



PARKS 2009 CAMPAIGN

Friends of Hudson River Park
Governor's Island Alliance
New York Restoration Project
Metropolitan Waterfront Alliance
Mosholu Preservation Corporation
Prospect Park Alliance
Queens Civic Congress

Dear Candidate,

On behalf of New Yorkers for Parks and the Parks 2009 Advisory Committee, we are launching a campaign to support parks and the quality of life of all New Yorkers. In this economic recession, New Yorkers will be relying on the city's features that benefit the most such as parks and open spaces.

Enclosed is a candidate survey that addresses key parks issues, through which we'll learn more about your vision for our city's parks, playgrounds and open spaces. **Please take the time to thoroughly respond to the issues on the attached questionnaire.**

This candidate survey will help to inform the public about parks related issues and policies. Questions are both direct and open ended, so please circle "yes" or "no" when asked and take the time to answer the question as completely as possible in the space provided. If more room is needed to adequately address these issues, please feel free to attach additional pages when resubmitting the survey.

Answers to this survey will be featured in the **Parks Voter Guide** to be distributed by Parks 2009 prior to the primary election; in some cases we may use excerpts or summaries from your answers. They will be made available on our website, www.ny4p.org, and upon request to the public and the press.

To ensure that your views are included, please return the questionnaire by June 19th 2009 to:

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If you have further questions, do not hesitate to call us at 212.838.9410.

*** We need your answers by June 19th for inclusion in Parks 2009 printed material. We welcome responses via email, fax, mail, etc.**

(For non-Mayoral candidates: if any question below specifically relates to Mayoral authority, please indicate if you would support and/or call upon the Mayor to take such action)

2009 CANDIDATE SURVEY

What do you believe are the top priority park issues that need to be addressed in your district and citywide?

I firmly believe that our communities need a more meaningful, participatory role in the design, renovation, and envisioning of parkland and including community parks. A major issue our city parks are facing right now, is the tension between public parks and the need for more partners to steward our parks specifically in an economic environment such as we find ourselves in. While we need to diversify funding for our parks so that their existence do not live or die by the whims of one funding mechanism, the dangers of privatization are real and affect many aspects, from concessions (some of which are quite elaborate), to naming rights, to the use of artificial turf.

Securing Adequate Funding / Maintenance for Parks

a. Will you work towards securing long term funding for Parks?

Yes

i. If so, would you consider exploring creative financial models such as Parks Improvement Districts (based on the BID model), tax increment financing (TIF), zoning benefits and public private partnerships to supplement maintenance and operating costs?

Yes

b. Would you support dedicating revenue earned through park concessions to parks maintenance and operations?

Yes

i. If so, would you also support revising the Major Concessions Rules to include all significant private uses on public property (including parks) to community/borough review?

Yes

c. Will you support establishing the tracking of spending and staffing on a park by park basis?

Yes

d. When a capital project is not fully funded will you support diversifying funding sources to ensure their completion? What would those sources be?

Yes. I would seek funds from private foundations and corporations – such as REI Environmental Grants – and seek to help in applications for federal grants through programs like the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF.)

e. What specific actions would you take to ensure that every park in every neighborhood has properly working facilities such as ball-fields, educational facilities, restrooms, etc?

i. Will you support a “fix it first” policy for funding capital projects, so that resources are allocated to existing projects in need of repair?

Yes

f. Will you support adequate staffing and funding to ensure that new and existing parks stay in a “state of good repair”?

Yes

i. that funding/programs would you use to increase the full-time parks maintenance staff?

I would love to have the discussion regarding the funding

ii. What can be done to improve the baseline services, or maintenance of effort, in our parks to ensure that partnerships don't need to replace poor, existing services or neglected services such as bench and fountain repairs?

I would think a program where apprentices perform such work in return for academic or other credit might help meet this need.

iii. How would you fund the unique maintenance costs of waterfront parks (e.g. access, bulkheads, and piers).

I think that Sen Squardran's proposal for a harbor district bears serious consideration.

g. Will you support park ratings by borough and community board in addition to the citywide level in the Mayor's Management Report?

Yes

h. Will you support making the official Parks Department “property list” – that specifically delineates all 1,700 properties – available online?

Yes

Protecting Parkland

a. Will you support more laws that require public notification and input when a park will be used for non-park purposes, to afford parks the protection they need from development or use by other agencies?

Yes

i. How would you require that professional sports organizations assist in maintaining and operating public parks near their facilities?

I would support legislation to make city funding for professional sports organizations contingent on specific on-going contributions by these organizations to neighborhood parks.

b. Will you work to strengthen parkland alienation regulation by requiring Environmental Impact Statements before parkland alienation bill is filed by municipality?

Yes

i. How will you do this?

I would support legislation to that effect.

c. Will you support mitigation for taking of parkland and ensure replacement of lost parkland for the community?

Yes

i. How will you do so?

Contractually, I would look to make certain that there are terms detailing which parklands are to be replaced and with what commensurate benefits.

d. How would you prevent “pay to play” situations from arising at public and amateur sports facilities?

I do not support pay to play in any governmental functions.

e. Will you support legislation that requires regular NYPD reports to the City Council on crime in parks (i.e. Intro. 470)?

Yes

f. Will you work towards making parkland part of the city’s CompStat system?

Yes

Expanding Park Use

a. Will you work toward creating, with significant community involvement, a comprehensive citywide master plan for parks and open spaces that will guide the overall acquisition, restoration, improvement, and maintenance of parks, natural areas, playgrounds and athletic facilities in the five boroughs?

Yes

i. What is your vision for some of the new parks?

My vision is not at issue, what should be at issue is the vision of the park community of users.

ii. How would you develop it?

I favor of a participatory design process where the community is involved from early envisioning through the design process--very much like the process my community engaged in with PS 38 and that my colleagues and I are engaging in with Thomas Green Park.

b. Will you support extending Resolution No. 1033 which calls for the continued protection of community gardens and the rights of the community and gardeners?

Yes

c. What specific actions would you take to revitalize the recreational and amateur sports programs that have been decreased by this year’s budget cuts?

Many recreational and amateur sports programs rely almost exclusively on state funding which, in times of economic turmoil, makes them susceptible to dramatic cuts in funding. I would be in favor of seeking alternate, private sources of funding for these programs such as sponsorships in order to better ensure their permanence and stability.

d. What specific actions would you take to enable a much higher level of collaboration among the Parks Dept. and other city agencies on issues such as stormwater management, greenways, and economic development projects?

I would propose legislation that requires the Parks Department, the DEP, and economic development agencies to collaborate.

e. How will you ensure that public spaces created as amenities/mitigation for large scale economic development projects such as Atlantic Yards, Hudson Yards, and Manhattanville are truly open to the public?

Large scale economic development aren’t public spaces if they aren’t open to the public. The agreements that create these projects must clearly lay out what public means and conform with the timing that the parks are open.

i. Do you support mapping such public spaces as parkland?

Yes

National and Regional Parks

a. How will you support the creation of planned new regional waterfront parks like Fresh Kills, Hudson River Park, Governors Island and Brooklyn Bridge Park?

I have participated in the community visioning and planning processes in connection with Brooklyn Bridge Park and have supported the development of Governor's Island. I continue to serve on the PCC which seeks to bring the civic groups and park entities together at the same table to negotiate users concerns

b. What are your plans to ensure that all citizens have equal access to these regional facilities?

I will advocate for increased public transportation, both surface and water born, to adequately serve the parks and facilities, increase water taxis/ferried, ensure the availability of recreational watercraft and programming that attracts a broad cross-section of park users.

c. What steps would you take to promote the use of and access to our city's national parks at Gateway National Recreation Area and the other National Parks of NY Harbor?

It is important for New York City residents to be aware of the national parks that are available for their enjoyment, and the ease with which they can visit these destinations. Because Gateway National Recreation Area and the other National Parks of NY Harbor are accessible via public transportation, one effective means of educating the general public about the parks available to them would be running an advertisement series on buses and subways. Another method of outreach would be putting brochures with information about the parks and their accessibility in commonly frequented public locations such as supermarkets and health centers. A different, but related, issue is ensuring that parks are accessible to the disabled. I understand that the Parks Department is in the process of implementing an initiative to this end – I fully support this plan and would like to see an expansion of the Parks Department's efforts.