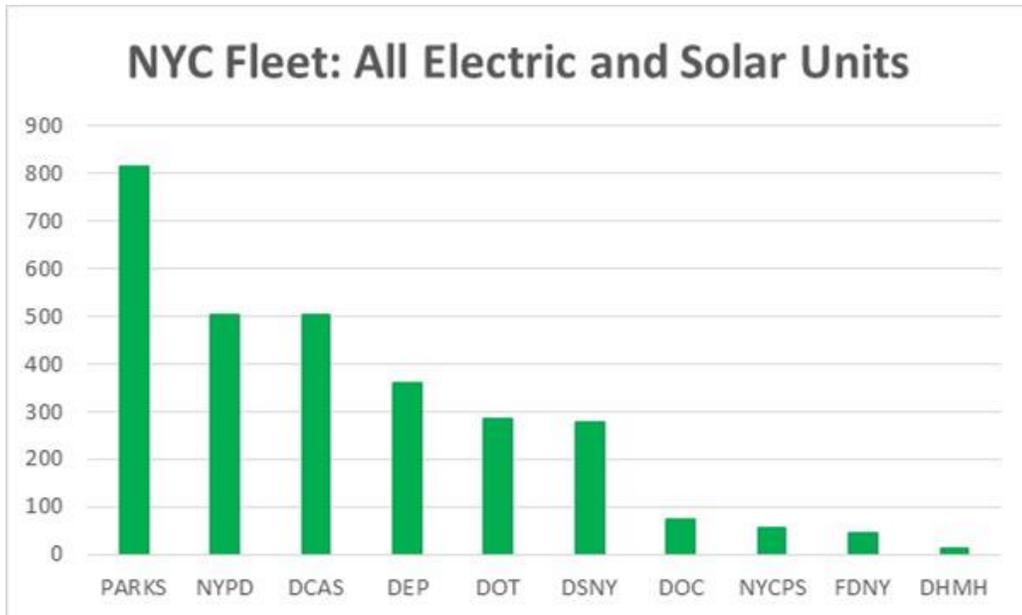


## Fleet Spotlight: Parks Fleet Managers Brian Aucoin and Cynthia Lopez

By: Keith T. Kerman & Brianna Dolmo



Of all City agencies, NYC Parks has long been at the forefront of sustainable fleet adoption. Today, Parks operates NYC’s largest plug-in electric fleet with 844 on and off-road EV and solar units, a remarkable 97% of these being all-electric (BEV) units instead of plug-in hybrids (PHEVs). Parks also operates 191 hybrid electric units. It was one of the first agencies to transition from fossil diesel to full use of renewable diesel for its 1,300 trucks and off-road equipment units. Over 80% of the fleet has converted away from fossil fuels.

Parks has recently appointed a new fleet management team, Brian Aucoin as Chief of Fleet Operations and Cynthia Lopez as Deputy Chief.

Brian started his career at NYC Parks in 1999 as an Outreach Coordinator with Partnerships for Parks working in Southern Queens. He then served as the first

Bronx River Conservation Manager, establishing the Conservation Crew for the Bronx River Working Group/Bronx River Alliance from 2000-2004. In 2004, he was appointed Director of the GreenApple Corps AmeriCorps Program, delivering urban forestry, ecological restoration, and environmental education services until 2011. Keystone projects during that time included Parks' first green roof at the Randall's Island Garage and many subsequent green roof installations, including the Ranaqua Garage in the Bronx.



From 2008-2011, Brian directed the Million Trees Training Program, a green-collar arboriculture and ecological restoration job training program. He then served as Director of the Natural Resources Group's (NRG) first volunteer program, hosting large-scale projects such as the annual NYU East New York street tree stewardship project with over 1,400 student volunteers, and he oversaw the creation of the NAVigator program for long-term, independent volunteers.

In 2016, Brian became Deputy Chief of Operations for Citywide Services/Fleet, managing the agency's on- and off-road fleet and small equipment. As Deputy Chief, Brian has developed new teams, streamlined services, and prioritized physical improvements, fleet safety, sustainability, and compliance initiatives, including mandated training and re-evaluation for operators with repeated preventable collisions. He has partnered with DCAS to help implement Vision Zero priorities such as Geotab telematics, truck side guards, quad cameras, and safe driver training, as well as to help establish NYC's largest fleet of electric vehicles (EVs) and EV infrastructure.

Brian holds a Bachelor of Science in Environmental and Sustainable Resources from the University of Louisiana, Lafayette. He was a member of the DCAS Leadership Institute and recipient of the Gordon Davis Renaissance Award. Programs under his leadership have received the Government Leading Fleet Award, the U.S. Forest Service Chief's Honor Award, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 2 Environmental Quality Award.

Brian grew up in New Orleans, LA. He is a proud resident of the Bronx, where he lives with his wife, Sarah, Chief of Wildlife & Education at NYC Parks, their two sons, Artie and Oscar, and their animals, Turbo and Trawler. In his spare time, Brian plays ultimate frisbee, disc golf, and the drums and enjoys live music, being outdoors, and going on adventures with his family.

Newly appointed Deputy Chief of Operations Cynthia Lopez has been with NYC Parks for seventeen years and previously served as Fleet Administrative Coordinator. Before joining NYC Parks in December of 2006, Cynthia worked for the NYC Office of Technology and Innovation (OTI), known as DOITT, during Cynthia's time there. Prior to becoming a city employee, Cynthia was a social worker for a non-profit organization helping teen moms.

Fleet is an administratively demanding area with legally mandated safety and emission requirements, employee licensing, and extensive contracting components. Among many initiatives, Cynthia and her team recently completed a full review of the Parks EZ pass program, working with TBTA to update records for all passes and resolve program compliance issues.

Cynthia is also currently administering a major salvage program for older Parks vehicles. In partnership with DCAS, Parks recently brought in a large new electric fleet, leaving over 300 older gas and diesel vehicles to be processed for salvage since September 2023. Cynthia has already readied over 200 of these for auction and sale, with more coming.

Cynthia looks forward to greening the Parks fleet even further, including electrification of larger trucking units such as garbage and rack trucks, reducing dependency on fossil fuels, and implementing safer fleet designs that will reduce collisions and injuries.

Outside of work, Cynthia is heavily involved in Omega Phi Beta, with whom she has been a sister for 25 years. The Latina-orientated sorority is new on the Greek scene, founded in 1989. A main focus of the group is to raise awareness about violence against women.

Thanks, and congratulations to Brian and Cynthia. DCAS looks forward to working with them to make Park's fleet greener, safer, and more reliable.

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## Week In Review: January 14 - January 20

New York City honors the legacy of Dr. King, celebrates a housing record and introduces the preliminary budget.



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