



**Report to Hudson River Park Advisory Council  
March 31, 2025**

**Save the date for SUBMERGE – Friday May 16 & Saturday May 17**

It's almost time to kick off the 2025 season with a Park favorite, the SUBMERGE Marine Science Festival! SUBMERGE will be held on the Park's Pier 84 on Friday May 16 and Saturday May 17 with plans to welcome nearly 40 partner organizations during the two-day festival. On Friday, NYC schools attend SUBMERGE during organized festival field trips where students can meet local wildlife, engage with hands-on demonstrations and more. Saturday's events are fully open to the public and feature science shows, wildlife touch tanks, fishing, kayaking and fun for all ages.

Hudson River Park is excited to welcome a wide range of partners to this year's event including NYC Parks, NYS Dept of Environmental Conservation, NY Academy of Sciences, several CUNY and SUNY institutions, Billion Oyster Project and many more. We are also grateful to the numerous Park tenants who participate in this important event, and we're excited to be joined by the Intrepid Museum, Manhattan Kayak, Hudson River Community Sailing, Village Community Boathouse and NY Outrigger.

We hope to see you there! Visit [hudsonriverpark.org/submerge](http://hudsonriverpark.org/submerge) to learn more!

**Design and Construction**

*Pier 97*

Just south of Pier 97, we are completing some minor asphalt work at the joint between the bikeway and pedestrian areas near the bow notch area, and expect to reopen that area in early April. All work on the new park building is substantially complete and we are now working to secure the regulatory sign-off inspections required to open to the public later this spring.

*W 29- W 44 Street Design*

Using feedback obtained at January's very successful public engagement meeting, Marvel has been developing some initial conceptual alternatives the upland area between Pier 79 and Pier 84 and for the portions of Pier 84 slated for improvement as part of the design process. We are looking forward to sharing these concepts with the community (including the Advisory Council) for additional feedback and input as soon as they are ready.

The design team has also been continuing to gather information and make observations about the upland area between the privately owned Pier 78 and the NYCDOT Ferry Terminal at Pier 79. HRPT and the design team have had discussions with both NYCDOT and NYCEDC to share and discuss this information. We subsequently held informative meetings with Pier 78 and New York Waterway as well. We have communicated to all parties that we hope we can work collaboratively together to improve this area for collective benefit. Solutions for this zone will depend on coordination among all parties, and we look forward to sharing more information and gathering public input on this area at a future meeting.

### *Turf Replacement - Piers 46 & 25*

Thanks for funding from Council Member Erik Bottcher, this Spring the Trust is going to be replacing the turf athletic field at Pier 46. The Trust also expects to replace the turf at Pier 25 this fall. Both fields show significant wear and are beyond their expected lifespan. At both Pier 25 and Pier 46, work will include replacing the turf carpet and infill systems, along with repair work to the perimeters and recycling of the existing turf carpet. The work will require temporary closure of the pier, although we will be working with the contractor to maintain as much public access as is safely possible.

### *Pier 40*

As previously reported, the Trust hired Hudson Meridian in 2024 to oversee the range of capital maintenance work needed at Pier 40. Hudson Meridian and Trust staff have been working on detailed logistics planning for the first tranche of work which includes garage structural repairs and fire suppression system work in nearly every corner of Pier 40. Hudson Meridian in collaboration with the engineer of record will now be completing construction documents and will be obtaining bids, with a target construction start date in September. Given the nature and scale of the work, garage operations, HRPT offices and maintenance areas, and tenant/permittee spaces will all be affected to some degree. Staff is endeavoring to plan the work to minimize disruptions to tenants and HRPT operations where feasible, and will certainly coordinate in advance including with tenants. At this time, we do not expect this phase of work to impact the Pier 40 ballfields, though eventual work on the loading dock will be required too. While bidding the first tranche of work proceeds, logistics planning and coordination for future scopes, including the loading dock roof and other work throughout Pier 40, will proceed.

### *Marine Construction*

HRPT has entered into a five-year contract with Reicon Group, LLC for marine repairs at various locations throughout the Park. The thousands of individual piles supporting public park piers and the bulkhead require regular inspections and as-needed capital maintenance. The Trust has identified a series of piles and areas that require attention to ensure they remain in a state of good repair. Subject to securing regulatory approvals, we anticipate starting work this summer.

### *Parkwide Construction Management Services*

The Trust has entered a contract with M&J Engineering as on-call construction manager to support capital maintenance and repair projects that we expect will occur over the next few years, such as replacement of the synthetic turf at Piers 25 and 46, and repairs to the roofs at Pier 25 Mini-Golf and the Piers 66, 84 and 96 Boathouses. The Trust uses construction managers as our chief representative in the field during construction and to manage construction start-up, construction, and post-construction services on behalf of the Trust as required. The Trust will of course separately engage with stakeholders – e.g., our boathouse permittees -- as specific designs for each project come together.

### *West 26th Street Maintenance Building*

Work to repair the fire damage has been completed apart from the new electronic door locks that have been delayed due to supply chain issues with the manufacturer. These locks are expected to arrive in April. In the meantime, the building is now secured with temporary locks and is available for use by staff.

### *Pier 45 Shade Structures*

The Trust has issued a work order to our on-call contractor to repaint the metal supports and to replace the fabric on the existing shade structures at Pier 45. The contractors are currently scraping

and painting the metal work while the fabric is cut to shape off site. This work is scheduled to be complete – and shade returned – prior to the summer season.

#### *Art Restoration*

The Trust's contractor EverGreene Architectural Arts recently commenced work on the mural in the Pier 40 lobby, and will next make repairs to the LGBT Memorial and the base for the Apple sculpture located near Pier 46. EverGreene will also professionally clean the Two Too Large Tables at 29th Street.

### **Real Estate and Planning**

#### *Pier 40 Youth Baseball Facility Operator*

In early March, the Trust attended a meeting of Manhattan Community Board 2's Waterfront & Parks committee focused on the future of space on the south side of Pier 40 that has long been occupied by P3. Prior to the meeting, the Trust had committed publicly to maintaining this space for youth sports, and that we would not be seeking to introduce a commercial use there.

At the well-attended meeting, the Trust heard the community's strong interest in seeing this space continue to be used for baseball/softball training and programs. Unlike soccer, baseball cannot safely be played outdoors year-round in locations with cold seasonal weather such as New York City. Older children and teenagers are capable of hitting hard balls fast and at substantial distances, making baseball a sport that demands controlled space for safety – another benefit of having access to indoor space for training.

Earlier this month, the Trust issued a Request for Proposals seeking experienced not-for-profit organizations to operate and maintain the Premises to conduct and promote affordable, year-round youth Baseball (and softball) programming at scale for children at all skill levels. By providing indoor space for baseball training, the Trust intends to continue to support safe, four-season youth baseball to occur in the Park for players at all skill levels, and at greater scale than if only exterior fields were offered for play.

In lieu of paying rent, the RFP and eventual permit will require the Permittee to demonstrate substantial community benefit to the public on a continuing basis throughout the Term of the permit.

#### **Public Safety**

With the arrival of Spring and the annual increase in park use and pedestrian traffic, there is an expectation that there will be a corresponding increase in petty crimes and thefts in the coming months based on past history. We have already seen some recent thefts at Pier 40 including the theft of an unattended cell phone and an attempted theft of an unlocked bicycle that was thwarted by PEP.

While crime overall in the park is down, there were two noteworthy crimes that occurred recently. On March 17, at about 4:30 PM, a woman walking on the esplanade near the security gate at Gansevoort Peninsula, had her Apple headphones snatched from her head by a group of apparent youths on bicycles. The perpetrators then fled north on the bikeway. The theft was captured by a camera system and valuable investigative video footage has been provided to the NYPD 6th Precinct Detective Squad.

On March 20, 2025, at about 1:00 AM, an apparently emotionally disturbed person intentionally broke the glass door to our maintenance room at Pier 84 by repeatedly throwing rocks at it. The person did not enter the location and fled the park immediately thereafter.

#### *Annual Field Permittee Meeting*

On March 11, the annual field permittees meeting was held at Pier 40 at which time those in attendance were reminded of the need to remain vigilant and protect their property when using the fields. We cannot stress enough the message; **DO NOT LEAVE VALUABLES UNATTENDED AT THE FIELDS**. There are white HRPT storage boxes placed throughout the field that groups can use to store their bags more securely. Groups should designate somebody to watch their bags. If you see someone acting suspiciously on the fields, please notify the Operations Desk at 212-242-6427.

#### *Dog Rule Enforcement*

With the warm weather fast approaching PEP has stepped up their enforcement efforts to address unleashed dogs and dogs in prohibited areas of the park. Hudson River Park is narrow, with the West Side Highway and one of the busiest bikeways in the nation on one side and the Hudson River's dangerous currents on the other. Keeping dogs on a leash outside of dog parks helps protect them and helps keep other dogs, wildlife and Park patrons safe. See our educational pamphlet about dog rules [here](#).

### **Environmental and Sanctuary Initiatives**

#### *ESMP Full TAC Meeting*

In February, we hosted our annual ESMP Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) for a thorough review of our 2024 progress and discussion on priorities and projects for 2025. We welcomed our TAC experts in all three management areas representing organizations like NY/NJ Harbor Estuary Program, Army Corps, NYS DEC, NYC City Planning, Billion Oyster Project, Hudson River Community Sailing, and the Intrepid Museum. Hudson River Park's River Project team kicked off the meeting by sharing successes in Public Access & Resource Management, Environmental Education, and Research & Habitat Enhancement. There was an opportunity for questions and discussion at the conclusion of each management area presentation. Kate O'Malley from our Design & Construction team also provided an update on the Estuarium design, which invited some feedback on helping the exhibits and aquaria feel dynamic overtime. The second half of the meeting was dedicated to a group discussion. We invited TAC members to offer ideas on priority projects and themes as we approach our halfway point. We also explored how to best capture our collective impact and share successes from partner and tenant projects that take place in the Park's Estuarine Sanctuary.

#### *Seasonal Hiring*

Our River Project team's hiring process is underway for the coming season, with seasonal roles focused on environmental education and field science. Each year, these positions recruit current college students and young professionals to support science and education work throughout the Park. We work with many partners as a part of our annual recruitment including CUNY, the LifeSci NYC Network, Park Visiting Scholars and other local institutions.

We're also excited to share that we've been selected as a host site once again for a Pace University Wilson Center for Social Impact summer fellow. We will be working with Pace staff to identify a current undergraduate student to join our team this summer as a part of that program. Pace is also planning to highlight Hudson River Park as a successful fellowship site during an upcoming panel at the Wilson

Center where our River Project staff and one of our previous fellows will be sharing more about the impact and value of this partnership.

## **Public Programs**

### *Events & Permits*

As we eagerly await the arrival of spring, we're also gearing up for an exciting programming season that will offer people of all ages opportunities to dance, enjoy live music, explore the Park, and experience a variety of cultural events. While our official season announcement will come in mid-April, we're thrilled to share a sneak peek at some of the exciting events ahead!

New this year, Pier 45 will host a Juneteenth celebration curated by the Ladies of Hip-Hop, featuring dance classes, live music, and interactive experiences that honor this significant day in American history. Meanwhile, an expanded season of Broadway by the Boardwalk will bring an incredible lineup of talent to Clinton Cove in July and August, and the 25th annual Blues BBQ will offer even more fantastic food and music when it returns in August.

The Park is a popular place for events and the Public Programs team is also well into warm weather planning – with permitted run/walk events, celebrations and more happening in the Park. Some highlights include Hyrox returning to Pier 76 for their athletic competition, along with hosting some citywide events like Bike MS.

### *Spring Field Season*

With the spring field season now underway, demand for field time remains high. A total of 63 leagues have been permitted, providing 6,900 hours of practice and play for 25 youth organizations and 38 adult organizations. Applications for the summer season opened on March 17 and are due by April 18. In response to permittee feedback, we have aligned our permitting cycles with NYC Parks to streamline the application process.

Beginning this fall, permit applications will follow this updated schedule:

Fall Season - September 1 – November 30 - Apply between June 16 & 30

Winter Season - December 1 – March 31 - Apply between September 1 & 15

Spring Season - April 1 – June 15 - Apply between December 1 & 21

Summer Season - June 16 – August 31 - Apply between April 1 & 14

## **Operations & Facilities**

### *Snow Operations*

This winter we saw a significant amount of snow and ice accumulation. The Operations team spent 850 hours plowing, shoveling and deicing to maintain safe paths.

### *Park Water*

Facilities staff will begin to reenergize water systems to the drinking fountains and ground hydrants parkwide from April 1 through April 15. With miles of pipes and systems to be checked, this is a significant mobilization for the Operations team. All display fountains and splash park water features in the playgrounds will be turned on at the end of May, in time for Memorial Day weekend.

### *SDOT's Bikeway Improvements*

State DOT has continued coordination with the Trust on the bikeway security improvement project. Most recently, State DOT's contractors completed the upgrades in the Christopher Street area which included the installation of bollard arrays and a raised plant bed. Bollard arrays were also installed at the Clarkson St. crosswalk, replacing a concrete planter and on the bikeway at Canal St in replacement of the concrete Jersey barriers.

### *Pier 40 Entrance Traffic*

City DOT installed a traffic turning light at the Rt. 9A southbound right lane, turning into Pier 40. The new light coincides with the existing traffic light for the bike lane, providing a controlled and safer shared space for both cyclists and vehicle operators.

The Operations staff coordinated a striping project on the frontage of Pier 40 which involved re-striping existing striping areas for better visibility and sketching new hatched crosswalk lines at garage ingress/egress points to better enhance safety for pedestrians and vehicle operators.

### *Spring Light Audit*

The Operations staff will be conducting the biannual bikeway and Parkwide light audit on March 26th. While the Trust will correct any lighting issues on the park's side, all bikeway lighting outages will be shared with City and State DOT.

### *Tree Pruning & Lawn Preparation*

As part of our Spring preparation efforts, the Trust brought in a contractor to perform some tree maintenance throughout the Park. The first area for maintenance was in Chelsea, where we pruned the willows. The Trust has also been aerating the lawns to help ensure they are healthy and strong for the another season of intensive warm weather use.

## Hudson River Park Transferable Development Rights Explainer

In 2013, following a Task Force process, the Hudson River Park Act was amended in a number of important respects. Among the changes was a new provision that allows the Trust to sell “any unused development rights as may be available for transfer to properties located up to one block east of the park’s boundaries, if and to the extent permitted under local zoning ordinances.” The Act as amended further specified that any revenues derived from the transfer of any unused development rights from Pier 40 be used “in the first instance” for the repair of Pier 40’s infrastructure.

Subsequent to the law’s enactment, the Trust began working with City Planning to explore that agency’s willingness to consider amending existing zoning regulations to allow the transfers. City Planning ultimately approved creation of the “Special Hudson River Park District” generally to promote the development of the Park and the repair and rehabilitation of its piers, bulkheads, and infrastructure. To accomplish this, City Planning established a special permit and mapping mechanism that considers each proposed transfer of development rights on a site-by-site basis. While the basic special permit mechanism is applicable to the entire district, individual ULURPs are required to amend the zoning text each time a granting and associated receiving site is proposed.

For City Planning to consider a requested transfer of development rights from a specific site(s) within Hudson River Park to an eligible inland site(s) within one block of the Park, there must first be a potential purchaser that controls a *receiving site*. City Planning must determine whether it is willing to consider the requested upzoning or rezoning at that parcel, subject also to environmental review and the Trust’s requirements. City Planning’s practice has then been to refer the potentially interested party to the Trust to discuss the Trust’s willingness to consider selling unused development rights from a Park *granting site(s)*. Assuming the Trust is interested, City Planning requires ULURP applications for potential transfers to include, prior to certification:

- a survey of the granting site(s) inclusive of zoning calculations;
- a survey of the receiving site inclusive of zoning calculations;
- drawings and other information regarding the proposed development on the receiving site;
- a statement from the Trust identifying improvements to be made to Hudson River Park, and indicating that monies generated by the transfer of floor area, in combination with any other available funding, would be sufficient, according to the Trust’s estimate, to complete the work.

City Planning must agree that the Trust’s proposed granting sites are sufficient and appropriate for the proposed transaction, but is not involved in the Trust’s negotiations with the prospective purchaser of development rights with respect to determining the sales price. The Trust may not sell the development rights without first conducting a fair market appraisal. The Trust must also conduct its “Significant Action” process before agreeing to sell development rights, though this Trust public process can proceed simultaneous with ULURP. However only after ULURP and the Significant Action process are completed, and payment is made, can granting and receiving sites be mapped in the Special Hudson River Park District and the transfer occur.

To date, the Trust has completed three transferable development right (TDR) sales:

- 200,000 square feet from Pier 40 to the St. John’s Terminal project opposite Pier 40 for \$100 million (a price that exceeded the value of the development rights due to unique circumstances). As part of the ULURP, the Trust agreed to extinguish future sales from Pier 40.

- 123,437.5 square feet from Piers 59, 60 and 61 and the associated headhouse from Chelea Piers to the Douglaston Block 675 Receiving Site on West 29<sup>th</sup> Street.
- 29,625 square feet from Piers 59, 60 and 61 and the associated headhouse from Chelsea Piers to the Lalezarian Block 675 Receiving Site on West 30<sup>th</sup> Street.

The proceeds from these sales have been incredibly valuable for enabling the Trust to accomplish both new construction and crucial capital maintenance. At Pier 40, we completed a comprehensive pile repair program plus life safety and other improvements. The proceeds from the two Block 675 sales helped us construct the Chelsea Waterside Park restroom building and Pier 97 new park, and a portion of those funds are set aside for the new park area from 29<sup>th</sup>-44<sup>th</sup> Streets that is now in design – all priorities of Community Board 4 stated during the ULURP process. Looking to the future, new pier and public park space at Pier 76 will be very expensive and can only benefit from the availability of TDR sale proceeds. TDR sale proceeds can also help address future capital maintenance needs in the Park.

For reference, the Trust does not have surveys identifying the total amount of remaining development rights that we can provide you. The basic procedure for determining available development rights is to survey the footprint of the above water pier structure, multiply it by the FAR permitted under existing zoning (2 FAR under the Park’s M2-3 zoning), and then subtract the square footage of those above deck pier structures defined as “buildings” under the zoning resolution. We conduct these surveys one-at-a-time when we are in negotiations with prospective purchasers.

The Trust has recently been approached by the owners of 629 W54th Street and 801 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue, both in CB4, about a potential sale of TDRs to facilitate two affordable MIH housing projects as part of what City Planning now calls the Dewitt Clinton Park North ULURP. The combined square footage for the two potential transfers, indicated at the ULURP’s initial scoping meeting, is approximately 148,000 square feet. While there have been preliminary discussions with the two developers, at this time there is no formal offer on the table to acquire these TDRs, the Trust has not committed to specific granting sites within the park that would be used, and the private application is not yet certified into ULURP.

As part of the ULURP for sales to the properties on Block 675 at 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> Streets, the survey and zoning analysis was completed that indicated the availability of 468,701 square feet of unused development rights at Chelsea Piers. The square footage ultimately transferred to Block 675 was approximately 158,000 square feet and, as part of the recent 2022 lease with Chelsea Piers, 100,000 square feet is now reserved should Chelea Piers and the Trust ever agree to an infill expansion at the complex. This leaves approximately 211,000 square feet available for transfer from Chelsea Piers.

To provide the Trust with additional flexibility should the Dewitt Clinton Park North ULURP eventually proceed, we are also considering the availability of unused development rights from Circle Line (Piers 81 and 83), Con Ed (Pier 98), as well as those remaining from Chelsea Piers. These piers were disclosed as potential granting sites by the developer/applicants during the ULURP scoping. From previous work we know that the footprint of Pier 98 is approximately 38,000 square feet and the combined area of the two Circle Line piers is about 100,000 square feet. We have not yet surveyed the buildings on those piers. For Pier 76, since we do not yet know what type of commercial use may ultimately be on a portion of that pier (in addition to public open space), we do not know whether there will be unused development rights available from the pier.