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[For Residents](#)
[For Visitors](#)
[For Businesses](#)
[City Government](#)
[About Jersey City](#)
[Calendar](#)
[JC1TV](#)
[Home](#)[City Government](#)[Department of Business Administration](#)[Accounts and Controls](#)[Communications](#)[Economic Opportunity](#)[Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action](#)[Information Technology](#)[Internal Audit](#)[Management & Budget](#)[Mayor's Action Bureau](#)[Municipal Public Defender](#)[Payroll](#)[Pensions](#)[Personnel](#)[Purchasing](#)[Real Estate](#)[Risk Management](#)[Tax Exemption \(Abatements\)](#)[Treasury and Debt Management](#)

Jersey City Recreation and Open Space Master Plan - 2008

Description

Recreation is an important "quality of life" issue in Jersey City. Currently Jersey City is deficient in the amount of open space areas provided for its residents, as well as in the type and amount of recreation facilities. Accordingly, this master plan is intended to guide Jersey City for the next decade with a comprehensive program that recommends renovations and new facilities for its existing public parks, as well as the acquisition and development of land to create several new parks.

The following are key recommendations of the [Jersey City Recreation and Open Space Master Plan](#):

Rehabilitate existing recreation facilities

Virtually all of the existing parks are in need of repair and also need to be improved to meet code compliance. Some existing facilities need to be reoriented or reconstructed with more durable materials such as synthetic turf for the athletic fields to allow increased use.

Build new recreation facilities to meet public needs

There is room in several of the existing parks to add needed facilities such as athletic fields, parking areas, skateparks, etc. Due to spatial constraints, maximum buildout needs to be achieved, where appropriate.

Acquire and develop additional open space to create new parks

Jersey City must aggressively continue to seek to acquire more park land in all wards, on an annual basis, to meet the recreational needs of its citizens. This report recommends the addition of nearly 100 acres of currently vacant land to the City park system.

Prioritize the improvements over a 10 year period, on a ward by ward basis

This Master Plan contains a detailed year by year, park by park matrix to guide the prioritized improvement program for existing and new parks.

Construct greenways

Jersey City must continue to acquire the necessary easements, use agreements, and land purchases where possible to maximize the recreational potential of its two waterfronts by constructing several miles of pedestrian and bicycle trails and related facilities along both the Hudson River and Hackensack River and along the route of the East Coast Greenway.

Reconstruct a portion of the historic Morris Canal and delineate its former location

Historical preservation and reconstruction are important aspects of Jersey City's heritage, including



the former Morris Canal within Jersey City. Descriptive markers should be placed in strategic locations along its former route, and the western entry/exit portion of the canal should be reconstructed as part of the proposed Hackensack River Greenway Park there.

Work closely with Hudson County and the New Jersey Division of Parks and Forestry

Jersey City must coordinate with County and State agencies to provide additional recreation facilities at Lincoln Park West and Liberty State Park. These County and State parks within Jersey City presently contain over 100 acres of undeveloped land, which could enable the construction of both active and passive recreational facilities for use by Jersey City residents.

Work closely with private developers to construct new parks and recreation areas

Requiring developers to provide public parks and recreation facilities should be part of the site plan approval process.

Continue to work closely with neighborhood associations and conservancies

Jersey City must coordinate with local organizations to improve existing parks. Several parks have neighborhood organizations which act as stewards. These organizations represent their neighborhoods, and Jersey City should respond to their requests for park improvements, safety, and proper maintenance.

Improve communication between the various City agencies and divisions

Presently the various Divisions operate in a somewhat isolated manner administratively, and do not communicate effectively on projects impacting the City, including recreational opportunities.

Aggressively seek available funding to finance the proposed park improvements and new park development

All available sources of Federal, State, County and municipal funding should be aggressively pursued on an annual basis, to help defray the cost of the park acquisition and development projects.

Update the Recreation and Open Space Master Plan periodically

The plan must be updated and kept flexible to respond to new opportunities. The Recreation Master Plan should be reviewed annually, and the ten year prioritized improvement program must be able to accommodate unanticipated opportunities to acquire and develop new park sites.

Read the entire [Recreation and Open Space Master Plan](#)