

# FY 2021 Borough Budget Consultations

## Manhattan - Department of Parks and Recreation

Meeting Date 9/6/2019

### AGENDA ITEM 1 : General Agency Funding Discussion

The purpose of holding the Borough Budget Consultations is to provide Community Boards with important information to assist in drafting their statement of District Needs and Budget Priorities for the upcoming fiscal year. As you know, Community Board Members are volunteers who may not be familiar with the budget process and how agencies' programs are funded. At the same time, Community Board members are very knowledgeable about local service needs.

This year's Manhattan agendas have three sections:

I. Agencies begin the consultation with a presentation of their goals, funding decision process, and highlights of their funding needs.

II. Then, the agenda continues with Community Boards asking about specific program funding.

III. Lastly, the agendas include Boards' requests on district-specific budget questions. We request that the agency respond in writing, but have any further discussions on these items with the Community Boards outside of the consultation.

For the first section, please present on the four topics below for 10-15 minutes at the beginning of our Consultation. Also, please provide written responses or even a PowerPoint presentation that we can use to fully and accurately educate our Board Members.

1. What are your priorities and operational goals for FY20 and projected priorities and operational goals for FY21?
2. What are the current proposed FY20 and FY21 service and operational goals and proposed funding?
3. Which programs is the agency adding, dropping, or changing for FY20 and projected for FY21?
4. What are your benchmarks for new and existing programs and what are your benchmarks/key performance indicators for measuring success?

### AGENCY RESPONSE:

1. The Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) plans, maintains and cares for a more than 30,000-acre municipal parks system that encompasses over 1,900 parks, 1,000 playgrounds, 36 recreation centers, more than 650,000 street trees and two million park trees. The agency's goals are to manage the City's parks and recreation facilities, manage the City's street, park and forest trees, preserve and expand the infrastructure of New York's parks and provide recreational and educational opportunities for New Yorkers of all ages.

2. The agency's expense budget included in the FY20 Adopted Budget is \$587,220,032. The agency's 10-Year FY20 Capital Plan projects a total Parks capital budget of over \$5 billion.

3. NYC Parks looks forward to continuing our strong commitment to improving our city's parks and maintaining the state of good repair for our many park properties. We will continue to implement the signature initiatives and programs created during this Administration, including the Community Parks Initiative (CPI), Anchor Parks and Parks Without Borders, all dedicated to ensuring that parks all over the city are given the attention and care they deserve.

Information on the status of the CPI projects in Manhattan can be found in our response to Agenda Item #4.

The Anchor Parks project in Manhattan covers much of Highbridge Park. There are two phases, both of which are

under construction.

Manhattan has two Parks Without Borders projects at Jackie Robinson Park and Seward Park. Both of these projects are in construction. Parks has also received additional funding through the Parks Without Borders program to enhance the capital projects at Tompkins Square Park Avenue B playground, St. Gregory's Park and Clement Clark Moore Park.

4. As with all operating departments, Parks benchmarks are reported as part of the Mayor's Management Report (MMR), which can be found here: <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/operations/performance/mmr.page>

We will distribute a copy of the Parks indicators at the meeting.

## **MEETING NOTES:**

### **COMMENTS:**

#1) Bill Castro (Manhattan Borough Commissioner, Parks): Can go in year round to use dry ice to deal with rodents in parks. Compactor Big Bellies have been very beneficial to the community.

#2) Bill Castro (Parks): Mayor puts in about 75% of capital budget, council member and borough president puts in the rest 25%. The rest of the \$44 million (taking away the \$9.6 million that was baselined) is temporary and theoretically won't be renewed. About 16 workers per community board.

Bill Castro (Parks): Works with NYPD to deal with homeless in parks, make arrests, etc.

#3) Bill Castro (Parks): Solar compactors are expensive. Rats are not a problem in the vast majority of the parks.

#4) Bill Castro (Parks): There is no plan to continue funding for CPI, but community boards are welcome to advocate for CPI funding.

#5) Nothing new to add.

#6) Bill Castro (Parks): Has been an increase emphasis on addressing comfort stations. In the past this wasn't the case due to a limited budget.

Richard Lewis (Chair, CB12): Where is starting point to renovate/restore comfort stations in CB12?

Jesus Perez (DM, CB6): Asked about ADA comfort stations.

Bill Castro (Parks): Advocacy is key to get funding. Looking at a rational, planners' perspective to see where comfort stations are needed. Also changing signage on comfort stations and seeing which ones aren't compliant for ADA accessibility. New comfort station construction will be ADA accessible, goal is to make comfort stations 100% compliant.

#7) Bill Castro (Parks): Nothing at this point re: working with private sector to get wifi in parks. Steve Simon (Chief of Staff, Parks): Talking to Google for a few sites though. Richard Lewis (Chair, CB12): Maybe convert old phone booths as wifi spots.

#8) Marie Winfield (Member, CB11): Is staffing level affecting issues? Parks: Will look into.

#9) Nothing new to add.

#10) Community boards will help advocate for needs discussed.

### **NOTES:**

Parks: Will give breakdown of \$44 million (minus the \$9.6 baselined) to community boards so they can help advocate to keep that amount for future years.

Bill Castro (Parks): Will get back to community boards re: tree stumps data, removal requests.

Bill Castro (Parks): Will send solar compactor placement list to community boards.

Bill Castro (Parks): Will send number of eligible CPI sites in Manhattan, if funding were available, to community boards.

## **AGENDA ITEM 2 : FY20 \$44M increase for Parks**

How will the new funding be allocated in Manhattan by district and category? 100 new park workers and 50 gardeners will be baselined. How much of the \$44M will fund these new workers? How will these workers be allocated in Manhattan by district?

There has been reference to “contracts” in reports on the new funding. What are these? Will the 100 workers, 50 gardeners and other staff be temporary workers? Does the agency want support to baseline funds for these workers?

### **AGENCY RESPONSE:**

\$19.6 million has been allocated for 200 City Parks Workers (CPWs) and 100 Gardeners, of which \$9.6 million for 100 CPWs and 50 Gardeners was baselined.

With the new funding, Manhattan will be getting 15 additional CPWs: District 3 – 4 CPWs, District 9 – 2 CPWs, District 10 – 2 CPWs, District 11 – 3 CPWs, District 12 – 2 CPWs, District 12A (Includes Highbridge Park) – 2 CPWs.

Contracts for tree stump removal will be utilized with the additional \$1 million, and some of the \$4 million allocated for forest management will be expended through contracts.

Funding is only available in FY 20 for 100 new workers and 50 new gardeners and the other additional funding provided by the Council apart from the \$9.6 million that was baselined. We would support having the additional funds baselined.

### **MEETING NOTES:**

#### **COMMENTS:**

#### **NOTES:**

## **AGENDA ITEM 3 : Solar Compactors**

Solar compactors have significantly reduced the rodent populations and have increased the quality of the parks and playgrounds.

What funding would be needed in FY21 to install compactors in Manhattan parks and playgrounds? Which sites are most in need?

What funding would be needed in FY21 for maintenance?

### **AGENCY RESPONSE:**

We do not know what the cost of the solar-powered compacting trash receptacles will be in FY 21 since a new contract is being negotiated by the City. The most recent cost figure we have for one of these trash receptacle with a foot pedal, anti-graffiti wrap and one year of monitoring services is \$3,881.40. Each time each unit was serviced

(under the old contract) the cost was a minimum of \$169.

Please see the attached spreadsheet for a list of sites in need of solar trash compactors.

## **MEETING NOTES:**

### **COMMENTS:**

### **NOTES:**

## **AGENDA ITEM 4 : CPI Budget**

1. What is the FY20 budget for CPI?
2. Projected for FY21? Which sites are underway in Manhattan? Which sites are planned for future years?
3. What is the source of CPI funding?

## **AGENCY RESPONSE:**

1. The CPI funds were allocated during FY 15/16/17/18. Some of the funding being spent on current projects is in the FY 20 budget.
2. No additional funding is projected at this time. As a result, there are no plans for future CPI sites.

The following projects are underway in Manhattan:

Playground One (Community Board 3)

On schedule, construction will be completed in July 2020 - \$3,453,000

Joseph C. Sauer Park (Community Board 3)

Construction to begin mid-September - \$4,067,000

Luther Gulick Playground Comfort Station (Community Board 3)

Construction scheduled for completion in September 2019 - \$3,045,392

[With other funding, the playground is also under construction and should be completed in September 2020 - \$9,949,000]

Bloomingtondale Playground and Comfort Station (Community Board 7)

Comfort Station: on schedule, construction should be completed in September 2019 - \$1,468,000

Playground: on schedule, construction should be completed in October 2019 - \$5,240,000 (some of the funds came from the Council and the BP)

Bill 'Bojangles' Robinson Playground (Community Board 10)

Contract recently awarded. Construction should begin by the end of the year or early next year. - \$2,037,000

Harlem Lane Playground / Frederick Johnson Park (Community Board 10)

Scheduled to go out to bid next month. Construction expected to begin early 2020 and be completed summer 2021. - \$18,000,000

Comfort Station: Construction expected to begin early 2020 and be completed spring 2021. - \$2,800,000

Abraham Lincoln Playground and (Community Board 11)

Comfort Station: construction to begin mid-September - \$1,624,000

Playground: construction may begin by end of the year - \$9,731,698

Audubon Playground and Comfort Station (Community Board 12)  
Playground: on schedule, construction should be completed April 2020 - \$7,160,000  
Comfort Station: in procurement, construction should begin Spring 2020 - \$998,000

3. Mayoral funds: DPR and DEP

**MEETING NOTES:**

**COMMENTS:**

**NOTES:**

**AGENDA ITEM 5 : Climate Change**

What budget allocations has Parks made in Manhattan to address climate change? In FY20? Projected for FY21? Use of permeable surfaces and improving drainage systems? Waterfront park system? ESCR? Other?

**AGENCY RESPONSE:**

NYC Parks is committed to addressing climate change by incorporating sustainability and resiliency into the planning and design of our parks. In 2017, Parks released Design and Planning for Flood Resiliency: Guidelines for NYC Parks, an interdisciplinary manual that provides guidance for developing and renovating coastally resilient waterfront parks. The guidelines outline various measures, including site analysis, materials and plant selection, grading and permeability, that are integrated into our design and planning processes and therefore do not have their own separate budget allocation or line item.

NYC Parks is also actively collaborating with a number of City agencies and entities to advance neighborhood resilience, including but not limited to partnering with Mayor’s Office of Resiliency, Department of Design and Construction, Economic Development Corporation, Department of Transportation, Department of Environmental Protection and others on projects like the East Side Coastal Resiliency project, Two Bridges Coastal Resilience and the Battery Coastal Resilience.

**MEETING NOTES:**

**COMMENTS:**

**NOTES:**

**AGENDA ITEM 6 : Restroom Restoration and Renovation**

1. What is the FY20 budget for the restoration and renovation of restroom facilities?
2. What is the projected restoration and renovation budget for FY21?
3. Please provide a list of these restrooms in Manhattan by district, and the cost associated with each one.
4. Which are most in need?
5. What amount of funding is required to make all Parks restrooms handicapped accessible?

6. What amount of funding is required to increase the number of restrooms and provide one for each playground and field?

**AGENCY RESPONSE:**

1. There is no specific budget for renovating comfort stations. Each project is funded separately:

- Bloomingtondale Playground - \$1,468,000 - completion scheduled for Fall 2019
- Audubon Playground - \$998,000 - completion scheduled for Winter 2020 / 2021
- Highbridge Park Adventure Playground (new comfort station) - \$3.5 million - completion scheduled for Spring 2021
- Highbridge Park Quisqueya Playground - \$1.71 million
- Frederick Johnson Park (new comfort station) - \$2.8 million - completion scheduled for Spring 2021
- Marcus Garvey Park / Harlem Little League Clubhouse - \$3.251 million - completion scheduled for Winter 2019/ 2020
- Sara D. Roosevelt Park (Stanton Street) - \$1.557 million - completion scheduled for Winter 2019/2020
- Sara D. Roosevelt Park (Broome Street)
- Baruch Playground - \$1.866 million - completion scheduled for Winter 2019/2020
- 24 Sycamores Playground - \$1.701 million – construction anticipated to begin Fall 2019
- Corlears Hook Park – \$2.777 million – construction anticipated to begin early 2020
- Merchant’s Gate (Central Park) - \$3.1 million

2. As stated above, there is no specific budget for renovating comfort stations. We plan to renovate several existing comfort stations and build a few new ones in FY 21 (see below).

- 3. District 1: Battery Park Playscape - \$4.9 million
- District 3: East River Park – As part of ESCR, we will be building new comfort stations at 10th Street (\$2.3 million), the track house, and the tennis house.
- District 3: Pier 42 new comfort station - \$2.8 million
- District 3: Tompkins Square Park - \$4.6 million
- District 3: McKinley Playground – \$911,000
- District 11: Abraham Lincoln Playground - \$1,624,000
- District 11: Harlem River Park (new comfort station) – \$4,716,000
- District 12: Msgr. Kett Playground (new comfort station) - \$4.5 million
- District 12: Morris-Jumel Mansion (ADA Access and Bathrooms)- \$490,000
- District 13: Great Hill (Central Park) - \$500,000

4. We are currently reviewing the condition of other comfort stations to determine which ones are in need of capital renovation.

5. We are currently gathering the data regarding ADA accessibility for our comfort stations and will be placing this updated list on our website. We do not have a cost estimate at this time for making the remaining comfort stations accessible.

6. We do not have room in every playground and field to construct a comfort station at each site

**MEETING NOTES:**

**COMMENTS:**

**NOTES:**

**AGENDA ITEM 7 : Wifi in Manhattan Parks**

1. What funding is needed in FY20 and FY21 to bring WIFI to all Manhattan Parks sites, and has the Parks found any new partnerships to fund this expansion?

**AGENCY RESPONSE:**

We currently have Wi-Fi available to the public at 39 parks and recreation centers in Manhattan. Although we do not have plans for any new sites and we have not found a new partnership for Wi-Fi installations, we are keeping any requests for additional sites in mind should funding or a new partnership become available.

Work in the past was either funded through a gift from a private entity (AT&T) or through the City’s cable franchise agreements with Spectrum (formerly Time Warner Cable) and Altice (formerly Cablevision).

It’s really not possible to estimate what it would cost to provide Wi-Fi at all Manhattan parks because each park is different, and different ways would have to be figured out to bring coverage to unique spaces. Also, installation methods and network speed/consistency would vary, along with a range of price tags. We have never installed Wi-Fi using City dollars so we would have to devise the mechanism for doing that, another unknown. The costs for the installations done between 2013-2015 would not be useful in determining the current costs since installation methods and equipment have changed.

**MEETING NOTES:**

**COMMENTS:**

**NOTES:**

**AGENDA ITEM 8 : Maintenance Staffing Numbers**

1. What are the full-time ,part-time and seasonal general workers, plumbers, gardeners, skilled trades, forestry, and staffing numbers and FY20 budgets for Manhattan, by district?

1A. Projected for FY21?

2. What is the need by district?

**AGENCY RESPONSE:**

1. Please see the attached list of staffing for the Manhattan districts. (Note: This chart does not reflect the additional workers being hired with the new FY 20 funding.) Our summer staffing numbers were increased over last year (88 in August 2018 vs. 150 in August 2019). The Parks districts are the same as the Community Districts, with the following exceptions: District 13 encompasses Central Park, District 14 includes Riverside Park, West Harlem Piers and the southern portion of Fort Washington Park below the George Washington Bridge, and District 15 covers the East River Esplanade between 14th and 125th Streets, Andrew Haswell Green Park, Playground 103 and the East River Playground.

The budget for Manhattan M &O staff is approximately \$19 million. The budget for Manhattan forestry and horticulture is approximately \$2.4 million. The budget for Manhattan tradespeople (plumbers, carpenters, electricians, etc.) staff is \$4 million. All figures include seasonals. We do not have a breakdown by district.

1A. We expect to have a similar staffing allotment in FY 21, depending upon the FY 21 Adopted Budget.

2. We will discuss this at the borough consultation meeting.

**MEETING NOTES:**

**COMMENTS:**

**NOTES:**

**AGENDA ITEM 9 : Playground Funding**

1. What is the FY20 budget for playground associates and camp staff?
  - 1A. Projected for FY21?
2. What is the source of this funding?
3. How many associates and camp staff will this fund and at which Manhattan locations?
4. How is funding allocated to rec center staff?
5. How many Manhattan playgrounds could still benefit from having an associate?
6. Last year you expressed difficulty finding qualified associates -- do you have an update on practices and success of identifying qualified candidates?

**AGENCY RESPONSE:**

1. The budget for Playground Associates, including 1 staff member for the Summer Sports Experience program at Thomas Jefferson Park, is \$372,000.
  - 1A. We expect it be about the same in FY 21 with the addition of some collective bargaining increases.
2. This funding is almost entirely Mayoral, with some funding from Council Members.
3. It will fund 20 Playground Associates, 17 of whom work at specific sites (see attached spreadsheet) and one Summer Sport Experience staff at Thomas Jefferson. We have 33 staff working at six camp sites – Tony Dapolito, Hansborough, J. Hood Wright, Chelsea, Al Smith and East 54th Street.
4. Staff funding is based on attrition, backfills through retirement, or leaving the agency for other reasons.
5. Additional funding would be great and would allow us to place Playground Associates at additional parks like Vesuvio Playground, John Jay Park, Marcus Garvey Park, Asser Levy Playground and Carl Schurz Park. About 50 additional playgrounds in Manhattan could benefit from having Playground Associates if funding were available.
6. We increased our outreach by attending more college fairs, but we were still unable to hire as many Playground Associates as we would have liked. Our strategy for next year will be to start earlier and use as many resources as available, including the community boards.

**MEETING NOTES:**

**COMMENTS:**

**NOTES:**

**AGENDA ITEM 10 : Parks Department Capital Process**

1. Recognizing the attempts made by the Parks Department to speed up and reduce delays in the capital process,



what resources are being explored and made available for the review and improvement of the Parks Department's protracted capital process?

2. What savings have been realized through current streamlining efforts?

3. What are plans to continue this process in FY21?

4. Are there any plans to give Parks a capital budget so it would not have to cobble together funds from elected officials?

**AGENCY RESPONSE:**

1. Our agency’s ability to deliver capital projects and improve our parks in a timely manner continues to be a top priority. The internal process reforms we’ve instituted for the design and construction of our projects since this Administration took office – streamlined reviews and reducing internal processes -- is having a transformative impact. Additionally, increased funding for Capital division staff provided in recent budgets by this Administration has allowed the agency to tackle and expedite more projects and deliver on our mission to plan, build and care for vibrant parks for all New Yorkers.

2. In recent years, internal process reforms has resulted in significant time savings for capital project delivery. Over the past several years, the median design time for single-site landscape projects decreased by 12 months and a greater proportion of our construction projects are being completed early, all while the total number of design completions and the average dollar value of projects increased considerably.

3. This commitment to reform the process will continue, as we seek to further improve and refine our internal practices and work with the Administration and City Council to explore potential changes to the Citywide capital process.

4. NYC Parks has a very significant capital budget, largely funded by the Mayor. The total Parks Capital 10-Year forecast includes over \$5 billion, 75% of which is Mayoral funding. This funding has made many of our signature capital improvement efforts possible, including the Community Parks Initiative. However, discretionary capital funding from elected officials is also a significant portion of our capital budget, for which we are very appreciative.

**MEETING NOTES:**

**COMMENTS:**

**NOTES:**