Thank you for reviewing the draft of the Riverside Park Master Plan. It is a work in progress so some pages are not finished yet. Please let us know if there is something we missed or if something is not quite right so we can make revisions.

Thanks,
Charles McKinney

Charles.McKinney@parks.nyc.gov
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8 CREDITS

Riverside Park Master Plan 2016
Riverside Park will be the nation’s most beautiful boulevard and successful integration of scenic landscape, recreation, parkway and shoreline park.

It will be known for:

- Caring and professional maintenance
- Support for community initiatives and volunteerism
- Welcoming entrances and paths for walking and wheelchair use, running, biking and exploring nature with delight and without conflict
- Innovative recreational facilities that meet the needs of every neighborhood and age
Why do we need a Master Plan?
This plan will guide the next phase of the long-term effort to restore and maintain Riverside Park’s scenic landmark landscapes, and to adapt the park to meet the needs of every neighborhood and age group. It addresses the major problems of flooding, bicycle / pedestrian conflict, failed drainage, seriously deteriorated structures and woodland health.

This plan builds on the Master Plan completed by New York City Parks in 1984 and implemented over the past 30 years in partnership with the Riverside Park Conservancy.

How was it developed?
NYC Parks worked with park user groups, residents from Community Districts 7 and 9, and the Riverside Park Conservancy to develop a shared understanding of the park’s problems, changing community demographics and needs.

How will we work together to make it happen?
NYC Parks will work with Community Boards 7 and 9, the Riverside Park Conservancy, nonprofit partners and elected officials to identify funding from New York City expense and capital budgets, as well as private funding sources to implement the this plan.
ORGANIZATION GOALS

How do the Riverside Park Conservancy and the Parks Department work together?

NEW YORK CITY PARKS
MISSION AND PRIORITIES

Create and sustain thriving parks and public spaces.

PLAN resilient and sustainable parks, public spaces and recreational amenities.

BUILD a park system for present and future generations.

CARE for parks and public spaces.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Provide a fair distribution of resources and programming that will meet the needs of current and future generations. Every neighborhood should have opportunities for physical activity within walking distance.

Develop new experiences and memories for users.

Engage and learn from the complete range of park users.

Eliminate borders and barriers that inhibit use of the park by people of all ages and abilities.

PARK RESTORATION

• Restore civic infrastructure.
• Increase the health and natural service functions of parks.
• Make parks easier to maintain.
• Develop sources of operating funds.
• Support efforts of community groups and individuals to improve parks.
• Adapt parks to climate change.
• Accommodate the outdoor recreational needs for all ages, abilities and cultural preferences that live within walking range of the Park.

BUILT ENVIRONMENT

• The park’s environment should make visitors feel the park is well cared for.
• Infrastructure (e.g., lighting, storm drains, plumbing, etc.) should be in good repair and adequate for conditions.
• Built environment components (e.g., bathrooms, ballfields, stairs, pathways, playgrounds, etc.) should be good repair and proper working order.
• Buildings should be in good repair and occupied by park uses.
• Bathrooms should be clean and well maintained.
• Lighting is working and adequate.
• Signage is adequate for orientation, knowledge of rules, and events.
ORGANIZATION GOALS

How do the Conservancy and the Parks Department work together?

LANDSCAPE AND ENVIRONMENT

- The Park’s landscapes should make visitors feel the park is watched over and cared for.
- Plantings and landscapes should be attractive to both the casual and the knowledgeable observer. They should be healthy, beautiful and appropriate for the area and era.
- Plantings should attract desirable wildlife.
- The Park should be protected and maintained so it is usable year round.
- All 400+ acres should be maintained at the same standard, to serve all communities equally.
- No bare soil or flooded areas.
- Invasive species removed or contained.
- Trees inspected, treated and pruned on a regular cycle and as needed for safety, health, shape, stability and sight lines.
- Lush lawns well mowed and maintained.
- Rodent population under control.
- Park is clean and garbage cans are emptied.
- Snow and ice are removed quickly from Park and greenway paths.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & ADVOCACY

- Maintain a large, active and informed volunteer corps throughout the Park and across the full spectrum of user groups.
- Ensure volunteers are fully supported and equipped.
- Provide programs that will appeal to diverse audiences (age, interest, background.) Events should draw visitors from all communities and draw people to visit sites throughout the park.
- Promote beneficial park use (athletics, exercise, social gathering, relaxation, etc.)
- Build awareness of parks’ benefits, needs, and the importance of stewardship.
- Ensure adequate facilities (type, quantity, condition) e.g., bathrooms, playgrounds, sports facilities
- Ability to quickly and effectively inform park users of important developments such as storms.

RIVERSIDE PARK CONSERVANCY MISSION

Restore, maintain and improve Riverside Park in partnership with the City of New York for the enjoyment and benefit of all New Yorkers.

The Conservancy supports the preservation of the park’s historic landscape, structures, and monuments, engages the community in active stewardship of the Park, and provides a wide range of programs.
PROGRESS

After 30 years of effort, Riverside Park is very much improved and is a vital center of community activity. Almost all of its athletic fields and playgrounds have been restored; the marina and Rotunda and athletic field complexes have been activated. The bicycle network has been stitched together with major connections along the River. The maintenance force has been effectively organized, and the park inspection ratings frequently put Riverside Park at the top of the city wide rating program.

The Riverside Park Conservancy is extremely effective for its size, and its impact on the Park is well focused on horticulture care, volunteer support, strategic fundraising and advocacy for the capital restoration program. In 2016 private funding pays for $3.1 million in park operation, restoration and program expenses. The in-house landscape architect has expeditiously and expertly coordinated the design and construction of much of the park’s fabric.

Yet despite this progress, the park faces some major challenges. The deterioration of forest areas, drainage systems, pavements, masonry structures have exceeded the ability of the current maintenance force. There are 19 City funded workers in 2016, which is half of the 2002 work force.

PROGRESS and MAJOR CHALLENGES

What has been accomplished and how should we focus our future efforts?

MAJOR CHALLENGES

Circulation
The success of the bike route created hazardous conditions for bikers and pedestrians.
• Bicycle and pedestrian conflict occurs frequently, especially on the waterfront esplanade.
• It is important to create a dedicated route for bikes.

Neighborhood populations are aging
• There is a need for trip-free and wheelchair access.

Recreation and Structures
Important structures, including the centerpiece, the Rotunda, are highly deteriorated and their continued use is threatened.
• The employee work areas at the Rotunda are unhealthy.
• The Rotunda and esplanade are not ADA compliant
• The Rotunda is subject to flooding.
• There is now an active project at the City Department of Transportation that will restore the structure. Funding will be needed for the fountain and public use areas.

Mid and Upper park neighborhoods are inadequately served by playgrounds and restrooms.

Infrastructure and Landscape
Riverside Drive retaining walls, stairs and granite on the 1937 Park and Parkway structures, and River bulkheads require inspection, stone resetting and repointing.

Portions of the Park and the Henry Hudson Parkway are within the 100-year flood plain and need to be modified to survive floods.

The Park-wide deterioration of drainage systems, pavements and masonry structures affect the usability of the park and create an appearance of disrepair.

Forests, trees and plants throughout the park need care.
• The horticulture staff of the park is inadequate for the size of the Park
• There is a need for more trained and coordinated staff.
PRIORITIES

What are the priorities of the Master Plan?

Circulation

Modify the circulation system to better accommodate safe and enjoyable use of the park by bikers, pedestrians, wheelchair users and senior citizens.

Recreation and Structures

Restore important structures and infrastructure.

Provide recreation and comfort stations in underserved areas.

Infrastructure and Landscape

The Park needs 1-2 million dollars in City funding annually for “state-of-good-repair” contracts to incrementally restore the Park’s walls, steps, paths, fences, drainage systems, comfort stations and playgrounds.

- This would deliver highly visible park improvements quickly.
- Funding would also modify structures and utility systems to prevent flood damage.

The park needs an additional 2.43 million dollars annually for landscape and natural area restoration and care.
**Restored Riverside Drive**
walkways connected at 95th street

**Restored Paths** through landscapes that change with the seasons

**Woodlands** managed for health, habitat and ecology

**Improved Drainage** and healthier lawns

**Signage system** for orientation and information

**Marina** expanded and dredged

Improved **Bicycle paths** designed for the joy of riding and separation from pedestrians. Designated bike connections at 72, 79, 95, 97, 111, 125, 138, 148.

**Cherry Walk** widened, strengthened protected from cars and illuminated

**New Restrooms** for the 97th Street tennis courts, the middle of the park at 108th street, the community garden at 138th Street and the North Waterfront at 148th Street

**River access** and kayak storage

**Waterfront Playground** with ballfields, soccer field and picnic grove at 151st Street

**Innovative Playscape** at 109th street near the skate park

**Skate Park** with restrooms at 108th Street

**Soldiers and Sailors Monument** restored with lighting

**Restored turret and cupola** with cafe at 155th street

**Restored Rotunda and Fountain**
How does the plan for Riverside Park fit in with the NYC Parks’ Strategic Priorities?

**STRATEGIC PRIORITIES**

Equally distribute resources and programming that will meet the needs of current and future generations. Every neighborhood has opportunities for physical activity within walking distance.

Eliminate borders and barriers that inhibit use of the park by people of all ages and abilities.

Engage the complete range of park users.

Create new experiences and memories for users.
MAJOR ISSUES and OPPORTUNITIES

COMMUNITY NEEDS
- Seating and activities for people over 65
- Activity areas for Alzheimer patients
- Comfort stations open late and year round

D The Marina needs to be dredged and expanded in order to provide the best service to the public

The Park floods
Large portions of the Park, shown by the blue line on the map, are inside the 100 year floodplain. Underground utilities, water systems and structures are vulnerable to damage. Plantings that are not tolerant of saltwater are vulnerable.

Bicycle / pedestrian accidents occur frequently on the waterfront esplanade
Areas of conflict are shown with red hatching on the map. 72nd Street, next to the River, is the worst.

The Rotunda, the centerpiece of the Park, is highly deteriorated and its continued use threatened
COMMUNITY NEEDS
• Volunteer house for tool storage
• Seating and activities for people over 65
• Restrooms to serve the tennis courts at 97th Street

MAJOR ISSUES and OPPORTUNITIES

E Stairs and granite cladding on the 1937 structures are failing
The Riverside Drive retaining walls, stairs and granite cladding on the 1937 structures require inspection, stone resetting and repointing.

F Storm drainage inside the park is broken or inadequate. Paths require repaving.

G Riverside Drive pedestrian zone is in failing condition
96th to 113th and 116th to 125th have deteriorated pavements, collapsed catch basins or sewers. Walls and stairs need stone resetting and pointing.
MAJOR ISSUES and OPPORTUNITIES

COMMUNITY NEEDS
- Children’s playground
- Comfort stations on the middle level and skate park

H It is hard to get inside the park, and very difficult for a wheelchair.

The neighborhood needs a playground, activities for adolescents and rest-rooms.

I Cherry Walk is too narrow and dark
Cherry Walk is overcrowded with bikes and pedestrians, The route is not lit or adequately protected by the low and guardrail. Glare from car headlights in the northbound lane blinds bikers.

J Forested areas are in poor ecological health and unmanaged
The forest requires management for ecological health, habitat and beauty.
The north waterfront was developed at a lower standard of landscape. It includes parking lots for a marina that was never constructed.

The recreational areas and comfort station need major improvements and need to be raised for flood protection.

**COMMUNITY NEEDS**
- Dog Run
- Restroom at 138th
- Restrooms at the river level
- Soccer / football field
- Activities for adolescents
- Senior citizen activities and park access

**MAJOR ISSUES and OPPORTUNITIES**

**K** Kayak launch and pedestrian crosswalks create a conflict with bikes

The bicycle path frequently intersects with pedestrian crossings and uses such as the gate to the kayak dock and the bicycle racks.

**L** Playground, comfort station and landscapes are in poor condition

The north waterfront was developed at a lower standard of landscape. It includes parking lots for a marina that was never constructed.

The recreational areas and comfort station need major improvements and need to be raised for flood protection.

**M** New pedestrian bridge in construction will make it easy for the neighborhood to reach the waterfront
CAPITAL PROJECT SUMMARY

What are the major projects?

A  Restore the Rotunda

Restore the Rotunda, fountain and cafe space. Convert steps to ramps and restore bathrooms.

Total costs: $XX
All estimates in 2016 dollars

B  Dredge, Expand & Strengthen the Marina

Dredge, expand, and strengthen Marina.

Total costs: $XX
All estimates in 2016 dollars
This plan will guide the next phase of long-term effort to restore and maintain Riverside Park’s scenic landmark landscapes, and to adapt the Park to meet the needs of every neighborhood and age group. It addresses the major problems of flooding, bicycle / pedestrian conflict, failed drainage, seriously deteriorated structures and woodland health. This plan builds on the Master Plan completed by NYC Parks in 1984 and implemented over the past 30 years in partnership with the Riverside Park Conservancy. Almost all of its athletic fields and playground have been restored and the bicycle network has been stitched together along the Hudson River.

Soldiers’ & Sailors’ Monument
Restore and light the Sailors’ and Soldiers’ Monument.
Total costs: $XX
All estimates in 2016 dollars

Construct New Bike Route
To resolve the bicycle and pedestrian conflict throughout the Park, we will develop a separate, scenic bike route.
Total costs: $XX
All estimates in 2016 dollars

Reconstruct Cherry Walk
Widen the path to separate bikes and pedestrians. Raise elevation to prevent flooding. Install lighting and vehicle barrier.
Total costs: $XX
All estimates in 2016 dollars
Yet despite this progress, Riverside Park faces some major challenges:
- The success of the bike route has created a hazardous environment for bikers and pedestrians.
- Important structures and major infrastructure are aging and their continued use is threatened.
- Mid and Upper Park neighborhoods are inadequately served by playgrounds and restrooms. Older populations need access and activity areas.
- Park-wide deterioration of drainage systems, pavements, landscapes and forested areas. Both capital and maintenance projects are needed.

**Riverside Drive Pedestrian Zone**

Restore Riverside Drive pedestrian walkways.

Total costs: $XX
All estimates in 2016 dollars

**Create New Entrance at W111th**

Create a new ADA accessible entrance at 111th Street.

Total costs: $XX
All estimates in 2016 dollars

**Mid-Park Play Zone**

Construct destination play area and comfort station.

Total costs: $XX
All estimates in 2016 dollars
Riverside Park stretches from 59th to 158th Streets along the Hudson River and serves 300,000 people. Residents from the Upper West Side, Manhattan Valley, Morningside Heights, Harlem and Manhattanville neighborhoods participated in workshops so that we could develop a shared understanding of the Park’s problems, changing community demographics, and needs. We examined their concerns and developed this Master Plan to guide future funding, projects and restoration programs in the Park. NYC Parks looks forward to continuing investment in Riverside Park, to make it the nation’s most beautiful boulevard and successful integration of scenic landscape, recreation, parkway and shoreline park.

**I. Restore Historic Structures & Adapt for New Uses**

Restore historic structures on Riverside Drive. Construct a comfort station in the structure at 138th Street. At 154th Street, restore the structure and include a cafe space.

Total costs: $XX

*All estimates in 2016 dollars*

**J. North Waterfront Playground & Picnic Area**

Construct a destination playground with water play, and elevate it above flood zone. Restore the comfort station and improve the landscape beauty and picnic area.

Total costs: $XX

*All estimates in 2016 dollars*
## CAPITAL PROJECT SUMMARY

What are the major projects that are required to separate pedestrians and bicycles and to make the entire park wheelchair accessible?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BIKE AND PEDESTRIAN SEPARATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>59th to 96th Streets</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create a dedicated bike path just west of Parkway 72-83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construct new path for bike access from Riverside Drive to tunnel at 72nd Street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extend the stairs at 72nd with an archway to allow reconfigured bikeway to pass under. Reconfigure the bikeway to pass between the dog run and the softball field</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Widen path west of Cherry tree grove and reconfigure benches for bike and pedestrian separation 95 to 92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>96th to 125th Streets</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create a dedicated bike path just west of Parkway 93 - 99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stripe bicycle path from Riverside Drive at 102nd Street to the tunnel at 100th Street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Widen and raise bike and pedestrian paths on Cherry Walk, improve highway barrier and lighting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>125th to 158th Streets</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create a dedicated bike path between fields and highway 145-155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve bike path striping and lighting under elevated highway at 135</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PERIMETER, ENTRANCES AND WHEELCHAIR ACCESS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>59th to 96th Streets</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Convert ramp at 72nd Street to handicapped slope. Restore pavement on ramp, provide railings, regrade pavement for proper drainage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Convert southern steps to a ramp at the 78th street tunnel. Convert Rotunda steps to ramps on both sides</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restore Riverside Drive pedestrian zone 91-95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>96th to 125th Streets</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New pedestrian entrance and ramp at 111th Street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Convert steps to ramps at 111th Street inside park and on Tilden Island</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restore Riverside Drive pedestrian zone 95-113, 116-119, 119-125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>125th to 158th Streets</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restore Riverside Drive pedestrian zone 148-153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve and light the pedestrian tunnel at 158th Street</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROPOSED CITY DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>59th to 96th Streets</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Widen the 92nd Street Tunnel sidewalk and stripe it for bike / pedestrian separation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remove Parkway exit at 95th Street, provide two lanes of exit at 96th street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remove small diameter auto ramps at 79th Street. Provide signalized intersection for pedestrians</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete the tunnel for the Joe DiMaggio highway between 72nd Street and 59th Street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>96th to 125th Streets</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Widen the 100th Street tunnel sidewalk and stripe it for bike / pedestrian separation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reconstruct Riverside Drive, pavements, medians and drainage structures 95 to 119th Street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reconstruct Henry Hudson Parkway, pavements, guardrails, medians, lighting and drainage structures 95 to 125th Street. Raise it where it is prone to flooding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>125th to 158th Streets</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reconstruct Henry Hudson Parkway, pavements, medians, lighting and drainage structures 95 to 125th Street. Raise it where it is prone to flooding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedestrian bridge over Henry Hudson Parkway at 151st Street</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| KEY |
| IN PROGRESS |

| PRIORITY PROJECT |
### CAPITAL PROJECT SUMMARY

What are the major capital projects required to adapt the park to meet current and future recreational needs and to protect the park’s most treasured structures?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RECREATION AND STRUCTURES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>59th to 96th Streets</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restoration of the Rotunda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(70M in CDOT funds budgeted for FY 21)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Restore Soldiers and Sailors Monument</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restore Serpentine Promenade landscape and overlook at 89th Street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>96th to 125th Streets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restore Women’s Health Protective Association monument, entrance and hillside landscape</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve Grants Tomb landscape and bluestone pavement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Install feature landscapes, drainage improvements, jogging path and train tunnel grate platforms 100 to 110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>125th to 158th Streets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restore 152nd street turret, arcade and hillside landscape</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restore 138th Street structure, with a comfort station and storage space to serve the community garden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve Riverside Drive Landscape and views of the Hudson</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### MEMORABLE PLACES

- **152nd Street**: Monument, entrance and hillside landscape
- **152nd Street**: Turret, arcade and hillside landscape
- **138th Street**: Monument, entrance and hillside landscape
- **138th Street**: Turret, arcade and hillside landscape

### RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE NEEDS

- **97th Street**: Tennis courts
- **97th Street**: Comfort station
- **97th Street**: Adult exercise equipment, comfort station and PEP office at Classic playground
- **97th Street**: Senior Citizen activity and sitting areas around 75th Street near Riverside Drive
- **87th Street**: Comfort station and field house, adapt as neighborhood garden and volunteer center
- **87th Street**: Permanent Kayak storage in 72nd street area
- **87th Street**: Marina expansion and dredging

### KEY PROJECTS

- **102nd Street**: Senior Citizen activity and sitting areas
- **102nd Street**: Neighborhood fitness center, comfort station at 102nd St.
- **102nd Street**: Courts at 102nd Street for Summer camp
- **102nd Street**: Senior Citizen activity and sitting areas
- **102nd Street**: Enlarge Sakura Park tot lot, restore granite stairs and improve Sakura park
- **102nd Street**: Restore Dinosaur playground comfort station and field house
- **102nd Street**: Move kayak ramp entrance at 130th street. Construct storage.
- **102nd Street**: Café on turret roof overlooking the Hudson at 152nd Street on Riverside Drive.
What is the strategy for restoring infrastructure and landscape?

The Park needs 1-2 million dollars in City funding annually for “state-of-good-repair” contracts to incrementally restore the park’s walls, steps, paths, fences, drainage systems, comfort stations and playgrounds.

Decrease capital funding requirements and improve park appearance by using requirements contracts before deterioration is advanced, and by coordinating the contracts with in-house landscape restoration.

The park needs an additional 2.43 million dollars annually for landscape and natural area restoration and care.

### INFRASTRUCTURE and LANDSCAPE

#### What is the strategy for restoring infrastructure and landscape?

The Park needs 1-2 million dollars in City funding annually for “state-of-good-repair” contracts to incrementally restore the park’s walls, steps, paths, fences, drainage systems, comfort stations and playgrounds.

### INFRASTRUCTURE

#### 59th to 96th Streets
- Park Maintenance facility with secure storage for vehicles and materials during Rotunda Restoration

#### 96th to 125th Streets
- Modification of utilities and irrigation systems to withstand flooding

#### 125th to 158th Streets
- Modification of utilities to withstand flooding

### NATURE and LANDSCAPE

#### Additional staff required above 2016 level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zone Gardeners</th>
<th>59th to 96th Streets</th>
<th>96th to 125th Streets</th>
<th>125th to 158th Streets</th>
<th>Additional Cost</th>
<th>Conservancy Annual Cost</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Systematically restore and CARE for landscape and natural areas. Professional maintenance of the entire park, coterminus with Park rating zones.</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
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<td>Annual pruning and tree care</td>
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Total $2,353
ASSETS and CRITICAL ISSUES

Identify the Park’s assets to enhance, and issues to address.
What distinguishes Riverside Park?

Riverside Drive is a masterwork by Frederick Law Olmsted, arguably the most beautiful residential boulevard in the world.
The elm trees that line Riverside Drive are an irreplaceable treasure, significant for their age, size and number.

They have been cared for since 1980 by non-profit partners and foundation supporters; without this support they would all been lost to Dutch Elm disease.
Riverside Drive is punctuated by artistic monuments to City, national, and international heros and the virtues they represent.

The Soldiers’ and Sailors’ monument, President Grant’s Tomb, the Warsaw Ghetto Memorial, and the Firemen’s Memorial are the venues for significant annual ceremonies.
Engineer F. Stewart Williamson designed the sinuous expansion of Riverside Drive supported by a Beaux Arts granite structures.
The expansion designed by Gilmore D. Clarke, Michael Rapuano and Clinton Loyd in 1935 is an unparalleled feat of landscape architecture.
Its many ballfields and playgrounds are integrated into the topography with artful terraces like Renaissance villas.
The Rotunda is the “Bethesda Terrace of Riverside Park,” an arcaded cloister and monumental fountain, which serves as the front door to the Hudson River.
Riverside Park South is a contemporary park by Thomas Balsley, the winner of the 2015 ASLA design award.

Portions of a tunnel to sink the elevated highway have already been constructed.
The 79th Street Boat Basin was designed to welcome the yachts of the world. Today it is the only reasonably priced public marina on the Hudson River. It provides dockage for New Yorkers as well as visitors from around the world.
The four-mile-long shoreline provides many naturalistic settings for experiencing the river and sunsets.
The Riverside Park Conservancy’s support for critical programs and projects has catalyzed many projects and programs that have been crucial to the Park’s expeditious renewal.

Jenny Benitez, 73, who remembers when the park was dominated by crime and drugs, now cares for the community garden at 138th Street. People who used it knew to leave by dusk, when drug dealers and prostitutes moved in... Graffiti covered seemingly everything, even Grant’s Tomb. A hillside on the park’s northern end was a graveyard for the skeletons of stolen cars..."The area where they used to shoot up was so bad," recalled Jenny Benitez, 73, who has lived on Riverside Drive for 44 years....

"It was hardly the vision Frederick Law Olmsted had in mind when he designed the park in the 1870’s to give people access to the water and a bit of serenity. Today, even a quick stroll shows how much has changed at Riverside over the years.

Where cardboard boxes and plywood lean-tos used by the homeless once stood around 138th Street, Mrs. Benitez and others tend garden boxes filled with lettuce, basil, tomatoes and flowers....
Riverside Park has benefited by thirty years of engaged and supported Park tenders, volunteers and user groups.

The 91st Street playground is filled with children who cool off in water fountains near the flowers that cover the area once littered with hypodermic needles. It is a striking transformation that began around a kitchen table where a group of residents decided to reclaim a space they considered their front yard. "It became obvious that if we wanted to make something happen, we had to do it ourselves," said Mary Frances Shaughnessy, 61, who attended that first meeting.

Those informal gatherings were the beginning of the Riverside Park Fund, (now the Riverside Park Conservancy) which is marking its 20th anniversary this year with an art exhibition scattered across the 330 acres of what is now one of the city's jewels. "It was a struggle," Milton Norman, 80, the chairman emeritus of the park fund, said of the group's start. "I used to stay up nights worrying about having enough money to pay the director."

Early on, the group realized it had to raise money and recruit volunteers to do the work long neglected by New York City as it dealt with a financial crisis. Information about the fund and requests for donations were mailed to nearby residents. For its first project, the fund decided to do something that would benefit everyone living along the park’s four-mile stretch from 65th to 155th Streets, so emergency call boxes were installed and fencing was repaired, said Pamela Tice, one of the group’s founders.

Reviving the park, Mary Frances Shaughnessy, said, “involved a lot of different neighborhoods and involved bringing a lot of different people together who normally wouldn’t have had contact.” Volunteers cleaned the park and hauled in soil to help fill in erosion. People with expertise in fields like horticulture and botany helped recruit and train other volunteers. ...

The Fund encouraged local groups to adopt different parts of the park to care for, and in the first 10 years roughly 40 spots were taken. One group maintained the clay tennis courts, others looked after the playgrounds and a community garden group took responsibility for beautifying the park’s northern section.
Dedicated Landscape Architect who prepares designs for capital projects and horticulture projects with an understanding of the Park’s history and artistic opportunities.
Thirty years of elected official support for projects in the 1984 Master Plan has made Riverside the community’s pride.
A new ADA compliant bridge will make it possible for local residents to have easy access to the waterfront park at West 148th Street for the first time.
The success of the bike route created a hazardous environment for bikers and pedestrians.

Bicycle and pedestrian conflict occurs frequently, especially on the waterfront esplanade.

It is important to create a dedicated route for bikes wherever feasible.
ISSUES: CIRCULATION

The adjacent neighborhood populations are aging

Wheelchair access to the whole park, as well as smoother pavement and dropped curbs, would make the park more usable for people who are infirm or dependant on wheelchairs.

Areas adjacent to nursing homes and Alzheimer patient residences should be adapted to serve their specific needs.
ISSUES: RECREATION and STRUCTURES

Important structures, including the Rotunda, the Park’s centerpiece, are highly deteriorated, and their continued use threatened.
ISSUES: RECREATION and STRUCTURES

The marina requires dredging in order to function properly.
ISSUES: RECREATION and STRUCTURES

The North Waterfront playground, comfort station, fields and landscape are inadequate for the neighborhood between 138th and 158th Streets.
ISSUES: INFRASTRUCTURE and LANDSCAPE

All of Riverside Park west of the Parkway, and most of Riverside South, is within the 100-year floodplain and needs to be modified to survive future floods.

These areas have a 1% chance of flooding during any year. This means a 25% (1 out of 4) chance of flooding in any 25 year period. The 100-year flood can occur two years in a row.

Areas adjacent to the 100-year flood will flood during a storm that includes wind driven waves or heavy rainfall.

The elevation of the Hudson River is projected to rise 11 to 21 inches by 2050. This will cause tidal flooding of Cherry Walk.
ISSUES: INFRASTRUCTURE and LANDSCAPE

Riverside Drive pedestrian zones from 96 to 113, 116 to 125, and 138 to 148 Streets have deteriorated pavements, drainage structures and benches.
ISSUES: INFRASTRUCTURE and LANDSCAPE

The Riverside Drive retaining walls, as well as the stairs and granite cladding on the 1937 structures, require inspection, stone resetting and repointing.
ISSUES: INFRASTRUCTURE and LANDSCAPE

Riverside Drive medians, curbs and drainage are in poor condition between 97 and 116th Street. Water courses into the park at 97th and 115th Streets.
ISSUES: INFRASTRUCTURE and LANDSCAPE
The park-wide deterioration of drainage systems, pavements and fencing affect the usability of the park and create an appearance of disrepair.
ISSUES: INFRASTRUCTURE and LANDSCAPE

Trees and throughout the park need care. The woodlands need invasive tree and vine removal and succession plantings for improved habitat.
In 1984, the City Council established a dedicated budget for Erosion Control in Riverside Park. The Program restored 12 acres of the park per year, and maintained those areas.

The full time staff budget and the expense budget for seasonal employees and supplies was reduced whenever the Parks Department budget was cut, but was not restored as the Department’s budget was restored.
We learned what people know, what they are concerned about, what they are working on, and think can be done. We interviewed park users, group leaders, NYC Parks personnel and external experts.

COMMUNITY CONCERNS and DEMOGRAPHICS

Kayaks, canoes, swimming in the river.

Safer pedestrian + bicycle interactions found ways for everyone to co-exist safely.

More public bathrooms on greenway.

More staff (including MTA) on greenway.

Remove silt, matted leaves, etc. from walkways more frequently.

Provide more staff and more effective maintenance and upkeep.

Address erosion in park.

Repave certain paths to reduce erosion.

Integrate green infrastructure to correct drainage problems and deal with erosion.

MORE COMMUNITY GARDENING

MORE

CONCERNS

and

DEMOGRAPHICS
Riverside Park is a magical place. I love exploring it on temperate evenings, especially when it's intoxicating with the scent of Linden trees.

We had a great walk through nature today. We heard the wind whistle through the trees, felt the River breeze, and enjoyed the birds and blooms in the bushes. We sat for a long time on the grass next to the river, watching the waves lapping on to the river, listening to the waves and the sunset.

I ran the entire length of the park on a soft path made just for runners. The lawns were lush and lovely, the plantings filled with color and interest. This park is so perfect for the neighborhood, even the water fountains and restrooms are a joy.

I have never seen a place that had so many volunteers engaged in caring for a park. It felt like a real community place.

We spent the day in Riverside park, the children worked with a volunteer to weed the garden and pick fruit. We visited THREE drop-in buildings, one with games for children, another with fitness equipment and another that hosted a health lecture. We went to Hudson Beach and had a great time. It felt like Santa Monica. We pulled up bars, rings, climbing ropes and even trapezes!

We couldn't get over how healthy the plants and trees looked. It is amazing how this park has become the most community engaged and environmentally conscious in the city. Solar powered lights, compost centers, green infrastructure...WOW!

Walking isn't easy anymore, but the park has ramps with handrails everywhere. I can get to the River! I can really relax and enjoy the flowers. What a joy to find a clean bathroom.

I love sneaking off to Riverside park to work under the trees or under the shelter when it is raining. What a joy, people think I am in an office!

I have never seen a place that had so many volunteers engaged in caring for a park. It felt like a real community place.

We went to Hudson Beach and had a great time. It felt like Santa Monica. Pull up bars, rings, climbing ropes and trapezes!

Today we heard so many different bird songs and almost no sounds of traffic. It is so nice without the traffic noise we used to have to endure.

Our dream of a buried west side highway has made Riverside South Park live up to all expectations. Too bad it took an earthquake to make it happen.
People who have a history of working in a park or using a park have intimate knowledge of what should be preserved, enhanced or fixed.

We conducted two community workshops that included a broad range of park users, residents of Community districts 7 and 9, and representatives from park user groups.

They mapped their concerns, their current initiatives and ideas for improvement. They prioritized their concerns and helped us visualize their wishes by writing a “postcard from the future.”

We transcribed all of this information and categorized it so we could investigate their concerns and develop projects and programs to address them.

The Master Plan Advisory Council synthesized this information into the Goals, listed on the next pages. These goals are the priority of the Master Plan.
Recreational Areas
- Add opportunities for adolescent, adult and senior fitness.
- Repurpose underused facilities.

Playgrounds
- Increase playground opportunities and equipment especially north of 100th street.

Restrooms
- Provide restrooms in areas that need them.
- Keep all restrooms open and clean when people are using the park.

Dogs
- Change to dog friendly ice melting products.
- Encourage dog owners to feel more a part of the Riverside park community.
- Provide dog runs in areas of the park that need them, and enforce leash and waste laws.

Drinking Fountains
- Provide attractive and clean drinking fountains in areas that need them, April to November.

Monuments
- Continue the restoration of monuments, prioritize the Soldiers’ and Sailors’ monument.
- Improve the landscaping, lighting and upkeep of monuments throughout the park.

Programming
- Provide more year-round programs and encourage more community programming.

Hudson River
- Improve kayak access and facilities.
- Provide places to wade or swim.

Marina
- Improve usability of the marina for boating and public access. Restore the marina structures and adapt them to coastal flooding.

Concessions
- Look for new opportunities such as kayak rental, roving morning coffee and healthy snacks near summer camps.
**Scenic landscape**
- Improve the scenic beauty and view corridors of the park.
- Correct erosion and drainage problems.

**Horticulture**
- Add seasonal beauty, fragrance and character using native plants and plants that will adapt to climate change.
- Improve weeding, poison ivy removal and soil enrichment.

**Park identity and memory**
- Enhance the landscapes of special places and give them poetic names so people can identify them.

**Grass and fences**
- Improve lawn and fence appearance.
- Install permanent fences and improve the design and upkeep of temporary fences.
- Improve lawn health by eliminating ponding and using mulching mowers for grass and leaves.

**Riverside Drive**
- Restore Riverside Drive, its medians, landscapes, tree panels, walking areas and drainage systems.
- Examine placement and signalization of crosswalks to ensure every neighborhood and age group has access without barriers or trip hazards.

**Tree care**
- Provide more frequent and thorough inspection and care of park trees, including disease control, removing dead branches and diseased trees, fertilization and watering.

**Natural areas**
- Map natural areas and educate staff and volunteers about how to optimize their work efforts for effectiveness, natural area health and habitat.

**Climate change and flooding**
- Develop a long term plan to protect the park from flooding and adapt the plant choices for flooding and warmer weather.
Bike / Pedestrian
- Make Riverside Park a much safer and enjoyable experience for bicyclists and pedestrians.

Path condition and accessibility
- Improve path conditions and handicapped accessibility throughout the park.
- Ensure there are benches placed for seniors.

Trails
- Provide soft and well drained paths for runners and nature lovers.

Highway
- Increase pedestrian safety in tunnels.
- Connect the park at 96th street.
- Decrease highway noise.

Orientation
- Provide orientation maps at entrances and discrete directional signage to major destinations at decision points.

Signage
- Provide attractive, friendly and legible rule signage at entrances and in problem areas.

Safety
- Provide call boxes to handle emergencies.

Lighting
- Provide lighting in areas that will receive night time use, such as bike route, as well as the paths to get there.
- Investigate improved aesthetics, controls, and energy efficiency.
Operations
- Prioritize increased maintenance and repair throughout the park.
- Include slopes, trees, vegetation, retaining walls, stairs, paths and drainage.
- Improve skills, support and coordination of staff.
- Develop sustained funding for increased staffing and support facilities.

Infrastructure Condition & Restoration
- Inventory and inspect all walls, stairs and drainage systems to improve their function and longevity.
- Develop City funding sources to improve park infrastructure.

Education and Enforcement
- Increase public knowledge and enforcement of rules in problem areas.
- Concentrate enforcement in areas where the pattern of use is destructive to the park and discourages neighborhood use.
- Pay attention to littering, noise, alcohol and dog feces.

Public Engagement
- Provide opportunities, such as a learning center, for individuals and families to learn about the park and how to garden.
- Create a stronger social media presence to support volunteerism and fund raising for projects.

Volunteers
- Identify more areas for communal gardens such as 91st Street.
- Provide excellent coordination and support for volunteer efforts.
- Provide neighborhood tool and composting areas.
Where is Riverside Park and who uses it?

Riverside Park stretches four miles on the Hudson shore of Manhattan.

**Community District 9**
- Total population: 110,000
- Change since 2000:
  - Under 20: -25%
  - Over 65: +7%

**Community District 7**
- Total population: 209,000
- Change since 2000:
  - Under 20: +10%
  - Over 65: +27%

2015 Community Health Profiles:
- 23% do not exercise
- 25% are obese
- 9% have diabetes
- 28% below poverty line

- 13% do not exercise
- 12% are obese
- 4% have diabetes
- 11% below poverty line
This area is served by 4 small tot lots on Riverside Drive. They are insufficient for the number of children in the neighborhood and those that are enrolled in nearby day care centers. Workshop participants requested more swings and equipment.

The playground at 148 street next to the Hudson River is in need of an upgrade to serve the increased numbers of people who will be able to reach it when the pedestrian bridge is complete in 2017.
Senior Citizens

These areas need:
• Senior citizen activities
• Pavement changes to reduce trip hazards
• Smoother transitions at dropped curbs
• Evaluation of walk-light timing
• Benches on sidewalks to allow resting
• Some stairs need to be converted to ramps to improve wheelchair accessibility
DESIGN HISTORY
AND PARK EVOLUTION

The design history of the park informs the characteristics of a historically appropriate park restoration.
Preface

Riverside Park, like all of New York City’s Parks, went through a thirty-year period of underfunded and uninformed maintenance prior to 1983. This was accompanied by vandalism, dumping and abuse that left them staggering.

After 1984, much was done to reverse the tragic deterioration of the prior decades. The New York City Parks Department and the Riverside Park Conservancy, formerly Riverside Park Fund, worked to save the park in accordance with the 1984 master plan prepared by the Planning and Preservation office of New York City Parks.

That plan included the first description of the Park’s historic design development. There were many complex questions. What remained of the original Olmsted landscapes? Which areas should be restored? What are their design characteristics? What eras should the restoration represent? What form should new construction take?

The history published here is largely the result of field investigations, archival research, and analysis conducted by the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation, Office of Planning and Preservation in 1982-1984. It has been augmented with new knowledge and photographs.

Design Synopsis

Frederick Law Olmsted, the designer of many of the world’s most important parks, conceived the concept for the sinuous Riverside Drive and the Park that preserved the natural valleys and rock outcroppings of the Hudson shoreline. Riverside Drive is regarded as one of most beautiful boulevards in the world and defines the character of the neighborhood.

Olmsted’s prescient philosophy became the foundation of the New York City Park values. He wrote, “Plant materials should thrive, be non-invasive, and require little maintenance. The design should conserve the natural features of the site to the greatest extent possible and provide for the ecological health of the area.”

In 1892, the nation chose Riverside Park for the tomb of General Grant. Riverside Drive became the favored site for monuments exalting heroes of the city and the world, including Joan of Arc, and the Soldiers and Sailors of the Civil War.

In the 1930s, under the direction of Robert Moses, Landscape Architects Gilmore D. Clarke and Michael Rapuano and Architect Clinton Loyd designed plans to expand the park, put the railroad in a tunnel and construct a parkway along the Hudson River. Over four years, workers of the Works Project Administration created 132 acres of parkland on landfill, with courts, ballfields, and playgrounds nestled around the scenic parkway. New Yorkers finally gained access to the Hudson river; the marina and Rotunda served as the City’s front door for visiting ships and marine dignitaries.

Design Significance

Riverside Park illustrates the evolution of the Olmsted Parkway concept, the English landscape style and the City Beautiful period as well as the finest work of Gilmore D. Clarke, Michael Rapuano and Clinton Loyd.

The Park’s special character, history, and sophisticated incorporation of major infrastructure earned it national, state, and city Landmark status in the early 1983.

The following pages illustrate the major steps in the Park’s evolution; they show how they relate to each other, recognize the great ideas, and describe a method to build on them to meet our current recreational needs and cultural aspirations.
Who were the major designers and what were their design intentions?

Park Designers and Their Intentions

It is useful and interesting to know how the original designers acquired their knowledge and how they approached design in order to appropriately restore, or modify their work with empathy. Frederick Law Olmsted, and Michael Rapuano, the major designer from the Moses era park, approached landscape architecture differently.

Frederick Law Olmsted acquired an appreciation of scenic landscapes by wandering the countryside of his childhood Connecticut. Often riding on the horse with his father through passages of scenery helped him understand the value of silent enjoyment without comment or evaluation. Later, Olmsted studied theorists of the picturesque such as Uvedale Price and William Gilpin as well as the professional work and writings of Humphrey Repton. The writing of Johann Georg von Zimmermann provided Olmsted with a physician’s observations of the power of scenery to engage the imagination. This unique grounding and his fortunate partnership with Calvert Vaux enabled the creation of Central and Prospect parks.

Olmsted’s core intention was to create an environment of unconscious influence rather than one that sought admiration. He engaged people through the enjoyment of a diffuse natural looking environment rather than “obviously designed” beauty or man-made features that demanded attention. He believed this would arouse curiosity and draw attention away from day-to-day concerns and troubling thoughts. The most effective design technique he and Calvert Vaux employed to accomplish this was to assess the natural beauty and attributes of a place and then amplify that—beyond what would have happened naturally.

The most important Riverside Park design ideas credited to Olmsted were the sinuous Riverside Drive that curved around areas of topographical interest, and the focus on drawing the gaze to the Hudson River.

Michael Rapuano’s education at Cornell University focused on the design of estates with European garden and villa inspirations. His most influential professor was Edward G. Lawson, a gifted designer and illustrator of gardens and estates. Rapuano won a Rome prize in 1927, which afforded him time to experience Rome and its treasured villas. When Lawson joined him in Rome as a visiting professor, they toured gardens in Italy as well as Spain and France, discussing history and theory.

When Rapuano returned to the United States, he worked for Gilmore D. Clarke, also taught by Lawson, of the Westchester County Park Commission designing parks and the first “motor parkways.” Rapuano was in charge of Landscape Design in Clarke’s office when Moses picked Clarke to redesign the New York City park system.

Rapuano applied his design sensibilities and talent to the New York City park system, creating what landscape architect and author Thomas J. Campanella described as “public-works baroque.” This design style was most likely intended to be enjoyed for its artfulness, bold plantings, romantic architecture, and mastery of automobile and pedestrian circulation. It was designed in plan drawings, at a drafting board, using a French curve—rather than in the field, in response to natural topography and features, as Olmsted would have designed it. His work lacked the overt social and psychological intent that drove Olmsted’s work.

Gilmore D. Clarke and Michael Rapuano worked with engineering, architecture and highway design professionals to integrate trains, cars and recreational facilities into the existing park and park expansion. They brought Olmsted’s circulation and land use design goals into the automobile age and developed a park design vocabulary that guided the Moses era park system expansion.

1 Harvard, at the same time, focused on the broader profession of landscape architecture, Olmsted and the public realm.
2 The Rise and Fall of Edward G. Lawson, by Thomas J. Campanella, Landscape Architecture Magazine March 2012
DESIGN HISTORY AND PARK EVOLUTION

What are the important design issues that will guide the Park restoration?

Landscape Restoration Framework

Riverside park is an amalgam of 19th and 20th Century park designs. It is the result of a progression of cultural development, the evolution of the English Gardening ideal as interpreted by Olmsted and his followers in the late 1880s and as interpreted by Gilmore D. Clarke and Michael Rapuano in the 1930s, rather than one discrete period.

The restoration should illustrate the essential design qualities of each of the major periods of the Park’s development:

Riverside Drive, the islands and the retaining wall are the backbone of Olmsted’s design, remarkable in its configuration, design and construction. It should be restored in a manner that elevates it to prominence. The layout changes and material choices from the 1930s and the City Hall bench should be accepted

- The current pipe rails, hex bloc and cobblestone pavements are expressive of the Olmsted period but were installed during the 1935 expansion of the park.

The original interior of the park was not designed in accordance with Frederick Law Olmsted’s direction. In addition, during the 1939 expansion of the park, it was excavated and overlaid with new paths and plantings. A historically accurate restoration is impossible.

- Restore it in accordance with Olmsted’s original intentions and design precepts.

The Park expansion designed by Gilmore D. Clarke, Michael Rapuano and Clinton Loyd is a masterwork of landscape architecture and infrastructure with significant architectural elements.

- The Moses era landscape and structures should be restored in accordance with the original plans.
- Preserve the character and gesture of the original planting plans. Adjust them to improve scenic beauty and habitat value.

The City Beautiful monuments were placed in the park with variable regard for Olmsted intentions.

- Monuments should be should be treated as evocative structures in an English landscape.
- It is important to protect park landscapes from new monuments, Riverside Drive is the most appropriate location.
- New monuments should be designed to replace some portion of the park that is in poor repair or missing

Additions to the park after 1937, which were not sensitive to the established palettes of materials or the scenic quality of their settings, should be screened with landscape, modified or removed.

- Inappropriate highway rails, signs and lighting should be modified.

Character defining features have been lost and need to be replaced:

- The Rotunda Fountain at 79th Street
- The bronze railings on 1935 structures
- The Riverside Park luminaires
- The decorative lamps on the viaduct at 96th Street
- The cupola on the belvedere at 155th St.

Some areas of the park fall short of their scenic and recreational potential and need to be restored or enriched:

- The South Lawn at 74th Street
- Amphitheater playground at 75th St.
- Grotto playground at 97th St.
- The Waterfront promenades
- The Marina
- The Rotunda at 79th Street
- Mount Tom at 83rd Street
- The Soldiers and Sailors Monument
- The Vale at 90th St.
- Riverside Drive and Islands
- The Olmstedian scenic areas
- The Terrace promenade 101-111
- Promenade garden at 91st Street
- The Crab Apple Grove at 92nd St.
- The woods 116th to St. Clair Place
- The Claremont Inn and hill
- The grave of the “Amiable Child”
- The Riverside Drive viaduct
- The Neo-classical entry ensembles and walls 135th to 158th Streets
- Sakura Park
Pre-park Era

The earliest map of Manhattan was prepared by the British when they occupied it. Their map shows the schist ridge that now supports Riverside Drive. It shows the rolling farmland topography and the streams from the island’s interior to the Hudson River flood plain.

It is easy to imagine the original inhabitants, the Lenape people, thriving in this verdant shoreline territory. Over time trappers, traders and farmers pushed out the native people and occupied the sylvan hills.

In the 1700s, people of greater means cleared land for farming or built homes, gardens and grounds that took advantage of the majestic vistas. They domesticated the once sublime Hudson Valley ridge as they escaped the densifying city and the ills of the day.
DESIGN HISTORY AND PARK EVOLUTION

Frederic Law Olmsted’s Plan

Initial purchase and plan

By 1811, all of Manhattan had been surveyed and platted with a rectangular street pattern, without regard for topography, streams or natural beauty. Immigration was swelling the population and by 1865 the need for middle class housing was tremendous.

There was pressure to install the grid of streets all of the way to the Hudson River. Parks Commissioner William E. Martin proposed exploiting the picturesque Hudson River views with a scenic carriage drive and ornamental park. He argued that a riverside park would encourage development, enhance the city’s tax base and relieve downtown overcrowding.

In 1866, the state legislature granted Parks Commissioner Andrew H. Green permission to purchase the precipice above the River to build that park and drive.

The street was planned as a straight avenue 100 feet wide. This configuration would have required extensive fill, regrading, and an expensive retaining wall, destroying the natural beauty of the location. Thankfully, in 1873, Frederick Law Olmsted, who, along with Calvert Vaux, designed Central Park, proposed an elegant solution.

After examining the existing topography and discovering its steep slopes and natural qualities, Mr. Olmsted suggested an approach that would enhance the natural beauty of the location rather than destroy it.

F. L. Olmsted’s Concept

Olmsted advised the Parks Department to merge the land for the avenue with the land for the park and to build a sinuous drive which would curve around topographical difficulties and enhance the existing topography, views and vegetation.

The officials were pleased to hear the curving road would cost less because it required less retaining wall and fill. They approved his plan and work started in 1877.
Olmsted shifted the Drive laterally into the park, so its length could be increased and the grades of the road could be gentle enough for horse drawn carriages. This curving carriage drive enjoyed sweeping views of the Hudson River Valley. Olmsted believed the park was too steep for recreation, so he proposed a limited path system that would give access to structures on the west side of the railroad tracks. The park incorporated the existing natural vegetation and the gardens of old estates, and served as a foreground to the Hudson River views.
Riverside Drive included a pedestrian walkway, a lane for horseback riding, two broad lanes for carriages separated by a median and a smaller side road that served the residential area when it was separated from the drive by landscaped islands. North of 100th Street there were five rows of elm trees for shade and beauty. Lindens were used on the southern portion. During the Moses era, the dirt horse riding lane shown in the photo above was converted to lawn panels.
The Parkway terminated at the Claremont Inn, overlooking the Manhattan Valley, where expansive views of the Hudson River and the Palisades were enjoyed.

(The viaduct shown in the illustrations was not constructed until 1901.)
Early Park Development

Olmsted’s work did not extend to the inside of the Park; the Park was not designed under his supervision. In 1878 Olmsted was removed as Park Superintendent and his position was abolished.

The Park was developed by a series of designers employed by the Parks Department from 1875 to 1900; including Samuel Parsons and Julius Munkwitz. They probably worked under the supervision of Calvert Vaux, who was appointed the Superintending Architect of the Department of Public Parks after 1881.

They likely had an understanding of Olmsted’s design approach, but Olmsted’s concept was not adhered to, nor was there a comprehensive plan for the whole park.

“In many important particulars the design has been mangled,” wrote Olmsted to H.K. Beekman, the President of the Department of Public Parks, in 1886. Olmsted believed the park was too steep for recreation and that the slope should not be planted with trees that would block views from the drive; both of these things were done by his successors. He offered to do a comprehensive plan with Calvert Vaux, but he was not given this opportunity.
The inside of the Park was laid out with paths and plantings in the English Gardening style. Photographs show how they enhanced the natural beauty of the setting and provided picturesque sequences of views. The changing character included linear paths which afforded glimpses of the River and settings for vegetation for visual delight. The rustic retaining wall separated the park from the city and formed a refuge.
Voluptuous meadows opened to the River prospects and sought to appear as a natural extension of the Hudson River valley landscape.

The railroad however, separated the park from the River, which along with the coal bins, the storage yards and sheds eroded the pastoral illusion.
1877
Construction started on Riverside Drive

1880
Paths are laid out in the park.

1880
Some portions of Olmsted’s drive: 72nd to 85th, 86th to 91st, 99th to 113th were open for pleasure driving, walking and cycling.

1890
Clarence True builds townhouses along the Drive from 76th Street to 83rd Street.

1891
Paths inside the park are installed from 72nd Street to 79th Street.

1892
Construction starts on Grant’s Tomb in a setting designed by Calvert Vaux.

1895
Paths are designed in Riverside Park from 96th Street to 120th Street.

1895
C. Vaux dies.

1897
Ulysses S. Grant’s memorial is completed.

1902
The viaduct connecting the drive at 96th Street was finished and the area’s popularity was established.

1903
F.L. Olmsted dies.

1904
The fashionable residential area was in full swing. Mansions and fine apartments lined the beautiful drive.
DESIGN HISTORY AND PARK EVOLUTION

Vaux Plan for Grant’s Tomb
DESIGN HISTORY AND PARK EVOLUTION

Olmsted Era Park Character
DESIGN HISTORY AND PARK EVOLUTION

Olmsted Era Park Character
DESIGN HISTORY AND PARK EVOLUTION

Olmsted Era Park Character
Riverside Drive Extension
125th Street to 155th Street

The Manhattan Valley blocked the extension of Riverside Drive until 1901 when it was bridged by a remarkable viaduct of steel lattice arches. This viaduct was designed and built by Francis Stuart Williamson, a civil engineer employed by Charles Henry Davis. It was a decorative structure with 26 bays of filigreed steel work that created a Piranesian environment of patterned sunlight streams below and provided expansive views of the City and the River from above.
In 1901, Andrew E. Foye, the Chief Engineer of the Department of Highways, boasted that the Viaduct was the beginning of the finest parkway ever built in the City.

By 1902, plans were developed by the Department of Public works to extend Riverside Drive to 155th Street. Francis Stuart Williamson employed the same concept developed by F.L. Olmsted for the park from 72nd Street to 125th Street. The Drive extension was laid out so that it would curve around topographical difficulties and was be supported at critical locations by a retaining wall.
The retaining walls and entry ensembles were not of the rustic style favored by Olmsted, but were of the Neo Classical style popularized by the City Beautiful movement.

The land west of the retaining wall sloped steeply down to the railroad wall and was covered with grass that allowed these grand palatial structures, evocative of a great civilization, to be viewed from the Hudson River.
In the early 1900s, after the advent of the City Beautiful movement, the Park began to serve as a site for monuments and sculptures that exalted the City's heroes and the virtues they represented.

One particularly notable example is the Soldiers' and Sailors' monument by Stoughton & Stoughton and Paul E.M. Duboy in honor of the City's Civil War dead.

Like most of the other monuments in the Park, this one was a revival of classical motifs and structures. It is an exuberant Beaux Arts interpretation of the Choragic Monument of Lysicrates in Athens, Greece.

It was architecturally integrated into the topography and sited in a prominent location where it would serve as a focal point for the streets, thus drawing the view from the City into the Park.

The Park was no longer an idealized version of nature; it now contained noble and dignified architectural structures that memorialized great people and their accomplishments.
The Railroad

At the same time the railroad began to increase its noise and visual distraction by expanding its line to six tracks. The railroad tracks, which formed the western boundary of the park, from 72nd Street to 155th Street, separated the park from the trash dumps, coal bins and storage yards that lined the river. In 1894, the State Legislature had attempted to prohibit industrial development along the river into the park, but this action did not stop the railroad expansion.

Early Proposals for Covering the Railroad

The early 1900s produced many controversial proposals to cover the railroad tracks or otherwise remove their blighting influences. Finally, in 1913 the railroad was pressured by the State Legislature into developing a plan to enclose those tracks in a tunnel that could support a park or an esplanade from 72nd Street to 123rd Street. No improvements were implemented, and in 1924 Comptroller Charles R. Craig proposed using landfill to extend the Park past the railroad tracks. His plan included a 25-foot esplanade along the waterfront from 72nd Street to 129th Street, and a roadway on top of an enclosed railway. He would have landscaped the new land, restored the existing park and provided playgrounds, playfields, tennis courts, and marinas. To the chagrin of the Westsiders, this improvement was not constructed and the decline of the Park continued. Years of Tammany Hall mismanagement coupled with the noise and fumes from the railroad soon rendered the Park almost completely unfit for use.
In 1929, McKim, Mead and White were hired to prepare plans for covering the railroad. They were requested to remove the grade crossings, enclose the railroad in a tunnel, and incorporate a new highway into an expanded park. They proposed a design that made the tunnel appear to be a grand wall that supported the west side of Manhattan. It was designed as a Roman aqueduct of granite, embellished with Neoclassical details and a balustraded parapet. This City Beautiful style terrace and wall supported a highway on top with pedestrian tunnels connecting the existing park to a new park next to the River.

A section of this design from 72nd Street to 79th Street was under construction in 1934 when Robert Moses became the new Commissioner of a unified five borough Parks Department. He soon discarded their plans on the grounds that the highway would be turned into a roller coaster by the pedestrian tunnels under its roadbed, that the highway would be constricted by inadequate access, and that the plans were generally impractical.
Robert Moses Era Park Enlargement

Under the direction of Robert Moses, Gilmore D. Clarke, Michael Rapuano and Clinton Loyd developed plans to use the top of the tunnel for parkland and put the highway on landfill.

With the advent of the family car and pleasure driving, it had become desirable to design this highway as a scenic drive along the Hudson River and to link it to the outskirts of the city. Therefore a new "parkway" was designed which enhanced the pleasure of the speed and uninterrupted forward movement made possible by grade separations and access ramps.

By 1937 this new "parkway" was built; it was graceful, it followed the terrain and was merged with the landscape to orchestrate sequences of views to the river and into the park for the automobile passenger.
This new design created 132 new acres of parkland on fill that was used to accommodate the new active recreation needs of the city. Basketball and tennis courts, ballfields, playgrounds, a marina and performance areas were integrated into the new topography and coils of the highway. The tunnel wall, covered by planted berms, and frequently punctuated by grand arched openings, sweeping stairs and terraces, became a backdrop for the parkway and the playgrounds.
Michael Rapuano designed the pastoral romantic landscape, inspired by his studies of Italian landscapes and villas while a Rome Price fellow in 1927. He created long allees of London Plane trees and Robinia on the roof of the train tunnel. The wall of the train tunnel incorporated granite arches, terraces and broad step ramps, and grids of London Plane trees between the ballfields. He integrated the playgrounds at 97th and 74th street into the topography with curving step ramps and terraces like Italian villas. These playgrounds with aspects of Villa d’Este, celebrated water spray and play.
Robert Moses believed that this waterfront could be the most beautiful place in the world. He pictured great terraces overlooking the River with sailboats and yachts along the shore. The 79th Street Boat Basin and Rotunda realized that dream. The Rotunda’s cool cloister with a fountain was a vestibule to the arcaded terrace overlooking the vessels in the marina. The marina became the City’s front door for visiting yachts and marine dignitaries.

Finally New York City had a "river gate" grand enough to welcome and accommodate the yachts of the world.
Relation between the Olmstedian Park and the Moses era design

The promethian land form changes that were required to accommodate the train tunnel and parkway necessitated changing the topography in the original Olmstedian sections of the park. These changes included the removal of many of the original paths, stairways and plantings. The new paths were designed with a french curve on paper rather than laying out the paths on site with deference to existing natural features and views.

The new plantings were large masses and allees of trees. Fast growing shrubs and ground covers were planted in large sweeps rather than diverse and unpredictable groupings favored by the English landscape style.
This regularization of landscape was accompanied by a new formalism of architectural elements and structures. Steep slopes were terraced for renaissance inspired alee’s of London Plane trees.

The park was no longer a rustic expression of the natural environment; it was now a demonstration of the power of engineering to reshape nature for transportation purposes, bringing Olmsted’s parkway concept into the automobile age.
Robert Moses Era Park Development North of 145th Street

Plans for the park from 144th Street to 155th Street were developed by Parks Department designers in a less grand mode. The design used a simplified version of the architecture and playground arrangements prevalent in the southern section of the Park. The trains were left in an open cut, and the highway was supported on an elevated platform. Consequently pedestrian access to the new park was constricted and views of the 1900s Neoclassical wall ensembles were blocked. None-the-less, it provided a naturalistic shoreline with views of the Palisades, the Hudson River and the George Washington Bridge.

This pragmatic approach to park development left much of this area’s potential beauty untapped. The parking lots, for a marina that was never built, took up land that could have been landscaped to provide the same type of naturalistic environment found in the southern section of the Park.
Park Changes between 1938 and 1984

After the Moses era park was completed, until work started on the park restoration in 1984, there were very few planned changes in the Park. The Park endured a long period of underfunded and uninformed maintenance. This was accompanied by vandalism, dumping and abuse.

A playground and comfort station were built at 76th Street next to the Drive; a comfort station and recreation building were added to the playground in the vale at 91st Street; tennis courts and comfort station were built in the meadow at 119th Street; and tennis courts were built next to the River at 97th Street.

None of these additions besides the tennis court at 97th Street attempted to advance the 1937 plan for the Park through the use of the established palette of materials or landscaping concepts. They were built of brick and concrete block in areas designed for scenic enjoyment.
Era of Restoration and Revitalization

In the early 198’s the Parklands Planning and Preservation Office of the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation analyzed Riverside Park’s:
1. Existing conditions and image
2. Recreational use and demand
3. History and design development

The office prepared a master plan that included guidelines for the parks restoration, a conceptual master plan and a capital plan that was intended to save important landscapes, remove hazardous conditions, satisfy community recreational needs, and reduce maintenance expenses.

The conceptual master plan showed:
1. The recommended type, location, and quantity of recreational facilities and their physical characteristics and relationships to the landscape
2. Circulation changes, landscape character and “theme areas,” view corridors, and land uses.
3. Desirable future changes, such as improvements that are not included in the capital plan that can be constructed by concessionaires or other providers.

The plan recommended horticultural restoration of the park accomplished by the Riverside Park restoration crews funded through the expense budget. The plan received the funding required for the restoration crews and the initial capital projects. Since that time most of the plan has been accomplished through City’s capital budget, cooperation with other agencies and the strategic use of private funds, volunteer labor and in-house forces.

After 30 years of effort implementing the Master Plan projects and restoration programs, Riverside Park is more vital and healthier, almost all of its athletic fields and playgrounds have been restored and the marina and Rotunda and athletic field complexes have been activated. The bicycle network has been stitched together with major connections along the River.

The following pages display the 1984 Master Plan, color coded to show what has been accomplished.
1984 MASTER PLAN  What has been accomplished since 1984?

**MARINA**
- Make the marina a better recreational facility, provide access for boat rental, outboard and special craft docking.
- Make the marina more accommodating for transient ships as well year-round vessels. Bridge and restore the marina.
- Increase the number of transient slips and provide facilities that attract recreational boaters.
- Construct a “Welcome Center” prior to welcome large yachts, ton boats and special barges.
- Build a public pier for watching the ships, for running and for the sale of refreshments.

**ROTUNDA**
- Restore the Rotunda and Fountain; adopt the ancillary interior spaces to serve as information, display and refreshment area.
- Provide dressing rooms for performers and provide construction fences.
- The space level 1 should accommodate the maintenance headquarters. Secure storage for tools, supplies and vehicles as well locker rooms for Park and Citywide crews.
- Concession the remaining parking spaces.

**DESIGN HISTORY AND PARK EVOLUTION**

**SOUTH RECREATION**

**SEAWALL AND ESPLANADE**

**SOUTH LAWN**

**SOUTH PARK**

**KEY**
- Project completed
- Pavement restored
- Landscape restored
- Facility or structure restored or converted to a new use
- Project in design or construction
DESIGN HISTORY AND PARK EVOLUTION

1984 MASTER PLAN  Showing project status 2016

SOUTH WATERFRONT  72ND ST TO 125TH ST

KEY
- Project completed
- Pavement restored
- Landscape restored
- Facility or structure restored or converted to a new use
- Project in design or construction

- Redundant paths
- Create a waterfront natural area
- Open views (Typical)
- Seawall repairs (in situ)
- Construct 6’ wide asphalt path
- Construct a variety of Conditions

72ND ST TO 96TH ST

Riverside Park Master Plan 2016
DESIGN HISTORY AND PARK EVOLUTION

1984 MASTER PLAN    Showing project status 2016

KEY

- Project completed
- Pavement restored
- Landscape restored
- Facility or structure restored or converted to a new use
- Project in design or construction

MIDDLE PARK
96TH ST TO 125TH ST

This area has considerable historic scenic landscapes. It has expansive vistas and low noise levels which make it well suited for scenic enjoyment.

The special character areas should be enhanced to imbue the park with a stronger sense of place, history and myth.

KEY

- Project completed
- Pavement restored
- Landscape restored
- Facility or structure restored or converted to a new use
- Project in design or construction
DESIGN HISTORY AND PARK EVOLUTION

1984 MASTER PLAN  Showing project status 2016

THE WOODS

The wilder areas of the Park provide habitat for wildlife and places to enjoy naturalistic environments.

These areas should not be developed but should be managed as forest and meadow, selectively thinned and replanted to enhance the natural character and habitat.

KEY

- Project completed
- Pavement restored
- Landscape restored
- Facility or structure restored or converted to a new use
- Project in design or construction

Riverside Park Master Plan 2016
DESIGN HISTORY AND PARK EVOLUTION
1984 MASTER PLAN    Showing project status 2016

NORTH WATERFRONT AND PARK  135TH ST TO 158TH ST

This area should be changed significantly to capitalize on the scenic view of the Palisades and the beautiful shoreline. More lawn area should be provided to encourage pickup sports and to accommodate the local demand for picnic areas along the River.

- Construct a new lawn with landforms scaled to Riverside Park.
- Make a pedestrian path to connect to Riverside Park.
- Potential location for Wave-Tech Pool?
- Potential location for Recreation Pier?
- Reconstruct Sitting Area.
- Build an adventure playground
- Restore Baseball Field and Softball Field
- Sports Area
- Preserve the overlook and wetlands
- RIVERSIDE PARK
- Restroom & Pedestrian Bridge
- Upgrade the Waterfront and Pedestrian Bridge

KEY
- Project completed
- Pavement restored
- Landscape restored
- Facility or structure restored or converted to a new use
- Project in design or construction

PROPOSED CONCEPTUAL DESIGN
Scale 1 inch equals 200 feet
NEW YORK CITY
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
DECEMBER 1983
SITE ANALYSIS AND CONCEPTUAL PLAN

Illustrate the major actions and projects necessary to solve the problems and meet the needs of the community.
What are the major issues that need to be addressed?

Large portions of Riverside Park are inside the 100 Year floodplain (Illustrated by the blue shading on the map).

Underground utilities and water systems are vulnerable to damage. Plantings that are not tolerant of flooding and saltwater are vulnerable.

The seawall and revetment is vulnerable to undermining in some locations.

At locations where the pedestrian paths cross the temporary bicycle path, there is a conflict.

Bikers have been traveling in a separate path and are disinclined to yield to pedestrians. In addition, pedestrians are concealed by the fence next to the path.

This will be remedied in a current capital project when the fences are removed and the intersections are marked more boldly.

The long term plan for Riverside South is to relocate the elevated highway into a tunnel under Riverside Boulevard and the adjacent park. The tunnel is partially constructed and funded.

Restrooms

Slow down bikes on park paths

Kayak storage

Need dedicated bike lanes

Pedestrian crossing at 65
What are the major projects?

**MAJOR PROJECTS**

1.01 Complete the parkway tunnel and demolish the elevated highway
1.02 Construct the park over the parkway tunnel
1.03 Floodproof all electrical and irrigation systems
1.04 Strengthen vulnerable curbs and pavements
1.05 Stripe bike routes and pedestrian crossings boldly, improving lighting
1.06 Complete the restoration of float bridge gantry
1.07 Improve pedestrian ramp at 68th Street

**PROJECTS**

1.08 Construct kayak launch
1.09 Construct kayak storage
1.10 Make comfort stations year round and extend hours
1.11 Provide historical information signage
1.12 Adapt tunnel for storage of park equipment and materials
1.13 Obtain ferry operator for float bridge
1.14 Provide adult exercise equipment
The Marina would better serve the public better if it were dredged and expanded.
- The current docks, piers and dockmaster structure are vulnerable to damage from high water conditions.
- Parking is inadequate for an expanded facility.

The Rotunda, the centerpiece of the park is highly deteriorated and its continued use threatened.
- The employee work areas have been deemed unhealthy.
- The Rotunda and Esplanade are not handicapped accessible.

Bicycle and pedestrian accidents occur frequently, especially on the waterfront esplanade.

72nd Street, next to the River, is the worst area of conflict in the park.

COMMUNITY NEEDS
- Seating and activities for people over 65
- Activity areas for Alzheimer patients

COMMUNITY CONCERNS
- Improve pedestrian route to river at 79
- Need dedicated bike lanes
- Restrooms Restore Rotunda
- Slow down bikes on park paths
CONCEPTUAL PLAN

PROJECTS
2.01 Restore the Rotunda, fountain and cafe space.
2.02 Convert steps on both side of the Rotunda to handicapped ramps.
2.03 Widen and illuminate sidewalks in 79th Street underpass.
2.04 Dredge and strengthen marina.
2.05 Expand marina.
2.06 Reconstruct the 72nd Street ramp for ADA compliant access.
2.07 Create a new bike path between the ballfields and the dog run.
2.08 Extend the 72nd Street stairs with an archway for bike route.
2.09 Provide a designated scenic bicycle route 72 to 83.
2.10 Regrade the bike path on both sides of the Rotunda.
2.11 Create a dedicated bike path with a separate entrance at 72nd Street.
2.12 Remove small diameter auto ramps.
2.13 Restore comfort stations at 76th Street.

PROJECTS
2.14 Stripe the bike route on both sides of 79th Street.
2.15 Improve the landscape and lighting around the dog run.
2.16 Install interpretation of Moses era parkway plantings.
2.17 Restore slope on west side of the Parkway.
2.18 Reduce parkway road noise, replace expansion joints and pavement.
2.19 Screen the dumpsters.
2.20 Reconstruct esplanade benches, and lighting
2.21 Create adult fitness area.
2.22 Create activity and sitting areas for seniors and Alzheimer residents.
2.23 Improve entrances, enhance beauty, reduce trip hazards.
2.24 Improve tunnel lighting and drainage.
2.25 Convert steps at 78th Street to ADA compliant ramp.

Provide a scenic route with gentle slopes and good illumination for bike riders, separate from pedestrians.

Restore the Rotunda and fountain, provide ADA compliant access to the Hudson River.

Dredge, strengthen and expand the Marina.

2.09
2.01
2.04
and 2.05
What needs to be addressed?

Due to the popularity of the bicycle route along the River, bicyclists enter the park on pedestrian paths. There is a conflict between bikers and people strolling on the path overlooking the Crab Apple Grove.

The Riverside Drive retaining walls, stairs and granite cladding on the 1937 structures require inspection, stone resetting and repointing. Some need new waterproofing and reconstruction.

Some slope areas are eroded. Some paths require regrading to direct water away from the playground and to green infrastructure.

The slopes need tree pruning and thinning, to open views of the river.

The area is much improved due to the understory plantings that are improving seasonal beauty.

Storm water from the street and slopes overwhelm the storm drain system and floods the 91st Street playground.

Site Analysis

New site for stone toilet house

Directional signs

New site for stone toilet house

Restore Soldiers and Sailors

New site for stone toilet house

Due to the popularity of the bicycle route along the River, bicyclists enter the park on pedestrian paths. There is a conflict between bikers and people strolling on the path overlooking the Crab Apple Grove.

COMMUNITY NEEDS

Volunteer house for tool storage

New site for stone toilet house

Proper signage

COMMUNITY CONCERNS

Neighborhood park

Improve fence at Cherry grove

由于数据过长，长文本的总结无法完全显示。
**PROJECTS**

- **COST**

3.00: Provide a designated scenic bicycle route 82-83 and 91-94.
3.01: Create a dedicated bike path from 95th St.
3.02: Widen the sidewalk at the 92nd Street tunnel.
3.03: Develop Mt. Tom as a feature landscape.
3.04: Restore Soldiers’ and Sailors’ monument and the belvedere.
3.05: Restore the 87th Street building as a volunteer center.
3.06: Restore the Joan of Arc monument setting and adjacent park paths.
3.07: Reconstruct the Parkway, raise it to prevent flooding.
3.08: Install interpretation of Moses era parkway plantings.
3.09: Enhance winter landscape character and sledding safety.
3.10: Restore woodland health, remove invasive trees and vines, prune and thin trees.
3.11: Restore sea wall or rip-rap.
3.12: Provide cable fencing around Crab Apple tree grove.
3.13: Improve drainage to prevent playground flooding.
3.14: Restore stairs.
3.15: Path paving needed (not all locations shown).
3.16: Open views.
3.17: Senior citizen sitting and activity area.
3.18: Improve tunnel lighting and drainage.
The clay tennis courts are popular and well programmed. However, they do not have restrooms or proper storage for equipment and supplies.

The south parking lot is used for park composting and storage of debris which detracts from park beauty.

The Parkway has poor drainage, inconsistent lighting and extensively damaged guardrail.

The guardrail is perceived by cyclists as inadequate to protect them from cars on the Parkway.

• Storm drainage inside the park needs cleaning and repair.
• Inoperative and inadequate storm sewers and compacted soil cause of flooding.
• Paths require regrading and repaving.

The exit to Riverside Drive at 95th Street severs the Riverside Park pedestrian zone.

The exit generates vehicular confusion and congestion on the parkway and on 95th Street.

Restroom to serve the Tennis Courts
Restrooms for the Soccer field at 101

COMMUNITY CONCERNS

Connect the park at 96
Tennis court restrooms needed
Bike Conflict on paths and tunnels to waterfront
Improve lawn care
Improve paths
Dinosaur playground
Clean up South parking lot

SITE ANALYSIS
CONCEPTUAL PLAN

PROJECTS

4.00  Restore Riverside Drive pedestrian zone 96 to 106
4.01  Provide a designated scenic bicycle route behind tennis courts
4.02  New ramp entrance for bikes and wheelchairs at 97th Street
4.03  Create a dedicated bike path from 97th St.
4.04  Widen and raise Cherry walk, improve lighting and guard rail
4.05  Tennis court restroom and storage building.
4.06  Convert the parking lot to an attractive composting and gardening area
4.07  Convert building to neighborhood fitness center,
4.08  Reconfigure courts for youth sports camp
4.09  Remove the 95th Street exit. Provide two lanes of car exit on 96th Street.
4.10  Provide continuous walkway on Riverside Drive.
4.11  Restore Riverside Drive, medians and drainage.
4.12  Widen sidewalk under tunnel at 100th Street
4.13  Install Interpretation of Olmsted era plantings for seasonal beauty
4.14  Install interpretation of Moses era parkway plantings
4.15  Install site drainage under crushed brownstone jogging path
4.16  Restore historic luminaires on the bridge at 96th Street
4.17  Path paving and drainage (Not all locations shown)
4.18  Connect path east of highway from 104 to 106
4.19  Climbing wall and novel equipment such as in-ground trampoline
4.20  Install picnic platforms over all train gratings
4.21  Create adult fitness area
4.22  Restore landscape and provide "Communal tables for picnics"
4.23  Restore building and comfort station at 105th Street
4.24  Restore stairs and walls
4.25  Restore Siegel memorial island fences, paving and stairs
4.26  Restore Firemen’s memorial island fences, paving and the stairs at 99th Street.
4.27  Reduce road noise: replace expansion joints, repave with asphalt
This portion of the park is not accessible by wheelchair users.

The popularity of the bicycle route and the cross town bike route at 106th street feed bicycles to the stairs at 108th street.

Other bikers enter the park at 116th street. Both filter through on pedestrian paths to the shoreline bike route.

Storm drains on Riverside Drive are inadequate for heavy rainfall.

Stormwater enters the park at 97th Street and 115th Street causing erosion and flooding.

The tot lots on Riverside Drive are not adequate for the population.

There is need for a full size playground and comfort station between 97 and 123rd Streets.

The Riversides Drive pedestrian zone from 96 to 113, and 116 to 125 have deteriorated pavements, drainage and benches. There are collapsed catch basins or sewers. Walls and stairs need stone resetting and pointing.

This area floods due erosion, silted up and inoperative drainage.
**Riverside Park Master Plan 2016**

**Mid-park play zone with “Playscape”**

**Projects**

- 5.00 Install interpretation of Olmsted era plantings for seasonal beauty.
- 5.01 New park entrance and ramp that matches the retaining wall construction.
- 5.02 Best location for greenway if Cherry Walk is lost to global warming.
- 5.03 Best location for a future pedestrian and bike bridge.
- 5.04 Restore comfort station and provide promenade level comfort station.
- 5.05 Innovative “Playscape” on the lower level that connects to the promenade.
- 5.06 Install picnic platforms over all train gratings.
- 5.07 Large scale art installations and performance area.
- 5.08 Construct rock nill and water landscape feature.
- 5.09 New path at 115th Street
- 5.10 Restore Riverside Drive, medians and drainage.
- 5.11 Restore Riverside Drive pedestrian zone 106-110th Streets.
- 5.12 Reconstruct entrance pavement at 115th Street.
- 5.13 Move and restore Women’s Health Protective Association Monument.
- 5.14 Widen and raise Cherry Walk, improve lighting and guard rail.
- 5.15 Install interpretation of Moses era parkway plantings.
- 5.16 Restore woodland and ecological health, remove invasive trees and vines, plant shrubs and understory to provide habitat and food.
- 5.17 Restore sea wall or rip-rap.
- 5.18 Open views.
- 5.19 Expand Skate Park.
- 5.20 Convert 112-ML and LL steps to ramps.
- 5.21 Restore Tilden and Kossuth memorial island fences, paving and stairs.
- 5.22 Restore 108-110 island fences, paving and stairs.
- 5.23 Restore stairs and walls.
- 5.24 Restore paths and drainage.
The Claremont Inn area once had the very best views north to the Hudson River valley. This view has been lost to invasive trees and vines.

The forest requires management for ecological health, habitat and beauty.

Cherry Walk is overcrowded with bikes and pedestrians. The route is not lit or adequately protected by the low and damaged guardrail. Glare from car headlights in the northbound lane blinds bikers.

**COMMUNITY NEEDS**
- Children’s playground

**COMMUNITY CONCERNS**
- Need Cherry Walk lighting
- Preserve bird sanctuary

**Improve Riverside Drive medians and islands**
- Widen Cherry Walk
- Tree pruning
- Improve Riverside Drive pavers and benches
- Need a bridge to the river
- Slow down bikes on park paths

**SITE ANALYSIS**

Riverside Drive medians, curbs, storm sewers and islands are in poor condition.
### Projects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>Restore woodland and ecological health.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.01</td>
<td>Restore Riverside Drive pedestrian zone 116-125.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.02</td>
<td>Widen and raise Cherry Walk, improve lighting and guard rail.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.03</td>
<td>Reduce the size of the on-ramp at 125th street.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.04</td>
<td>Expand playground.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.05</td>
<td>Restore comfort station and utilities at tennis courts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.06</td>
<td>Construct comfort station.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.07</td>
<td>Restore Sakura park stairs and walls.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.08</td>
<td>Restore irrigation system.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.09</td>
<td>Restore Chinese garden and surrounding pavement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.10</td>
<td>Remove the sidewalk from the island south of Grant's tomb.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.11</td>
<td>Reconstruct the median at 125 to match Riverside median width and materials.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.12</td>
<td>Open views.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.13</td>
<td>Restore stairs and walls.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.14</td>
<td>Restore paths and drainage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.15</td>
<td>What to do under bridge in tunnel?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.16</td>
<td>Provide Playscape.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.17</td>
<td>Mark bike lane and pedestrian crossings boldly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.18</td>
<td>Improve Sakura Park tot-lot.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.19</td>
<td>Convert volleyball court to bocci area (or other use).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The bicycle path frequently intersects with pedestrian crossings and uses such as the gate to the kayak dock and the bicycle racks.

The elaborate granite structures and walls from 135th to 153rd Streets require inspection, stone resetting and pointing.

The structure at 138th Street needs a restroom to serve the Community garden.

The bicycle path goes under the elevated highway and crosses through an area that needs major improvements to appearance and lighting.

Community Needs

Activity and accessibility for Seniors
Dog Run
Restroom at 138

Community Concerns

Pedestrian bridge over highway
None native plants for habitat
Activist for area under elevated highway
West 143rd St Park at 135
Stormwater, Parking, Bike lane, vertical green wall, Restrooms
More community gardens
Dog Runs

Dog Run needed
Bike access to Riverbank State Park

Kayak rental
Sawtooth bison on park paths
Shade and seating
Need dedicated bike lanes

Riverside Park Master Plan 2016
**CONCEPTUAL PLAN**

**PROJECTS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>7.00</th>
<th>Mark bike lanes and pedestrian crossings boldly in the Harlem Piers Park.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7.01</td>
<td>Improve the appearance, legibility and lighting under the highway.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.02</td>
<td>Provide a sidewalk on the west side of 12th Avenue from 138th Street.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.03</td>
<td>Stripe the bike route from Broadway on 138th Street.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.04</td>
<td>Restore granite retaining wall and parapet.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.05</td>
<td>Restore the historic structure at 148th Street and include a restroom and electricity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.11</td>
<td>Pursue obtaining more of this area for park purposes.</td>
</tr>
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**Riverside Park Master Plan 2016**
The north waterfront was developed at a lower standard of landscape. It includes parking lots for a marina that was never constructed.

The recreational areas and comfort station need major improvements and need to be raised for flood protection.

The park has been hard to access on foot, which has hampered neighborhood use.

When the new pedestrian bridge opens, it would be good to have more playfields and playground space as well as a restored restroom.

The steep slopes need tree pruning and thinning, as well as new understory plantings to improve seasonal beauty.

There are several areas where runoff is causing erosion.

The metal stairs and fencing are in poor condition.

The parking lots have been a long-term problem for the neighborhood due to loud car stereo systems, unsafe traffic conditions and unwillingness of park users to use trash containers.

The park is rendered unusable to the neighborhood due to the deleterious effects of misuse on weekends.

迫切需要北水边的重新设计

需要专用自行车道

拆除停车场

增加游乐区

食品摊位

自行车冲突

清洁：降雪和除冰

通勤：自行车通道

社区需求

儿童游乐场

河边厕所

体育场地

老年人活动

和访问

社区担忧

斜坡需要树木修剪和稀植，以及新的第二层植被来改善季节性美观。

有几处地方侵蚀导致降雨。

金属楼梯和围栏状况不佳。

停车场长期以来一直是社区的问题，由于噪音的汽车立体声音响，不安全的交通状况和公园使用者不愿意使用垃圾桶。

公园在周末由于过度使用而变得不可用，由于这种有害的影响。

北水边的重新设计需要

食物摊位

自行车冲突

采摘停车场

清洁：降雪和除冰

通勤：自行车通道

社区需求

儿童游乐场

河边厕所

体育场地

老年人活动

和访问
Riverside Park Master Plan 2016

CONCEPTUAL PLAN

MAJOR PROJECTS

8.00 Convert multipurpose field to soccer/football.
8.01 Move bike route to area between ballfields and highway.
8.02 New bike and pedestrian bridge (in construction 2015).
8.03 Move parking lots to new area under highway at 158th street.
8.04 Construct destination playground and water play.
8.05 Construct 2 new ballfields.
8.06 Construct picnic grove with picnic tables and barbecue grills.
8.07 Restore comfort station at playground.
8.08 Construct BMX track and skate area.
8.09 Construct a comfort station in Fort Washington Park.
8.10 Restore structure, belvedere and cupola. Establish a cafe and provide a sitting area for seniors with views of the Hudson.
8.11 Restore woodland beauty and ecological health.
8.12 Restore Riverside Drive pedestrian zone 143-155.

PROJECTS

8.09 Reconfigure entrance at Riverbank State Park, restore elevator service.
8.10 Install interpretation of Moses era parkway plantings.
8.11 Create an “enchanted landscape” as envisioned by the “Take Me to the River Plan.”
8.12 Open views.
8.13 Improve walkway, fences, stairs and add colorful gardens.
8.14 Improve tunnel lighting and drainage.
8.15 Construct a ADA compliant ramp from 166th Street and Riverside Drive.
8.16 Create adult fitness area.
8.17 Senior citizen sitting and activity area.
8.18 Restore historic structure, stairs, walls and lighting.
8.19 Restore paths, lighting, benches and drainage.
8.20 Restore shoreline and add rip-rap.
8.21 Install kayak launch and dock, provide storage.

Riverside Park Master Plan 2016
NATURE AND LANDSCAPE PLAN

What are the major landscape projects and what should be their character?
LANDSCAPE ANALYSIS and PLAN

What are the different types of landscape? How should each of them be restored?

Riverside park is an amalgam of 19th and 20th Century park designs rather than a discrete period. It is the result of the evolution of the English Gardening ideal as interpreted by Olmsted and his followers in the late 1800’s, and as interpreted by Gilmore D. Clarke and Michael Rapuano in the 1930’s. Riverside Drive and the Olmstedian slopes were modified in the 1930s. Each requires a specific treatment.

Riverside Drive and Retaining Wall
Riverside Drive was executed in accordance with Olmsted’s plans and retains a high level of spatial integrity. It was rehabilitated with hex block pavers, pipe rail fencing and cobblestones during the 1937 addition. The concrete and wood benches, chain link fencing and cobra head lights are inappropriate and should be changed.

Olmstedian Slopes
The interior of the park between the Olmsted wall and the train tunnel is neither an Olmsted Landscape or a Rapuano landscape. Misdirected execution of Olmsted’s concepts for the design of the interior of the park and subsequent major changes to its topography, paths and plantings during the Moses expansion make design attribution problematic. However, a strip of the original topography and some path alignments that vary in width from 20 to 50 feet remain on the west side of the retaining wall.

The topography adjacent to Riverside Drive was the original design determinant for the form of Riverside Drive, although it was modified during the Moses era work, it is important to rehabilitate this area in accordance with Olmsted’s intention, that of providing views of the Hudson river over and through the shoreline landscape. This should be done in accordance with Olmsted’s landscape design precepts.

Moses Era Landscape
From the toe of that slope to the Hudson River is intact Rapuano design topography, paths, flowering trees, and formal allees. The shrub and ground cover layer is spotty. The Henry Hudson Parkway, Rotunda and two Italian villa inspired playgrounds are architecturally significant, worthy of Restoration.

Interface Between Olmstedian Slopes and Moses Era landscape
The flattened lawns and pastoral plantings between the Olmstedian slopes and the train tunnel are spatially important to the adjacent Olmstedian slope and should be incorporated into the larger spatial organization of the Olmstedian park.

Applicable Standards of Landscape Restoration
The Secretary of the Interior’s standard called Rehabilitation is the most appropriate standard to apply to the lost Olmsted scenic areas due to the importance of the original design and the varying degrees of loss or modification the landscape.

Rehabilitation is defined as the process of making possible a compatible use for a property through the repair, alterations and additions while preserving those portions or features which convey its historical, cultural or architectural values. It supports replacement of missing features by creating a new design that:

- Represents the spatial organization, features, and materials of the missing historic landscape.
- Is compatible with the remaining character-defining features of the historic landscape.
- Is clearly differentiated. (The Moses era path configuration and step ramps and concrete benches should serve as adequate differentiation,)
Riverside Drive

In the 1937 modification the designers preserved Olmsted’s design intent and converted the bridal path into lawn panels. They sought to enhance Olmsted’s design by replacing the gravel paths with asphalt hex block, replacing the post and cable fences with pipe rail, and formalizing the tree planting strips with curbs and cobbles. At the same time, they introduced the concrete and wood Chrystie-Forsyth bench which did not convey the same historic appearance as the other elements.
Riverside Drive
Riverside Drive and retaining wall were conceived by Olmsted to preserve the beauty of the hillside and to enhance the enjoyment of the River views. The original concept included a carriage drive as well as pedestrian and equestrian paths for scenic enjoyment. This arrangement was modified in 1935 when the bridal path was removed and replaced with lawn panels and sitting areas. At the same time the furniture vocabulary was changed to Chrystie-Forsyth benches, pipe rail fences, hex block and cobblestone pavers by Michael Rapuano.

Restoration recommendations:
• There need not be an attempt to achieve a historically or botanically accurate restoration Riverside Drive, the existing arrangement meets current usage better than the original; the vocabulary of materials is better suited to usage than the original rustic concrete posts, movable benches and gravel paths.
• Riverside Drive and wall should be rehabilitated evoking the character of the 1880 park but preserving the basic arrangement of paths and grass panels installed in 1935.
• These areas should be restored using the Olmstedian vocabulary of materials as established in 1935, the pavers, cobbles, pipe-rail fences, and type "B" lamp posts.
• The Crystie-Forsyth benches should be replaced with the City Hall Bench,
• The cobra head lights should be replaced with the Bishop’s Crook pole.
How were the Olmstedian slopes modified in the Moses era addition?

**Extant Olmstedian Landscapes**

Topography provides the key to understanding the extent of the Olmstedian Park that was preserved during the 1937 addition. The park on the east side of the train tunnel was filled in order to raise the grades to meet the higher elevation of the new railroad tunnel roof. This area was flattened. The topography nearest the retaining wall was not changed and its original path system was mostly retained. The original trees were preserved and integrated into the new landscape by Michael Rapuano.
Almost all of Olmstedian park was modified during the 1937 expansion. Slopes were filled in and flattened, paths were regularized and moved to the edges of the lawns. In addition, the landscape character was converted from pastoral and picturesque to a more regularized landscape referred to in this document as “parklike.” This is particularly evident in the park from 72nd street to 79th street, illustrated on this page.

An authentic return of the Olmstedian landscape is impossible. The topography of the original Park was so extensively altered during the 1937 addition. None the less, areas that were important to the original design should be rehabilitated in accordance with Olmsted’s design intent and precepts.
Olmstedian Slopes and Scenic Areas
The Olmstedian scenic areas were intended to look natural, to provide an escape from the city and to provide views of the River. In 1937 these sections of the Park were greatly modified to accommodate the needed topography changes. These modifications were so extensive it will be impossible to achieve a historically or botanically accurate restoration of the Olmstedian Park.

• The Olmstedian scenic areas should be interpretively restored as picturesque sequences of views and experiences in keeping with the tenets of the English Gardening style.
• The existing plantations should be augmented in a manner which demonstrates the critical Olmstedian design qualities while preserving the 1937 vocabulary of paths and stairways.
• Olmstedian plants should be chosen. There should be no appearance of gardening or contrivance.

Secretary of the Interior’s Standard for Design for the Replacement of Missing Historic Features

“When an entire feature is missing, the landscape’s historic character is diminished. Where an important feature is missing, its replacement is always recommended in the rehabilitation guidelines as the preferred, course of action.

If adequate historical, pictorial, and physical documentation exists so that the feature may be accurately reproduced, and if it is desirable to re-establish the feature as part of the landscape’s historical appearance, then planning, designing and installing a new feature based on such information is appropriate.

If adequate historical, pictorial, and physical documentation does not exist so that the feature may be accurately reproduced, then the feature may be represented in a new design that is compatible with the remaining character-defining features of the historic landscape. The new design should always take into account the spatial organization and land patterns, features, and materials of the cultural landscape itself and, most importantly, should be clearly differentiated so that a false historical appearance is not created.”

Riverside Park Master Plan 2016
DESIGN CHARACTERISTICS OF OLMSTED PARKS

The most succinct list of critical design qualities of Frederick Law Olmsted's landscapes was written by Patricia M. O'Donnell in "Historic Preservation as Applied to Urban Parks" which was published in The Yearbook of Landscape Architecture X year.

STRUCTURES AND SITE AMENITIES

Structures and site amenities were integrated into the landscape through careful placement and emphasis on overall effect. Modest frame or stone comfort stations, maintenance structures, stables, picnic shelters and rustic shelters were blended into the park setting. Bridges, retaining walls and drainage systems were designed with natural or picturesque character. Benches, light standards, drinking fountains and other site amenities of appropriate design and materials were placed in the landscape.

GATHERING SPACES

Gathering spaces were designed for large numbers of people. These spaces were often more formal and were designed in linear or geometric shapes. They were more decoratively appointed than other parts of the parks, with terraces, balustrades, statuary, mosaic paving, intricate light standards and other ornate features. Formal spaces were often edged with rows of trees, which blended away into an informal landscape.

NATURAL SPACES

Natural spaces were created where park visitors could seem to be completely removed from the artificial and man-made. Naturalistic landscapes containing plant materials and water features were composed to provide this type of setting.

ACTIVE RECREATION SETTINGS

Active recreation settings were provided. Pools for swimming or wading, gymnastics equipment, running tracks, tennis courts and baseball diamonds were among the sports facilities included in the design of parks.

DESIGN FOR HARMONY

Design for harmony of all elements was the overall consideration. Each park functioned as a whole, without attention being drawn to individual elements.

PROFUSE PLANTINGS

Profuse plantings were developed in all spaces from casual to formal, and small to large. A broad palette of materials was used, with foliage in varying shades of green. Plants included trees of all sizes, shrubs, vines, wildflowers, ferns, aquatic plants and grasses, but no showy hybrids. Selection was not restricted to native materials but included all plants adaptable to the region. The qualities of each setting were created with plantings; trees were spaced singly or in small groups on a grassy meadow to produce a pastoral effect; stepped materials were composed in masses to enclose and direct views while defining spaces; dense, varied materials were planted on rough ground creating a dappled light and shade to simulate a wild, mysterious environment.

SPATIAL EXTENSION

Spatial extension was achieved through the opening, obscuring and closing of views, forming board vistas and intimate outdoor rooms. The landscape was seemingly enlarged by leading the viewer through a continually changing experience, often in a circuit route.

SEPARATION OF CIRCULATION MODES

Separation of circulation modes was provided through the development of distinct systems of uses; pedestrian, bicycle, equestrian, slow pleasure driving and faster through traffic. Safe intersections of the different modes were designed through the use of grade changes to create overpasses and underpasses. In informal areas gently curving roads and paths were characteristically used.

SEPARATION OF ACTIVITIES

Separation of activities was provided through physical distance and/or screening with landforms and plant materials. Provision for varied uses and the clustering of similar uses minimized potential conflicts in use through design for separation.
**Role of Monuments in the Landscape**

The monuments erected in the park in the early 1900’s grew out of the City Beautiful movement that used artistic monuments to memorialize great people and heroic deaths. Today, Grant’s tomb, the Firemen’s memorial, the Soldiers’ and Sailors’ monument and the Memorial to the 6 Million Jews Martyred are the settings for our city to gather and refresh our memories of our heroes and victims. Their immediate settings provide a stage for ceremonies and a setting that ennobles and accommodates the gathering. From a distance, the monuments enliven the scenery like classical temples did in English Gardens such as Stourhead.

**Recommendations**

- The monuments should be architecturally restored
- Monument settings should be designed to accommodate daily used as well as ceremonial occasions
- Landscapes surrounding memorials should ennoble them at close range and work with the larger scale park landscape
- Views to and from monuments should be opened in accordance with English landscape design qualities.
- Romantic lighting should serve to enhance the use of the setting and visibility from a distance
- Monuments should be treated as evocative buildings in English landscapes.
The City Beautiful era Neo-Classical structures are the defining elements of Riverside Drive. Historic photographs convey open mowed slopes that devolved into wooded areas composed of self-sown trees.

**Williamson Structures**
- These elements should be architecturally restored
- The surrounding vegetation should be thinned to allow them to be seen.

**Riverside Drive** (Placeholder text)
- London Plane trees, asphalt pavement, cobblestone planting strips, settee bench, steel picket fencing.
- **Slopes**
  - The wooded areas should be thinned and pruned to reveal the most shapely trees and open views of the structures and outward to the Hudson River and palisades.
  - Middle story trees and shrubs with seasonal variety should be used to shape views and add interest.
**Moses Era Landscape and Parkway**

These areas represent a 20th century interpretation of English Landscaping and Parkway. These sections place an emphasis on man-made landforms and structures, creating a setting much more contrived than in the Olmstedian sections of the park.

The 1937 path system represents a regularization of the English landscape path system. It is designed for the topography, land uses and destination of the 1937 plan. These landscape areas should be **rehabilitated** using the 1937 plans.

The architectural elements should be architecturally restored using the 1937 plans.

New structures should be constructed using the palette of materials and form vocabulary established in the 1937 plan. They should express the 1937 configuration in gesture and sense of the system as a single work of art.

**Use the 1930s landscape plan as a guide to massing of a new layer of shrubs and middle story trees.**

- Do not replicate the 1930s shrub and vine vocabulary as most of those plants are no longer acceptable due to invasiveness and growth habit. Choose plants that are similar in size and interest to the original planting plan.
- Pay attention to the middle story and flowering trees and make an effort to understand its massing and adjust the new plantings to shape views and block unsightly additions to the park or off site conditions.
- Use multi stem varieties of middle story trees, not trees that have been limbed up for street tree use.
- Add shrubs and trees that will extend the flowering season and add other interest such as winter and fall color.
Formal Areas
The Clarke and Rapuano formal areas, promenades, activity areas and playgrounds should be *rehabilitated* using the 1937 plans.

- These areas should be developed as gathering places for groups and recreational activities in keeping with their original purpose.
- Underused facilities should be considered as sites for new uses or the relocation of existing uses from scenic sections of the park.
- The architectural elements should be architecturally restored using the 1937 plans.
- New structures should be constructed using the palette of materials and form vocabulary established in the 1937 plan.
- Modifications, additions and deletions required to address current circulation requirements and experiential concerns should express the 1937 configuration in gesture and sense of the system as a single work of art.

Parkway
The Clarke and Rapuano parkway and adjacent landscapes should be restored in accordance with the original plans.

- Evaluate the original planting plans in terms of the plant’s ability to grow in the existing conditions. These conditions include shady, sloped areas, heavy use areas, polluted air, and contemporary blights and diseases.
- Future improvements to the highway should restore the art-deco fences or use new ones of a style reminiscent of the originals.
- Signs and lamps should be interpretations of the 1937 designs
The Riverside Park restoration philosophy is to preserve the design characteristics of each phase of the Parks development while joining them into a coherent whole. This approach recognizes the cultural value of each era and allows the restoration plan to be realistic in scope.

In the Olmsted influenced areas of the park it is fitting to use trees, shrubs and ground covers that add seasonal variety, texture and color in a naturalistic way. In the Rapuano landscapes it is appropriate to choose new plants that are of similar character and interest to the original plan in large masses.

This plan recommends the development of themes for each place, consistent with the designers’ original intentions, the attributes and limitations of the setting and our current ecological and horticultural concerns.
**Landscape Maintenance.**
- Create an understanding of the character of the varied landscapes so that appropriate planting and pruning techniques will be employed by everyone working in the Park.
- Restore bare slopes. Continue the program of thinning, drainage control, and planting and erosion control to save them.
- Perform preventative maintenance on the retaining wall, stairs and structures and steel fences.
- Establish a horticulture management plan to maintain the health of historic landscapes.
- Community planting projects should follow the restoration plan.
- Stop the incursion of Norway maples, Ailanthus trees, invasive vines and Japanese knotweed.
- Increase the tree care program.

**Direct the views**
- Plant shrubs and trees to block bad views and muffle noise from the highway.
- Open views of the River, avoid unattractive sections of the New Jersey and the Henry Hudson Parkway.

**In keeping with F.L. Olmsted’s concept of park system connectivity, develop links to Central Park and within the Park.**
- Develop 72nd Street and 110th Street to Central Park as parkways.
- Remove the highway exit which splits the park at 95th Street.
NATURE AND LANDSCAPE PLAN
What are the different types of landscapes in Riverside park?
What are the characteristics of each?

Olmsted landscape types and characteristics

In Olmstedian landscapes Circulation was choreographed through Forest and Pastoral areas where nature was enhanced.

Circulation was designed to allow the participant to enjoy the scenery without distraction. Pleasure was enhanced by separating the different modes of travel, and avoiding direct crossing at the same grade.

Forest areas created a sense of mystery and boundlessness. They formed partial enclosures of lawns and paths, defined spaces, and otherwise heightened the beauty of the strolling experience. They served to direct views, disguise boundaries and make lawns and forests appear more extensive. Forests were “profusely planted” with a broad variety of trees, shrubs, middle story trees and ground covers in irregular masses. The edges of forests were indistinct, with much more variety in shade, shadow and texture than would have been natural.

Pastoral areas created a sense of peacefulness. These are open areas with longer sight-lines, such as sunny lawns and meadows undulating and meandering under and through artfully spaced individual trees and irregular groves. Some trees would have more open canopies with visible branching structures that provide dappled shade, others would have lower or more spreading branches and provide denser shade. Natural features such as rock outcroppings, lakes and streams would have been partially revealed, stimulating curiosity and creating destinations.

Gathering spaces for larger numbers of people were more geometric and decoratively appointed with terraces, balustrades, gardens, and enclosed and shaded by rows of trees.

Rapuano landscapes types and characteristics

Rapuano’s landscapes were the products of the hand of man and machine; defined here as Sculpted, Parkway, and Formal

Sculpted refers to the areas of the park that was reshaped with fill and grading according to Rapuano’s plans. Topography was manipulated to cover the railroad tracks, lift and lower the parkway to accommodate pedestrian tunnels, as well as the orchestrated acceleration and deceleration of autos entering and exiting the parkway. Playgrounds and water spray features were designed to resemble Italian villas integrated into the topography. The paths resemble the paths of the 19th century French Parks by Adolphe Alphand, such as the Bois de Bologna and the Bois de Vincennes.

Formal refers to the lines and grids of London plane trees that shaded and defined recreation areas and gathering spaces such as the promenades. These spaces were articulated with stone pavers, geometrical termini and refined walls which emphasized their man-made design quality. In some cases, such as the active sports area, from 101st Street to 111th Street they were treated much like walled gardens in an Italian villa landscape, walled off from the rest of the park with refined and ornamented masonry that integrated stairs and structures.

Parkway refers to the roadway and environment of man-made landforms, plantings and architecture ensembles. The graceful roadway was intended to give a feeling of exhilaration which was imparted by the uninterrupted forward motion and speed it made possible. Its curving, rising and falling enriched the physical experience as well as the scenic experience. The scenography included scenic views of the Hudson River, sweeps of colorful planting on sunny embankments, abrupt view changes created by the parkway tunnels, and ennobling features such as Rotunda traffic circle and fountain.
NATURE AND LANDSCAPE CONCEPT PLAN

What are the major landscape projects and what should be their character?
CIRCULATION ANALYSIS AND PLAN

What are the pedestrian, bicycle and wheelchair problems and solutions?
Riverside Park Master Plan 2016

Community Concerns & Wishes:

Too much traffic on a narrow walkway • Dedicated bike lanes needed • Sign slow down

Pedestrian and bike paths merge

Boat launch

Riverside Park South

Poor visibility of pedestrians crossing bike path - bikes go fast

Inclined ramp not suitable for cyclists and pedestrians to share

Proposed route of dedicated bike lanes

Pedestrians have a separate path for strolling

Bicycles have a dedicated path. At pedestrian crossings it needs marked crossings with signage for pedestrians to look before crossing.
**Circulation Analysis and Plan**

- **Dangerous Bottleneck** • Confluence of cyclists and pedestrians needs to be modified to prevent accidents

Existent Combined Bicycle and Pedestrian Path
Proposed Dedicated Bicycle Lanes

- **Cyclists and pedestrians share narrow path with many conflicts**
- **Ramp is too steep for wheelchairs**

**Marina gates open into bike route**

**No handicapped access to Rotunda or marine walk**

**Pedestrian and cyclist confusion on how to navigate through Rotunda area**

**Bus layover parking conflicts with bike paths on both sides of 79th Street**

**Stripe a two-way bike route across the west side of the Rotunda traffic circle and ramps.**

**Decrease the grade of the path on both sides of the Rotunda by starting the slope further back.**

Route dedicated bicycle lanes under the steel arches.

Extend stairs and provide an archway for bikes to pass through.

Dedicated bicycle lanes go through the wooded area east of the track and softball fields.
Circulation Analysis and Plan

- Cyclists go too fast • Promenade is the best place to teach bike riding • Need signs to direct people to the water

Existing Combined Bicycle and Pedestrian Path

Proposed Dedicated Bicycle Lanes

Cherry Walk is increasingly vulnerable to flooding and will be underground due to climate change by 2050

Path is much too narrow and steep for bikes and pedestrians

Poor visibility around underpass, conflict on connecting paths

Tunnel sidewalk is much too narrow for bikes and pedestrians

Steep path is attractive to bikes

Existing conditions of shared path between 92 and 95

Proposed separated path with reoriented benches between 92 and 95

View to the seaward
Riverside Park Master Plan 2016

Circulation Analysis and Plan

- **PARK PATHS NEED STRIPING FOR BIKES**
- **BIKES ARE TOO FAST HERE TOO**
- **WIDER PATHS LIKE HUDSON RIVER PARK NEEDED**

**Existing Combined Bicycle and Pedestrian Path**

**Proposed Dedicated Bicycle Lanes**

**TUNNEL SIDEWALK IS MUCH TOO NARROW FOR BIKES AND PEDESTRIANS**

**NARROW SLOPED RAMP SHARED BY BIKES AND PEDESTRIANS WITH POOR VISIBILITY**

**GENERAL BIKE AND PEDESTRIAN CONFLICT**

**VEHICLE EXIT AT 95TH STREET SEVERS PEDESTRIAN WALKWAY**

**CYCLISTS MERGE ONTO PEDESTRIAN PROMENADE FROM 103RD**

**Increase Cherry Walk width to 14-16 feet where possible. Separate bikes and pedestrians with a planted strip.**

**Investigate decreasing width of on-ramp at 125th Street to provide more space. Investigate feasibility of installing flood lights on highway light poles to illuminate Cherry Walk.**

**Investigate concrete grade beams supported by footings to contain pavement.**

Location of proposed bicycle lanes, incorporating parking lot pavement and coordinated with comfort station.

Expand sidewalks inside tunnel at 100th and 93rd Streets. Stripe bike lanes.
Circulation Analysis and Plan

- Would love to see some areas like the promenade as a bike free zone except for children learning - Need to get to river

The bike path is increasingly vulnerable to flooding and will likely be underwater due to climate change by 2050

Stairs at 108th used by cyclists due to proximity to crosstown bike route on 106th

Much too narrow for the amount of bikes and pedestrians using the path

Bikes filter through park from 116th

Possible location for future higher elevation bicycle route

Proposed ramped entrance to park at 111th Street

Best location for a bridge over Parkway at 111th Street if sea level rise does not preclude use of Cherry Walk
Circulation Analysis and Plan

- IT IS TOO DARK ALONG RIVER
- CAR LIGHTS CAUSE GLARE
- CHERRY WALK PAVEMENT IS COLLAPSING
- HIGHWAY IS TOO NOISY

Existing Combined Bicycle and Pedestrian Path
Proposed Dedicated Bicycle Lanes

POOR VISIBILITY WHERE PEDESTRIANS CROSS BIKE PATH, CONFUSION ON WHAT IS BIKE PATH VS. SIDEWALK

Existing conditions of shared shoreline path 100 to 125th Streets

Proposed separated bike path with wall to contain cars and decrease glare
**Circulation Analysis and Plan**

- **CONNECT BIKE PATH TO THE RIVER**
- **PEDESTRIAN AND BIKE CONFLICT**
- **SLOW BIKES HERE**
- **CYCLISTS WARY OF LEAVING BIKES ON PIER**

**Improvements:**

- Improve markings at pedestrian crossing.
- Investigate alternate bike lanes under viaduct.
- Relocate kayak ramp and dock to the main pier. Relocate bicycle rack to less busy area.
- Improve lane marking and lighting under the highway and railroad. Stripe a two-way lane from 138th and Broadway.
Circulation Analysis and Plan

- Existing Combined Bicycle and Pedestrian Path
- Proposed Dedicated Bicycle Lanes
- Path is not striped
- Conflict on shared path / promenade
- Dangerous highway intersection
- No handicapped and poor pedestrian access to park
- Forbidding tunnel with stairs serving crosstown bicycle route
- New ADA compliant bridge at 151st St.

Proposed location for new bike route between ballfields and highway
Convert parking lots to play and picnic areas
New ADA compliant bridge at 151st St.
PROJECT DESCRIPTIONS

Describe the most important projects in detail. Provide project descriptions and budget estimates for all projects.
PRIORITY PROJECTS

The Rotunda will be recognized as a space of civic hospitality and celebration

THE ROTUNDA

The Rotunda will serve as a welcoming vestibule to the Hudson River, and a welcoming gateway for marine vessels from around the world.

The cafe will be enhanced with restored Guastivino vaults, lighting and restrooms. The concourse and expansive terrace will make this place an oasis on hot days.

The fountain restoration will include the circle of bronze turtles spouting arcs of water to the center as well as an illuminated jet of water visible from Broadway over the top of the parapet.

Wheelchair ramps without switchbacks will replace the existing step ramps on both sides of the rotunda. This will be possible by starting the ramps on the east side of the train tunnel.

Bikes will have enhanced access to the dedicated bicycle route on top of the rotunda on dedicated lanes in both directions on 79th Street.

The garage will be dry, illuminated and handicapped accessible. The garage will be a major revenue source for the park if some of the maintenance vehicles and storage facilities are relocated. A larger capacity garage would also improve the marketability of the Marina.

Concourse level spaces will be adapted to serve as the park’s operations and administration headquarters with facilities for information and display.
PRIORITY PROJECTS

placeholder for Marina
PRIORITY PROJECTS

CHERRY WALK

- Increase path width to 14 feet
- Construct a 30 inch tall warm concrete barrier to provide protection from automobiles.
- Where width of land allows provide two lanes for bikes and a separate path for pedestrians.

**PRIORITY PROJECTS**

**CHERRY WALK**

- Install continuous warm concrete wall 30” tall for pedestrian protection.
- Mosaic shrub planting to decrease glare from headlights.
- Illuminate the Cherry walk with hooded wide beam lights from the Parkway poles to decrease cost and vulnerability to flooding.

**CHERRY WALK**

- Construct a 30 inch tall warm concrete barrier to provide protection from automobiles.
- Where width of land allows provide two lanes for bikes and a separate path for pedestrians.
PRIORITY PROJECTS

Mid Park Play Zone

- Water play and Play Art venue
- New playground with tree canopy platform and climbing net
- Wood platforms for picnicking over tunnel opening
- Temporary art play installations and performances that increase place identity

Location of new temporary uses
PRIORITY PROJECTS

New Drainage and Enhanced Landscape Character

- Jogging path with mulch on top and trench drain
- Middle story evergreen trees enhance scenic landscape
- Small native shrubs to provide beauty and attract wildlife
- New entrance with wheelchair and carriage ramp at 111th Street
PRIORITY PROJECTS

Reconstruct Riverside Drive and Enhance Island Landscapes

- Maintain the Elm inspection program
- Plant disease resistant Elm trees with vase shape branching
- Redesign pipe rail fence for improved durability and ease of repair
- Replace concrete and wood benches with “City Hall” bench
- Regrade lawn panels to detain and absorb storm water
- Replace missing lamp posts with 8 foot “B” poles and Riverside luminaires
- Be cautious with curb and pavement replacement to avoid root damage and root zone soil compaction

- Regrade Riverside Drive to direct storm water to the median
- Install new storm sewer near the median
- Widen the median and increase depth of planting soil for trees

- Restore Olmstedian landscapes
- Replace chain link with steel picket fence
- Provide landscape irrigation
- Install Bishop Crook street lights
Standards
Placeholder for ENTRANCES

- Create a welcoming atmosphere and provide attractive views into the park.
- Entrances with natural features such as outcroppings and landscapes should have plantings that frame them and benches facing towards them.
- When possible include plantings of seasonal beauty placed to be visible from seated people on the perimeter.
- Plantings should be protected from dog urination, foot traffic and park vehicles. Perimeter fencing should be as transparent as possible and sufficient to protect plantings from foot traffic and dog urination. Most likely a 3-foot picket fence, so that seated people can see over it into the park.
- Entrances with natural features such as outcroppings and landscapes should have plantings that frame them and benches facing towards them.
- Entrances are an opportunity for social arrangements of benches.
- Park lighting fixtures should be spaced so as to provide at least 1 foot candle on the pavement and not cause glare.
- If the surrounding land uses are objectionable in appearance from inside the park, landscape buffer plantings should be installed to provide interest inside the park.
- Seating should be arranged and designed to meet the needs of the adjacent population such as senior centers and day care centers.
- In less public areas should be designed to discourage domination by a single person.
- Provide coordinated greeting signage with locator map, rules and space for public notices.
Standards

Placeholder for SIGNAGE

Provide greeting signage with orientation maps, rules, space for events postings, as well as contact information for the Parks Administrator, and 311 numbers.
Standards

Placeholder for FURNITURE
Standards
Placeholder for LIGHTING

9 foot “B” pole

Riverside Park Luminaire
Describe plans prepared by others that were consulted in the preparation of this plan.
PRIOR PLANS & STUDIES

TAKE ME TO THE RIVER

Enchanted Forest - Return the hillside between 145 and 151st Streets in Riverside Park to a series of sloping lawns with open views to the Hudson. First steps are forestry survey management plan and historic landscape report. Funded by DCR after TMTTR 2005 Concept Plan, but needs matching funds. This would reconnect the neighborhood with the waterfront by opening up views of the Hudson River now blocked by overgrown woods in Riverside Park and recapturing the use of historic existing overlooks along Riverside Drive.

Historic Landmarks & Districts Designation Reports - To research feasibility of proposed new or consolidated historic districts & landmarks, and consensus building for political & community dialogue and support.

Linear Park/Plaza & 155th Street Renovation - Several smaller projects implemented together or separately to upgrade entire block between Broadway and Riverside Drive with new pavements (currently cobble stones), bike routes, signage, banners, pedestrian and facade lights, and art. A new public park/plaza at the Broadway end. Renovation will bring Hamilton Heights and Washington Heights together for large outdoor street events. The linear park has great Hudson River views and will help attract new visitors to Audubon Terrace.

Waterfront Access Routes: TMTTR is driven by this community’s passion for reconnecting with their greatest natural resource and historic heritage, the Hudson River. While West Harlem’s privileged location overlooking the River is enviable, there are substantial natural and man-made obstacles to accessing it. This framework is structured around a series of east-west streets that create a network of circulation and activity throughout the community. Each of these waterfront routes leads to either an entrance to Riverside or Riverbank State Parks, or to a significant neighborhood feature along Riverside Drive such as an overlook, playground, or garden.

The following box shows key recommendations for implementing the community’s vision of the residential neighborhood and waterfront routes.

Residential Neighborhood & Waterfront Routes

- Conduct a traffic study to determine if lane reduction is possible
- If so, reduce travel lanes on 135th Street between Broadway and Riverside Drive to allow extra space for bike lanes and streetscaping
- Add new planting, lighting and other streetscape elements
- Implement all planting, lighting and other streetscape elements
- Improve access to waterfront through improvements for cyclists, signage, and streetscaping that lead visitors to the parks at 135, 138, 139, 142, 145, 149, 151, 153, and 155th Streets
North Waterfront Play and Picnic Grounds as designed and approved in the Fort Washington Park Master Plan