



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*

David Weprin
Candidate for Comptroller

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 to:

Juliana Roberts Dubovsky
Government & External Relations Associate
New Yorkers for Parks
355 Lexington Ave, 14th Floor
New York, NY 10022
Fax: 212.371.6048

Email: jroberts@ny4p.org

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

(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?

Securing Adequate Funding / Maintenance for Parks

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

Yes No

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?*

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

Yes No

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 No

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

Yes No

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 No

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 would conduct audits and send staff to inspect such facilities to make sure they are in line with the audits.**

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 No

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

Yes No

i. *What funding/programs would you use to increase the full-time parks maintenance staff? **I would work to create public private partnerships in order to share in the cost of maintaining, which includes the adequate staffing of full-time maintenance staff.***

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? **The clear answer would be to increase the park department budget to increase the park staff.. But that cannot be the only answer or solution to a clear problem in the baseline services of our City Parks. That is why it is important to establish working, effective and efficient public private partnerships. We need to improve and expand community participation in the decision making process.***

iii. *How would you fund the unique maintenance costs of waterfront parks (e.g. access, bulkheads, and piers)? **Again, public private partnerships are essential. I would also look towards other funding sources through the Federal Government, whether it be stimulus money or grant money.***

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

Yes No

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

Yes No

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 No

*i. How would you require that professional sports organizations assist in maintaining and operating public parks near their facilities? **This would be part of the public private partnership by calling on professional sports organizations to promote sports and community thru such efforts.***

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

Yes No

i. How will you do this?

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

Yes No

*i. How will you do so? **I would look into the possibility of requiring an Environmental Impact Statement as a way to fully understand the impact of the parks particular usage will affect the surrounding community.***

d. How would you prevent "pay to play" situations from arising at public and amateur sports facilities? **Increasing enforcement and oversight through the auditing process is a clear way to prevent "pay to play" – the only people that win in these situations are those who line their pockets, not the surrounding community.**

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

Yes No

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

Yes No

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 No

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

ii. How would you develop it?

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 No

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?

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? **We must audit agencies to ensure they are doing what needs to be done. Audits will shed light on whether or not are adhering to their agency requirements. If there is a lack of collaboration I would bring all necessary parties to get a better understanding as to why there isn't a higher level of collaboration.**

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?

If property owners are failing to provide access to the community, we must ensure that the law is being enforced. That can be accomplished through the audit process and help from those in the community to make sure that elected officials are informed of what is going on.

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

Yes No

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?

b. What are your plans to ensure that all citizens have equal access to these regional facilities? **First we need to ensure that the City never considers charging a fee to use the park for everyday recreation. One should not have to worry about paying to sit on a bench or to walk through the park. We must work together to ensure that local parks are reflective of the area and that access is not denied.**

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? **We must work together in partnership with the various City agencies that are directed to promote our City's tourism within the City and beyond the City's borders. By creating new partnerships and highlighting these very unique and valuable resources, we can ensure that all New Yorkers can share and enjoy its precious resources at Gateway National and other National Parks of NY Harbor.**