. Hudson River Park Friends UnGala (Virtual Gala) was a big success. We raised over \$1 million. If you haven't viewed the event, here it is:
<https://hudsonriverpark.org/get-involved/gala/>
2. Pier 76/Tow Pound: Community Board #4 Waterfront, Parks & Environment Committee, this Thursday, November 12th at 6:30 PM.
3. The Friends volunteer program is still going as we continue into November and beyond. About 3-4 Neighborhood Gardeners are still joining weekly and are encouraged to continue until Thanksgiving. Anyone that wants to continue volunteering after that date is welcome to do so.

The Pumpkin Smash took place this past Saturday (November 7th) at Chelsea Waterside Park from 11:00am-3:00pm. Check out <https://hudsonriverpark.org/visit/events/event/pumpkin-smash/>

Our last scheduled Green Team event is set for Saturday November 21st. We will be cleaning up the Boardwalk of trash and weeds, all debris collected will be composted. Space is available on the roster, if interested in joining email volunteer@hudsonriverpark.org for more details.

Corporate groups are still activating with a few more bulb planting, habitat clearing and fall clean-up projects on the calendar in November. Volunteer projects are still available in the Park before the ground freezes over.

Hudson River Park Friends is exploring Virtual Volunteer Opportunities for corporate groups throughout the winter season. Potential projects include translation, focus groups, data entry and tabulation, and video editing.

4. Park coalition update: Parks and Open Space Partners – NYC
 - A. Frozen capital dollars due to COVID. Coalition is working on addressing this with Council Members. There could be \$1 Billion in city capital funds frozen temporarily.
 - B. Looking to set up mayoral candidate forums.
 - C. New efforts to obtain funding from the Green fund for 2021. Also, coalition organizations compared notes on virtual galas and socially distanced small events such as picnics.
 - D. Planning advocacy and press actions on city council funding cuts, parks maintenance and layoffs.
 - E. Please see below on [Update on nation-wide ballot initiatives for open space and park funding.](#)
 - F. [The group is now researching alternative funding models for parks.](#)

Update on nation-wide ballot initiatives for open space and park funding

Good park funding news on Election Day. The Trust for Public Land had 26 measures on the ballot and can confidently say that 24 have been approved by voters and the other 2 are comfortably ahead.

Measures passed in every part of the country on issues including parks, open space, climate, green school yards, water and wildlife. Taken together, these measures will generate almost \$3 billion for communities across America. Here are the measures, many of which could be models for NYC:

- **Oakland, CA:** The Oakland Unified School District school bond, which includes the ability to fund Green School Yards, will generate \$735 million. Passed with 77% support.
- **San Francisco, CA:** A \$487.5 million bond that includes \$239 million for neighborhood parks. Passed with 71% support.
- **Denver, CO:** Denver “climate sales tax”, a ¼-cent sales tax increase, will generate an estimated \$800 million over the next 20 years for a wide variety of climate-related programs. Passed with 64% support.
- **Adams County, CO:** \$400 million sales tax renewal for parks, trails and open space. Passed with 83% support.
- **Colorado River Water Conservation District:** This 15-county district increased its property tax to protect water security and increase water use. The measure is projected to generate nearly \$100 million. Passed with 72% support.
- **Collier County, FL:** Property tax to generate \$287 million for the acquisition and management of environmentally sensitive land. Passed with 76% support.
- **Manatee County, FL:** Property tax to generate and bond for acquisition, improvement, and management of land to protect water quality, preserve habitat and provide parks. Will generate \$108 million. Passed with 71% support.
- **Volusia County, FL:** Two conservation-related measures passed which will each dedicate a 0.2 mill property tax increase, projected to raise \$294 million total and provide \$100 million in new bonding authority. The measures passed by 76 and 72 percent respectively
- **Michigan:** Statewide Constitutional Amendment to lift the cap on how much the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund can take in to create and protect state parks and other natural resources. Passed with 85% support.
- **Traverse City-Garfield Twnsp., MI:** Property tax to generate \$12.8 million to assist with the purchase of forest and woodlands. Is passing with 72% support.
- **Rochester, MN:** Property tax to generate \$40 million to improve parks, conserve trees. Passed with 61% support.
- **Montana:** Montana Marijuana Tax to generate \$360 million over twenty years for land conservation in Montana. I-190 passed with 57% support; CI-118 passed with 58%.
- **New Paltz, NY:** Real estate transfer tax to generate \$3.5 million over 20 years for rivers, streams, working farms, and wildlife habitats. Measure passed with 72% support.
- **Ottawa County, OH:** Property tax to create hiking and biking trails, and to protect water quality. This measure could create \$11 million. Measure passed with 61% support.
- **Portland, OR:** Property tax to restore parks, natural areas, and increase access to recreation for underserved communities. Will generate \$239 million. The measure is passing with 64% support.
- **Hays County, TX:** Bond to generate \$75 million for open space. Passed with 70% support.

Source: Carter Strickland, NYS Director, the Trust For Public Land.