



STATE OF NEW YORK | EXECUTIVE CHAMBER  
DAVID A. PATERSON | GOVERNOR

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## GOVERNOR PATERSON & MAYOR BLOOMBERG OPEN FIRST SECTION OF BROOKLYN BRIDGE PARK

Governor David A. Paterson, Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg and local elected officials today opened the first portion of Pier 1 at Brooklyn Bridge Park. Pier 1 features the first of the park's waterfront promenades, lawns, a playground, and the "Granite Prospect," a set of steps built from large granite slabs for park goers to sit and enjoy the scenery. Once completed, the 85-acre waterfront park will stretch along the Brooklyn waterfront from Atlantic Avenue to Jay Street, north of the Manhattan Bridge.

The Governor and Mayor were joined at Pier 1 by State Senator Daniel L. Squadron, Assembly Member Joan L. Millman, Brooklyn Borough President Marty Markowitz, New York City Council Member Steven Levin, Public Advocate Bill DeBlasio, Empire State Development (ESD) Chairman and CEO designate Dennis Mullen and Executive Director Peter Davidson, Brooklyn Bridge Park Development Corporation (BBPDC) President Regina Myer, Port Authority of New York and New Jersey Executive Director Christopher O. Ward, Deputy Mayor for Economic Development Robert C. Lieber, Parks & Recreation Commissioner Adrian Benepe, City Planning Commissioner Amanda M. Burden, and Brooklyn Bridge Park Conservancy Chairman David Kramer.

"Today is a historic day for the State, City, and the borough of Brooklyn. After more than 25 years Brooklyn Bridge Park is a reality – one that New Yorkers and visitors alike will enjoy," Governor Paterson said. "The development of Brooklyn's waterfront will create livable communities and strengthen our State's economic future while adding to the wide variety of tourist destinations that Brooklyn has to offer. I would like to thank my colleagues in government for their commitment to developing this incredible public space and also applaud ESD Chairman & CEO Dennis M. Mullen and BBPDC President Regina Myer for their work on this important project."

"The piers along the Brooklyn waterfront south of the Brooklyn Bridge have for years sat vacant or underutilized, acting as a barrier between Brooklyn residents and their waterfront. Today, we're removing that barrier and reclaiming this stretch of waterfront for Brooklynites and all New Yorkers," Mayor Bloomberg said. "New York City's waterfront is one of our most valuable assets, and opening it up to families in all five boroughs has been a major priority for our Administration. Today's opening of part of Pier 1 is another important milestone, and it's just the beginning of the creation of what will be one of the world's great waterfront parks."

Brooklyn Bridge Park, designed by Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates, includes Piers 1 through 6, Empire Fulton Ferry Park and the existing Main Street Park. In addition, two historic

properties, the Civil War-era Empire Stores and the Tobacco Warehouse, will be integrated into the park. The park will offer playing fields, sport courts, playgrounds, civic lawns, and running and bicycle paths. A calm water area is planned for kayaking and canoeing. BBPDC, which oversees the creation and construction of Brooklyn Bridge Park, broke ground on the demolition of the long-abandoned piers in February 2008.

The portion of Pier 1 to open today is six acres, with several additional acres opening later this spring. At 9.5 acres, Pier 1 will be the largest of the park piers, and the only one built on landfill rather than on pile-supported structure. That foundation provides the base for a new topography including a hill at the center of the pier, which provides dramatic and sweeping views of the New York Harbor and the Brooklyn Bridge. When complete, Pier 1 will include two large lawns: the Bridge View lawn and the Harbor View lawn, a playground at the northern edge with play equipment for younger children, a waterfront promenade, and a series of tree-lined pathways that provide a varied waterfront experience. The "Granite Prospect" is a set of steps built from granite salvaged from the Roosevelt Island Bridge reconstruction along the western edge of the pier. Nearly 400 trees have been planted on the Pier so far; there will be as many as 500 mature trees this spring. This summer, a salt marsh planted with native plant life will open and a boat ramp for non-motorized watercraft will open.

Earlier this month, the State and City announced an agreement that will expedite the completion of Brooklyn Bridge Park. The proposed modifications include a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the State and City, which would create a not-for-profit entity to manage the development and operation of the park. The actions secured an additional \$55 million dollars in City capital funds, on top of the \$139 million from the City and \$85 million from the State for construction, bringing the 85-acre world-class waterfront park closer to completion. Brooklyn Bridge Park Development Corporation President Regina Myer will serve as President of the new entity.

Senator Squadron said: "There's no better way to celebrate spring than with a new park for our community and all of New York. The opening of Pier 1 is the next step in achieving a true Harbor Park – a Central Park for the center of our city. I want to thank the local community leaders who have fought so hard for this park, as well as Mayor Bloomberg and Governor Paterson, Assembly Member Joan Millman, Congresswoman Nydia Velazquez, Borough President Marty Markowitz and Council Members Brad Lander and Steve Levin for their work on making this park a reality."

Assembly Member Millman said: "I am thrilled to be here today. Our long awaited dream of a world-class waterfront park has finally been realized. It's taken more than 25 years to reach this point but we are finally here. I look forward to a new partnership with the city to build this much-needed park. I believe that this partnership will usher in a new era of cooperation and community participation to ensure that we can accommodate everyone's vision for this park. I want to thank Governor Paterson, Mayor Bloomberg, Congresswoman Nydia Velazquez, Public Advocate Bill de Blasio, Brooklyn Borough President Marty Markowitz, Assembly Speaker Shelly Silver, State Senator Daniel Squadron, and former Council Member David Yassky for working with us to make this dream a reality. Not to be forgotten are my predecessor, Eileen Dugan, former State Senator Marty Connor and former Brooklyn Borough President Howie Golden. Without their leadership and vision, this day would not have been possible. I especially

want to praise Regina Myer. When she first started, the only advice I gave her was: 'Build the park.' And build the park she has."

New York City Public Advocate DeBlasio said: "Today Brooklyn Bridge Park has the center piece of a new active waterfront that all of Brooklyn can enjoy. I hope we will continue to utilize Brooklyn's coast to create new green space, jobs, affordable housing and make it part of our city's public transportation network."

Brooklyn Borough President Markowitz said: "What Prospect Park was for the 19th Century, Brooklyn Bridge Park will be for the 21st. I am delighted that this emerald by the East River is open. For visitors from Manhattan, now all it takes is a quick trip across the bridge to discover what residents here already know: the grass is always greener in Brooklyn."

New York City Council Member Levin said: "I am thrilled that the city will play a strong leadership role in the final development stages of Brooklyn Bridge Park, and I want to congratulate the Mayor and Governor for keeping this process moving forward. This plan will give city officials much needed oversight of the Brooklyn Bridge Park project, as well as bring an additional \$55 million to the project. I look forward to working with my fellow elected officials to make sure Brooklyn Bridge Park is a spectacular park for all of Brooklyn."

ESD Chairman and CEO designate Mullen said: "It is a true honor to see the transformation that has taken shape at Brooklyn Bridge Park. The opening of Pier 1 marks a milestone for this highly anticipated project that will breathe new life into this neighborhood and offer New Yorkers the opportunity to enjoy our waterfront for years to come. ESD is looking forward to the opening of Pier 6 this spring and to supporting the future development of the park."

BBPDC President Myer said: "Thanks to the strong partnership between the city and state, we are making the long awaited dream of Brooklyn Bridge Park a reality. This is truly a New York park – incorporating repurposed materials from four boroughs to achieve the highest standards in sustainability and design. We are thrilled that this Park, with its unique waterfront features, multitude of recreational and leisure opportunities and stunning views, will become a cherished resource for residents and visitors alike, and particularly for the Brooklyn community that has advocated for and supported this project over the years."

ESD Executive Director and BBPDC Chairman Davidson said: "Congratulations and much credit to Regina Myer and her hardworking team at BBPDC. Brooklyn Bridge Park is exceptional not only in terms of its size and scope, but as a progressive example of green design and intergovernmental partnership. ESD is proud to have played a part in this monumental achievement for the State and the City of New York and we look forward to the park claiming its place among New York's greatest attractions."

Port Authority of New York and New Jersey Executive Director Ward said: "This park benefits all those who live and work in our region, as well as the City's millions of visitors, by providing a beautiful place to relax and play in the shadow of a true New York icon – the Brooklyn Bridge. I want to thank Governor Paterson and Mayor Bloomberg for their leadership on this issue."

Deputy Mayor Lieber said: "Today marks an exciting milestone in the development of Brooklyn Bridge Park, and we're committed to seeing the entire project through to completion. For years, these piers have lied vacant, cutting Brooklyn residents off from the waterfront. Today we're

reconnecting them with the waterfront and creating a one-of-a-kind asset for Brooklyn and the whole City."

New York City Parks & Recreation Commissioner Benepe said: "With today's opening of Pier I and the upcoming opening of Pier 6, Brooklyn Bridge Park is making its debut as Brooklyn's new 'front yard' on the waterfront. Thanks to the leadership of the Mayor and Governor, the diligent efforts of Peter Davidson, Regina Myer and the Brooklyn Bridge Park Development Corporation, and the compelling and beautiful design by Michael Van Valkenburgh, we are elated to open the first section of the most important new park in Brooklyn in more than a century."

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