



**New York City Planning Commission
Hearing on River Ring
October 6, 2021
Adam Ganser, Executive Director**

My name is Adam Ganser, and I am the *Executive Director* of New Yorkers for Parks (NY4P). I would like to thank the Planning Commission for the opportunity to submit written testimony in favor of the River Ring project proposed by Two Trees.

This project speaks to three priority policy issues facing the city: a dearth of public green space, a general lack of preparedness for climate change, and shortage of affordable housing. This project, a private development, ambitiously seeks to do its part to address these three important challenges.

Affordable Housing:

Too often, the priorities of open space and affordability are pitted against each other in private developments. Two Trees has demonstrated a commitment to both with this project prioritizing affordability for those New Yorkers most in need of affordable housing. The development proposal currently dedicates 25% of the total units to affordable housing, with 40% of those units targeted for very low-income New Yorkers making 40% of the area median income. While NY4P's focus is on open space, open space must have equitable access, and Two Trees initial proposal is a start in that direction.

Park Space:

According to our own research, North Brooklyn has one of lowest rates of open space per capita in the city, making the development of parks a critical priority. Even though there is no requirement for the developer to do so, Two Trees has committed to build an ambitious park that will make possible a string of waterfront open spaces from the Brooklyn Navy Yard to Newtown Creek – unthinkable just ten years ago. What's more, it will be fully public and paid for and maintained by private dollars, costing the city nothing.

Climate Resiliency:

The proposed park is not just a park; it is a forward-thinking climate resiliency model, with breakwaters to slow down wave action, reducing the impact of storm surges and protecting the neighborhood. The project sets an important precedent for future waterfront development in New York City. What's more, the park's resiliency features will allow the natural habitat of the East River at this site to be restored. This will promote and sustain oysters, fish, birds and other wildlife.

For over 100 years, [New Yorkers for Parks](http://www.ny4p.org) (NY4P) has built, protected, and promoted parks and open spaces in New York City. Today, NY4P is the citywide independent organization championing quality parks and open spaces for all New Yorkers in all neighborhoods. www.ny4p.org