



Report on Operations and Accomplishments in 2021-22

During Fiscal Year 2021-22, the Hudson River Park Trust (“Trust”) again advanced planning, construction, environmental, programming and operational initiatives that are at the heart of its mission. Despite the budgetary and operational challenges created by the COVID-19 pandemic, Hudson River Park (the “Park”) was able to serve the public with high quality public open space and accessible environmental, educational, fitness and recreational programming both in-person and virtually. The Park opened a new public space at Pier 55 and commenced construction of two new park areas at Gansevoort Peninsula and Pier 97 that will be open to the public in 2023.

Construction and New Projects

Tribeca Habitat Enhancements between Piers 26 and 34

In conjunction with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (“DEC”), and with input from the science community, the Trust designed an oyster and habitat enhancement project in the portion of the Estuarine Sanctuary between Piers 26 and 32. Specific enhancement features installed in Fall 2021 by the Trust’s marine construction contractor, with support from its subcontractor Billion Oyster Project, included: biohuts around certain existing piles, gabions and reef balls with seeded oyster shells in the interpier areas, textured piles, and mesh fabric containing oyster shells on select piles at Pier 32.

Pier 40

Pier 40 is the largest single property in the Park and is home to heavily-used athletic fields, administrative and operating facilities of the Trust, a commercial parking garage, and commercial excursion vessels, among other uses. Revenue generated at Pier 40 from parking and maritime uses is a major source of Park operations funding. Nevertheless, Pier 40 has not reached its full potential for either public open space or revenue generation – a fact attributable both to the pier’s condition and to limitations in the Park’s enabling statute.

When the Park came into existence, Pier 40 was already in poor structural condition, and the Trust has had to implement costly repairs to repair portions of the building’s roof, piles, life safety and other systems over many years, diminishing its intended financial benefit to the overall Park.

In 2016, following an amendment to state legislation and a formal zoning action by New York City among other actions, the Trust was able to transfer 200,000 square feet of unused development rights from Pier 40 to the nearby St. John’s Terminal Building site.

The Trust entered into a \$100 million sales contract with the St. John's developer and the proceeds from that agreement are now devoted to repairing Pier 40's deteriorated infrastructure including the approximately 3,600 individual piles that support Pier 40. Pile repair work was organized into seven separate procurements. Divers from several marine construction firms installed individual "jackets" and made other repairs to the Pier 40 piles and deck and the final phase, Phase 7, will be completed in 2022. Repair work to the rooftop parking area was completed, thus restoring the Trust's ability to rent approximately 350 parking spaces at the Pier 40 garage. The Trust is also in the process of installing a new sports turf field on the Pier 40 rooftop to be completed in early Summer 2022; that field will serve as a swing space for displaced users of Chelsea Waterside Park until the Chelsea Waterside field reopens in late 2022.

Gansevoort Peninsula

The Gansevoort Peninsula is an approximately 5.5-acre parcel that was used by the NYC Department of Sanitation until 2018. In 2018, NYC completed the removal of the Sanitation facility, providing a clean slate for a large new park area at Hudson River Park.

Based on the new park design by the Trust and the design team lead by James Corner Fields Operation with substantial community input, in FY 21-22, the Trust entered into all construction contracts and began the process of converting the Gansevoort Peninsula to public park space. Once completed, the new park will include a resilient beach, boardwalk and kayak launch on the south side, a salt marsh on the north side, a large synthetic turf ball field, dog run, adult fitness area, lawn for passive recreation, small park building and a variety of paths and esplanades.

The Whitney Museum of American Art completed fabrication of the permanent public art installation entitled *Day's End* by artist David Hammons in May 2021. Located at the south edge of the Gansevoort Peninsula – partially in the water -- *Day's End* is an ephemeral stainless-steel sculpture constructed within the same footprint and with the same dimensions as the original Pier 52 pier shed. It derives its inspiration and name from Gordon Matta-Clark's 1975 artwork once located in the same location. *Day's End* was donated by the Whitney Museum to the Trust and is now a permanent part of Hudson River Park.

Little Island (formerly known as Pier 55)

Construction of Little Island, a new 2.7-acre public pier that provides both public open space and performing arts programming, was completed and opened to the public in May 2021, replacing the original Pier 54. The cost to construct Pier 55 was approximately \$250 million, with most of the funding coming from the private donor, Barry Diller and the Diller-von Furstenberg Family Foundation. Little Island hosted a full 2021 season of New York City-based artists to sold-out crowds in its first year of operation and has become a favorite open space destination for New Yorkers and visitors.

Pier 57

Pier 57 is located within the Park at approximately West 15th Street. The pier, which is listed on the State and National Registers of Historic Places, is currently being redeveloped privately through a partnership between Young Woo & Associates and RXR Realty. Pursuant to the lease, the developers are creating more than 3 acres of new public open space at the pier, while also incorporating office space for Google as well as space for a new public market and other cultural, entertainment, retail and maritime uses. Despite COVID, one subtenant, City Winery, began operating its new restaurant and music entertainment venue in Spring 2021. Google, the anchor subtenant, completed its fit-out in FY21-22 and began occupying the pier in January 2022, with more employees expected to return in FY22-23. The public perimeter walkway opened in Fall 2021 and the large landscaped public park on the roof with panoramic views of Manhattan and New York Harbor prepared for opening in April 2022. Pier 57 will also host an environmental education facility being operated by the Trust's River Project staff.

Chelsea Waterside Park

The Trust's and a design team led by Abel Bainnson Butz completed the design of the Chelsea Waterside Park Phase II upgrades in FY 21-22. The design includes a long-awaited comfort station with solar panels to reduce the Park's energy footprint, an expanded dog run and permanent picnic area, and a reconstructed synthetic turf field, among other improvements. Construction began in Fall 2021 with work expected to be completed in Fall 2022.

Pier 76

In March 2021, New York State announced that Pier 76, the former NYPD tow pound, would open as an interim public open space by June 2021. The NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, supported by the State Office of General Services, lead this effort and construction was completed in June 2021 when the new interim park was turned over to the Trust and opened to the public in time for the Summer 2021 season. Given the large space and paved surfaces, Pier 76 quickly became a popular venue for large events, including the Tribeca Film Festival, American Express US Open activation, Fashion Week, and the NYC Food and Wine Festival.

Pier 97

The Trust and the design team led by Imelk completed design plans for Pier 97 and secured approvals for the design from New York City's Public Design Commission given the property is located on city-owned land. Pier 97's design includes a distinctive new playground, multipurpose activity field, sun lawn, belvedere and sunset deck in addition to pathways, lush plantings and other park amenities, including a new restroom and small

concession. Construction began in Fall 2021 and the new park is expected to open in 2023. The Trust also worked on construction drawings to complete the finishes for the new over-water pedestrian platform between West 58th and 59th Streets and the refurbishment of the adjacent esplanade and bikeway to connect to New York City's Riverside South park using funds available from the New York State Department of Transportation.

Public Recreation

Throughout FY 21-22, the Park continued to be a refuge during the COVID pandemic, with many users recognizing the value of walking, exercising and relaxing in public parks and open spaces throughout New York City. The sports fields, tennis and basketball courts, skate parks, and playgrounds remained available for public use throughout the Park in accordance with State and City Department of Health guidelines.

Free Public Events

In 2021, the Trust continued to provide its free public events series both in person and virtually. In-person events included jazz performances, Healthy on the Hudson fitness classes and socially distanced participatory dance featuring Bollywood & Bhangra, Batingua Arts and Sunset Salsa. The Blues BBQ Festival premiered as a virtual event featuring the World Famous Harlem Gospel Choir. The Trust staff also worked with schools and non-profit organizations to host safe, outdoor school graduations and charitable walks and runs.

Sports Facilities

The Trust facilitated recreational play for the hundreds of thousands of park goers who participate in organized sports activities on Park courts and fields, including use by soccer and baseball leagues. Thanks to quality programming provided by the Park's wide range of for-profit and non-profit tenants under the Trust's oversight, tens of thousands more also played beach volleyball and mini golf.

Environmental Education, Science and Stewardship

The Trust continues to take seriously its mandate to protect and enhance existing marine habitat and the 400 acres of Estuarine Sanctuary. This is achieved through multiple partnerships and science projects including a robust slate of research initiatives, through work on the Estuarine Sanctuary Management Plan, and through direct efforts to enhance the river and Park environment.

Environmental Education

The Trust's River Project hosted a hybrid season of in-person and virtual programming. Virtual educational events included the "STEM Activity of the Week" series and "Ask a

Scientist” program. Staff also posted lessons in the popular “STEM at Home” activity series in Spanish as the Trust continued to translate many of its curricula into multiple languages. In addition, staff launched a series of virtual winter field trips with local schools focused on such topics as local fish populations, plankton ecology, environmental justice and plastic pollution.

The Pier 40 Wetlab, a research aquarium pioneered by the original non-profit organization called The River Project, reopened to the public in the Summer 2021, this time operated by the Trust directly. The Wetlab includes tanks that use Hudson River water to host such aquatic residents as oyster toadfish, seahorses, diamondback terrapins and horseshoe crabs. Prior to opening the Wetlab, the Trust made a number of cosmetic improvements to the space to better host the public.

With the return of some in-person programming, the Trust’s River Project staff also conducted tours of the Pier 26 Tide Deck. The annual SUBMERGE marine science festival was held in October 2021 as both a virtual and in-person event, and included discussions on Harbor Habitat, River Wildlife, Climate Change and Local Water Quality. The River Project, and the Trust, closed its summer programming season with the annual Pumpkin Smash on Pier 84 in which 1,115 pounds of pumpkins were smashed and added to the Park’s compost.

Science

In Summer 2021, the River Project collaborated with a number of visiting scientists from various universities and environmental institutions to advance research within the Park. Dr. Ashok Deshpande from NOAA Fisheries in Sandy Hook is partnering with the River Project team to launch a microplastics study monitoring the adsorption of chemical pollutants to these tiny plastics. This project will advance regional knowledge of the potential harm microplastics pose as they are ingested by wildlife and work their way up the food chain. Dr. Allison Fitzgerald from New Jersey City University and her undergraduate student received a Polgar award from Hudson River Foundation to study the dynamics of encrusting fouling species on oysters and health implications. River Project staff are also supporting Dr. Matt Hare of Cornell University to monitor juvenile oyster recruitment on shell bags at two Park locations as part of a harbor-wide study.

The River Project, with state funding, also secured an aquadrome called a WasteShark that is designed to collect floating debris in the water while simultaneously gathering geospatial and water quality information. Aside from collecting plastic debris, it will also help the Trust to engage volunteers and students about plastic pollution and contribute to the Park’s ongoing research. The River Project also received an award from the Hyde & Watson Foundation for the installation of a water quality data display. The display will feature the Park’s River Health Dashboard and communicate Hudson River’s water quality data to Park patrons, boaters and students.

The Hudson River Park Act requires the Trust to prepare and maintain an Estuarine Sanctuary Management Plan (“ESMP”) to balance and guide activities and initiatives involving the Sanctuary. In FY21-22, the Trust completed its update to the ESMP and a new Action Agenda for the period 2021-2030 which is intended to guide the Trust and its partners in managing the Sanctuary through the current decade. Over a period of several years, the Trust worked closely with a Technical Advisory Committee comprised of experts in three separate but overlapping topical areas -- Public Access and Recreation, Environmental Education and Natural Resources Research and Enhancement – to draft the Plan. After soliciting public comments, the Trust’s Board of Directors and the Commissioner of DEC approved the document in Fall 2021. In early January 2022, the Trust hosted its first annual Research & Habitat Enhancement meeting for scientists and environmental partners, which is one of the commitments of the ESMP.

Sustainability

Another notable operational success in FY21-22 was the continuation and expansion of the Trust’s successful community compost program. During COVID, New York City was forced to close composting centers around the City. The Trust was able to keep its 10 collection centers open, serving the inland communities who support this initiative. The amount of collected food scraps increased significantly as compared to the previous year. In Winter 2022, the Trust launched its Community Compost Tracker. This new dashboard, which is posted on the Trust’s website, showcases organic food waste collected and allows the public to compare data across time and location. In March 2022, the Trust also hosted a virtual meeting with its tenants and permittees to address Sustainability and the Trust’s Park over Plastics program.

Operations and Facilities Management

From plants to pavement, and from buildings to fountains, virtually every object and corner of the Park needs care and maintenance throughout the year. The Park’s Operations and Facilities team removed snow, replaced pavement, maintained marine infrastructure, mowed lawns, and repaired leaks, among countless other long- and short-term projects needed to keep the Park in good and safe condition. Flowers and trees bloom throughout the spring, summer and fall seasons to the delight of visitors to the Park.

Private Sector Partnerships

Hudson River Park was conceived as a public-private partnership. Since the Trust’s inception, the Park has worked with partners ranging from large scale commercial tenants like Chelsea Piers, Pier 57 and Circle Line to non-profit boating and community organizations to help activate and enliven the Park while also generating income in the form of rent to support Park operations. Many Park tenants and shorter term permittees

also conduct important programming serving schools and the general public. The Trust's River Project staff partners on some of these programs, including with staff from the Intrepid Museum, Little Island and Hudson River Community Sailing.

In addition, the Park relies on the financial support and community engagement provided through the Trust's partnership with Hudson River Park Friends. The Hudson River Park Friends' in-person gala raised significant private money to support the Park. Further, Friends' volunteers work alongside the Trust's horticultural staff doing weeding, planting, and other improvements to keep the Park looking beautiful all year long.