



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?

- **Revitalize the Flushing River and its waterfront, which is currently an underutilized and polluted industrial zone for recreational and residential use that includes green space.**
- **Better utilize the Municipal Parking Lot space for what Flushing residents need including green space.**
- **Restore the 2.5 acre piece of the Kissena Corridor Park used as a New York Hospital of Queens parking lot to parkland use.**
- **Protect Flushing Meadows Corona Park from inappropriate commercial and private exploitation.**
- **Secure the necessary funding to protect and maintain existing parkland.**

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?

Yes

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**

I am strong believer that public property and public benefits for private use should always be subject to community review and community givebacks.

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**

As a leader of a community non-profit and as a small businessman, I am open to using a range of innovative funding sources to ensure the completion of capital projects. These include contributions from foundations, private sector groups, and individual donors.

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 **No**

As a community advocate, I am committed to ensuring that every park has properly working facilities. I strongly support NY4P's award-winning Report Card on Parks project to provide independent information on the maintenance of parks. I will work with community groups and parks advocates to better track projects in need of repair, and will use my bully pulpit as a City Council member to ensure swift action from the Parks Department.

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’m proud to be endorsed by District Council 37, the city’s largest municipal employees union, which includes NYC park service workers, climbers, pruners, gardeners, and supervisors. I’m committed to adequate staffing and funding to ensure that these hard working men and women are supported in their important work of keeping parks in a state of good repair.

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

As a Steering Committee member of the One New York Coalition, I fought hard to protect middle class New York families from devastating budget cuts and in favor of fair share tax reform, which was successfully passed at the state level. I support using progressive revenue generating options as a means to maintain public services such as full-time parks 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?*

I will use my bully pulpit as a member of the City Council to ensure swift action from the Parks Department for effective maintenance efforts so that partnerships do not need to replace neglected facilities.

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

I will work hard with parks advocates to review options of funding waterfront parks, including accessing federal and state funds available for waterfront purposes.

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 support using the Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP) when a park will be used for non-park purposes

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

I support using enforceable contracts with the City for any agreements with professional sports organizations to maintain and operate public parks,

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?*

I would seek new legislation to require Environmental Impact Statements in these situations.

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 do not support any zoning changes that reduce parkland for the community. Instead, I will work to ensure the expansion of parkland as our population inevitably grows in the coming years.

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

With twenty years of experience as a grassroots community leader, I will work in coalition with community groups and park advocates to publicly fight against any “pay to play” situations and hold the City officials accountable.

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?

As a candidate proudly endorsed by the NY League of Conservation Voters, I am a strong advocate of revitalizing the Flushing River waterfront, which is currently an underutilized and polluted industrial zone. This should be part of a broader planning effort that takes active input from community, environment, and park advocates to respond to a broad range of needs of our rich, diverse community.

ii. How would you develop it?

I would look to work with community partners and planning experts to undertake a community-based planning process to identify the recreational needs and priorities of our diverse community. For an area such as Flushing, this effort must be crafted to actively reach in different languages to capture the needs of all communities. As a long time leader in the community, I would be eager to help lead this effort.

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?

As noted previously I support using progressive revenue generating options to support full-time parks maintenance staff. As a leader of a community non-profit and as a small businessman, I am open to using a range of innovative funding sources to ensure the completion of capital projects. These include contributions from foundations, private sector groups, and individual donors.

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?

As an effective coalition builder, I would be eager to bring the environmental community and City agencies in a regular ongoing dialogue to find solutions to common challenges such as flooding, traffic congestion, and lack of affordable housing.

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?

I support using enforceable contracts to ensure that any public spaces created as amenities for large scale projects should really be accessible for public use.

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?

I plan to be a strong advocate for new regional waterfront parks through my own actions and statements. I plan to make personal use of these beautiful parks and lead by example. In that way I hope to bring awareness to the diverse communities in my district of these valuable resources.

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

I am a strong advocate for affordable public transit on which hundreds of thousands of district residents rely daily. I will work to assure long-term financing of the MTA, service improvement, expansion of MTA's City Ticket program, and exploration of the ferry system to ensure that all citizens have equal access to our regional parks.

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?

Again, I plan to be a strong advocate for new the city's national parks through my own actions and statements. I plan to make personal use of the Gateway National Recreation Area and lead by example. In this way I hope to bring awareness to the diverse communities in my district of these valuable resources.