



Hunters Point Parks
CONSERVANCY



2021 Annual Report

Letter from the President

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

We are well into 2022 and this is the perfect opportunity to reflect on the accomplishments of 2021. While 2021 had its challenges, it also brought tremendous opportunities for even more community members to give their time, energy, and money to ensure that our waterfront parks are beautifully maintained. We are grateful for our caring and dedicated community that supports the Hunters Point Parks Conservancy through volunteering and financial donations. Together, volunteers gave 1,920 hours to remove over 1,500 bags of weeds, plant 16,000 bulbs, and 700 plants, and pick up trash throughout the park.

We are also lucky to have many dedicated city and state park workers that consider the parks their home. The Conservancy works closely with them during our bi-weekly volunteer gardening sessions. We also purchased 4 Yoshino Cherry Trees and 3 additional Big Belly trash cans for Hunters Point South Park. At Gantry Plaza State Park, we purchased 4 picnic tables, 8 umbrellas, and 100s of plants, and replaced 2 Adirondack chairs. We continue to look for opportunities in both the city and state park to provide funding for park improvements.

This year we were able to bring back our in-person programming. We loved watching Jaws, The Lion King and Raiders of the Lost Ark on the oval. Hundreds participated in our yoga, Zumba and other fitness programs. It was also extremely important for some of

the youngest members of our community to get back in the park and the return of our Summer Kids programming accomplished that as over 600 kids came to the park with 28 free events.

The Conservancy is committed to providing more Environmental Education to our community. We have worked with partners like Newtown Creek Alliance, Blue Bus Project, individual environmental educators, and others to stress the importance of the fragile environment we are all part of and encourage everyone to a more sustainable lifestyle.

Long Island City continues to grow faster than just about any other community in the United States. The park perimeter continues to be surrounded by more buildings and we will have to work harder to keep our parks the special place they have become. I encourage everyone to look through the Annual Report to see what can be accomplished when we have caring, committed people working together to keep our parks beautiful.



Rob Basch

President, Hunters Point Parks Conservancy

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Hunters Point Parks Conservancy (HPPC) was able to continue its role as Stewards of Hunter's Point South Park and Gantry Plaza State Park by managing a robust volunteer program despite the ongoing impact of COVID-19. We were able to host biweekly volunteer gardening sessions on Thursdays and Saturdays, which drew hundreds of people from neighboring buildings and throughout the city.

We also worked with corporate groups, both those with employees returning to the office and those looking for outdoor bonding activities for their teams still working from home. 148 people across 10 companies spent time gardening in the parks.

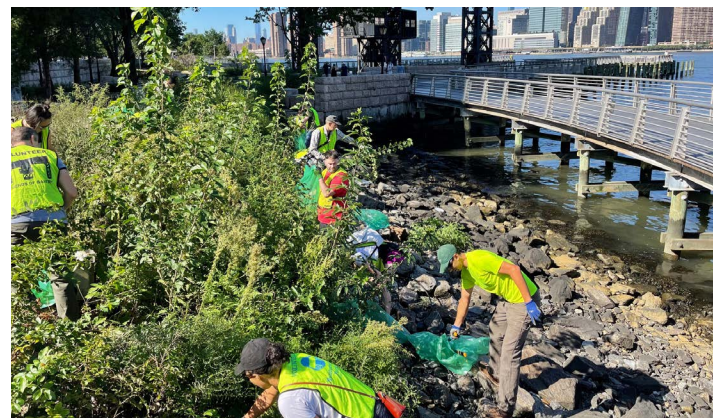
In total, we held 59 volunteer days which drew 941 people despite needing to limit group sizes. Volunteers removed 1,573 bags of weeds and trash and planted 697 plants and nearly 16,000 bulbs in the two parks.

We were lucky to have so many wonderful volunteers this year, including some individuals who came out more than 20 times! To thank our dedicated volunteers, we held our second-annual volunteer appreciation event in early October. Thank you to our host, Culture Lab LIC at the Plaxall Gallery.

Finally, an enormous thank you to our gardening program sponsors, Con Edison & Macy's.



Volunteers weed invasive species in Hunter's Point South Park



Volunteers pull weeds along the East River in Gantry Plaza State Park



Volunteers plant daffodil bulbs as part of the 7th Annual Bulbfest

BULBFEST

The Hunters Point Parks Conservancy held our 7th annual LIC Bulbfest on November 6th. This year, we had 97 volunteers who helped HPPC, NYC Parks, and NYS Parks plant nearly 16,000 tulip, daffodil, and allium bulbs in Hunter's Point South Park and Gantry Plaza State Park.

The Conservancy is extremely thankful to our Parks Department partners and the many dedicated volunteers who made this an extremely successful event. We're also enormously thankful to Amazon for sponsoring Bulbfest and to Van Zyverden, Inc. for donating the bulbs.

The flowers bloomed beautifully in both waterfront parks this spring!



POLLINATOR GARDEN

Hunters Point Parks Conservancy continued our partnership with Newton Creek Alliance (NCA) to expand our work on the pollinator meadow we created in September 2020 in the medians on 48th Ave. We held 3 volunteer days in the spring and summer dedicated to tending to the new garden.

On September 25, HPPC and NCA volunteers carried out a planting project in the garden as part of Insectageddon, a two-day worldwide celebration of insects and pollinators, led by The High Line and artist Cecilia Vicuña.

In total, 62 volunteers removed 45 bags of weeds and planted 245 new plants in the medians this year.

This garden serves as a habitat for ecological valuable pollinators, like butterflies, moths, bees and small birds. It also provides important ecosystem services including infiltration and filtration of stormwater, carbon storage, and nutrient recycling.

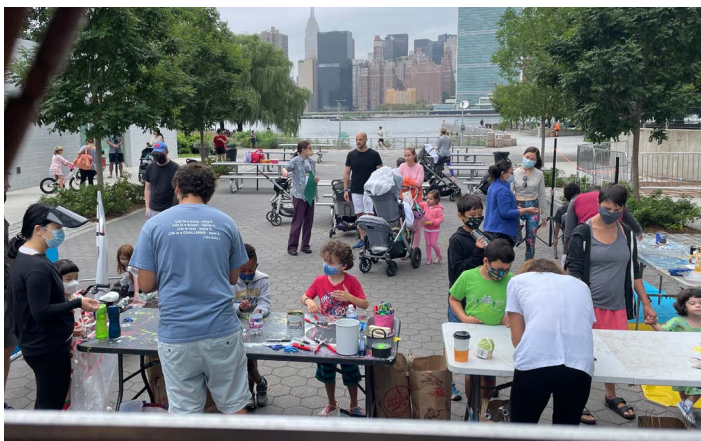


Volunteers add new plants to the 48th Avenue Pollinator Garden

BLUE BUS PROJECT AND LEAVE NO TRACE

This spring, we partnered with The Blue Bus Project, a non-profit bringing free art events to underserved local communities, on a Leave No Trace campaign around LIC. We distributed flyers to neighborhood restaurants and food trucks and introduced two coloring pages to teach children about respecting the parks and natural environment by disposing of their waste properly.

We also brought The Blue Bus to Gantry Plaza State Park for two Leave No Trace Kids Art Workshops attended by more than 100 people. During these workshops, kids were able to turn items that were usually found as trash in the parks into creative projects while learning about recycling.



Families make craft projects from discarded materials at a Leave No Trace workshop

NATURE TOURS

HPPC also partnered with the Newton Creek Alliance and environmental educator Gabriel Willow to bring 5 nature tours to Hunter's Point South Park in the spring and fall. These tours focused on the restored tidal marsh ecosystem in the park, along with some ecological history of greater NYC.

The 76 people who attended the walks learned about the way the restored wetlands served as habitats for migrating birds and how the park's design makes the shoreline more resistant to flooding due to storms and sea level rise.



Nature Walk attendees learn about the native and migratory species in the parks



Families take part in Leave No Trace Workshops with The Blue Bus Project

In July and August, the Conservancy held our 6th year of Summer Kids on the Waterfront programming with 6 weeks of free programs for children ages 10 and under in locations through Gantry Plaza State Park and Hunter's Point South Park. This year, during the course of the 6-week program, we hosted one free 45-minute program every weekday morning.

Over 600 children attended our 28 free events this year. Our events this summer were at limited capacity and almost every one filled up as soon as they launched! Thank you to our sponsors, NYC Ferry, Hunter's Point South Living, ProHEALTH Dental, and NYC Department of Youth & Community Development for supporting these great family activities.

2021 Summer Kids Programs:

- Music with Andy & Suzanna
- Jiggy Tots with McManus Irish Dance
- Yoga Classes with Yogi Beans
- Puppet Shows with WonderSpark Puppets
- Tots Sing and Play with Teaching Artists Collective
- City Owlets Owlazing Magic
- Snapology S.T.E.A.M / ROBOTICS
- Bricks 4 Kidz STEM Lego Class
- Magic Shows by Joe the Magic Man
- Art in the Park with Art Strong NYC



Kids paint at Summer Kids 2021



Mommy and Me yoga at Summer Kids 2021



Kids learn STEM through building at Summer Kids 2021



Crowds watch a movie at CinemaLIC

CINEMALIC

Now in its 7th year, our CinemaLIC movie series returned to the waterfront this summer with 3 free outdoor movie screenings with the best backdrop in all of New York City. After needing to cancel our 2020 series, we chose to schedule a more limited number of screenings this summer to give us more flexibility, just in case anything needed to be rescheduled. Fortunately, the show was able to go on, and all 3 screenings were hosted as planned for the community to enjoy.

Movie attendance this year reached over 1,250 combined viewers, with the largest crowd coming out for *The Lion King* on July 31.

This year, we chose movies from 3 different decades that could be fun for the whole family: *Jaws*, *The Lion King*, and *Raiders of the Lost Ark*.

A sincere thank you to Nest Seekers International for returning again as our movie sponsor!

Nest Seekers
INTERNATIONAL

IN PARK FITNESS

After running successful virtual fitness programs in 2020 and early 2021, outdoor fitness classes returned to



Yoga on the Waterfront

Hunter's Point South Park in July. This summer, we had to limit attendance at classes to support social distancing, but we still welcomed nearly 400 people to our 15 park programs, which included Yoga on the Waterfront with Joy Chen, Zumba on the Waterfront with Laura Wagner, H2ShO on the Waterfront with Erwin Gonzalez, Barre3 on the Waterfront with Lisa Pantaleo, and Zing! Kids Fitness.

Thank you to our 2021 fitness program sponsors: Weill Cornell Primary Care - Long Island City, TF Cornerstone, and LIC Dental Associates.



Virtual Programs and Videos

Lynn Yorkville

Judith Dattaro

Yoni

Ashandra's iPa

Susan Gutierrez

Pam G

E D

Annette Par

Kathy Da

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VIRTUAL PROGRAMS

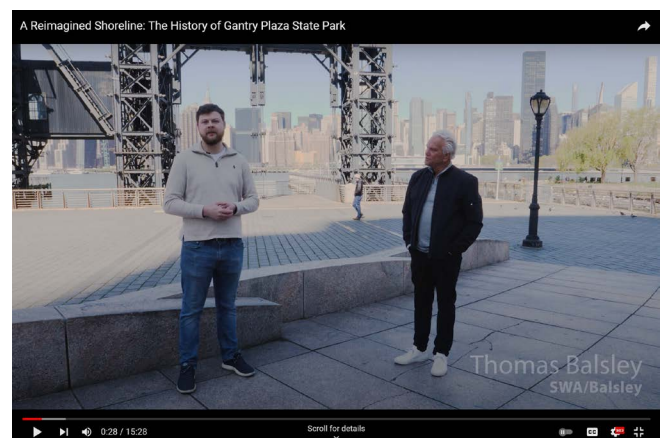
Following the success of our 2020 virtual programs, HPPC ran two seasons of fitness, art, and kids programs via Zoom this year. We hosted 29 programs attended by 1,140 people between February and June when we were able to return to small group programs in the parks. Thank you to our great co-hosts at Sophie Walters Fitness, Cosmic Fit Club, Snapology, and Donna Levinstone for helping keep kids and adults engaged and active while staying safe at home!

Thank you to Weill Cornell Medicine Primary Care - Long Island City and Standard Motor Products for sponsoring our virtual programs!

PARK VIDEOS

We also partnered with Andrew Kapochunas, local resident, amateur historian, and member of the New York Map Society, to produce a 5-part video series on the history of Hunters Point and Long Island City with a special focus on maps and historical images of our area. All five videos can be found on the HPPC YouTube channel.

To celebrate Gantry Plaza State Park's 23rd birthday on May 21st, we released a video with Tom Balsley, Managing Principal of SWA/Balsley and designer of both of our waterfront parks. The video, which is available on the HPPC YouTube channel, covers the history of Gantry Plaza State Park and the design process that led to the beautiful 12-acre oasis we now have on the Long Island City waterfront.



YouTube interview with Thomas Balsley
Scan the QR Code to watch:



PAINTING CLASSES

After taking part in our virtual programming, artist Donna Levinstone returned to outdoor classes to host “Watercolors on the Waterfront” in Gantry Plaza State Park this summer. 54 people attended 4 family-friendly evening sessions painting sunset views of the skyline or anything else that caught their interest.

Thank you to Weill Cornell Medicine - Long Island City, TF Cornerstone, and LIC Dental Associates for sponsoring HPPC’s summer program series!



THE HEART MONUMENT

On December 20, Sergio Furnari’s Heart Monument was installed along the waterfront in Hunter’s Point South Park. This large red stainless steel heart pays tribute to healthcare heroes who are serving their community during the COVID-19 pandemic and was last installed on the southeast corner of Central Park in late October 2021. It is already proving incredibly popular as a photo backdrop for park visitors.



Watercolor class with Donna Levinstone



The Heart Monument by Sergio Furnari



The 6th Annual LIC Waterfront 5K returned on September 18th after being held virtually in 2020. This year, we had 1,100 registered runners, including 150 kids who participated in the Shibley Day Camp Center Blvd. Kids Dash!

The event continues to be organized as a team effort by HPPC, Woodside Sunnyside Runners, and Run LIC. All funds raised go towards furthering the mission of the Conservancy to enrich the quality of life in Hunters Point by preserving and enhancing its waterfront parks.

The event is truly a community effort made possible by the generous support of our many sponsors and volunteers and services provided by the City and State Parks Departments, local elected officials, and 108th Precinct. We thank our many incredible sponsors.



2021 LIC Waterfront 5K and Shibley Center Blvd Kids Dash

All photos courtesy of Alex Lopez

2021 LIC WATERFRONT 5K SPONSORS

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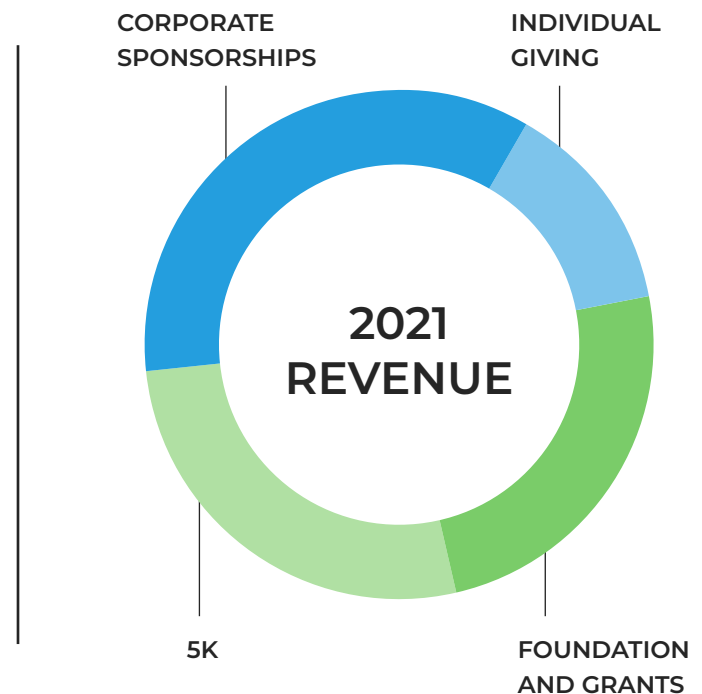
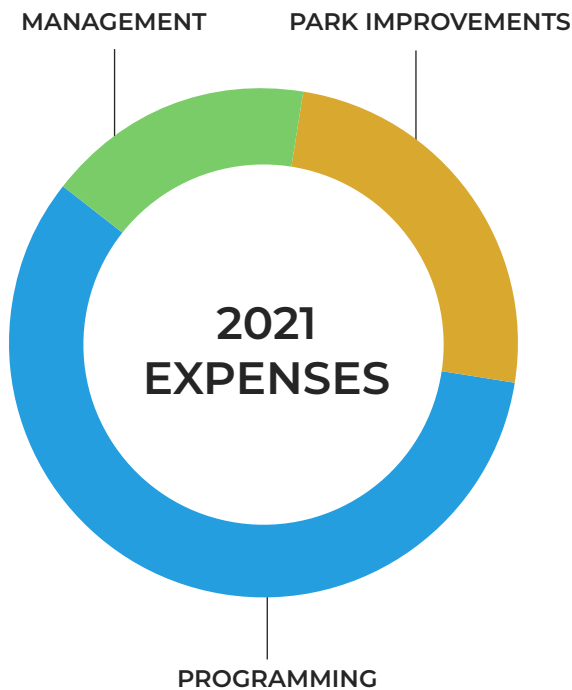
The Conservancy supports LIC parks by purchasing equipment and supplies that are outside of the parks' budgets. This year, HPPC was able to plant four Yoshino cherry trees in the oval in Hunter's Point South Park to replace trees that had died.

The trees bloom in April, displaying white-pink blossoms that provide much needed shade while also being a source of food for small birds and mammals. We also ordered 3 new Big Belly trash

cans, which have a much higher capacity than traditional cans, to join the 7 cans we purchased in 2020 to help the park cope with a huge increase in park use since the start of the pandemic.

In Gantry Plaza State Park, HPPC was able to purchase 4 picnic tables and 8 umbrellas for the plaza next to the ranger station, as well as 2 Adirondack chairs, gardening tools, and hundreds of plants.

We also assisted NYC Parks, NYS Parks & NYC DOT in identifying and replacing burnt-out lights in Hunter's Point South Park and Gantry Plaza State Park.



THANK YOU

Hunters Point Parks Conservancy thanks all of our donors, members, volunteers, and elected and park officials for their generous support in making all of our programs possible.

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