

## **Mission Statement and Performance Measurement Report for FY 2017-18**

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

As set forth in the Hudson River Park Trust's enabling legislation, the Hudson River Park Act, Chapter 592 of the 1998 Laws of New York, the mission of the Hudson River Park Trust is to encourage, promote and expand public access to the Hudson River, to promote water-based recreation, and enhance the natural, cultural, and historic aspects of the river from Battery Park City to West 59th Street in New York City for residents and visitors to the area. The Trust has authority over the planning, construction, operation and maintenance of Hudson River Park.

### **PUBLIC BENEFIT**

While residents and workers in and around the West side of lower Manhattan may be the primary benefactors, the benefits of Hudson River Park (the "Park") extend to all stakeholders including the people of the City of New York, the State of New York, local employees and tourists visitors from across the region, the country and the world.

### **PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT REPORT**

#### **1. Plan and Design the Park**

Hudson River Park Trust staff, architects, engineers and landscape architects have worked together with local community members to identify specific programs and elements for the piers and upland areas in each community. The Park was designed to provide active and passive recreation including children's playgrounds, recreational fields, comfort stations, small food concessions, boathouses, classrooms, opportunities for boating and cultural event spaces, among other uses. As development continues, areas to be designed will undergo similar planning and collaboration with local groups.

In 2017-18, the Trust continued to advance design of Pier 26, with the goal of commencing construction in summer 2018. The local community, represented by Community Board 1, has continued to express strong support for the design vision, which uniquely includes a number of features focused specifically on the Hudson River environment and environmental education of the Hudson River Sanctuary. The most notable of these features is an "ecological get down" at the western end of the pier. Just inland, plans are advancing for a science playground featuring creative interpretations of sturgeons as play features, as well as the "estuarium" – a long-planned environmental education facility expected to be operated principally by Clarkson University, in partnership with other organizations including the Trust.

Another critical initiative in FY2017-18 was completing design and conducting the public procurement and permitting processes for approximately 3,600 individual pile repairs at Pier 40. This large, 15-acre pier requires an estimated \$100 million in pile repairs – a vital undertaking needed to ensure the long-term integrity of this essential recreational and financial park asset. The Trust has previously secured full funding for this work through the sale of

unused air rights to an inland developer pursuant to local zoning. Work on the first two phases of pile repair began in Spring 2018.

Tremendous effort was devoted to ongoing planning for the signature “Pier 55” project. Philanthropists Barry Diller and Diane Von Furstenberg, and their family foundation, had previously pledged more than \$180 million to build a new public park pier and cultural facility in the area near 14<sup>th</sup> Street. After withdrawing from the project in Fall 2017 due to delays from litigation, the donors renewed their commitment to it after Governor Cuomo pledged his support for advancing construction for remaining portions of the park, resulting in the withdrawal of the previous litigation. As a result, the Trust re-secured required permits for construction, and construction has also commenced.

The fourth major initiative of FY2017-18 relates to two additional potential air rights transfers. The Trust staff worked closely with the NYC Department of City Planning, Community Board 4, and two private developers seeking to purchase unused air rights from Piers 59, 60, 61 and their headhouse as permitted by the Hudson River Park Act as part of the rezoning of development parcels on Manhattan Block 675. New York City’s mandatory Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP) commenced in late 2017, and Trust staff collaborated with Community Board 4 to identify the specific park improvements that would be constructed within their boundaries if the air rights are sold and the Trust receives the approximately \$48 million combined sales prices in return. Coupled with \$50 million in funding provided by Governor Cuomo in the FY2018-19 budget, as well as an anticipated match of that funding from New York City, the air rights funding will enable the Trust to advance construction on all but a small percentage of the remaining incomplete areas of the park.

Finally, the Trust worked with the Whitney Museum on a new concept for a site-specific, partially in-water new sculpture by the artist David Hammons proposed for the former footprint of Pier 52 at the Gansevoort Peninsula. Entitled “Day’s End,” the sculpture takes inspiration from a former art installation by that name by the artist Gordon Matta-Clark. The Whitney proposes to donate the sculpture, which requires an Act change as well as regulatory approvals, to Hudson River Park. The project has received strong support from the local community.

## **2. Construct the Park**

As of 2017, approximately 77% of the park is built or undergoing construction.

As noted above, construction on Pier 55, which began in 2016, has resumed, and completion is expected in 2020.

Adjacent to Pier 55, the Trust has continued to advance construction of the new over-water pedestrian platform and adjacent bikeway improvement between the Gansevoort Peninsula and 14<sup>th</sup> Street as part of a federally funded transportation grant. An associated cross-walk project, located on City and State property to the east, is currently being constructed by the State Department of Transportation with funding support from the City.

Construction is currently well under way on the rehabilitation and adaptive reuse of Pier 57. This project is being funded privately by the building's developers, which are also paying rent to help support the park's operations.

In FY17-18, the Trust began reconstruction of the new Chelsea Waterside Playground, which has a projected opening date of early Summer 2018. Hudson River Park Friends conducted a successful fundraising campaign for this project, and Council Member Corey Johnson and Assembly Member Richard Gottfried also made significant contributions to it.

Hudson River Park was selected as the location for the LGBT Memorial pursuant to Executive Order No. 158 to stand as an international symbol against ignorance, hate, bigotry, and gun violence, and to honor the victims of the June 12, 2016 shooting at Pulse nightclub in Orlando, Florida. The Memorial Commission appointed by the Governor selected artist Anthony Goicolea Studios as the winner of its design competition. The Trust has been working in partnership with the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation to advance design, fabrication and installation of the memorial for an expected opening in 2018.

### **3. Operate and Maintain the Park**

The Trust continues to operate and maintain the Park at a high level so that it remains a community asset and economic generator while simultaneously serving the millions of New Yorkers and tourists who use it annually. The Trust routinely reviews the maintenance needs of the Park and updates its security and maintenance plans accordingly based on available budgets.

Maintaining the park includes capital maintenance projects for both park-specific repairs and replacements, like playground safety surfaces and intermittent pile repairs, and repairs associated with maintaining legacy assets like Pier 40 and the historic bulkhead. Repairs to legacy assets are often complicated and costly. For example, in FY8-19, the Trust continues work on the large and complex task of repairing a collapsing historic bulkhead near Morton Street in the West Village. Repairs to this infrastructure have been complicated by unexpected subsurface conditions requiring longer piles and different construction techniques to protect the historic bulkhead during this work. At Pier 40, a major capital project this past year involved replacing the pier's sprinkler system and other life safety improvements.

The terrorism incident of October 31, 2017 on the adjacent State-owned bikeway, and the temporary barriers that have been installed, have created a need for the Trust to reconsider many aspects of its operations and maintenance activities. The State and City are still determining permanent security features, and the Trust will have to continue its planning and adaptations into FY18-19 and potentially beyond.

### **4. Provide Free and/or Low Cost Public Recreational, Educational and Cultural Opportunities**

The park's athletic facilities are a heavily used resource for residents and visitors. The ballfields at Pier 40 alone again experienced more than 240,000 users in 2017-18, while the tennis and basketball courts, skate parks, four non-motorized boathouses, and playgrounds throughout

the park drew tens of thousands more. Indeed, a recent survey by the citywide Waterfront Alliance estimated that more than half of the total number of non-motorized boating trips in New York City took place through one of Hudson River Park's boathouses.

Last year, the Trust's Environment and Education Department educated 27,000 people through a range of diverse and impactful programming which included 101 public education programs, 274 field trips, and 34 citizen science workshops. Notably, over 7,000 students participated in free and low cost field trip programs and 2,300 citizen scientists help with park research focused on oysters and marine plastics. Most of these programs are free or low cost.

In 2017, the Trust organized another successful season of free summer events. Over 61,000 people from New York City and the tri-state area came to the Park to enjoy a total of 116 family, fitness, music, movie and dance events. These 116 free events took place throughout the Park and included favorites such as Hudson RiverFlicks, Sunset Salsa, and the 18th Annual Blues BBQ, which was attended by more than 10,000 people. New last year were programming sessions that extended into Spring and Fall. Highlights included the afternoon Hudson RiverKids sessions that were very well attended by Tribeca neighborhood families, as well as weekly Healthy on the Hudson fitness classes geared to adults.

#### **5. Promote Environmental Stewardship and Enhance the Estuarine Sanctuary**

The Trust continues to take its mandate to protect and enhance existing marine habitat and the 400 acres of estuarine sanctuary seriously, through multiple partnerships and approaches. Chief among these are the full roster of environmental enrichment programs for school groups, summer camps and the general public. These programs include Big City Fishing & River Science workshops, Hudson River Nature Walks, teacher trainings, and the signature "Submerge" marine science festival that attracted 6,500 participants from all over the city and beyond – festival highlights include hands-on science from over 40 partner research organizations, live scuba dives into the Hudson River and larger than life water experiments on the science stage.

Last year, the Trust continued work on its Pier 32 oyster initiative, which involved installing and monitoring oyster wraps filled with both adult oysters and spat-on-shell directly on structurally sound piles (as opposed to in cages primarily at docks and railings) and monitoring growth, mortality, etc. for a minimum of a three-year term. This is in addition to its ongoing collaborations with the citywide Billion Oyster initiative. In 2017, Trust staff also continued their partnership with Brooklyn College to sample Sanctuary waters for the presence of microplastics -- plastics smaller than 5mm -- with the objective of obtaining baseline microplastic concentration data for the sanctuary.

The Park's composting program expanded significantly in June 2017 through the launch of the Community Compost Program in partnership with NYC's Department of Sanitation and Council Member Corey Johnson. Within the Park's four mile waterfront footprint, there are now seven locations where community members can drop off their food scraps from 7am-7pm daily. In 2017, the Park composted 50,000 lbs of community food scraps and 350,000 lbs of horticulture waste. The cured compost is then returned to Hudson River Park's plant beds and land through

community and corporate volunteer programs, helping the Park's plants flourish. This composting project has become a successful model of how parks can support city-wide efforts to expand composting by providing convenient food-scrap collection bins as NYC rolls out their curb-side compost collection efforts.

In addition, the Trust also continued to partner with numerous scientific organizations on environmental monitoring and restoration initiatives on oyster restoration, water quality monitoring and other research initiatives. For example, the Trust is an active partner in a scientific consortium called the Hudson River Environmental Conditions Observation Network, maintaining two monitoring stations that transmit real-time data about river conditions necessary to a diverse audience including scientists, boaters, and educators.

#### **6. Establish an Estuarine Sanctuary Management Plan**

The Hudson River Park Act required the Trust to prepare an Estuarine Sanctuary Management Plan (ESMP) which has provided guidance on balancing the needs of various park purposes while monitoring and enforcing park policies, laws and regulations to manage and protect the sanctuary. The ESMP is composed of goals and objectives in four key areas: resource protection, public access and recreation, education and environmental research. The Trust continues to work vigorously in each of those areas. In 2017, staff worked with a Technical Advisory Committee comprised of experts in research, habitat enhancement, environmental education and access to the water, with the goal of completing the ESMP update through a public process in 2018.

#### **7. Promote economic development and tourism in the state of New York**

Annually the Park is visited by millions – both New Yorkers and visitors to the City. As the number of Park amenities increases and as the types of tenants and permittees grow more diverse, such as the location of offices for Google at Pier 57, the number of visitors and opportunities for economic growth will continue to emerge.

#### **8. Operate on a model of economic self-sufficiency**

The Trust seeks to ensure the Park's future financial self-sufficiency by developing the Park's remaining major commercial nodes and growing its annual revenue. The Trust continues to work closely with Hudson River Park Friends, a non-profit dedicated to raising money for the Park, including the recent initiative to raise funds to complete a major playground reconstruction in the Chelsea Waterside section of the park.

In 2017-18, the Trust was an active participant in a task force created by Community Board 2 to explore potential changes to the Hudson River Park Act that the Trust believes are necessary for successful redevelopment of Pier 40 – a longer lease term and broadening permissible uses to include offices. Throughout this process, the Trust provided detailed information on park finances and operating assumptions and projections, and the community provided information on their desires and concerns about future development. Ultimately, Community Board 2 provided a report that acknowledged that commercial office use could be an acceptable use, but that also noted that any successful proposal for Pier 40 will need to be “appropriately

scaled and ... require developers who understand and respect the needs and concerns of residents in a complex mixed-use area burdened by traffic and under-served by parks.” The Trust expects to continue working with the local community and the elected officials who serve it on a long-term plan for Pier 40 that balances financial self-sufficiency with equally important community goals.