

FY 2022 Borough Budget Consultations

Manhattan - Department of Parks and Recreation

Meeting Date: 9/29/2020

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 faced unprecedented cuts and new funding requirements this year due to COVID 19. Can you list the previously unplanned cuts to the FY 21 budget due to COVID and the new initiatives necessitated by the emergency? Please discuss the expected timeline for the new initiatives. What programs and capital projects will be continued uncut. Of the cuts in spending for FY 2021, please identify the most significant cuts that are currently expected to be permanent [or continued at the reduced level into FY 2022].

What is the overall budget decrease for FY 21 adopted budget compared to FY20 budget?

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 FY21 and projected priorities and operational goals for FY22?
2. What are the current proposed FY21 and FY22 service and operational goals and proposed funding?
3. Which programs is the agency adding, dropping, or changing for FY21 and projected for FY22?
4. What are your benchmarks for new and existing programs and what are your benchmarks/key performance indicators for measuring success?

AGENCY RESPONSE:

The Parks Department's expense budget was cut by 14% (\$84 million): \$587M in FY 20 vs. \$503M in FY 21. We lost budget lines for 80 PEP officers and over 50 forestry and GreenThumb staff, but no one had to be laid off since we used vacancies to keep them working. The most significant cut was to our seasonal budget, which resulted in the loss of 1700 workers we normally rely upon to clean parks during the heavy summer season. We are hoping that these cuts are not permanent and will not continue into FY 22, but that is unclear at this time.

The FY 21 budget cuts have not had an effect on the capital budget at this time; however, the COVID-19 emergency did delay construction on Parks projects (some for several months), and the agency's procurement process to select construction contractors for active projects is currently paused until further notice. On a positive note, we recently received authorization from OMB to direct contractors who had been previously been awarded contracts to start working on 11 projects in Manhattan, and four of them have already begun (see Attachment A).

Regarding new initiatives necessitated by the emergency, we redeployed Recreation Center, Media Education and Aquatics staff, and utilized PEP officers, Park Rangers and M&O staff to serve as Ambassadors, visiting parks to educate people about social distancing and distributing almost 7 million masks as of 9/7.

Also, as of 9/29, nine Manhattan recreation centers are being used for the Learning Bridges program, which provides no-cost preschool and school age child care options for children from 3-K through 8th grade on days when they are scheduled for remote learning.

It is very difficult to discuss priorities and operational goals for FY21 and FY 22 in light of the uncertain fiscal situation.

The Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) plans, maintains and cares for a more than 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; care for 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.

Despite the severe difficulties caused by the COVID-19 crisis, we remain committed to marshaling our existing resources in the most efficient manner possible and delivering core services to keep our city parks as safe and clean as possible.

As with all City agencies, 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>

MEETING NOTES:

NEW INFORMATION:

NYC parks partnering with DOE to support remote learning and help children having difficulty navigating learning devices.

Malaika Green overseeing remote learning and recreational program

8am to 3 pm – academic support and 3 pm to 6 pm recreational activities- which will be introduced next week

Recreational centers had to provide/purchase items to be ready (hand sanitizer, barriers/dividers, tables and chairs

Rec centers have incurred social distancing costs /expenses

Services not being provided due to COVID-19 (memberships and regular member activities)

Vacancies were filled with current employees by moving staff from one budget line to another to keep services going

Parks staff supporting remote learning/recreational staff are experienced and have been training with DOH over the last couple of months to be ready for Bridge Learning

Devices are provided by DOE

Employees have a background in recreation and experience working with youth

FOLLOW-UP COMMITMENTS:

N/A

AGENDA ITEM 2: Coronavirus Budget Cuts

A recent joint report released by 25 park conservancies and nonprofits and the Department of Parks and Recreation reveals that the proposed budget includes a \$37 million loss in revenue from shuttered park activities and \$84 million axed from the city's parks budget. There is a proposed reduction of \$61.3 million to the Parks Department's budget in Fiscal Year 2021.

Which will the revenue loss be felt and what impact will it have on FY21 and FY22 budgets? Which programs and services will be directly impacted by these cuts?

AGENCY RESPONSE:

The revenue loss does not directly impact the NYC Parks budget since concession revenues go into the City's General Fund. To the extent that it adversely affects the overall City budget, it is certainly not helpful to the possible restoration of the cuts to the Parks' budget.

MEETING NOTES:

NEW INFORMATION:

A number of concessions are operating and two restaurants projected to open for indoor dining

FOLLOW-UP COMMITMENTS:

AGENDA ITEM 3: Community Parks Initiative (CPI) Budget

1. What is the FY21 budget for CPI?
2. Projected for FY22? Which sites are underway in Manhattan? Which sites are planned for future years?
3. What is the source of CPI funding?
4. How much of CPI is directed to capital and how much is set aside for staffing and programs?

AGENCY RESPONSE:

1. There is no new funding for the CPI program. Five parks are currently being reconstructed in Manhattan through the CPI program, and one was recently completed. The total budget for these projects is about \$38 million.
2. The funding for two of these parks -- Fred Johnson Playground (CB 10), which will have a new comfort station, and Abraham Lincoln Playground (CB 11), where the comfort station is being renovated -- will be carried over into FY 22, when the playground projects and the Abraham Lincoln comfort station should be completed. The other three projects underway in Manhattan -- all of which should be completed this fall -- are Joseph Sauer Playground (CB 3), Bill "Bojangles" Robinson Playground (CB 10) and Audubon Playground (CB 12). Another project, Playground One (CB 3), was recently completed. The contract has yet to be awarded for Harlem Lane Playground (CB 10), which has an estimated budget of at least \$5 million, so its construction will extend into FY 22. It is unknown whether any additional funding for new CPI Projects will be provided in FY 22.
3. CPI funding is primarily Mayoral, sometimes supplemented by Council or BP allocations.
4. CPI funding enabled us to hire 20 CPWs (City Park Workers) and five gardeners in FY 21.

MEETING NOTES:

NEW INFORMATION:

Harlem Lane contract yet to be awarded (budget: 5 million)
Parks able to retain some expense funding -- which allowed to retain staff

FOLLOW-UP COMMITMENTS:

AGENDA ITEM 4: Climate Change

What budget allocations has Parks made in Manhattan to address climate change? In FY21? Projected for FY22? Use of permeable surfaces and improving drainage systems? Waterfront park system? ESCR? Other? Which programs are being cut and which programs are being delayed?

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. Every capital project we present to the community boards invariably shows that we are increasing the permeable surfaces and drainage systems in the renovated parks.

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 such as East Side Coastal Resiliency, Brooklyn Bridge-Montgomery Coastal Resiliency and the Battery Coastal Resiliency.

MEETING NOTES:

NEW INFORMATION:

Presentations to Community Boards cover issues of permeability and resiliency

Parks is improving drainage at Riverside Park

No specific budget allocations for climate change and no specific budget for comfort stations (each is individually budgeted)

FOLLOW-UP COMMITMENTS:

Parks committed to work on issues of permeability/drainage/resiliency at CB 7

Parks to update on budget amounts and number of resiliency projects in the Borough

AGENDA ITEM 5: Restroom Restoration and Renovation

1. Restoration and renovation of bathrooms and comfort stations and bathrooms in parks is a borough-wide priority for community boards, what is the FY21 budget for the restoration and renovation of such facilities?
2. What is the projected restoration and renovation budget for FY22?
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 accessible? What percentage of parks restrooms currently comply with ADA?
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.
2. The FY 22 budget for comfort station renovations is not known at this time. Some of the projects funded in FY 21 and listed below will extend into FY 22.
3. Baruch Playground (CB 3) - \$1.866M
Corlears Hook Park (CB 3) -- \$2.8 million
East River Park (CB 3) – As part of ESCR, new comfort stations will be built at 10th Street (\$2.3 million), the track house, and the tennis house.
Luther Gulick Playground (CB 3) – new comfort station, recently completed - \$3.8 million
McKinley Playground (CB 3) - \$925,556
Pier 42 (CB 3) – new comfort station - \$2.8 million
Tompkins Square Park (CB 3) - \$5.6 million
24 Sycamores Playground (CB 8) - \$1.7 million
Frederick Johnson Playground (CB 10) – new comfort station - \$3-5 million
Abraham Lincoln Playground (CB 11) - \$1.64 million
Harlem River Park (CB 11) – new comfort station - \$3-5 million
Marcus Garvey Park / Harlem Little League Clubhouse (CB 11) - \$3.8 million
Audubon Playground (CB 12) - \$1.5 million
Highbridge Park Adventure Playground (CB 12) - new comfort station - \$4 million
Highbridge Park Quisqueya Playground (CB 12) - \$1.71 million
Morris-Jumel Mansion (CB 12) – part of a larger project
Msgr. Kett Playground (CB 12) – new comfort station - \$4-5 million
4. We would like to renovate or build new comfort stations in the following parks: Battery Playscape (CB 1), Riverside Park South (CB 7), Morningside Park Middle Playground (CB 9), Poor Richard's Playground (CB 11), P.S. 155 Playground (CB 11), Thomas Jefferson Park playground (CB 11), among others.
5. We are gathering 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. Every playground and field does not have room to construct a comfort station.

MEETING NOTES:

NEW INFORMATION:

Twenty bathrooms (not 19) – One comfort station in Central Park
Website being re-launched to include complete list of ADA compliant comfort stations
Parks working on accurate list of parks where not possible to have ADA accommodations

FOLLOW-UP COMMITMENTS:

Parks to provide a list of ADA comfort stations
Parks to provide list of parks with no ADA accommodations possible

AGENDA ITEM 6: WiFi in Manhattan Parks

1. What funding is needed in FY21 and FY22 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. We have not found a new partnership for additional Wi-Fi installations; therefore, there are no plans for any new sites. 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 each one. Installation methods and network speed/consistency would vary, along with costs. We have never installed Wi-Fi using City dollars so we would have to devise a mechanism for doing that. The costs for the installations done between 2013-2015 would not be useful in determining current costs since installation methods and equipment have changed significantly.

MEETING NOTES:

NEW INFORMATION:

8 facilities being used for Bridge Learning activities but only 6 fully operational with WiFi

Parks working on upgrading 2

Costs of expanding WiFi at parks depend on many variables (new technology, new equipment, every park offers different challenges ...)

FOLLOW-UP COMMITMENTS:

Parks to work on expanding WiFi capability broadly (many variables impact this goal)

AGENDA ITEM 7: Maintenance Staffing Numbers

1. What are the full-time, part-time and seasonal general workers, plumbers, gardeners, skilled trades, forestry, and staffing numbers and FY21 budgets for Manhattan, by district?

1A. Projected for FY22?

2. What is the need by district?

AGENCY RESPONSE:

1. The attached chart ([Attachment B](#)) shows the full-time staffing for each district in Manhattan. Please note that District 13 is Central Park, District 14 is Riverside / Fort Washington parks (below W. 181st Street), and District 15 is the East River Esplanade. CPWs are the City Park Workers, our foot soldiers. APSWs are the Associate Park Service Workers, the next step up the ladder. POP workers are enrolled in the Parks Opportunity Program, an employment training program for persons referred by the Human Resources Administration/Department of Social Services.

1A. It is unclear what our staffing will be in FY 22.

MEETING NOTES:

NEW INFORMATION:

No new information

FOLLOW-UP COMMITMENTS:

AGENDA ITEM 8: Playground Funding

1. What is the FY21 budget for playground associates and camp staff?
 - 1A. Projected for FY22?
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. Unfortunately, there is no funding in the FY 21 budget for Playground Associates and summer camp staff (except for a PA in Washington Square Park funded by Council Member Chin).
 - 1A. It is unclear whether funding will be provided in FY 22.
2. N/A
3. See #1 above.
4. Funding is allocated for rec center staff based on the agency-wide staffing levels. To the best of our ability, we assign staff based on the usage levels for each center.
5. In the past, Manhattan has staffed as many as 25-30 playgrounds through the Kids in Motion program. We are hoping to return to that level, if not more, next summer. In a perfect world, we would like to have a PA at every playground with a comfort station.
6. Should funding be restored, we don't anticipate recruitment being an issue given the current job market.

MEETING NOTES:

NEW INFORMATION:

No new information

FOLLOW-UP COMMITMENTS:

N/A

AGENDA ITEM 9: 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 FY22?
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 phases of our projects since this Administration took office – streamlined internal design reviews, reducing change orders, increasing staff training -- is continuing to have a significant impact. Funding for additional Capital division staff provided in previous budgets has allowed us to tackle and expedite more projects and deliver on our mission to plan and build vibrant parks for all New Yorkers.
2. Internal reforms have resulted in significant time savings for capital projects. Since 2014, the median design time for landscape projects decreased by 12 months. In addition, a greater proportion of our construction projects has been completed early (27% in FY20 compared to 13% in FY14).
3. This commitment to reform the process will continue in FY21 and beyond, as we always want 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. In particular, we're focusing on improvements to the procurement phase of the process, which includes many external steps that are not within Parks' control. We've been working with OMB to streamline its reviews as well as the Mayor's Office of Contract Services (MOCS) on its new PASSPort system, which is expected to increase transparency and accountability in the procurement 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, Anchor Parks and Parks Without Borders. However, discretionary capital funding from elected officials is also a significant portion of our capital budget, for which we are very appreciative.

MEETING NOTES:

NEW INFORMATION:

Rate of "early" project completion has increased from 13% to 27%
Over 40 active construction projects – which is considered a high number
Adventure Park in Washington Heights will be completed this year

FOLLOW-UP COMMITMENTS:

N/A

AGENDA ITEM 10: Boroughwide Considerations

1. What is the breakdown of Parks staff that will be furloughed or terminated in FY21 and FY22 due to the budget cuts? If possible, please sort this list by community district.
2. Will the FY20 budget for vermin control be changed in FY 21 or FY 22? Is the amount that is currently budgeted adequate to meet the need?

AGENCY RESPONSE:

1. Staff with managerial status will be furloughed for five days between October 2020 and March 2021. 142 Parks staff are affected, including three Regional Park Managers (each covers four districts) and seven Park Managers (most of whom cover two districts) in Manhattan.
2. We do not have a specific budget for vermin control. We have four exterminators in Manhattan, one of whom is assigned to Riverside Park. Supplies are purchased through our overall borough expense budget. We spent \$8,571.10 on exterminating supplies in FY 20. We expect to spend the same amount if not a little more in FY 21. If our seasonal budget is restored, it would enable us to hire staff for later garbage pick-ups, which would reduce the number of rats in many parks.

MEETING NOTES:

NEW INFORMATION:

Mayor's Office helping with rat control
Late garbage pick up to help control rat population in parks
4 exterminators
Possibility of increased spending for vermin control

FOLLOW-UP COMMITMENTS:

Manhattan Projects Approved to Start Construction

District	FMS ID Description	OTW
1	Battery Park Coast Guard Monument Relocation	9/14/2020
4	DeWitt Clinton Park Staircase Reconstruction	9/14/2020
11	Marcus Garvey Park Pelham Fritz Recreation Center Reconstruction	10/30/2020
9	Sakura Park Stairs Reconstruction	9/14/2020
2	Tony Dapolito Recreation Center Reconstruction	9/28/2020
7	Booker T. Washington Playground Synthetic Turf Reconstruction	10/5/2020
3	McKinley Playground Play Area Reconstruction	9/14/2020
7	Riverside Park South Natural Turf Ballfield & Greenway Reconstruction	9/14/2020
10	Frederick Douglass Boulevard Community Garden Reconstruction	TBD
10	Courtney Callender Playground Handball Court Pavement Reconstruction	10/9/2020
3	Hamilton Fish Park Basketball Courts and Adult Fitness Equipment Reconstruction	9/14/2020

Manhattan Active Headcount
as of 09/15/20



WORK LOCATION

	TOTALS	APSW	CLIMBER & PRUNER	CPW	Seasonal CPW	GARDENER	Seasonal Gardener	MAINT WORK	PARK SUPERVISOR 1	PARK SUPERVISOR 2	TRADES & OTHER	POP Workers
District 1	24	1		6		3		1	3	1		9
District 2	20	2		4		1			1			12
District 3	63	5		19	6	3			5	1		24
District 4	17	2		1		1			1			12
District 5	24	3		4					2	1		14
District 6	19	1		3		1			1			13
District 7	21	1		5					1			14
District 8	25	2		4		3			2	1		13
District 9	24	3		6	2	2			2	1		8
District 10	35	2		8	3	1			3			18
District 11	35	2		10	4	2			2	1		14
District 11b Randalls Island Stadium	7	2		1		1			1	1		1
District 11c Randalls Island Garage	10	7		1					1	1		
District 11d 125th Street Boro Crews	24	4		4				9	2	1	3	1
District 11f Forestry/Horticulture	51	4	12	4	5	8	5		3	2	7	1
District 12	38	2		5	4	5			3	1	2	16
District 12a	32	1		7	1				2			21
District 13	16	2		6					1	1		6
District 14	40	5		10		2		1	5	1		16
District 15	19			3	2				1			13
Shops	41	1		4				2			34	
DISTRICT TOTALS	585	52	12	115	27	33	5	13	42	14	46	226

Manhattan Active Headcount
as of 09/15/20