

# Northern Manhattan Parks 2030 Master Plan

July 2011

Updates:  
April 2012

Michael R. Bloomberg  
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Mayor  
Commissioner of Parks & Recreation  
Assistant Commissioner of Planning & Parklands  
Northern Manhattan Parks Administrator  
Principal Urban Designer





# Northern Manhattan Parks

## Master Plan:

## PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

*Make a plan that can be implemented over the next 20 years by coordinating the efforts of elected officials, NYC Parks, City agencies, community members and non-profit partners.*

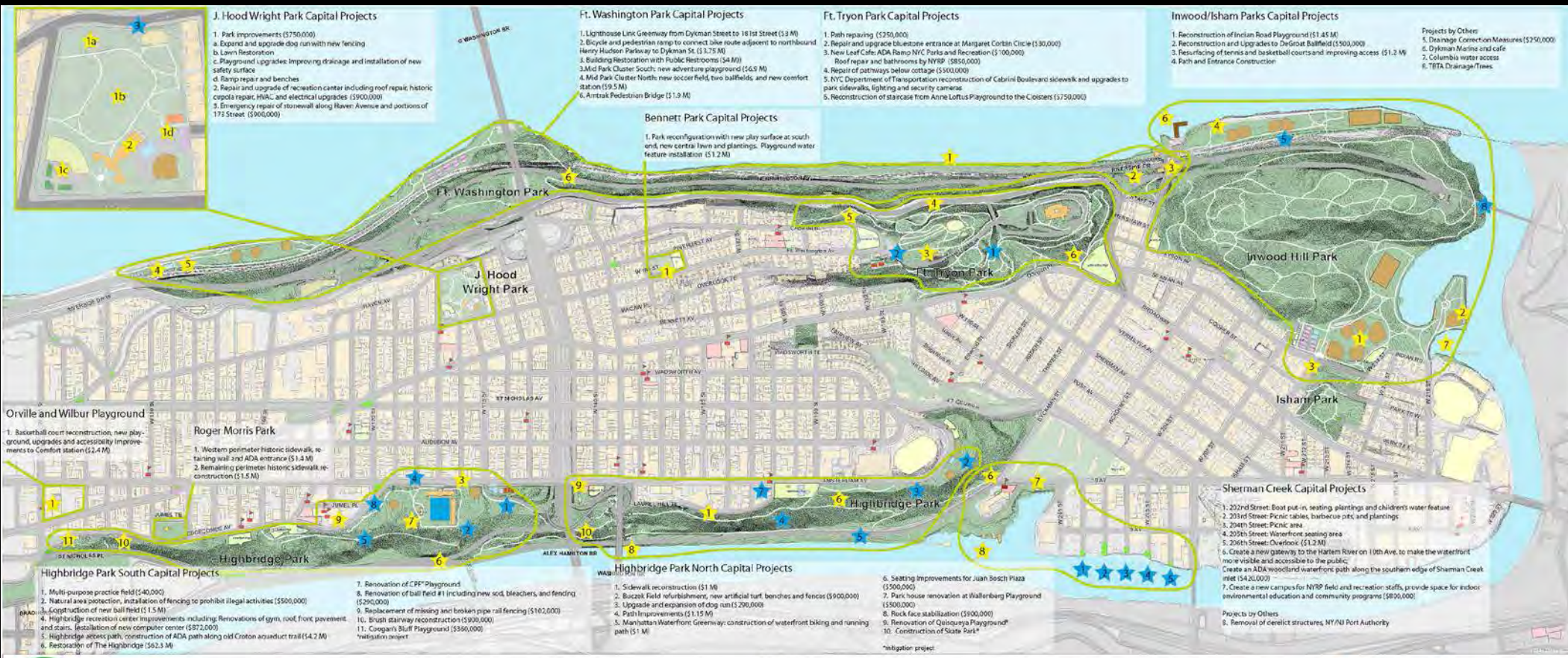


NYC Parks



Over \$150 million in capital projects have been recently completed or are underway

Identify and coordinate the next projects that will address community concerns and recreational needs as well as restore infrastructure and ecology.





Stitch the parks together as a system of ecological areas, scenic paths, bike routes, and river access points. Distribute recreational facilities needed by the whole community.

Neighborhood embraced by 5 major parks and 9 miles of shoreline

*Ft. Washington*

*Ft. Tryon*

*Inwood Hill*

*Isham*

*Highbridge*

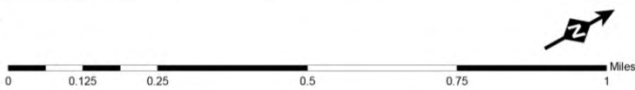
155<sup>th</sup> Street

Population 208,000 678 acres of parkland 3.2 acres per 1000 people



More than 20 groups are currently engaged in improving Northern Manhattan Parks

Advance the work of non-profit partners and volunteers.





## Success of the Master Plan depends on:

1. Shared understanding of the park problems and community needs
2. Commitment to the proposed solutions, and to obtaining funding for them
3. Coordinated long-term effort between agencies, non-profit partners, community groups and elected officials to fund and implement projects





# Northern Manhattan Parks

## Master Plan: PLANNING GOALS



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*Identify and address community concerns, waterfront design and access, pedestrian and bicycle circulation, recreational needs and preferences, as well as ecological and sustainability goals, community health and fitness, service and security problems.*



Interview community  
members, non-profit  
groups and  
representatives of  
elected officials

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# GreenTimes

*Grown in Washington Heights, Inwood and the Bronx by the the Manhattan Times, the Bronx Free Press and their partners.*

## Your idea goes here...

by Laura Gabby

"We're talking to the local experts," said Adena Long, principal strategic planner at the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation. "We think it's better to engage people first."

Long and Charles McKinney, principal urban designer at Parks, sat at a small table amidst an array of potted plants and flowers on the roof of "the Arsenal" in Central Park, originally built to be a munitions depot for the national guard and later turned into the Parks Department's central offices.

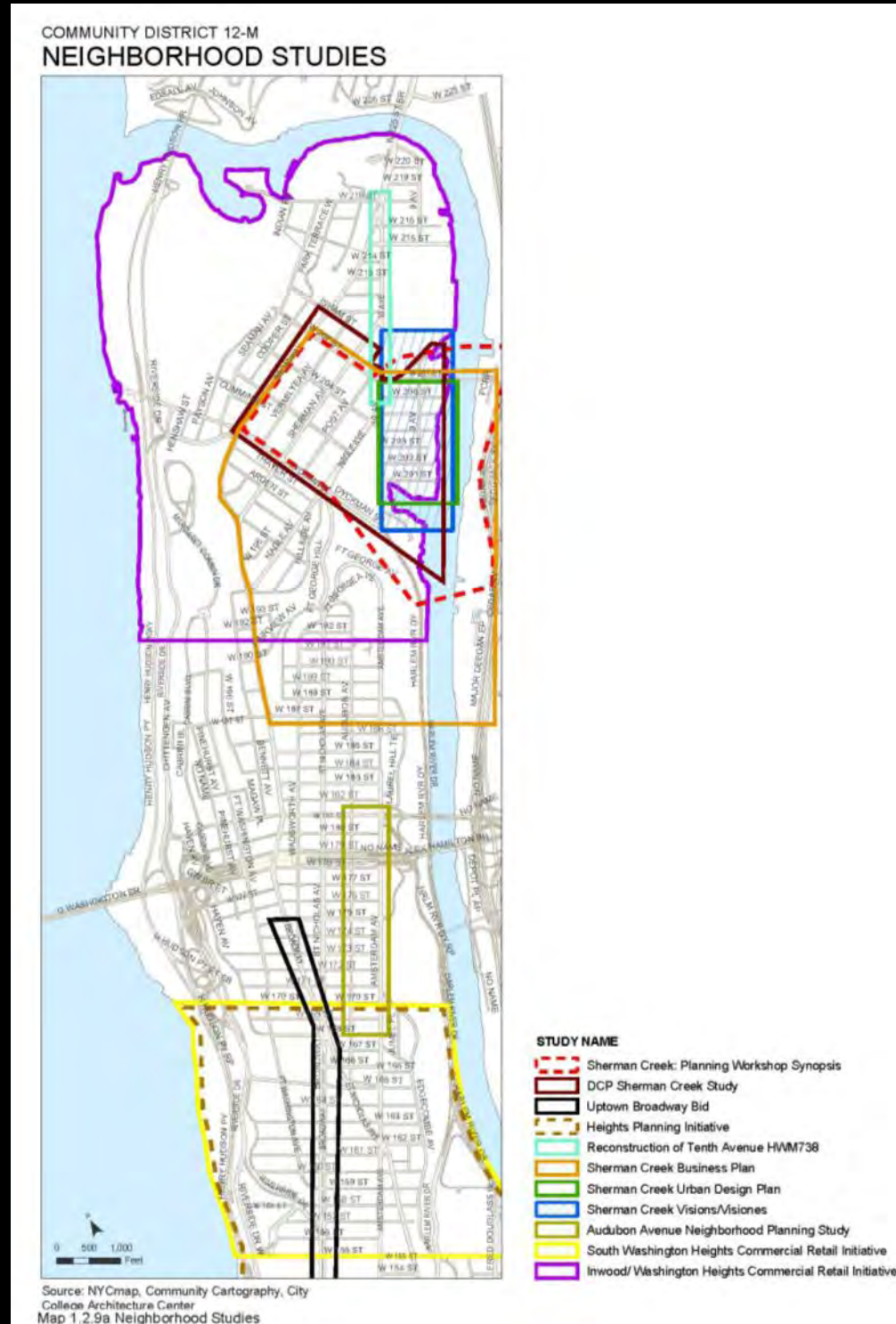
Long and McKinney were discussing the



## Build on the planning efforts of other agencies and groups

- Department of Transportation
- City Planning
- Department of Health
- New York Restoration Project
- Partnerships for Parks
- City College
- Parks Capital Projects
- Prior Parks Master Plans
- Natural Resources Group

**Facilitate the formation of stewardship groups and partners** who will assist with implementation





**Make extensive use of internal experts:**

- Partnerships for Parks
- Natural Resources Group
- Rangers
- Parks Inspection Program
- Operations division

Implement the  
**21<sup>st</sup> Century Park  
Design Guidelines**

Advance the goals of  
**PlaNYC**

Advance the goals of the  
**NYC Waterfront Plan  
Vision 2020**

Incorporate the  
**FIT City Active Design  
Guidelines**



# Northern Manhattan Parks

## Master Plan:

## INFORMATION GATHERING

*Learn what people know, what they are concerned about, what they are working on and what more they think can be done. Review existing studies, interview elected officials, leaders, Parks Department and external experts.*



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We conducted work sessions with maps to record concerns, wishes and existing projects:

- Restore forest health, views and ecology
- Increase river access
- Connect bike paths
- Restore paths and historic features
- Increase enforcement of drug laws
- Prevent homeless encampments
- Improve park cleanliness
- Connect communities to the park





We worked with Community Board 12 to develop a vision for the Master Plan:

1. Connect parks to neighborhoods through the creation of green corridors and prominent gathering spaces
2. Prioritize safe, well-maintained and accessible parks
3. Offer programming, features and amenities that will serve the community's needs and diverse interests
4. Protect the integrity of the natural environment, including the unique geology, forest, wildlife and wetlands
5. Provide safe and convenient access to bicycle and watercraft for both recreation and commuting
6. Advance design concepts that are relevant to the culture of the community







Inwood and Washington Heights at a Glance

Population

Total number of people living in Inwood and Washington Heights in 2000:

270,700

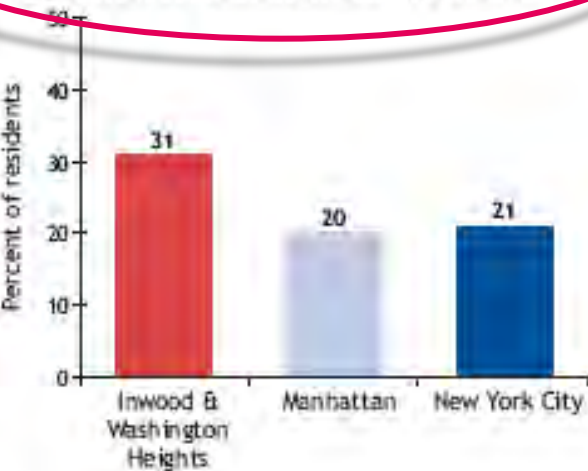
Age

People in Inwood and Washington Heights are similar in age to those in New York City overall

	Inwood & Washington Heights	Manhattan	NYC
0-17 years	26%	17%	24%
18-24 years	12%	10%	10%
25-44 years	32%	38%	33%
45-64 years	20%	23%	21%
65+ years	10%	12%	12%

Poverty

In Inwood and Washington Heights, the percent of residents living below the poverty level is higher than in Manhattan and NYC overall



26% of the population is under 17 years old

Inwood and Washington Heights residents aged 25 and older have completed fewer years of education than those in NYC overall

	Inwood & Washington Heights	Manhattan	NYC
Up to 8th grade	24%	10%	12%
Some high school, no diploma	21%	11%	16%
High school diploma	19%	14%	25%
Some college, no degree	18%	16%	20%
College graduate	18%	49%	27%

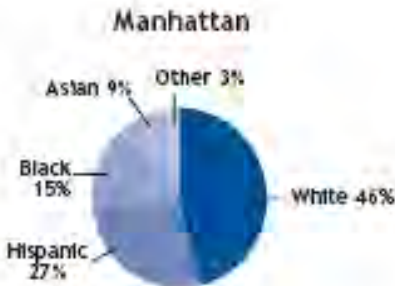
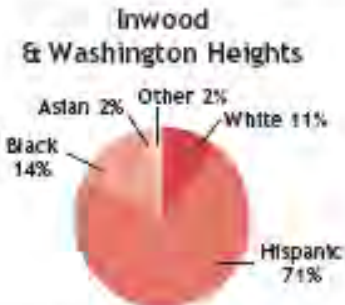
Foreign-born

More than half of Inwood and Washington Heights residents were born outside the U.S.

	Inwood & Washington Heights	Manhattan	NYC
Foreign-born	51%	29%	36%

Race / Ethnicity

Inwood and Washington Heights have a much higher proportion of Hispanic residents than Manhattan and NYC overall

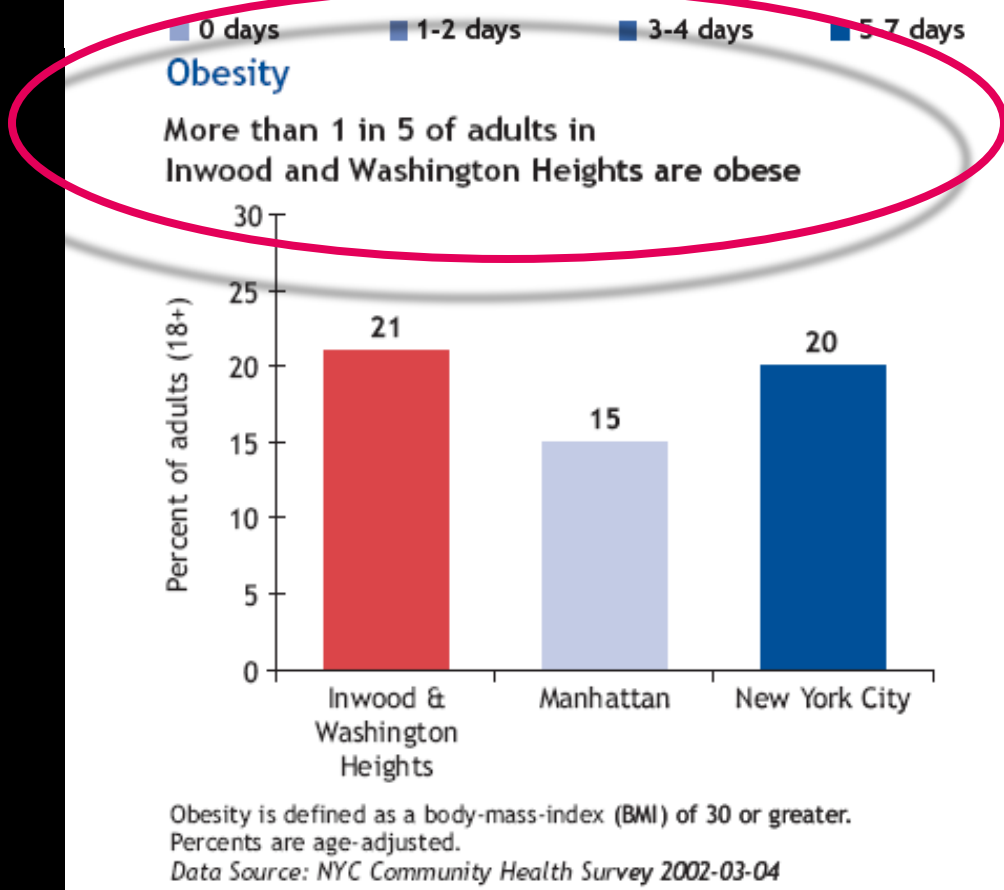
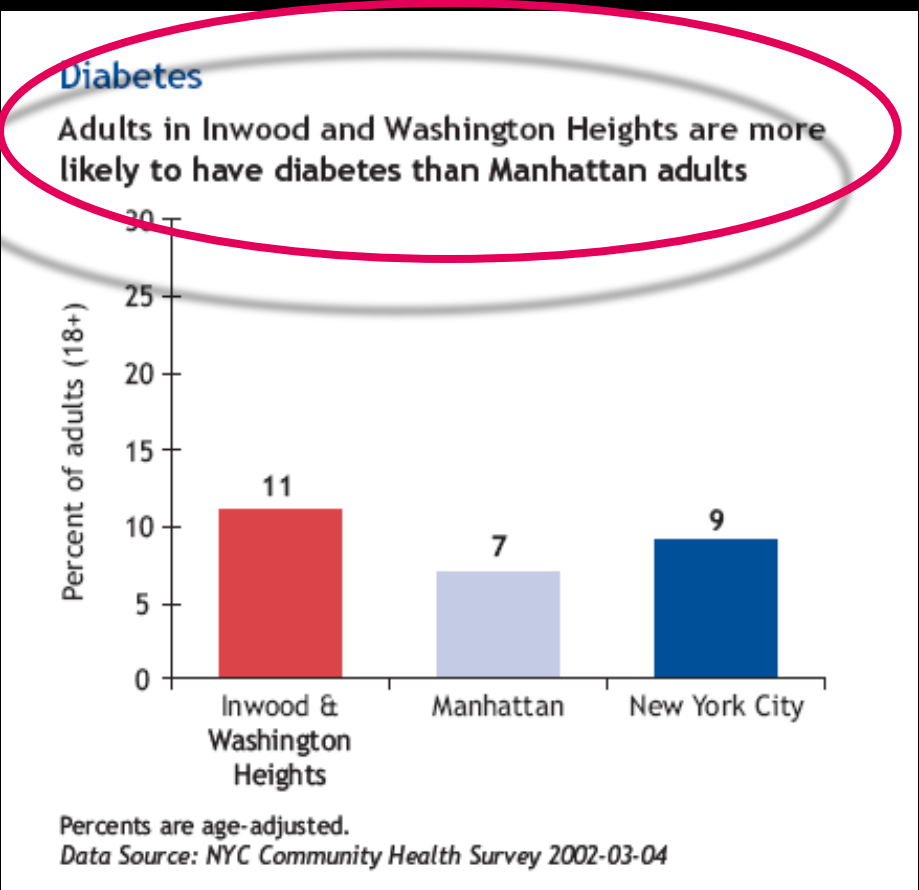
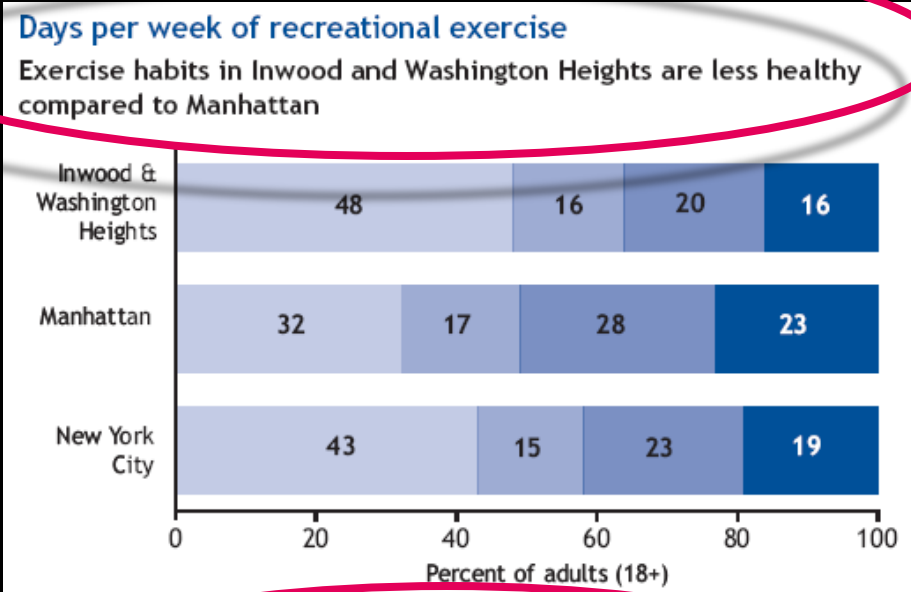




More than 1 in 5 adults are obese

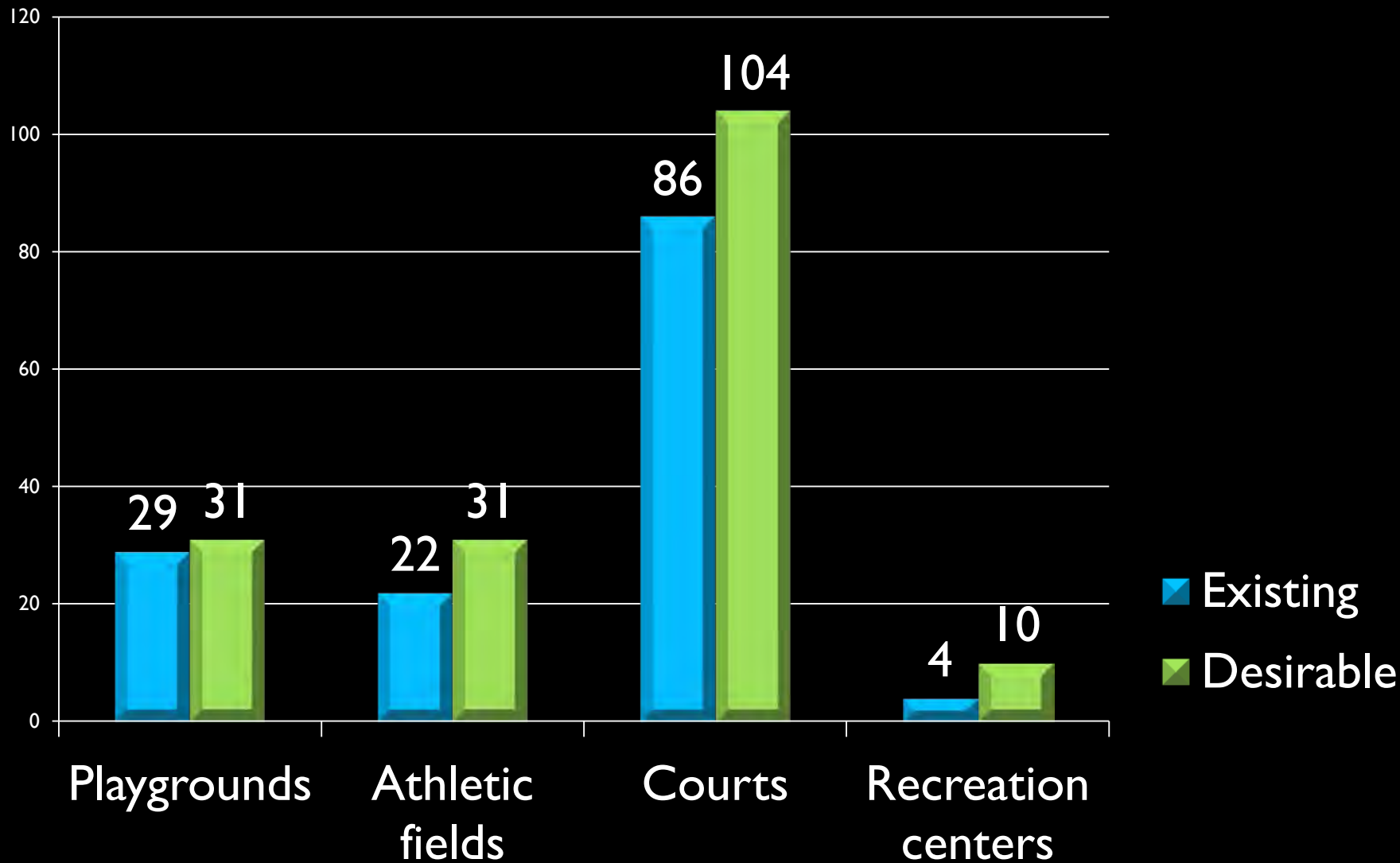
48% of the adults do not get physical exercise

Adults in Inwood and Washington Heights are more likely than those in the rest of New York City to develop diabetes





Compared the levels of service recommended by the New Yorkers For Parks “Open Space Index,” to the quantity of existing facilities. The community would benefit from additional fields, courts and indoor recreation space.



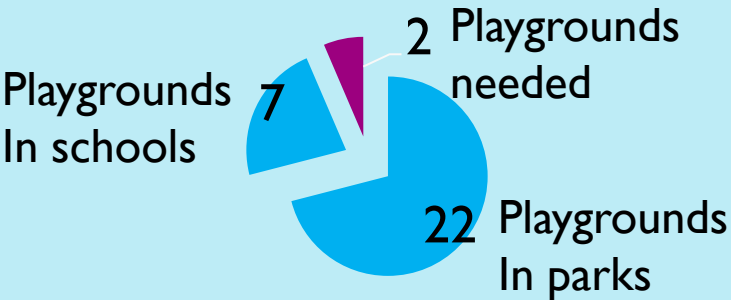
Based on the 2000 census population of 208,414 — 53,600 of whom are under 17



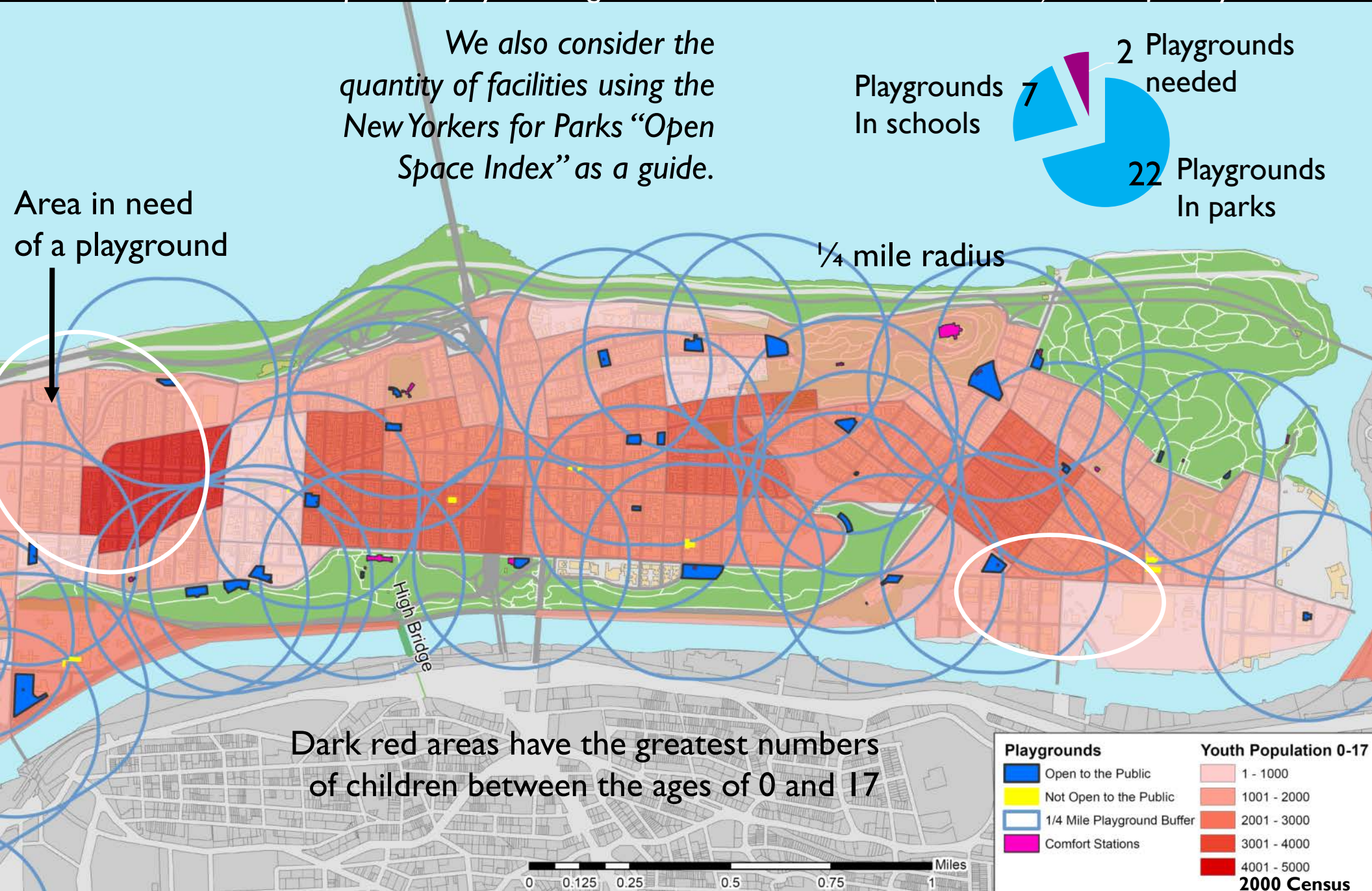
We assess recreational adequacy primarily by walking distance.

It is desirable to have a playground within a ten minute ( ¼ mile) walk of every residence

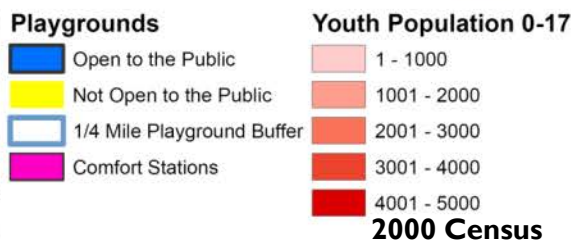
We also consider the quantity of facilities using the New Yorkers for Parks “Open Space Index” as a guide.



Area in need of a playground

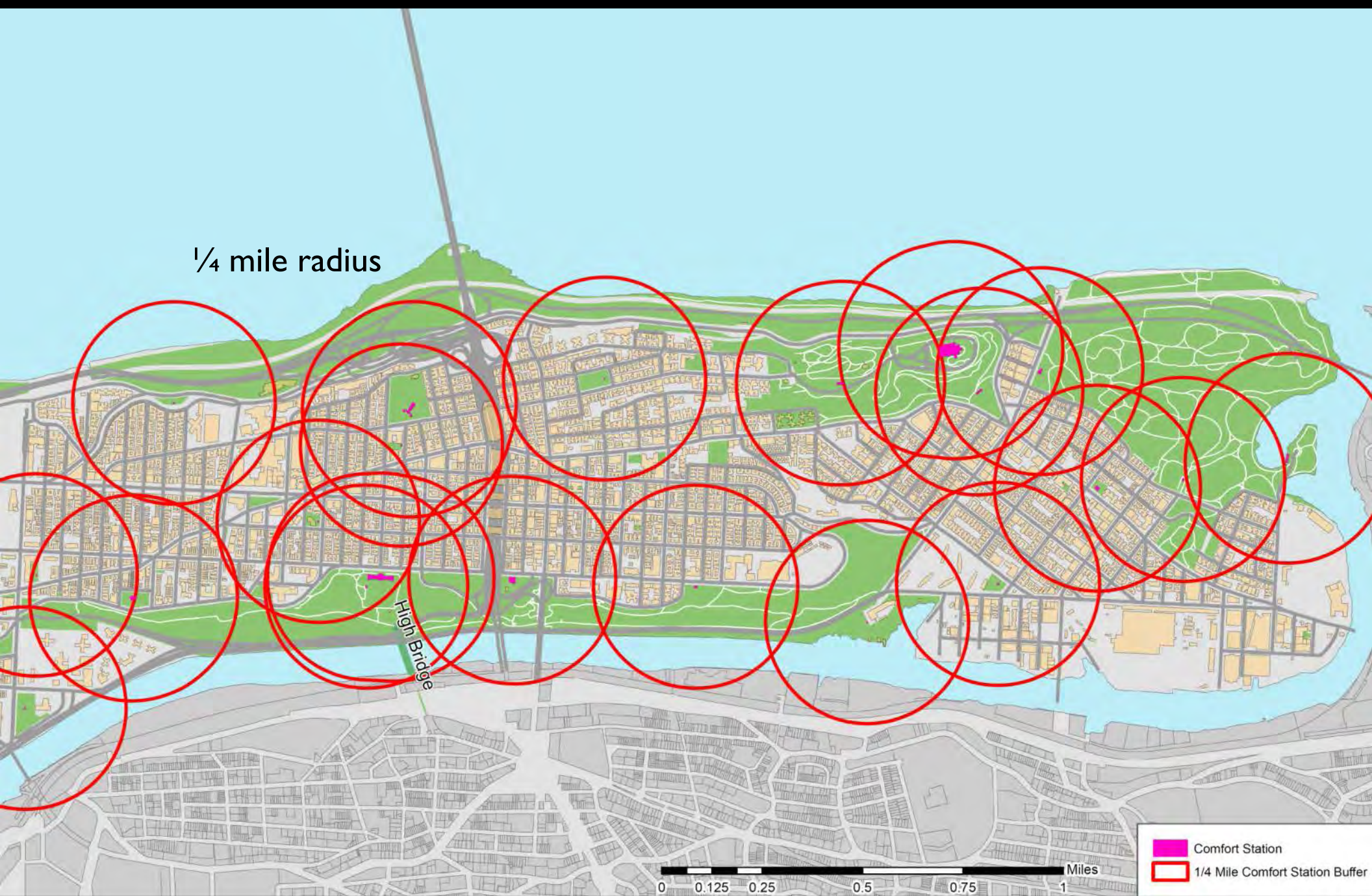


Dark red areas have the greatest numbers of children between the ages of 0 and 17





It is desirable to have a comfort station within playgrounds and within a ten minute (1/4 mile) walk from recreation areas

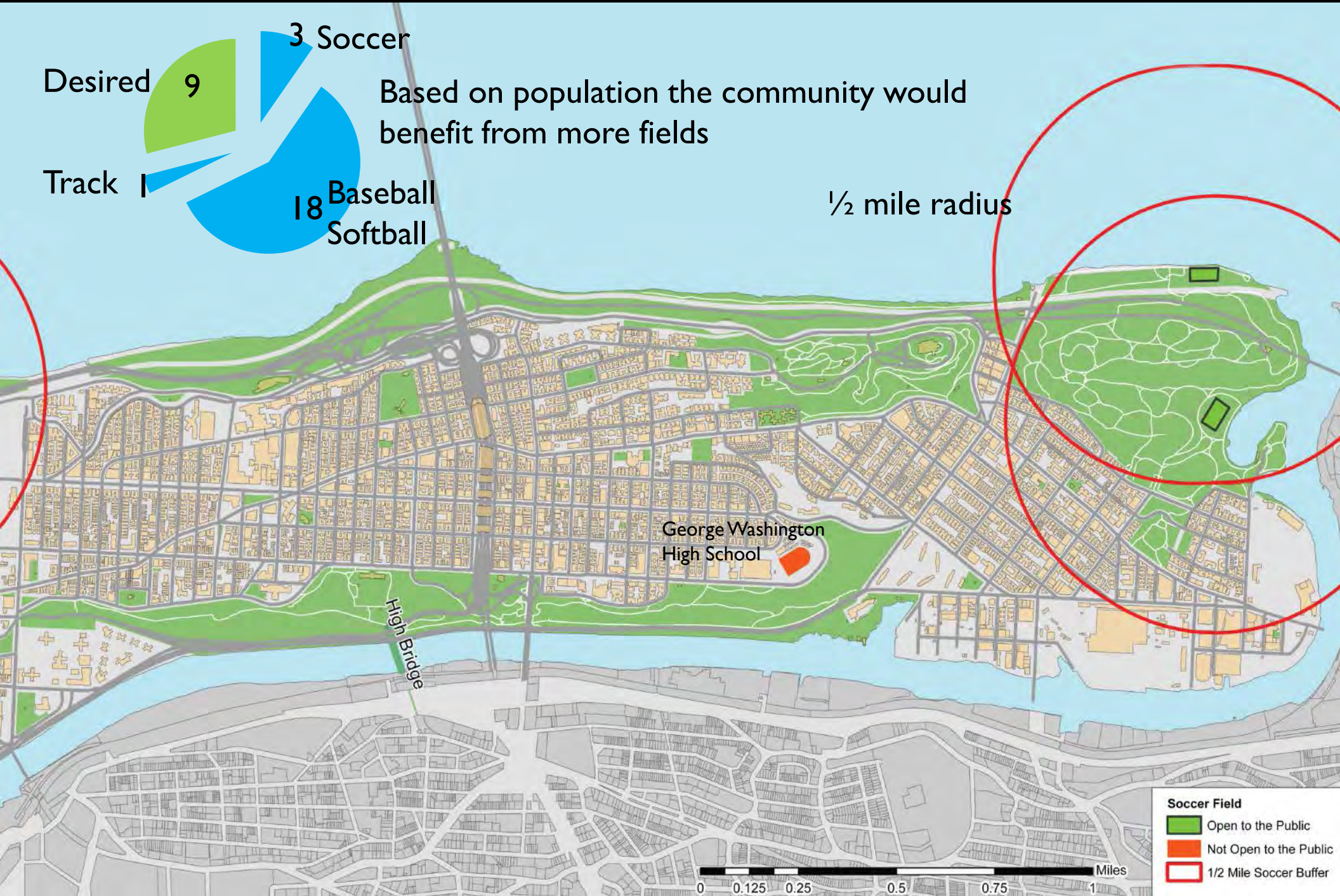




# Northern Manhattan Parks 2030 Master Plan

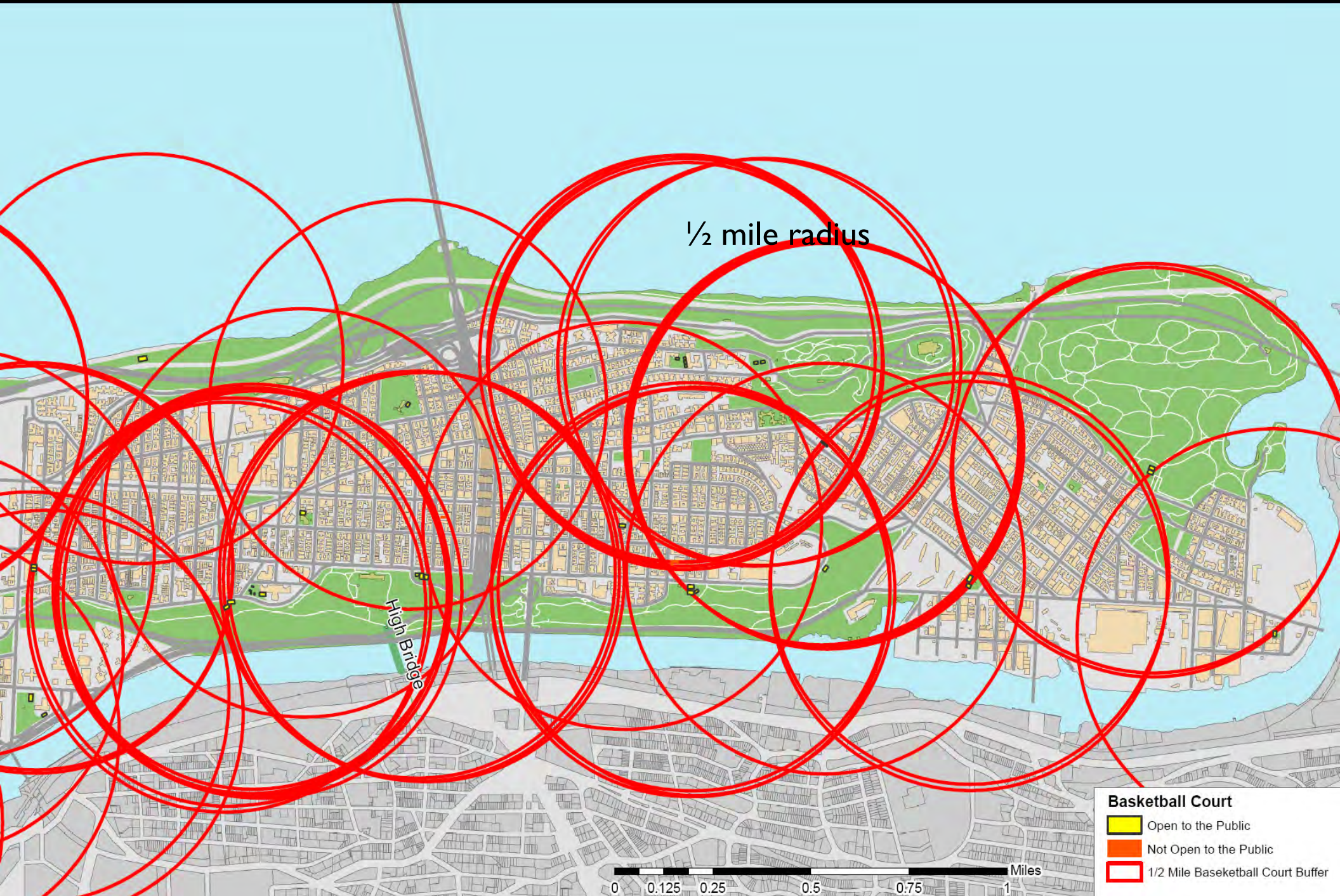
## Fields: Soccer

It is desirable to have athletic fields within a twenty minute ( 1/2 mile) walk of every residence





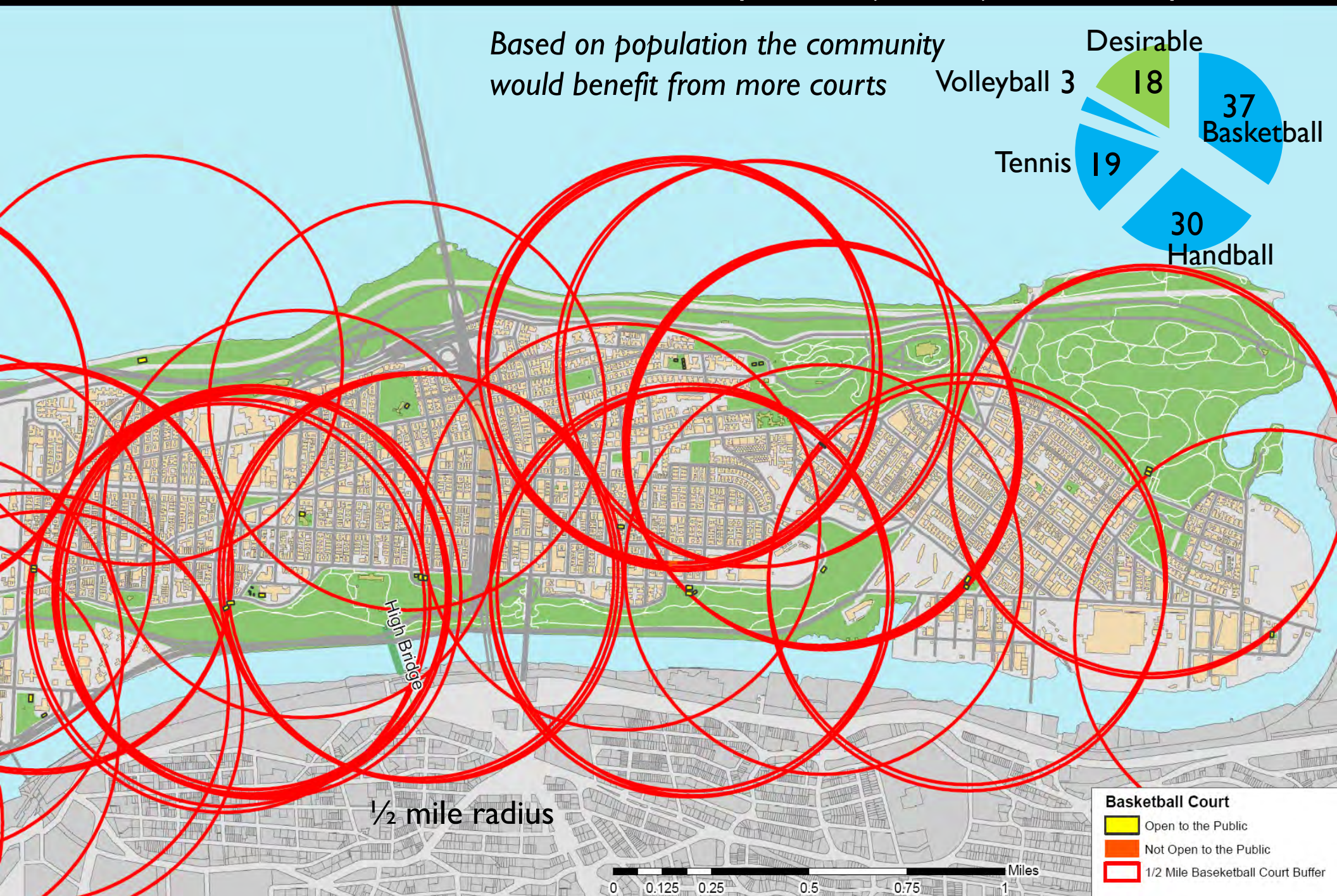
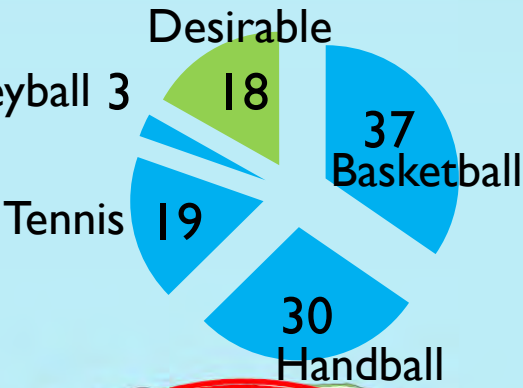
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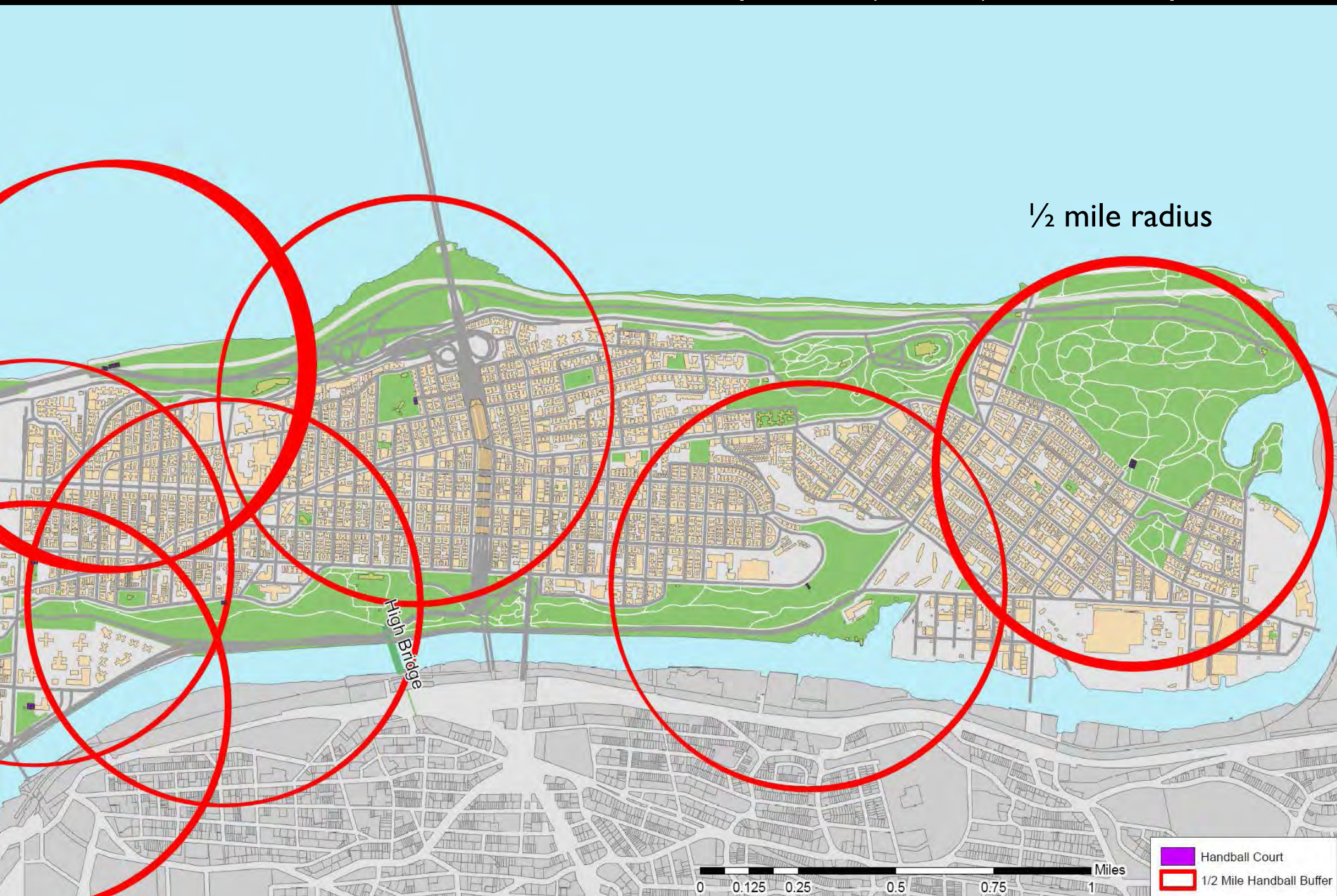
It is desirable to have ball courts within a twenty minute ( 1/2 mile) walk of every residence

Based on population the community would benefit from more courts



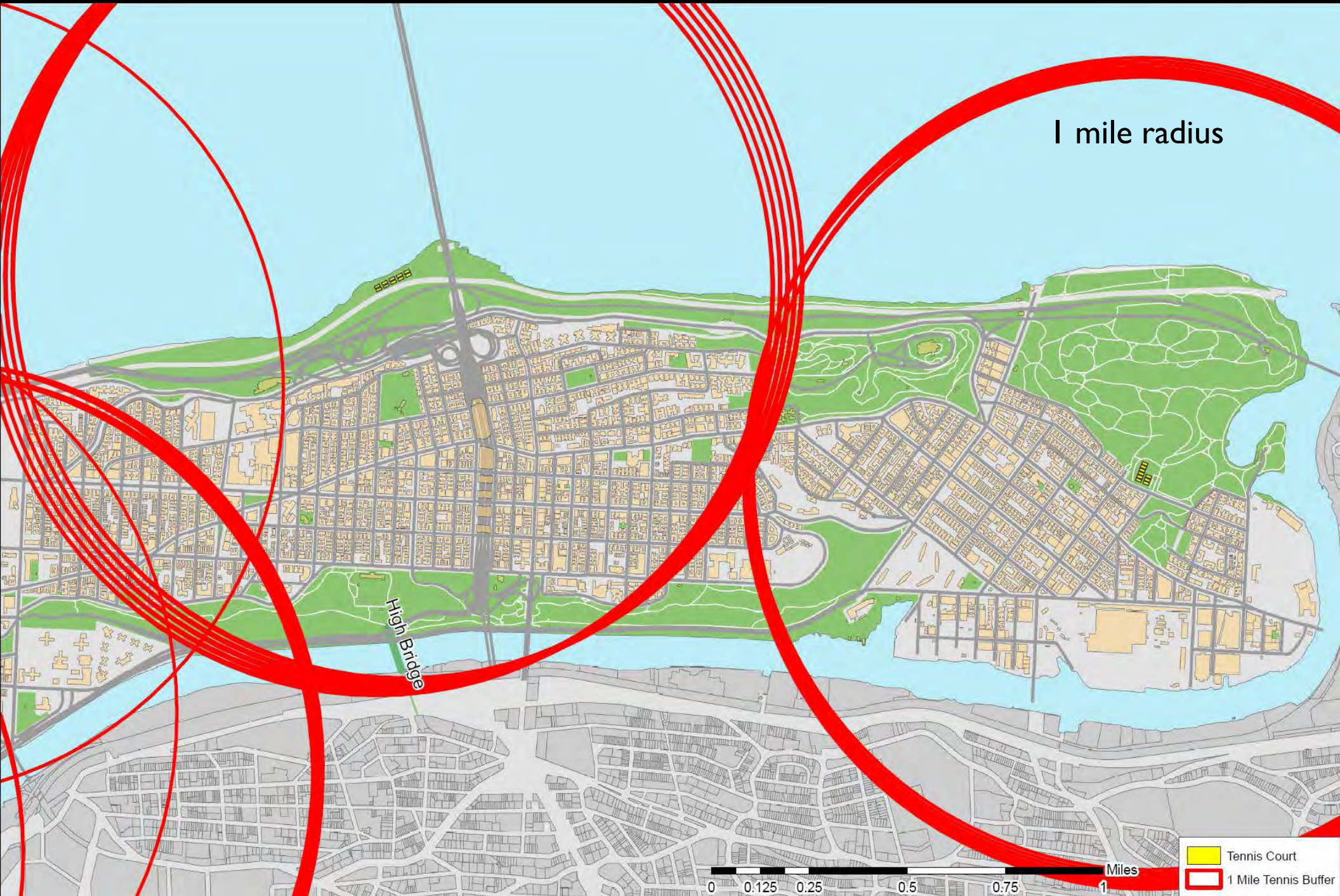


It is desirable to have ball courts within a twenty minute ( 1/2 mile) walk of every residence





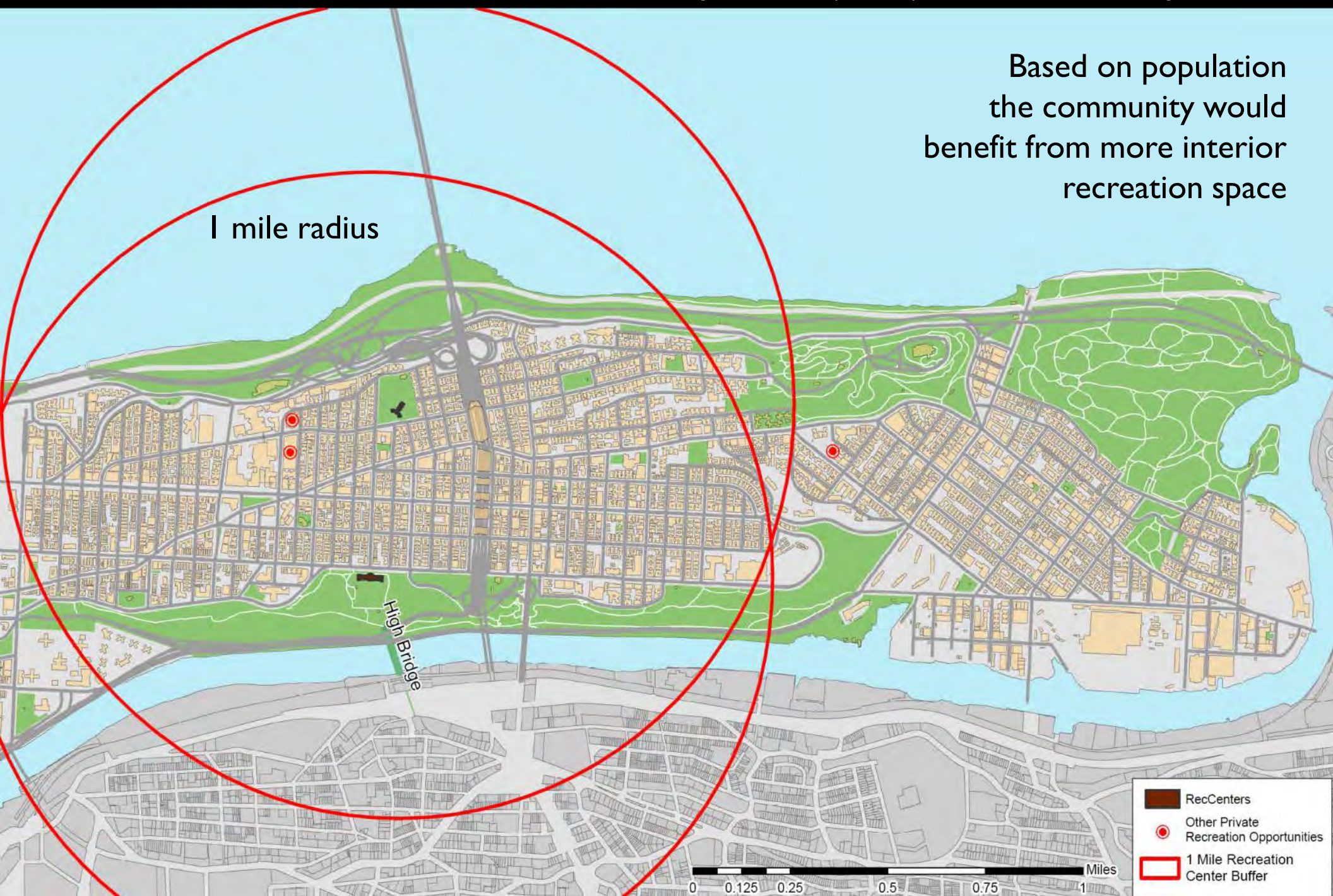
It is desirable to have tennis courts within a thirty minute (1 mile) commute of every residence



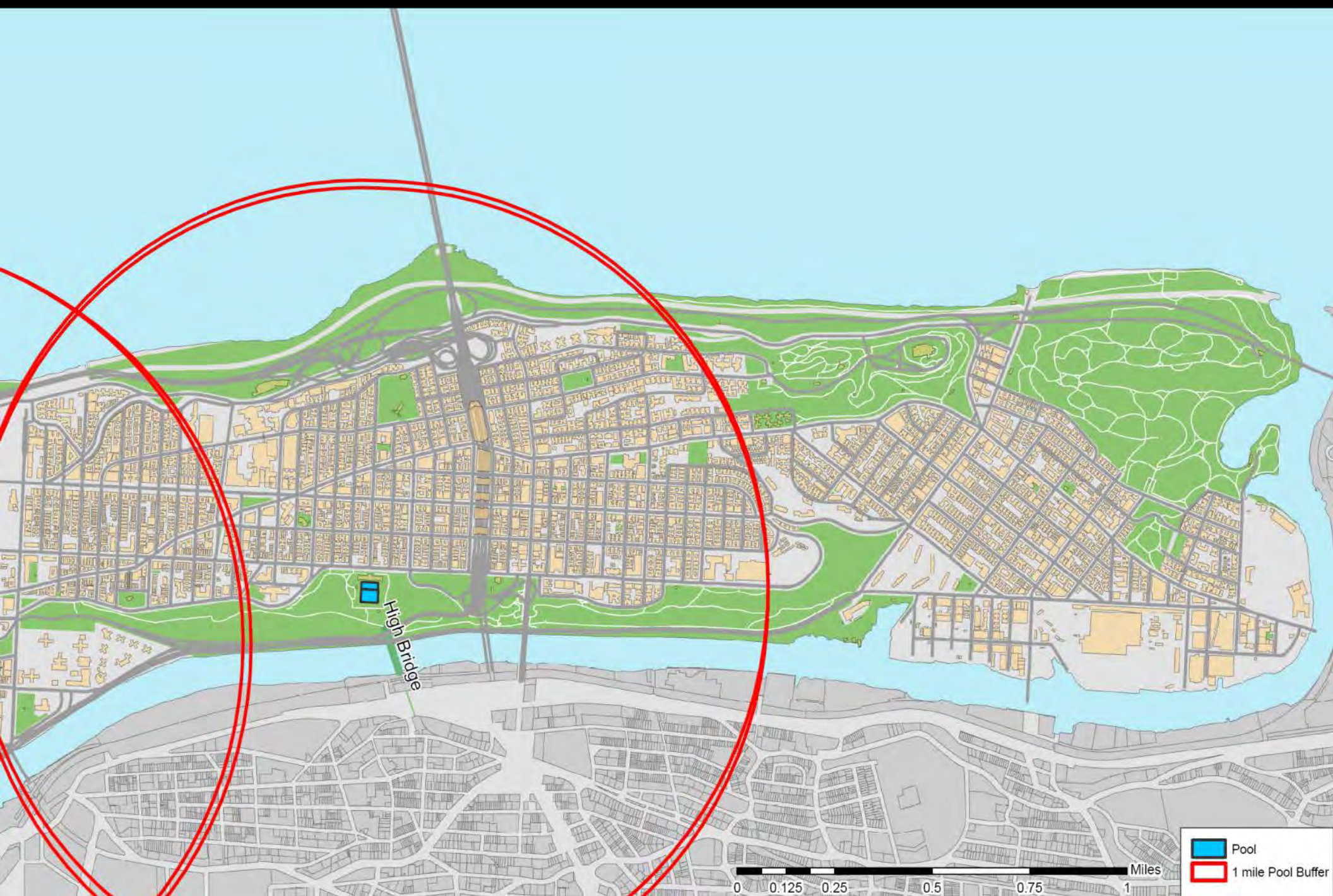


It is desirable to have a recreation center within a thirty minute (1 mile) commute of every residence

Based on population the community would benefit from more interior recreation space









# Northern Manhattan Parks

## Master Plan:



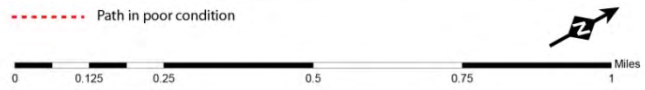
NYC Parks

## SITE ANALYSIS AND DESIGN DETERMINANTS

*Investigate the existing conditions of the sites to determine the problems, opportunities and constraints. Identify the factors that must be dealt with, the Design Determinants.*



*This is a summary of the most important issues we need to address in the Master Plan*





## Conditions, Accessibility, and Uses

**Goals in Vision 2020 Comprehensive Waterfront Plan**

**Goal 1: Expanding Public Access**

- Expand public access to the waterfront and waterways on public and private property for all New Yorkers and visitors alike.

**Goal 2: Enliven the Waterfront**

- Enliven the waterfront with uses integrated with adjacent communities.

**Goal 3: Support the Working Waterfront**

- Support economic development activity on the working waterfront.

**Goal 4: Improve Water Quality**

- Improve water quality through measures that benefit natural habitats, support public recreation, and enhance waterfront and upland communities.

**Goal 5: Restore the Natural Waterfront**

- Restore degraded natural waterfront areas, and protect wetlands and shoreline habitats.

**Goal 6: Enhance the Blue Network**

- Enhance the public experience of the waterways that surround New York: our Blue Network.

**Goal 7: Improve Government Oversight**

- Improve governmental regulation, coordination, and oversight of the waterfront and waterways.

**Goal 8: Increase Climate Resilience**

- Identify and pursue strategies to increase the city's resilience to climate change and sea level rise.

**Northern Manhattan Parks Master Plan**  
**Waterfront Edge Existing Conditions and Vision 2020 Waterfront Goals**  
 May 2011

**Legend:**

- Bulkhead
- Marsh and naturalized edge with wetland shrubs and phragmites
- Deteriorated bulkhead and rip rap
- Rip rap
- Suitable location for canoe and kayak storage and launching
- Park Paths
- Green Streets
- Volleyball
- Park Buildings
- Pools
- Tennis Courts
- Handball Courts
- Basketball Courts
- Recreational Fields
- Playgrounds
- Schoolyards to Playgrounds
- Schools



*This map shows the good and the bad views, and what actions need to be taken. Landscapes depend on orchestrated sequences of views and experiences to delight the stroller. Designers make every effort to open desirable views and block poor ones. Trees are used to frame or block views.*

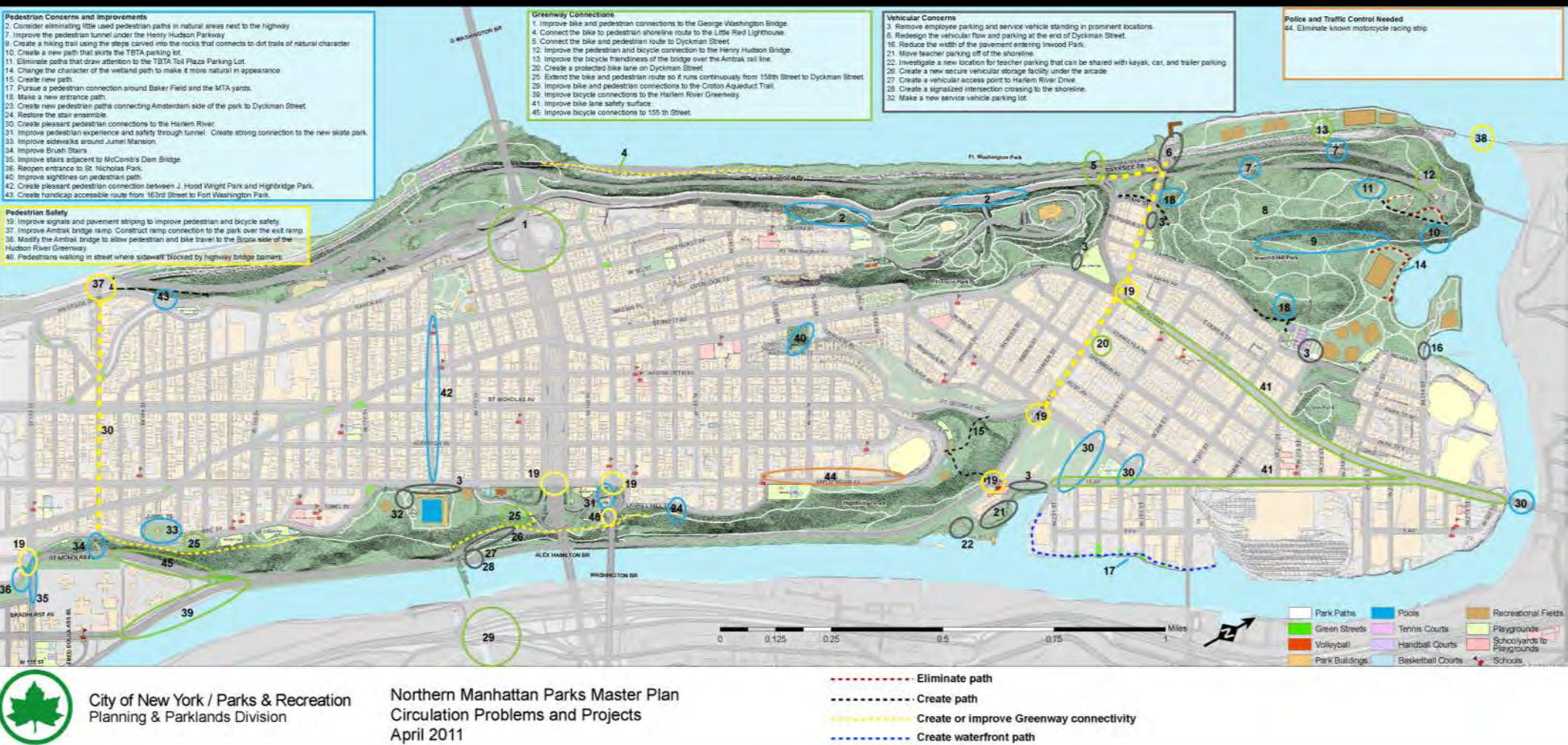


View of Palisades and Hudson River





*This map shows all of the factors we need to consider in order to make parks more accessible, the bike routes continuous and remove opportunities for conflict between pedestrians, bikes and cars.*





# Northern Manhattan Parks 2030 Master Plan

## Paths, Erosion and Water Problems

*This map show paths that need to be improved, storm water and flooding problems, as well as areas of soil erosion.*





# Northern Manhattan Parks

## Master Plan: MAIN CONCEPTS

*Identify the Big Ideas that will make the most difference,. Provide diagrams that describe how they can be accomplished feasibly and economically. Describe all of the projects on a Conceptual Plan map, to guide future projects.*



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**HEALTH** 78% of health costs nation-wide are related to lifestyle. This community’s health would improve if we provided more opportunities for active recreation, walking and biking.



**ECOLOGY** Invasive vines and trees are damaging the parks’ ecological health, the community’s perception of safety and the level of use.



**COMMUNITY** Expanding recreational opportunities at Highbridge Play center, Anne Loftus playground and J Hood Wright park would improve community health, economic prosperity and family happiness.



**SECURITY** Opening sight lines and improving path continuity will improve park security and use. Some areas require more focused policing.





- Fort Washington** *Restore forest health, improve access and active recreation*
- Fort Tryon** *Restore Olmsted landscape and historic structures, improve play areas*
- Inwood & Isham** *Restore ecologies, creeks, marshes and scenic views*
- Highbridge Park** *Restore forest health and internal views, create adventure opportunities*





Add: 8 comfort stations  3 playgrounds  4 soccer fields 

Add: 7 food and drink concessions 

Add: Adventure areas including a Skate park and Rock climbing area

Improve the condition of all sports fields





Connect the middle-level path through Highbridge Park

Extend and improve critical cross-town and Bronx on-street bicycle routes





- Extend **shoreline walkways**
- Improve **access** to shoreline walkways with signalized intersections and ADA ramps
- Create a **Hudson River dock** at Dyckman Street's west end with mooring field, pier and café
- Provide six locations for **small boat launching & storage**





Connect communities to their parks with green corridors and park attractions

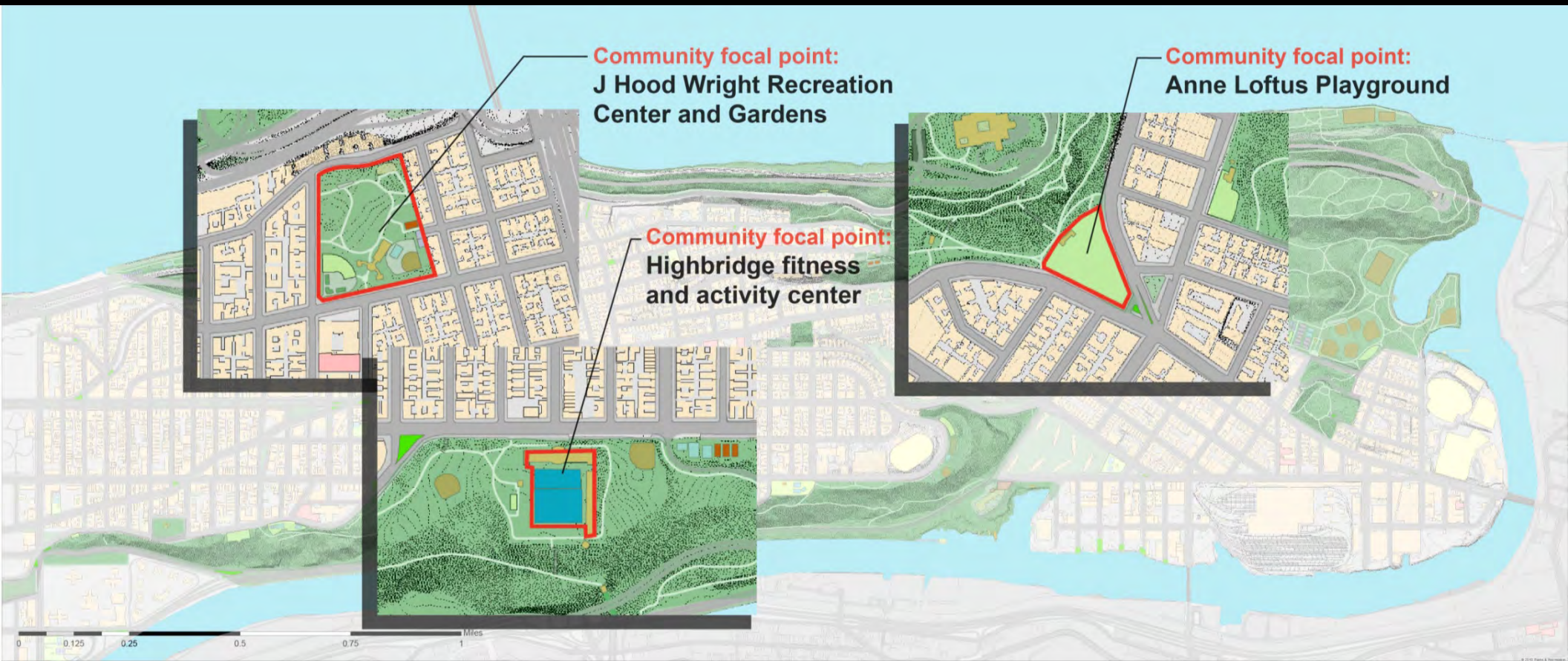




Make Highbridge Recreation Center a **year-round** recreation attraction

Strengthen Anne Loftus Playground identity as **THE community piazza**

Strengthen J. Hood Wright Park’s identity as **THE community gathering space**





Create high and low marshes, restore creeks

Connect parks with ecological corridors

Improve forest health and ecological diversity

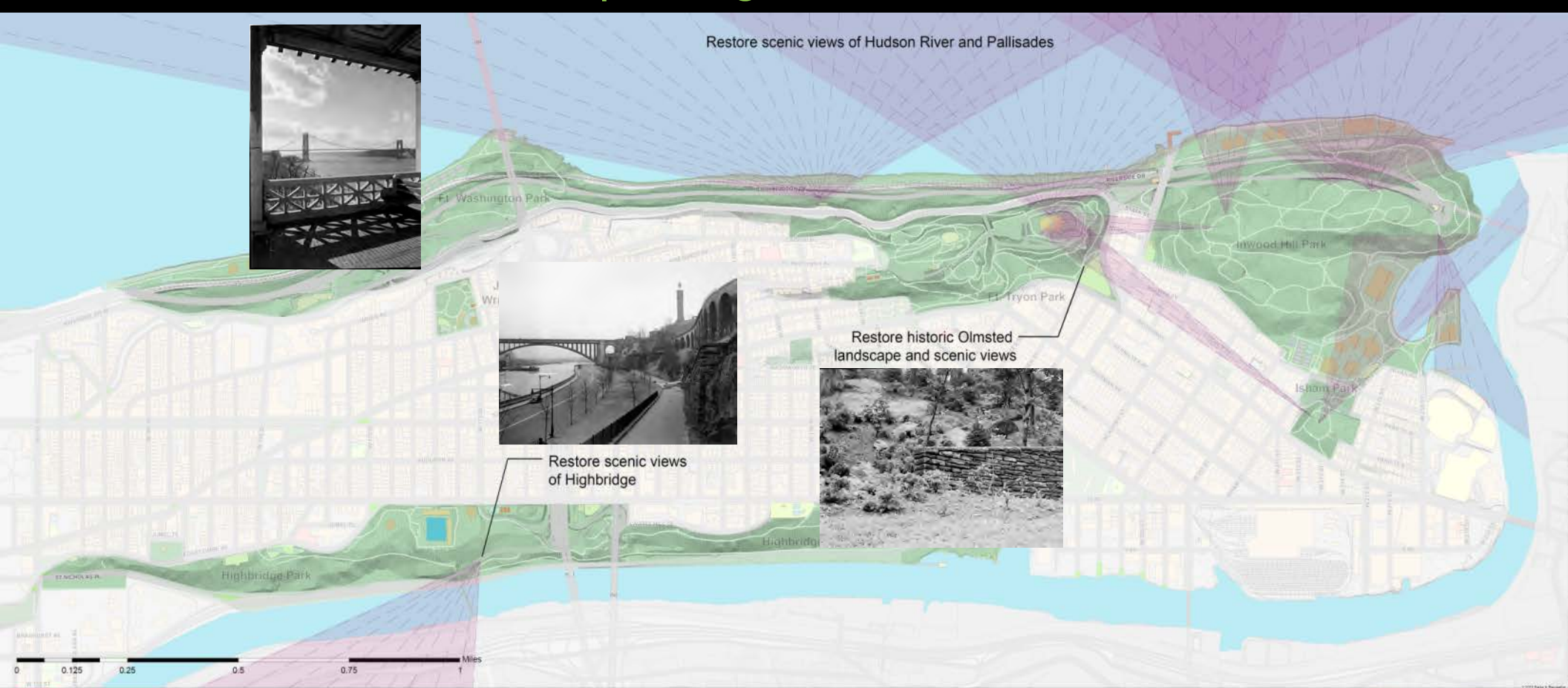




Restore **view-sheds** of the Hudson River and Palisades

Open and maintain **internal views**

Restore the **historic landscape design**

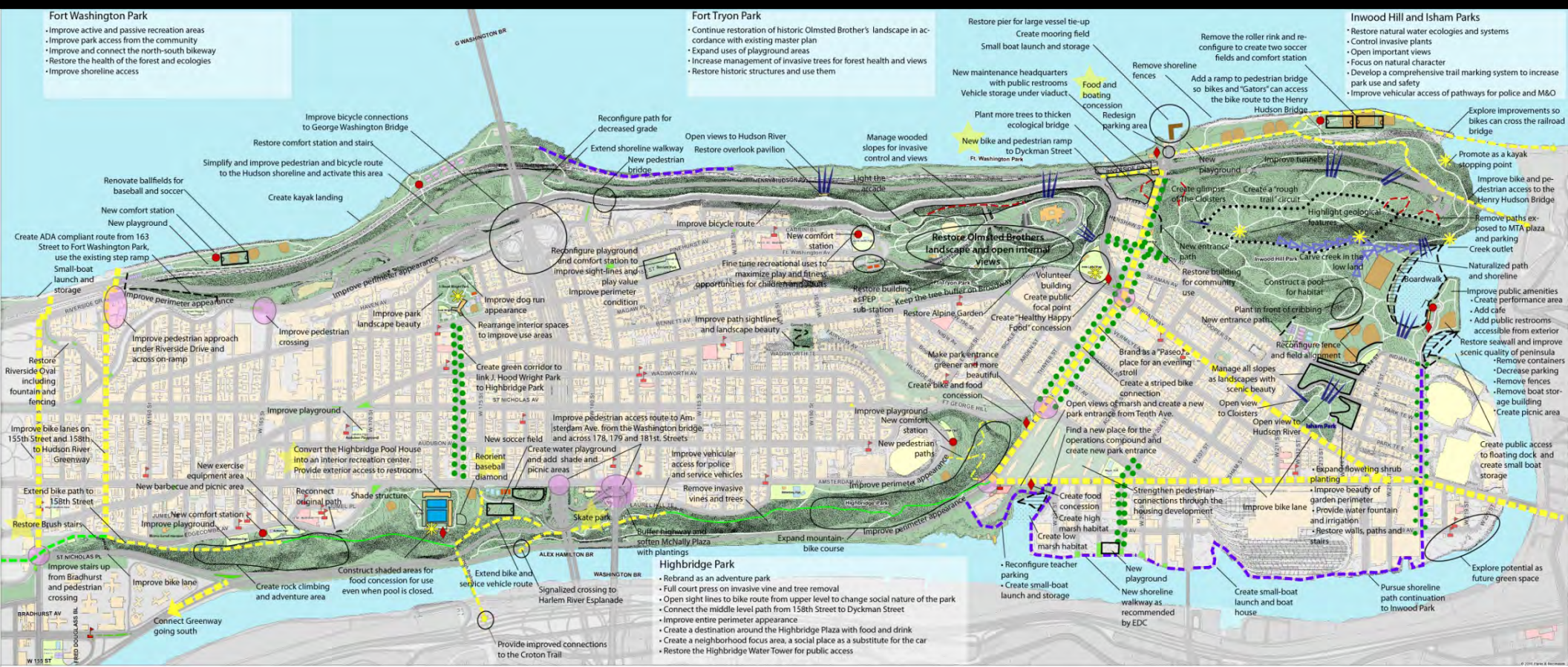


Park Paths	Pools	Recreational Fields
Green Streets	Tennis Courts	Playgrounds
Volleyball	Handball Courts	Schoolyards to Playgrounds
Park Buildings	Basketball Courts	



This is the map that shows all of the of the projects in the Master Plan.

In the “Park Projects” section that follows, each park is enlarged, and focus projects are described in more detail.





# Northern Manhattan Parks

## Master Plan: PARK PROJECTS



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*Describe the Major Goals for each park and describe the most important projects in detail.*



# Highbridge Park

## Enhance the picturesque park:

Expose gigantic rocks and meadows

## Provide more

## opportunities for healthy activity:

Improve the recreation center, athletic fields, playgrounds & restrooms

## Improve forest and ecology health:

Remove invasive trees and the vines that are killing trees. Enhance habitat for birds and locally rare species such as Dusky Salamanders

## Create opportunities for adventure:

Provide rock climbing, mountain biking, skateboarding, and BMX biking

## Improve bike path continuity and connections to the community:

Construct a visible and continuous middle level path through the entire length of the park connecting to the High bridge

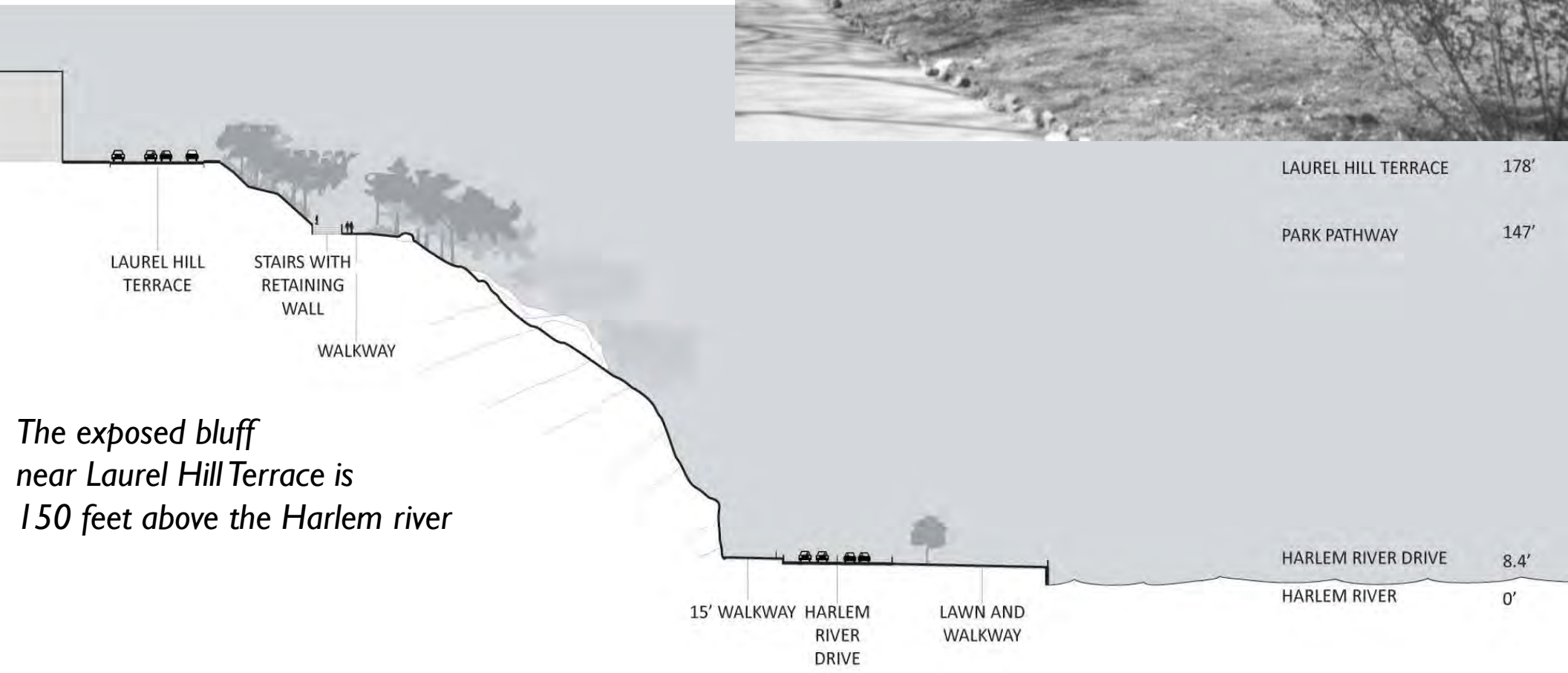




# Highbridge Park

Potential

*The rocks are cloaked in bittersweet and invasive trees, hiding their great beauty, they are sometimes gigantic, always scenic, and beckon exploration*



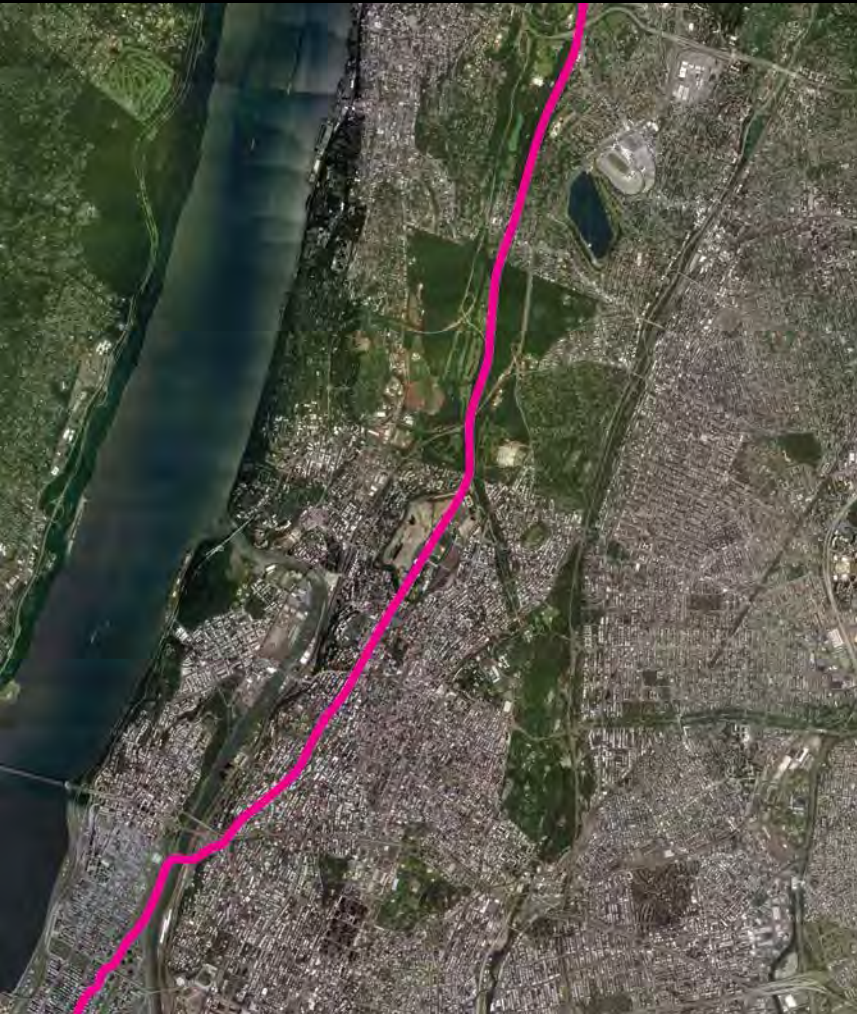
*The exposed bluff near Laurel Hill Terrace is 150 feet above the Harlem river*



# Highbridge Park

The restoration of the High Bridge will make it possible to bike on the *Croton Aqueduct Trail* from Manhattan to Westchester

Potential





# Highbridge Park

Restore and reveal the picturesque beauty of the park, provide a safe and scenic route through the middle



Provide a safe and scenic route through the middle level of the park connecting to the High Bridge

Activate isolated areas with uses that are attractive to adventure seeking people, who will make maximum use of the rock outcroppings, steep topography and difficult sites

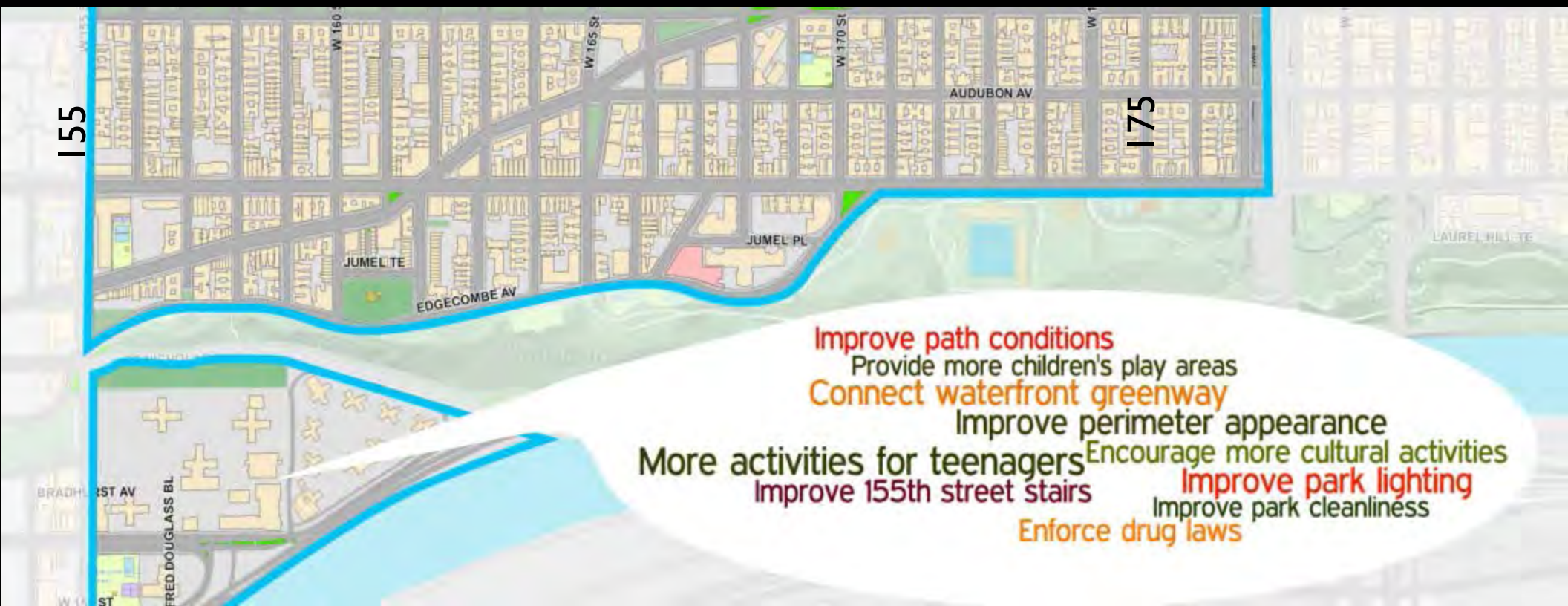


# Highbridge Park

## South

## Community Concerns as reported on *All Our Ideas*

*Each “word cloud” shows the top ten concerns people mentioned.  
If the type is larger, it means more people requested that item.*





# Highbridge Park

## South

## Community Concerns as reported on All Our Ideas

Each “word cloud” shows the top ten concerns people mentioned. If the type is larger, it means the item has a high probability of being requested by other community members.





## Community Concerns as reported on *All Our Ideas*

**Top Left:**

- Improve path conditions
- Plant more flowering plants

**Top Right:**

- Prevent storm sewer overflow into park
- Provide bike rentals
- More interior recreational space
- Choose plant species to attract native fauna
- Create more advanced mountain bike trails
- Improve park perimeter appearance
- Plant native species
- Improve park cleanliness

**Center Left:**

- Add more water fountains
- Improve park lighting
- Improve bike/pedestrian safety
- Add green corridor connecting to Fort Washington Park and GWB
- Improve north south bicycle path continuity
- Add unpaved hiking trails linking north and south
- Restore Washington Bridge staircase
- Light Washington Bridge underpass

**Bottom Left:**

- Enforce dog owner laws
- Provide more activities for teenagers
- Improve communication with community
- Information on Harlem River Speedway
- Improve park lighting
- Improve park cleanliness

**Bottom Right:**

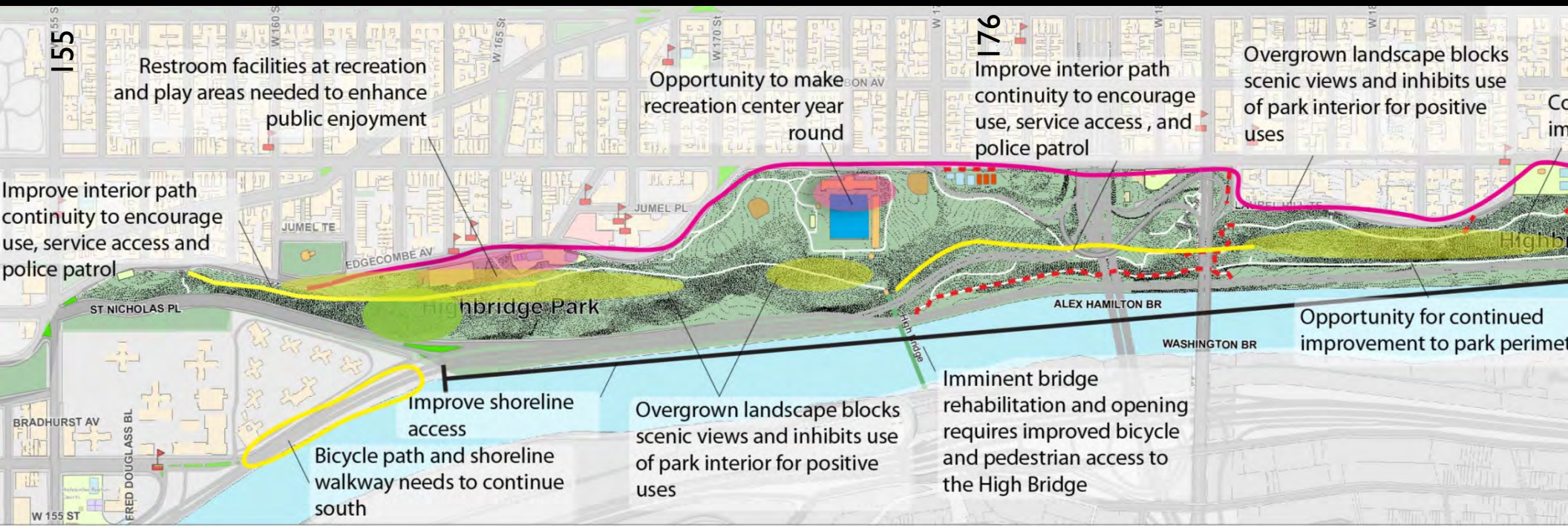
- Enforce drug laws
- Open scenic outlook from Laurel Hill Terrace
- Build pedestrian bridge connecting park to river
- Extend bike path throughout park
- Create more bicycle trails connect to Bronx residents
- Improve park cleanliness
- Improve park lighting
- Create mountain bike skills course
- Improve visibility into park
- Improve park drainage

**Map Labels:** FT GEORGE HILL, DYCKMAN ST, ACADIA ST, W 204 ST, W 203 ST, W 202 ST, W 201 ST, W 199 ST, W 198 ST, W 197 ST, W 196 ST, W 195 ST, W 194 ST, W 193 ST, W 192 ST, W 191 ST, W 190 ST, W 189 ST, W 188 ST, W 187 ST, W 186 ST, W 185 ST, W 184 ST, W 183 ST, W 182 ST, W 181 ST, W 180 ST, W 179 ST, W 178 ST, W 177 ST, W 176 ST, W 175 ST, W 174 ST, W 173 ST, W 172 ST, W 171 ST, W 170 ST, W 169 ST, W 168 ST, W 167 ST, W 166 ST, W 165 ST, W 164 ST, W 163 ST, W 162 ST, W 161 ST, W 160 ST, W 159 ST, W 158 ST, W 157 ST, W 156 ST, W 155 ST, W 154 ST, W 153 ST, W 152 ST, W 151 ST, W 150 ST, W 149 ST, W 148 ST, W 147 ST, W 146 ST, W 145 ST, W 144 ST, W 143 ST, W 142 ST, W 141 ST, W 140 ST, W 139 ST, W 138 ST, W 137 ST, W 136 ST, W 135 ST, W 134 ST, W 133 ST, W 132 ST, W 131 ST, W 130 ST, W 129 ST, W 128 ST, W 127 ST, W 126 ST, W 125 ST, W 124 ST, W 123 ST, W 122 ST, W 121 ST, W 120 ST, W 119 ST, W 118 ST, W 117 ST, W 116 ST, W 115 ST, W 114 ST, W 113 ST, W 112 ST, W 111 ST, W 110 ST, W 109 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# Highbridge Park

## Physical Issues South



## Concept Plan South





# Highbridge Park

## Physical Issues North



## Concept Plan North



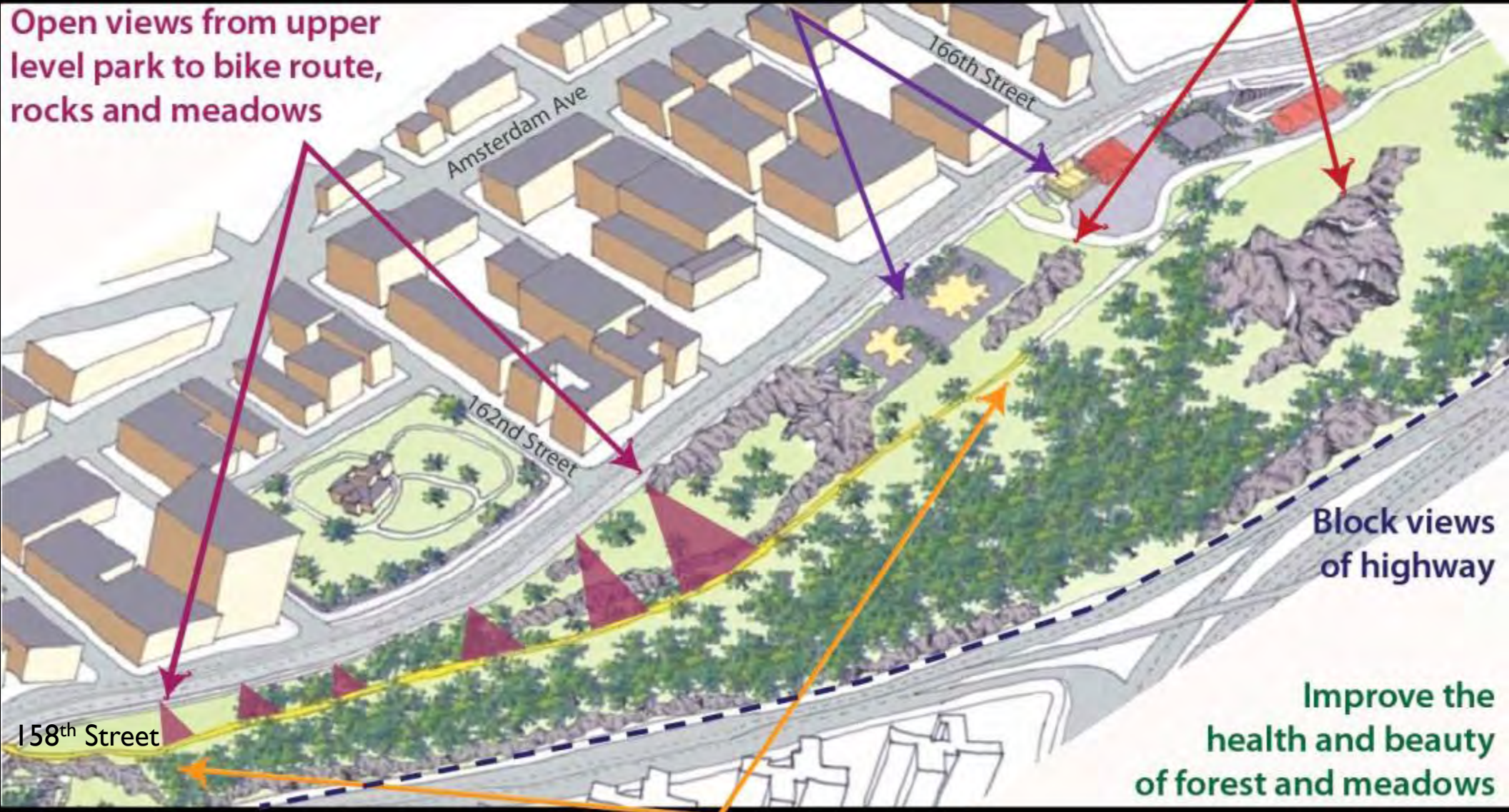


# Highbridge Park

Provide restrooms  
Add play value and exercise opportunities to playgrounds

Develop rock climbing and adventure trails

Open views from upper level park to bike route, rocks and meadows



Block views of highway

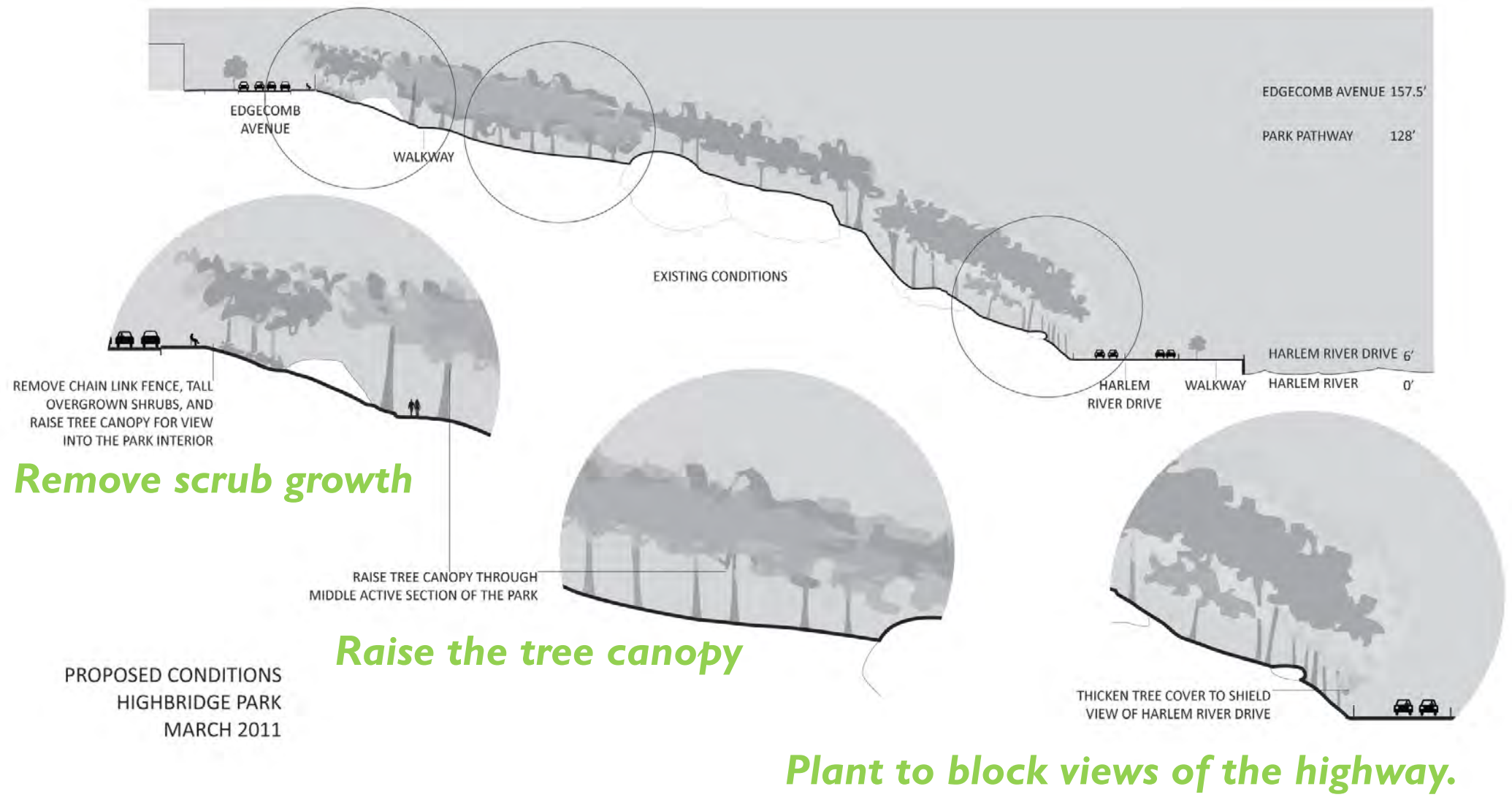
Improve the health and beauty of forest and meadows

Extend and connect middle level bike path from 158th St. to Dyckman St, with police access



# Highbridge Park

Open views of middle level path  
and scenic elements





# Highbridge Park

Create an adventure trail through the park's middle level

Provide opportunities to learn to climb rocks and explore rugged terrain

Increase path visibility  
from the upper level  
of the park, but keep  
it rustic

Remove scrub growth  
and invasive trees  
around rock  
outcroppings

Attract day camps

Encourage family  
adventure





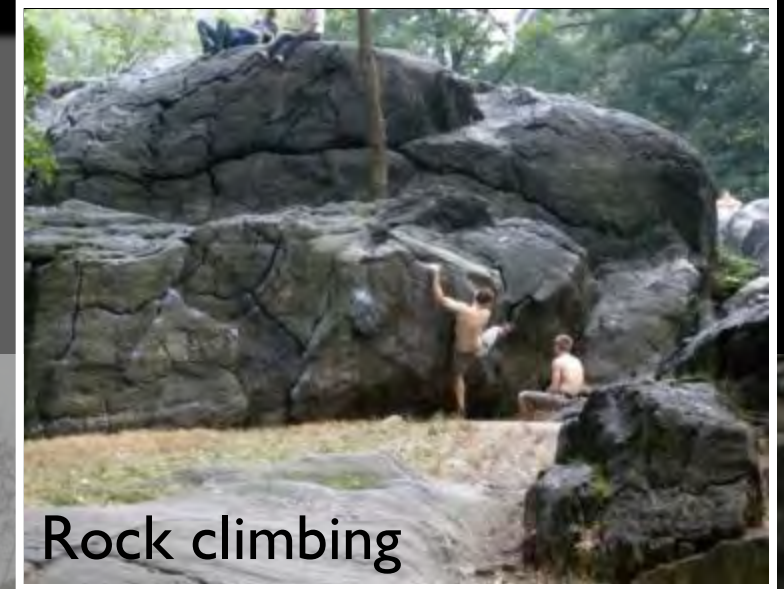
# Highbridge Park

Create opportunities for adventure

Remove pipe rail and benches in front of these major rocks

Provide training and programs to encourage the use of these rocks for adventure sports

Obtain sponsors or partners for training and programs



Rock climbing



Make the **Highbridge Recreation Center**  
a year-round family activity  
and fitness attraction

**NEIGHBORHOOD FAMILY FUN AND FITNESS**

Skate park

Rock and  
water spray play

Picnic area

New Soccer Field

New Path

Terrace Café

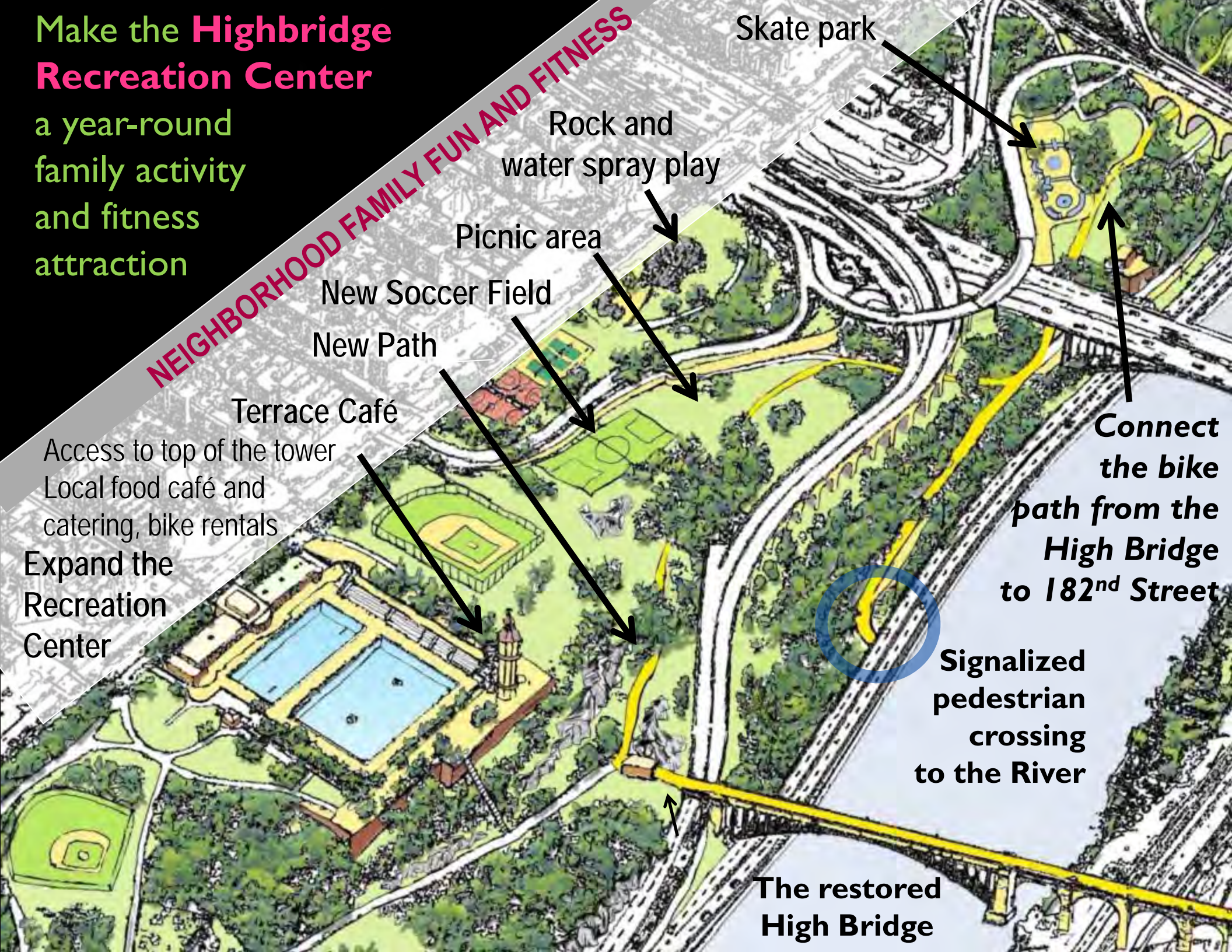
Access to top of the tower  
Local food café and  
catering, bike rentals

Expand the  
Recreation  
Center

**Connect  
the bike  
path from the  
High Bridge  
to 182<sup>nd</sup> Street**

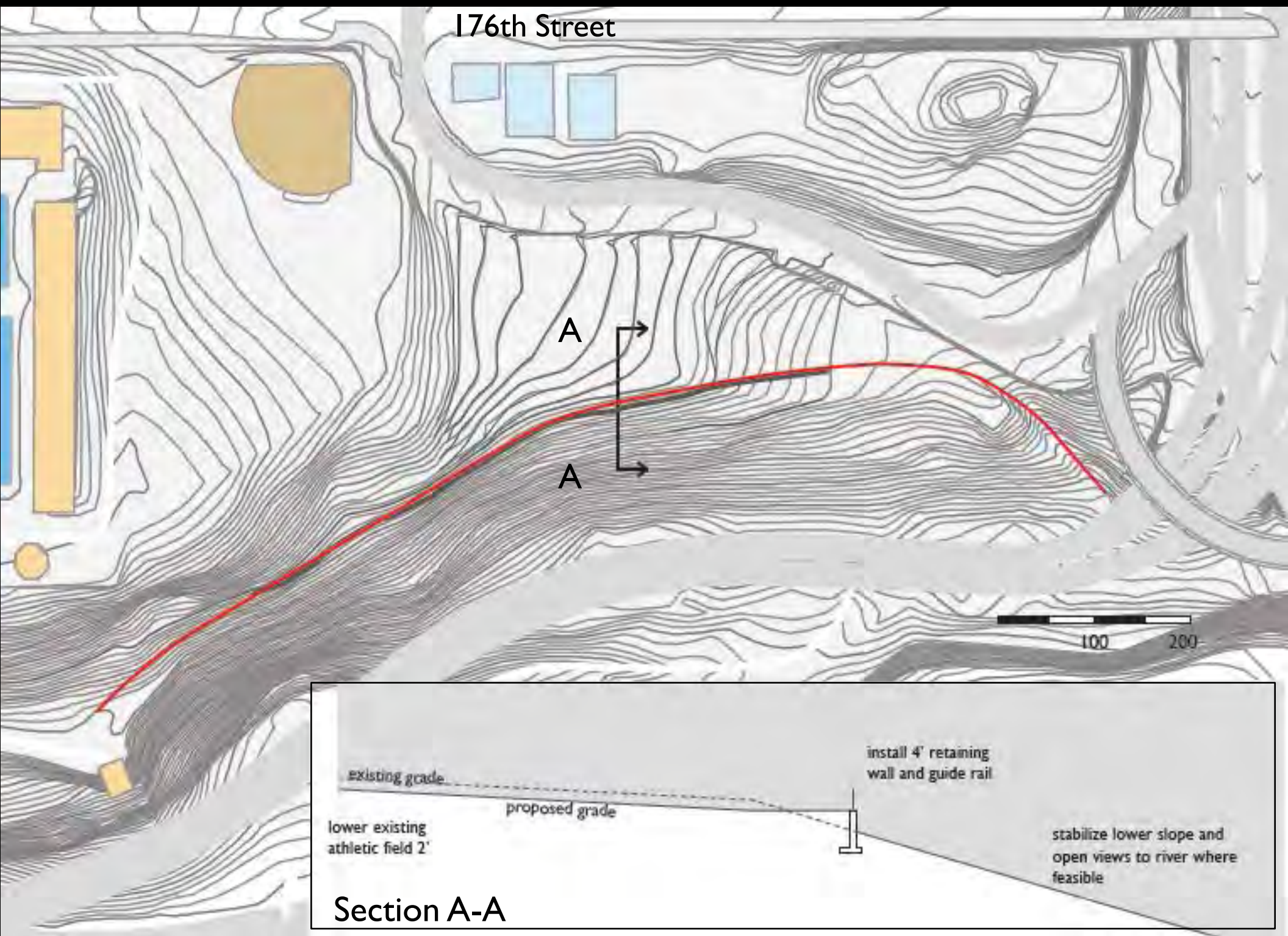
**Signalized  
pedestrian  
crossing  
to the River**

**The restored  
High Bridge**





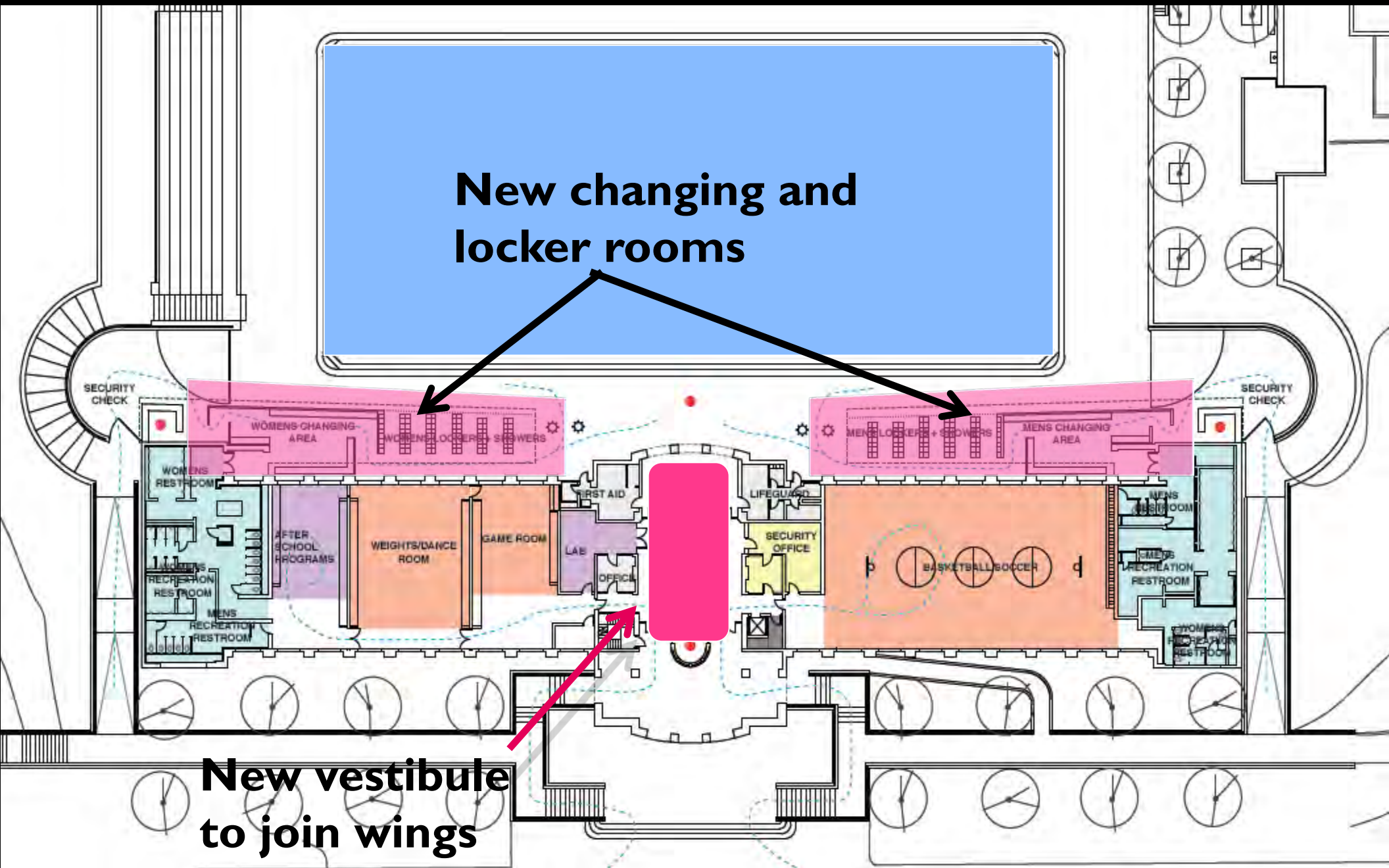
**Highbridge Park** Create a path through the middle level of the park





# Highbridge Recreation Center

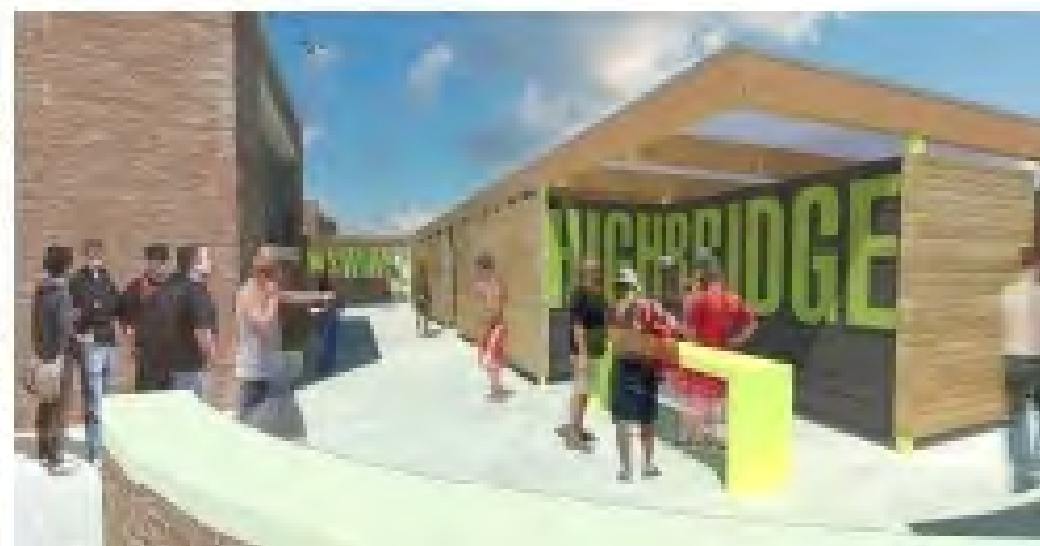
Construct external locker rooms and a new vestibule to free up internal recreation space in the recreation center during the summer





# Highbridge Recreation Center

Parsons School of Design students constructed the changing pavilions in Summer 2011.





# Highbridge Park

Improve landscape  
beauty, recreational  
opportunities  
and traffic  
safety

NEIGHBORHOOD FAMILY FUN AND FITNESS

Improve park  
character  
and pedestrian  
crossings along  
Dyckman St.

Improve mountain  
biking trails and  
pedestrian paths

Upgrade  
playgrounds

Provide a  
comfort station

Install beautiful  
perimeter plantings

Stop drag  
racing on  
the street

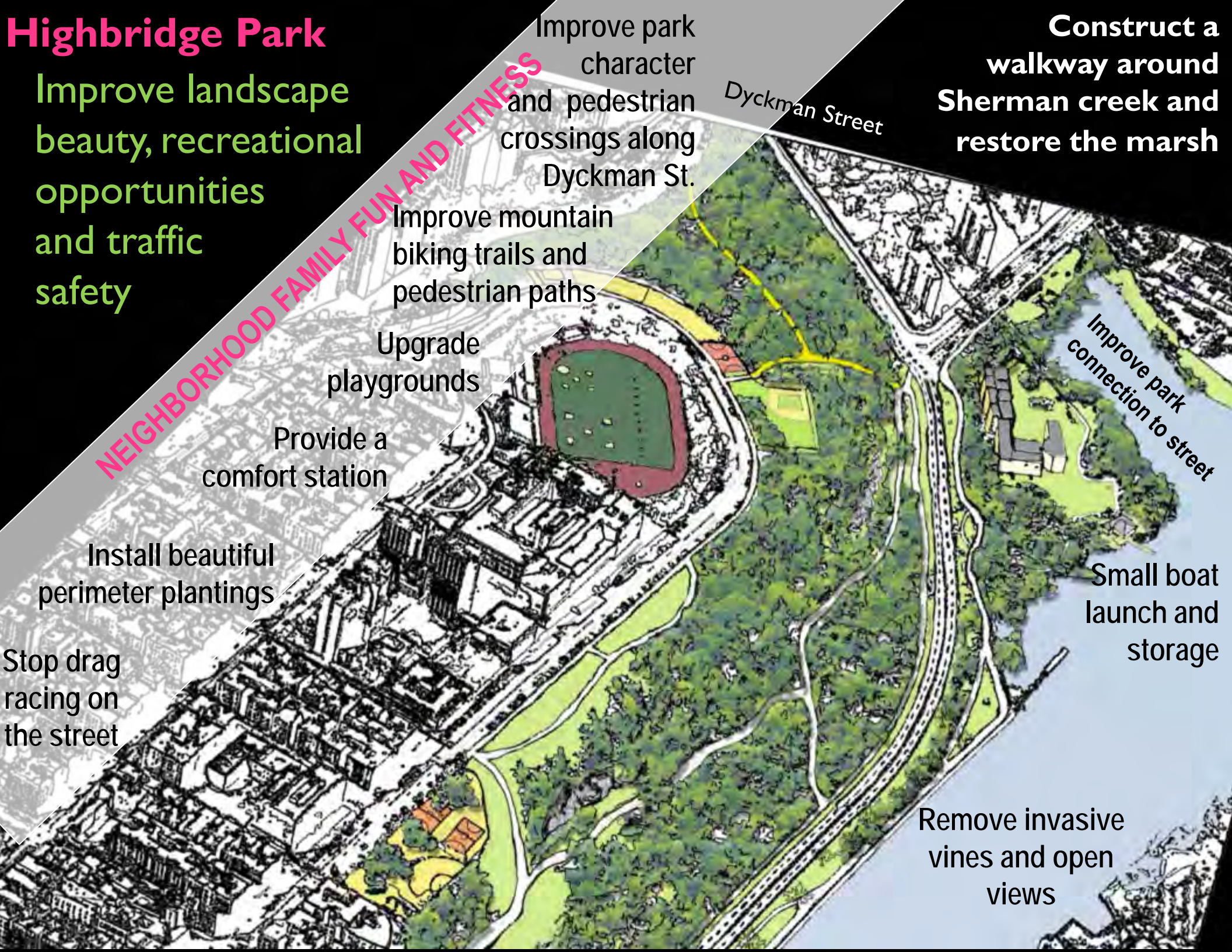
Construct a  
walkway around  
Sherman creek and  
restore the marsh

Dyckman Street

Improve park  
connection to street

Small boat  
launch and  
storage

Remove invasive  
vines and open  
views





# Highbridge Park

Activate isolated areas of the park with uses that are attractive to adventure-seeking people, who will make maximum use of the rock outcroppings, steep topography and difficult sites

mountain biking

skateboarding

BMX biking





# Highbridge Park

Restore forest health,  
ecological benefits,  
and scenic beauty

Remove invasive vines and trees,  
evaluate each species, its value or  
threat to the ecology, and develop  
a manual for treatment

Replant to establish forest balance  
and maintain scenic views

Clear around rock areas  
and scenic viewpoints

Establish volunteer, and after-  
school ecological restoration,  
educational and work programs



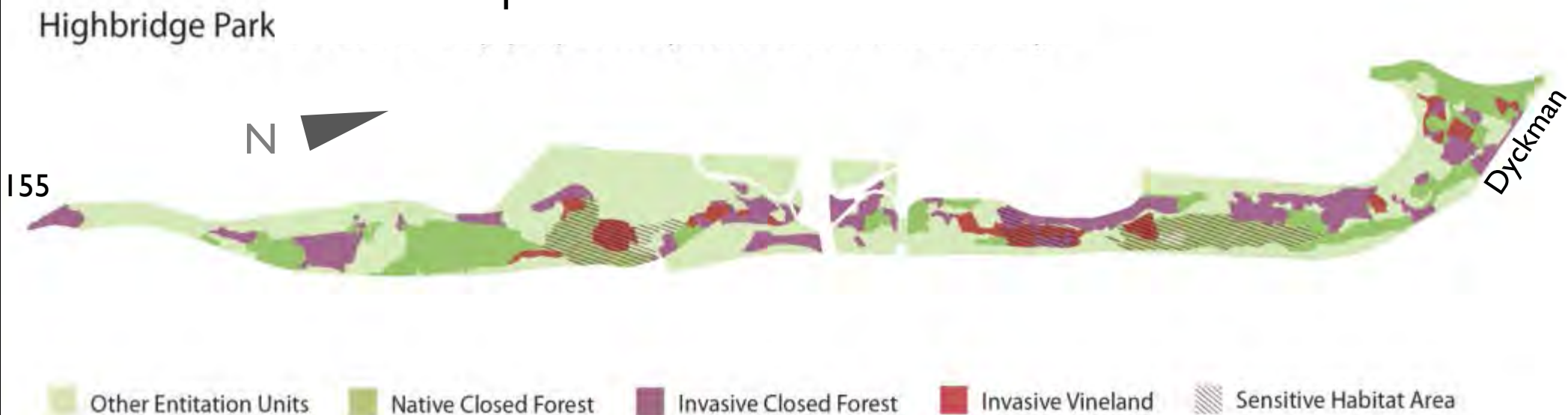


# Highbridge Park

## Remove invasive trees and vines

- Inspect important trees vulnerable to disease, such as the American Elm
- Protect sensitive areas, some are home to the Dusky Salamander, a NYC rarity, as well as garter snakes and white foot mice
- Update the entitation maps

This is a map of the plant communities prepared by the Natural Resources Group to guide restoration decisions. It considers cover type, canopy species, understory types and species and soil conditions.



The red and purple areas require attention or the vines will continue to kill trees



# Highbridge Park

## Open views of middle level path and scenic elements

Remove invasive  
trees and vines

Overlay maps of  
invasive trees and  
vines with maps of  
desirable and  
undesirable views, to  
plan removal and  
replanting

Replant view  
corridors with  
middle scale trees,  
and meadows





# Highbridge Park

## Open views of middle level path and scenic elements

Remove tall fences  
and scrub growth  
that impedes views  
where dumping has  
subsided

Orient benches to  
face views

Locate benches at  
view points





# Highbridge Park

## Restore stair ensembles throughout park

Restore the stone stairs, parapets and fences

Remove improper pointing and painting from the structure

Light structures for scenic interest and pedestrian safety

Remove domestic scale planters





# Highbridge Park

Redevelop the Dyckman Rest area for bike rentals and food concession

Provide attractive food vendors and an eating place

Develop a waiting area for livery car operators

Develop a mountain bike rental and concession





# Highbridge Park

## Improve perimeter appearance

Extend the perimeter treatment of Jackie Robinson Park

Replace the guardrail with a wooden barrier rail

Replace vandal resistant benches with a decorative metal bench

Redesign vehicular gates





# Highbridge Park

Develop a rustic landscape plan that highlights the rocks and captures the water from springs and street

- Create interesting views into the landscape
- Establish new paths up to Amsterdam Avenue from Dyckman street
- Regrade to create low areas to capture water and support plantings
- Correct faulty storm sewers on Amsterdam Avenue





# Dyckman Street

Work with the Audubon Partnership and NYC DOT to improve Dyckman Street as a green corridor connecting the five main parks

**Encourage:**

Leisurely shopping

Evening strolls

Cross-town biking





# Dyckman Street

Community residents and merchants have noted the problems with the existing configuration of Dyckman Street.

Work is underway by the Department of Transportation to reconfigure intersections and crosswalks, due to the high numbers of pedestrian and automobile accidents.

## Physical Issues



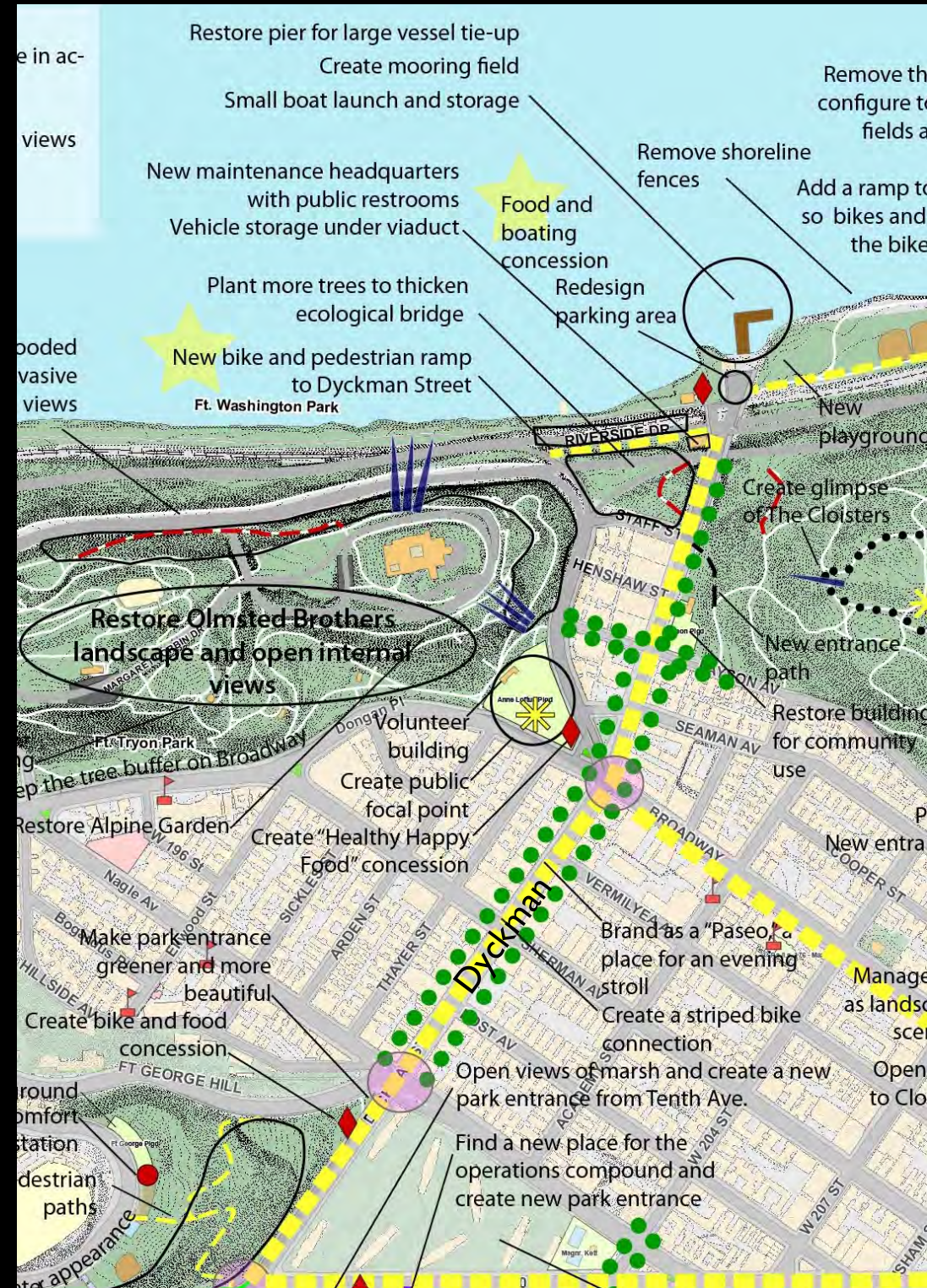


# Dyckman Street

# Concept Plan

Improve business opportunities,  
pedestrian and bicycle  
safety

- Create public gardens with healthy food at Anne Loftus, Dyckman Rest and Sherman creek
- Make Dyckman Street a more desirable strolling location, appropriate for the evening Paseo
- Establish areas for sidewalk cafes, perhaps by bumping out the sidewalk
- Eliminate double parking that congests traffic flow and blocks bike lanes
- Stripe bike lanes





# Dyckman Street

Work with MTA to improve the Dyckman Street station plaza





# Dyckman Street

Continue to improve crosswalks and signalization

Unsignalized right  
hand turn





# Dyckman Street

Decrease pavement and provide park-like entrance features and gardens

Employ rain gardens to absorb rainwater

Provide greeting and orientation signage





# Inwood & Isham Parks

**Restore forest health,  
streams, marshes and  
scenic views**

**Evoke past eras:**

Native American life,  
Revolutionary War



**Protect, reveal and interpret geological treasures:**

Geological phenomena and formations, springs and natural shorelines

**Explore Mannahatta:**

An isolated valley, and a forest ridge overlooking the sublime expanse of  
the Hudson Valley and Palisades

**Improve family attractions:**

Nature center, accessible restrooms, community space, performance  
area, picnic lawns



# Inwood Park

## Community Concerns as reported on All Our Ideas

Each “word cloud” shows the top ten concerns people mentioned. If the type is larger, it means the item has a high probability of being requested by other community members.





# Inwood and Isham Park Community

Concerns as reported on *All Our Ideas*

## Adjacent community

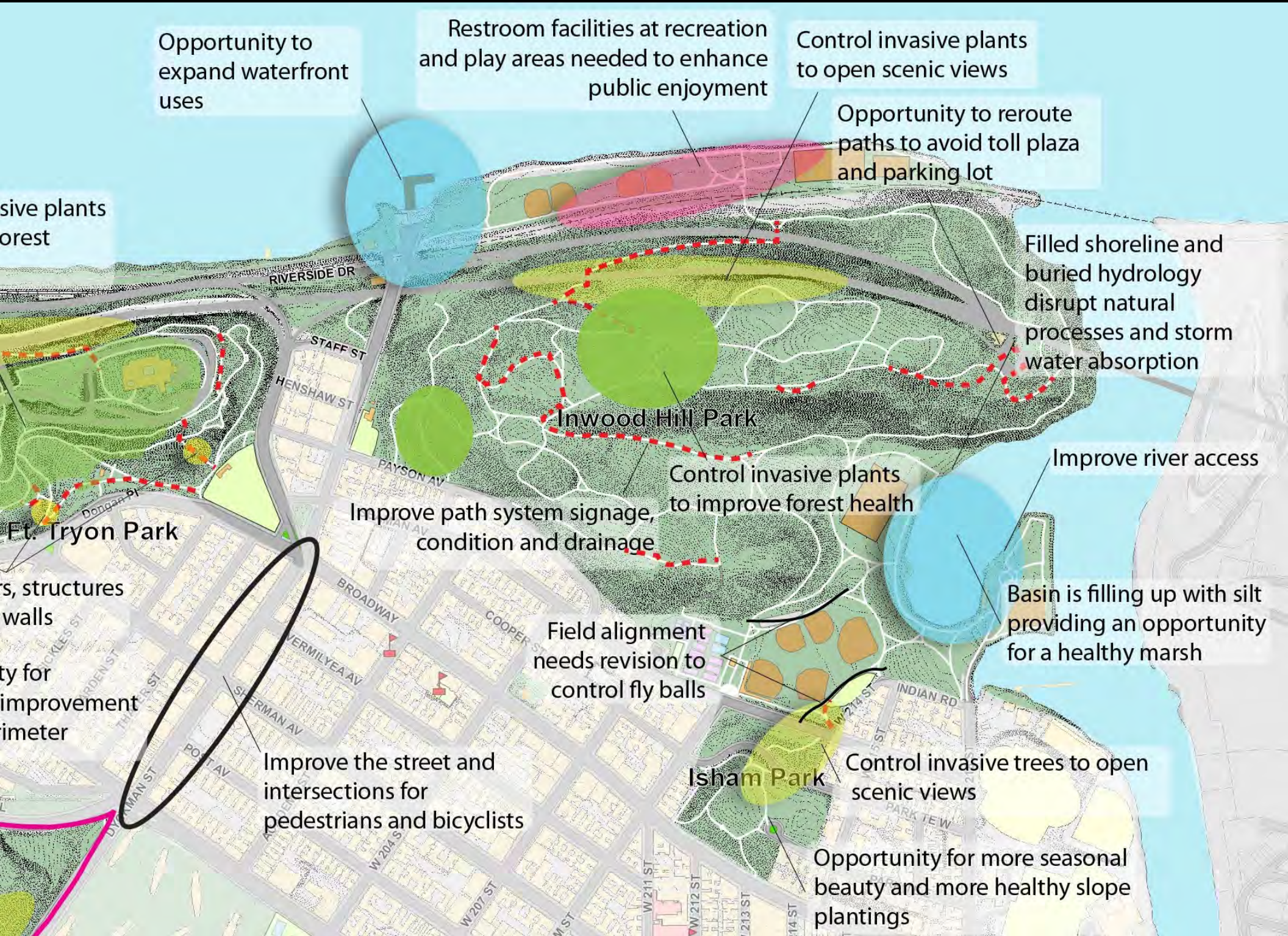
Enforce noise ordinance  
Improve bike/pedestrian safety  
Calm traffic add speedbumps  
Enforce one-way streets north of Isham Park  
Enforce traffic laws at 215th and Broadway  
Improve forest ecology  
Install side street speed bumps  
Plant more flowering plants  
Dampen subway noise  
Enforce litter laws





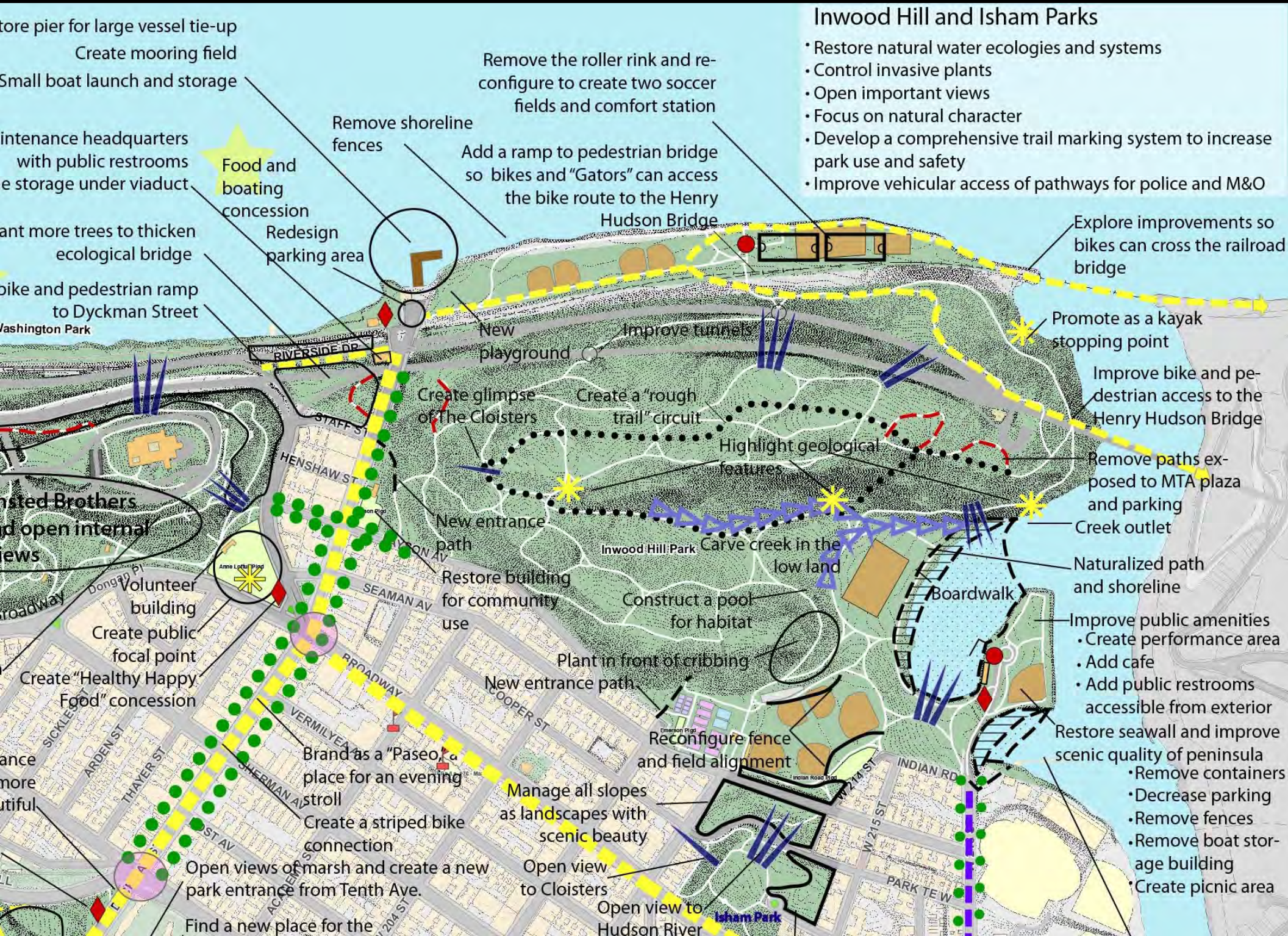
# Inwood and Isham Parks

# Physical Issues





# Concept Plan





# Inwood Park

Revise the path system to highlight natural features, avoid the TBTA toll plaza and correct circulation problems

Remove redundant paths and restore creeks and marsh areas.  
Create a rustic path through the Clove.





Present day map overlaid with historic features, creeks, paths, and roads





# Inwood Park Historic Features: Geological and Native American

FILLED-IN SPACE FOR ADDITION TO THE PARK.

During the Ice Age a series of bore holes were created in the rocks of Inwood Hill. These borings were created by rapidly flowing water from melting glaciers. The aggregate in the water wore down the rock into a depression which widened with the passing of time. The borings were discovered by geologists in 1931.<sup>1</sup>

The abundant natural resources of Inwood Hill attracted human settlement as far back as 1000 A.D. The site offered a fresh supply of water from the cold spring, cave shelters, an abundant supply of fish and shellfish in the Spuyten Duyvil Creek, rich soil for growing crops and a forest to supply timber for construction.<sup>2</sup>



Ice Age Bore Holes



Cave Shelters



Spuyten Duyvil Creek

Shorakapkok Native American Village

Cold Spring

Archeological findings imply that a permanent village named Shorakapkok was established by a group known as the Week-quas-keeks along the eastern border of the park. Additionally, artifacts have been found over the entire site, many in the vicinity of the cold spring and on the hillside near the caves.<sup>3</sup>

DRAWN FOR  
DYCKMAN INSTITUTE  
REGINALD PELHAM BOLTON



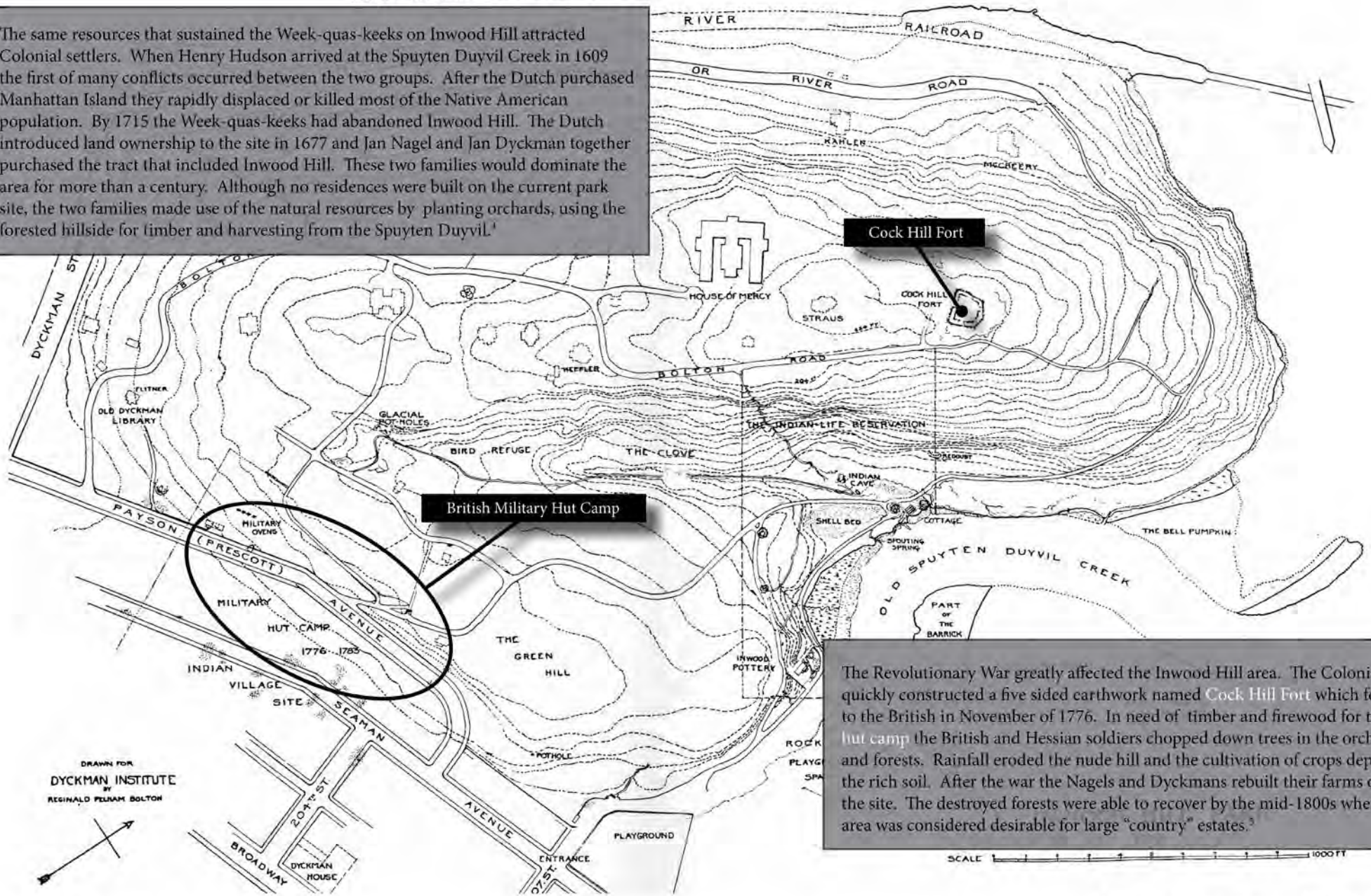
1. Reginald Pelham Bolton, *Inwood Hill Park on the Island of Manhattan* (New York: The Dyckman Institute, 193?), 23.  
2. "Human Impact on the Inwood Hill Park Site," in *Inwood Hill Park: Ecological Planning Study*, prepared by City College of New York Urban Landscape 365, Spring 1987, 1.  
3. *Ibid.*, 1.



## Inwood Park Historic Features: Colonial and Revolutionary Periods

FILLED-IN SPACE FOR ADDITION TO THE PARK

The same resources that sustained the Week-quas-keeks on Inwood Hill attracted Colonial settlers. When Henry Hudson arrived at the Spuyten Duyvil Creek in 1609 the first of many conflicts occurred between the two groups. After the Dutch purchased Manhattan Island they rapidly displaced or killed most of the Native American population. By 1715 the Week-quas-keeks had abandoned Inwood Hill. The Dutch introduced land ownership to the site in 1677 and Jan Nagel and Jan Dyckman together purchased the tract that included Inwood Hill. These two families would dominate the area for more than a century. Although no residences were built on the current park site, the two families made use of the natural resources by planting orchards, using the forested hillside for timber and harvesting from the Spuyten Duyvil.<sup>1</sup>

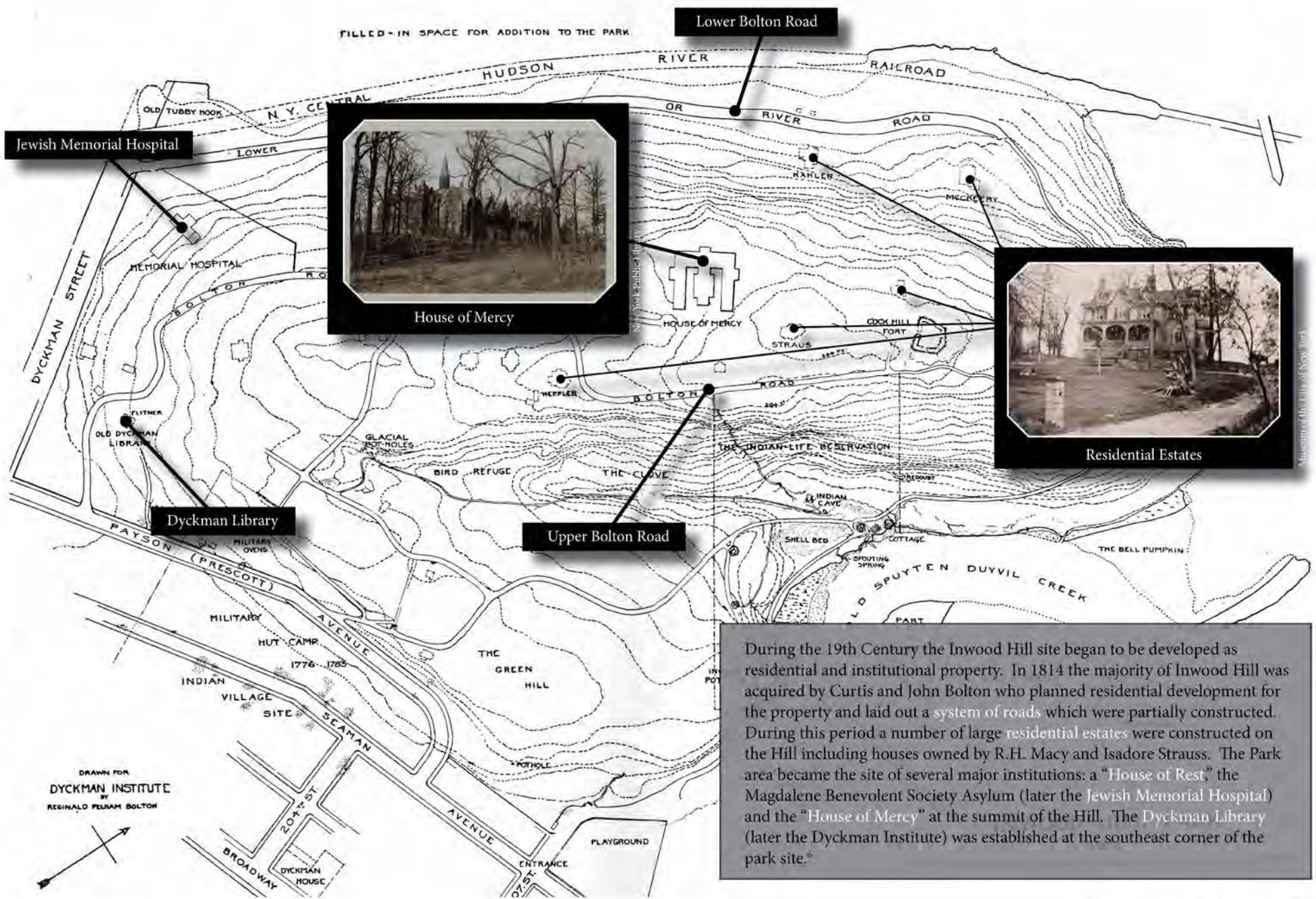


The Revolutionary War greatly affected the Inwood Hill area. The Colonials quickly constructed a five sided earthwork named Cock Hill Fort which fell to the British in November of 1776. In need of timber and firewood for their hut camp the British and Hessian soldiers chopped down trees in the orchards and forests. Rainfall eroded the nude hill and the cultivation of crops depleted the rich soil. After the war the Nagels and Dyckmans rebuilt their farms on the site. The destroyed forests were able to recover by the mid-1800s when the area was considered desirable for large "country" estates.<sup>3</sup>

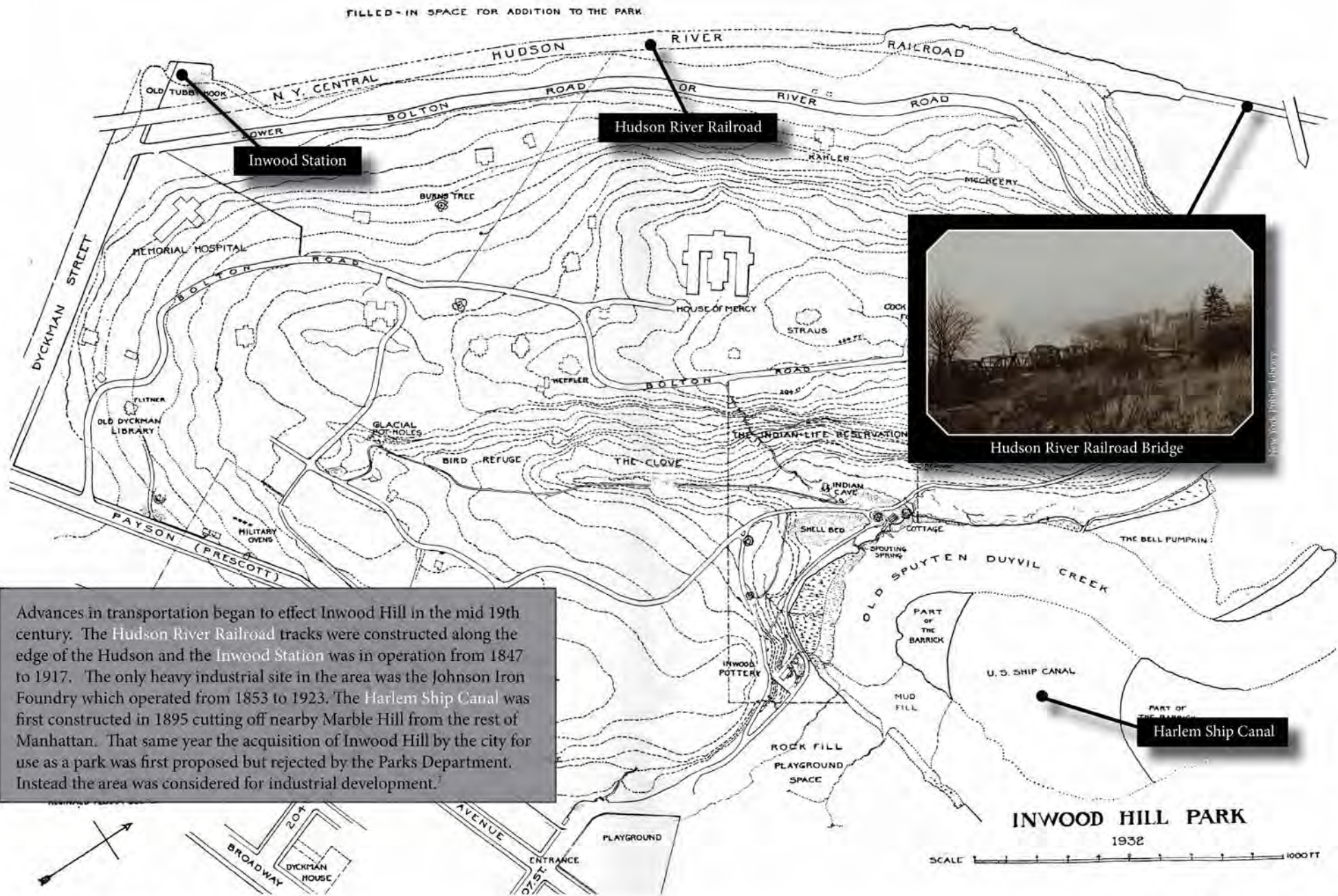
4. "Human Impact on the Inwood Hill Park Site," 2-3.
5. *Ibid.*, 3.



# Inwood Park Historic Features: 19<sup>th</sup> Century Estates and Institutions









# Inwood Park

## Historic Features: Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century

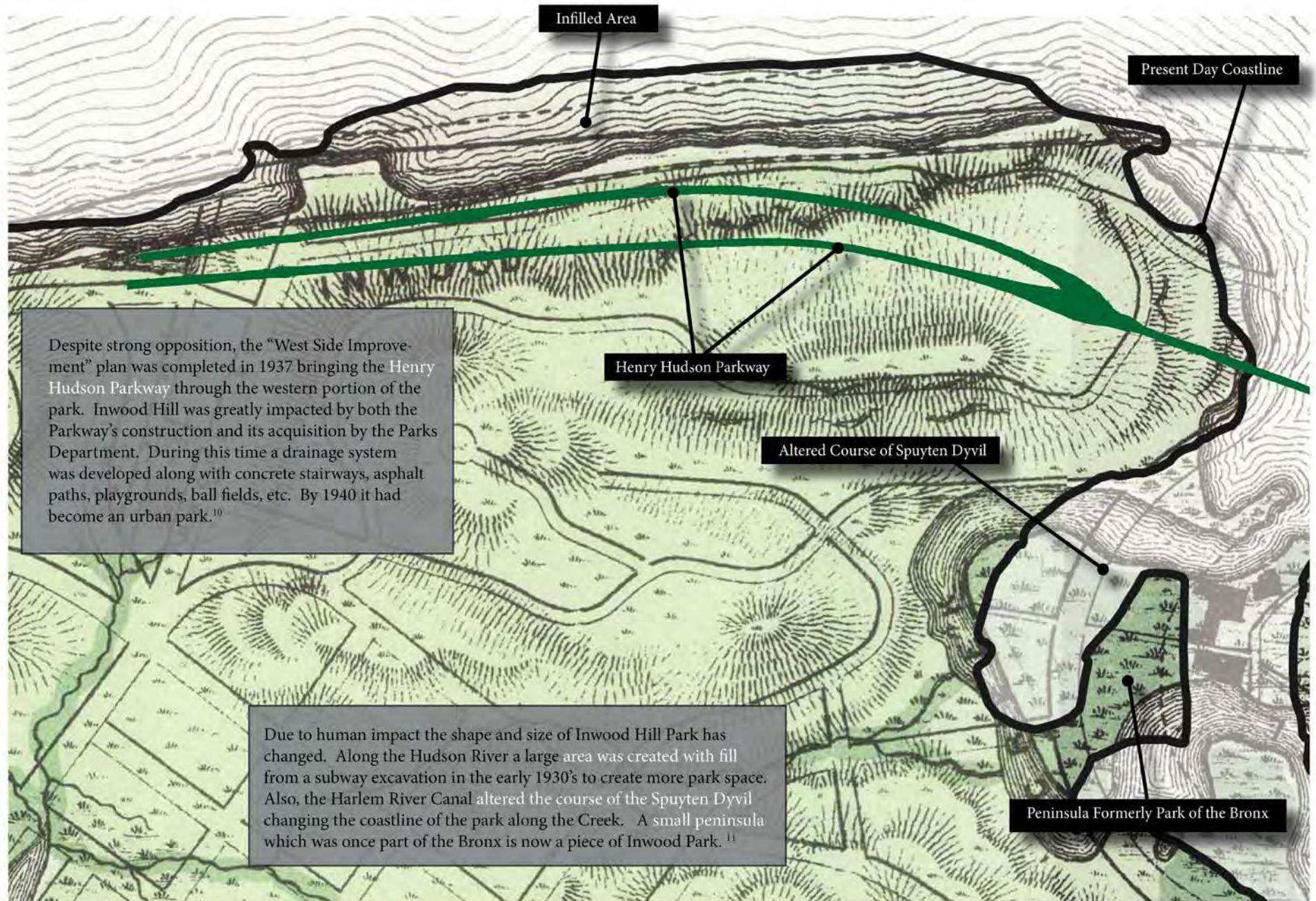
During the early 1900's, Inwood Hill remained in its "natural" form including the last bit of natural waterfront in Manhattan. The City was persuaded to create a park at Inwood Hill and between 1916 and 1923 the Parks Department acquired most of the present day site. At this point the trustees of the Dyckman Institute were appointed honorary curators of about 20 acres which were designated as the "Indian Life Reservation." This area included the cave and rock shelters, the Great Tulip Tree (the oldest living thing in Manhattan), the nearby cottage and a working pottery which reproduced Native American pots.<sup>8</sup> Native American remains were first discovered on the site in 1890 and a professional archeological dig was sponsored by the Museum of the American Indian in 1919.<sup>9</sup>



Map by Reginald Pelham Bolton

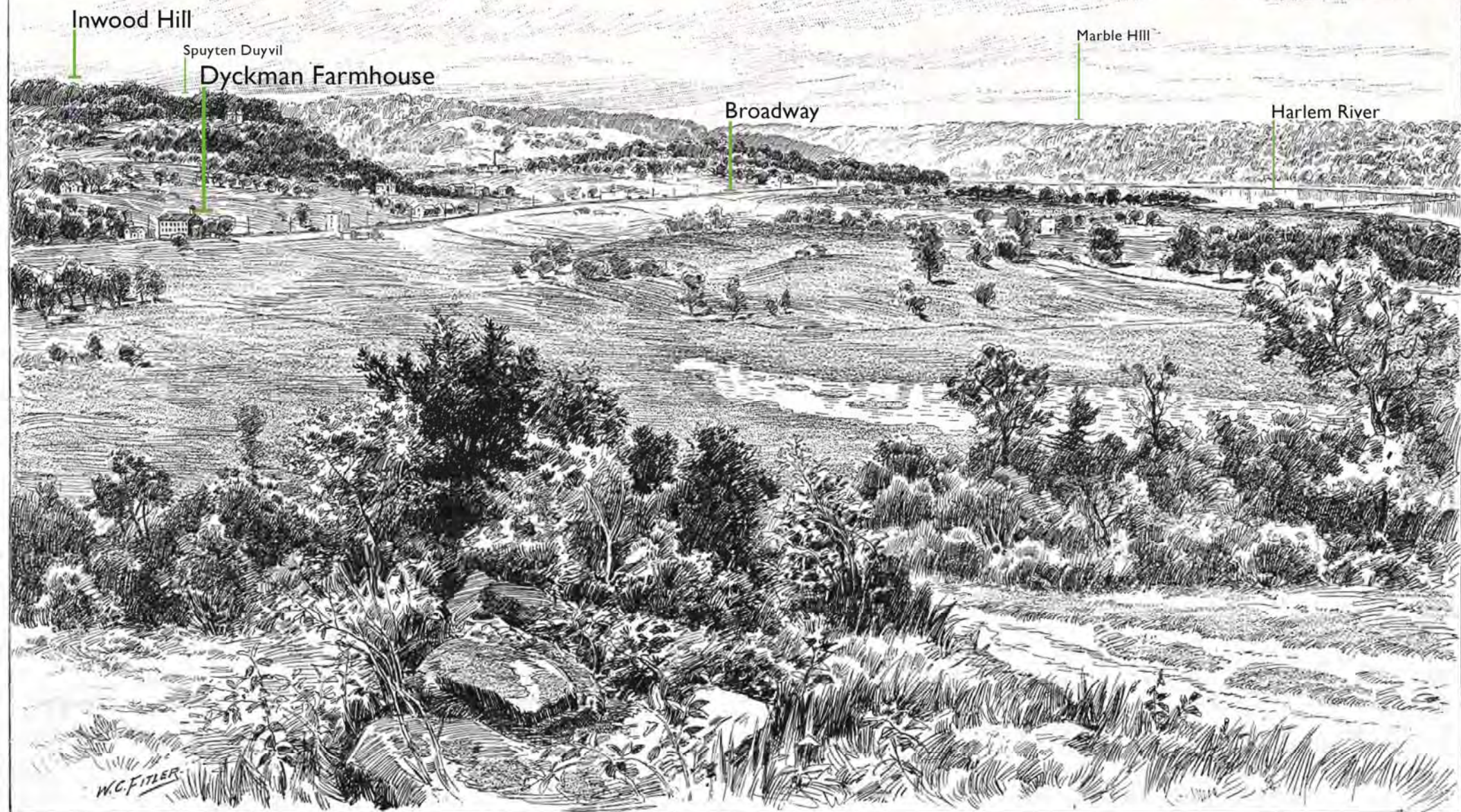
8. Bolton, 2.  
9. "Human Impact on the Inwood Hill Park Site," 5.







1892 rendering of the view of the Inwood Hill area from the Fort George area which is at the north end of the current day Highbridge Park

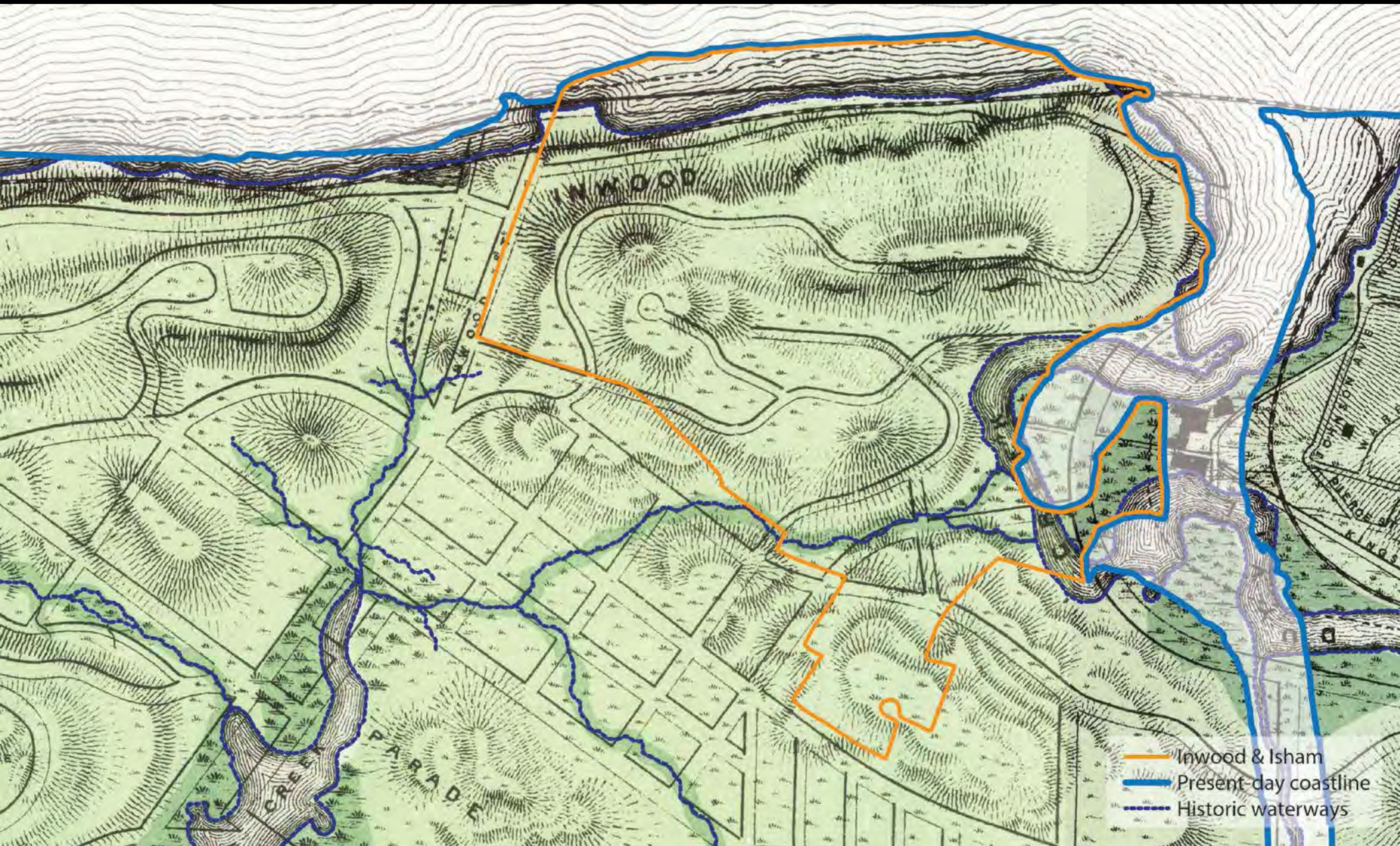




# Inwood Park

Restore the original hydrological systems

1874 - Viele Map showing original watercourses, overlaid with current park outlines and coastline





# Inwood Park

Restore watercourses and wetlands



Existing emerging  
wetland





# Inwood Park

## Restore watercourses and wetlands

Create a naturalized shoreline at a proper elevation to establish a high marsh

Reconstruct shoreline pathway as a boardwalk

Establish a low marsh in the body of the inlet



Proposed naturalized shoreline and creek outlet

New small boat launch location



# Inwood Park

## Create a naturalized creek outlet

Create a  
naturalized  
shoreline

Reconfigure  
shoreline and inland  
elevations to create  
a creek

Remove the steel  
fences, reconfigure  
the paths adjacent  
to the creek





# Inwood Park

Create naturalized wet areas and rivulet in the Clove



Existing conditions: Showing flooded and washed out path in the Clove



Proposed: Showing rivulet formed by lowering soil levels and re-grading topography



# Inwood Park

## Establish a wilderness trail

Restore and reuse steps and paths carved into the rock, as well as the small trails constructed on the slopes in the Indian cave area of the western ridge

Use very discrete trail markings

Route the path past scenic, geological and hydrological features





# Inwood Park

Improve interpretation of Native American caves and the geological features

Give insight to the Native American point-of-view

Provide access to the geological features in a way that blends into the natural environment and does not cause erosion.





# Inwood Park

Create a real fire ring and performance area at the Indian Caves

Use rocks and natural materials to form a ring of seating that will accommodate groups of 30 people





# Inwood Park

## Re-establish the natural character of the entrance to the Clove



- Remove curbs, lamp posts, and utility structures; use discreet signage
- Reduce pavement and construct a boardwalk over the restored rivulet
- Plant a new tulip tree to replace the lost historic tree

Proposed conditions



Current conditions



# Inwood Park

Improve the use and appearance of the peninsula



Remove the storage yard and containers, relocate the kayak storage building

Enhance the picnic area

Enhance the performance area

Paint the nature center a darker color

Reconfigure the restrooms to permit outside access when the center is closed

Provide a boardwalk for marsh access

Improve the roof and HVAC system



# Inwood Park

Reconfigure the ball field layout and foul ball fences to protect park users and improve appearance of the adjacent areas

Reconfigure the fields to decrease fly ball hazards to park users

Construct new fences closer to field foul lines to provide a more effective barrier and to make paths feel less constricted

Reconstruct similar fences near the dog run





# Inwood Park

Continue to remove invasive trees and vines

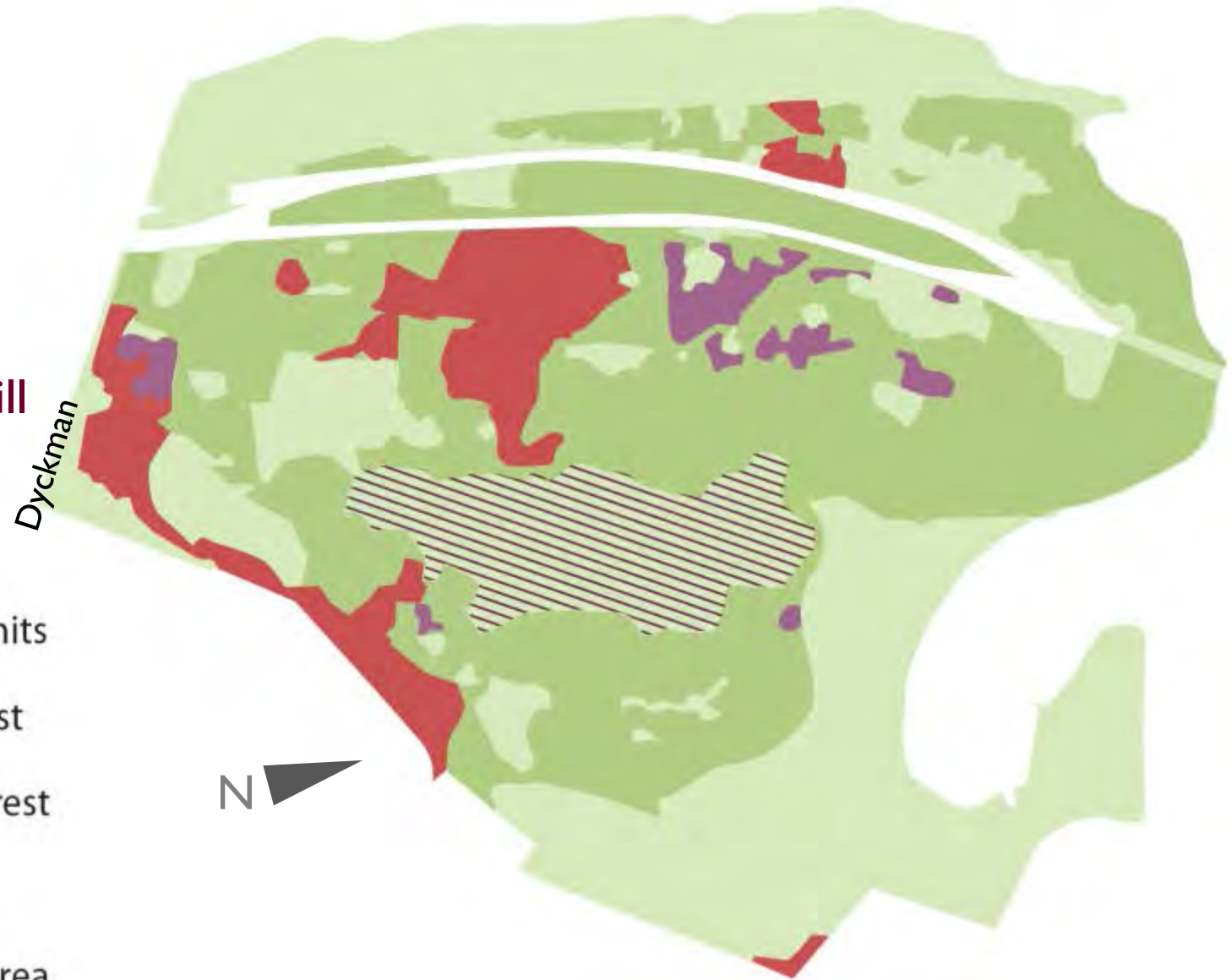
This is a map of the plant communities prepared by the Natural Resources Group to guide restoration decisions. It considers cover type, canopy species, understory types and species and soil conditions.

Inwood Hill Park

The red and purple areas require attention or they will spread aggressively

## Plant Communities

- Other Entitation Units
- Native Closed Forest
- Invasive Closed Forest
- Invasive Vineland
- Sensitive Habitat Area





# Inwood Park

Restore scenic views



Historic view of the Hudson



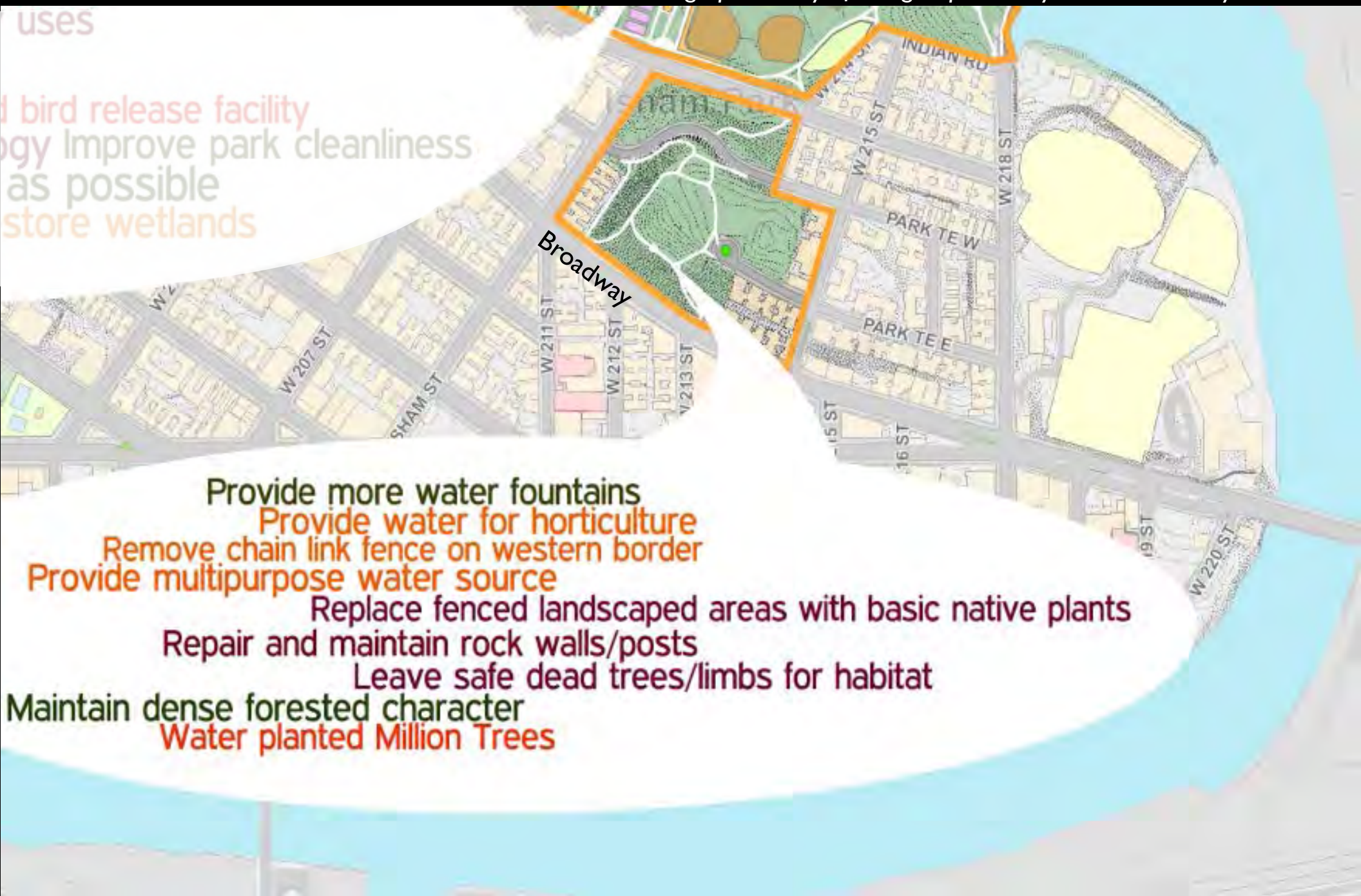
Example of overgrown condition with obscured view



# Isham Park

## Community Concerns as reported on *All Our Ideas*

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### Adjacent community



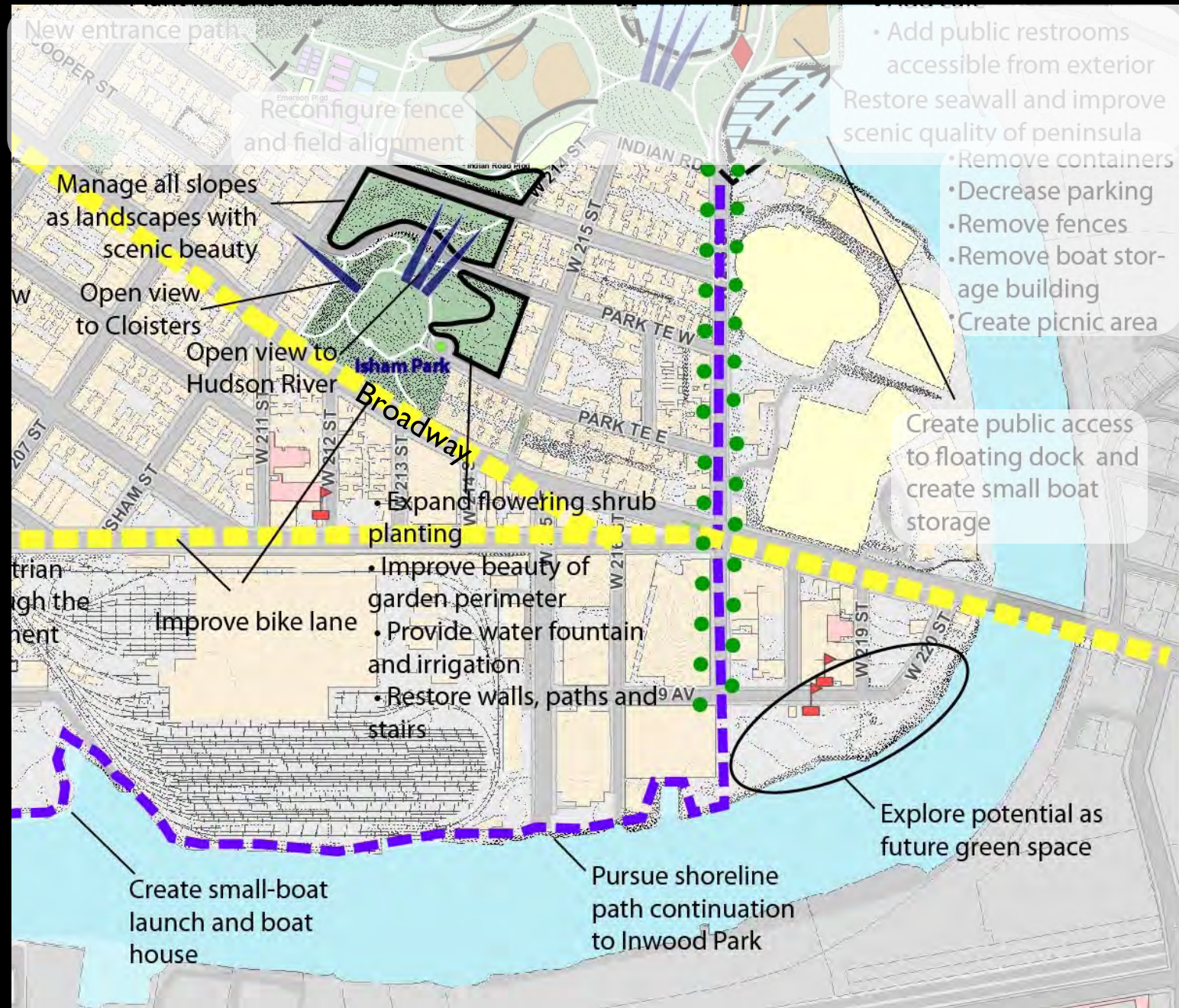


# Isham Park

## Physical Issues





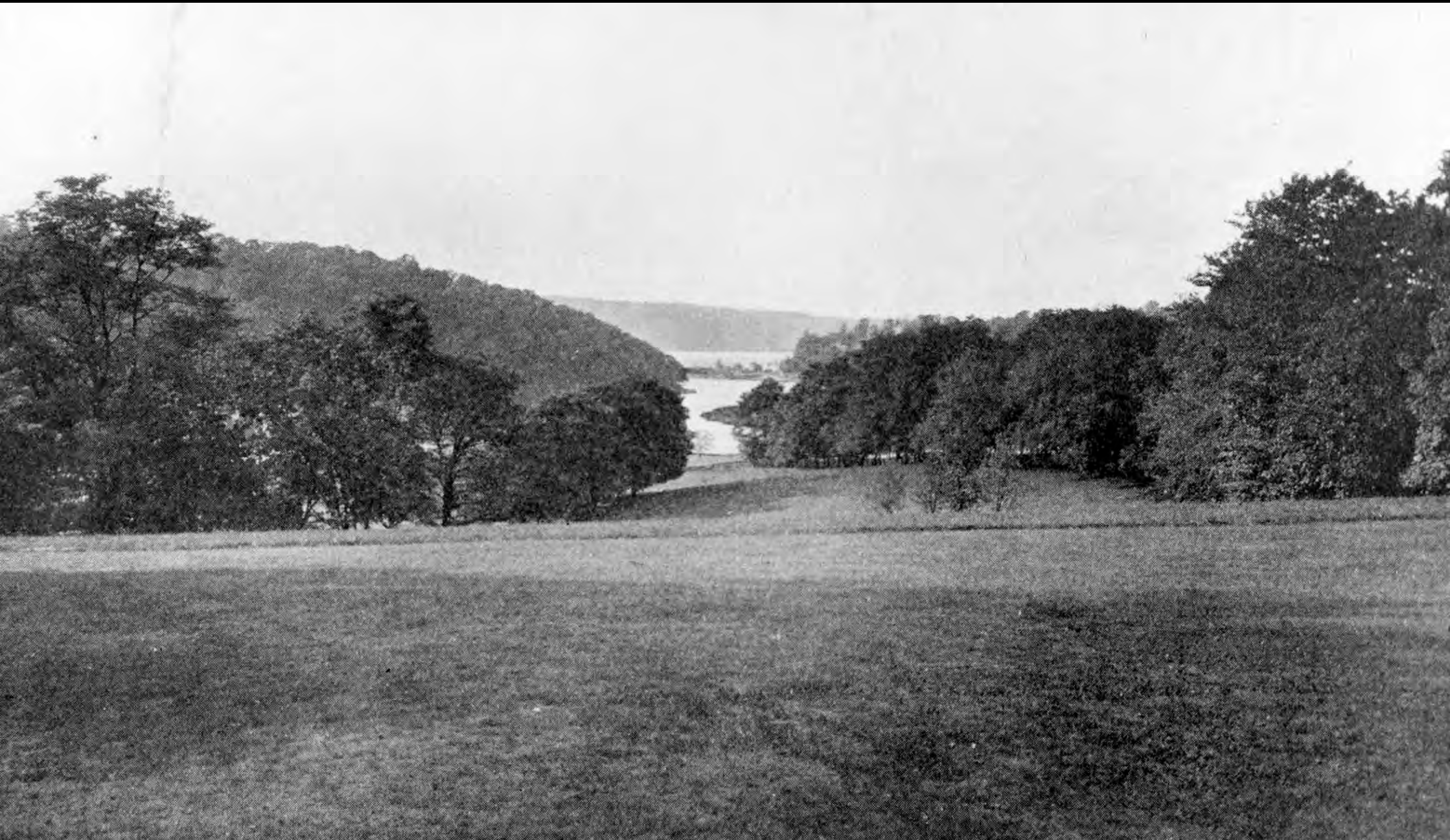




# Isham Park

Restore critical historic views and scenic beauty

Historic view from the Isham hill toward Inwood park and the Hudson River





# Isham Park

## Restore critical historic views and scenic beauty

Prune and thin healthy trees to improve sculptural beauty and sightlines

Relocate newly planted street trees that will grow too tall for the location

Only plant shorter trees in the view corridor

Relocate lampposts and signs that interfere with the view



Existing conditions



# Isham Park

## Improve safety and beauty of “Isham Family Path” and park slopes



Remove dead trees, prune and thin healthy trees to improve sculptural beauty and sightlines; plant understory trees and shrubs to enhance habitat

Remove tall shrubs that enclose the pathway

Plant groundcover near paths, plant lower flowering shrubs and airy multistem understory trees down the slope to add scenic beauty

Design short range views from the memorial benches

Establish a zone of 2 foot-candle warm colored lighting to make the path more attractive to pedestrians in the evening



# Isham Park

## Improve the appearance of the Park Terrace East circle

Replace the cobra head street lights with historic street lights, use discreet ground or fence mounted signage

Improve the circle plantings

Employ chemical graffiti removal rather than painting the stone





# Isham Park

## Integrate Bruce's Garden into the park landscape

Plant low growing  
flowering shrubs and  
airy multistem trees  
on the park side of  
the fence

Evaluate removing  
the fence and  
connecting the  
garden to the park  
like “Strawberry  
Fields” in Central  
Park

Provide water for  
irrigation





# Isham Park

Remove Mulberry trees damaging the stairs, and restore the stairs

Remove mulberry trees damaging stairs

Restore the stairs

Plant low growing flowering shrubs and trees

Provide water for irrigation

Demap the street that was never constructed





# Isham Park

Use standard dark color for all painted concrete surfaces



Existing white painted wall



Proposed granite gray painted wall

Decrease the dominance of painted surfaces in the landscape by making them darker

Plant ivy on the wall to naturalize it and discourage graffiti



# Sherman Creek



**Extend the  
shoreline  
path north to  
217<sup>th</sup> Street**

**Create opportunities for fishing and boating, including  
small boat storage and launching facilities**

**Add recreation facilities, such as playgrounds**

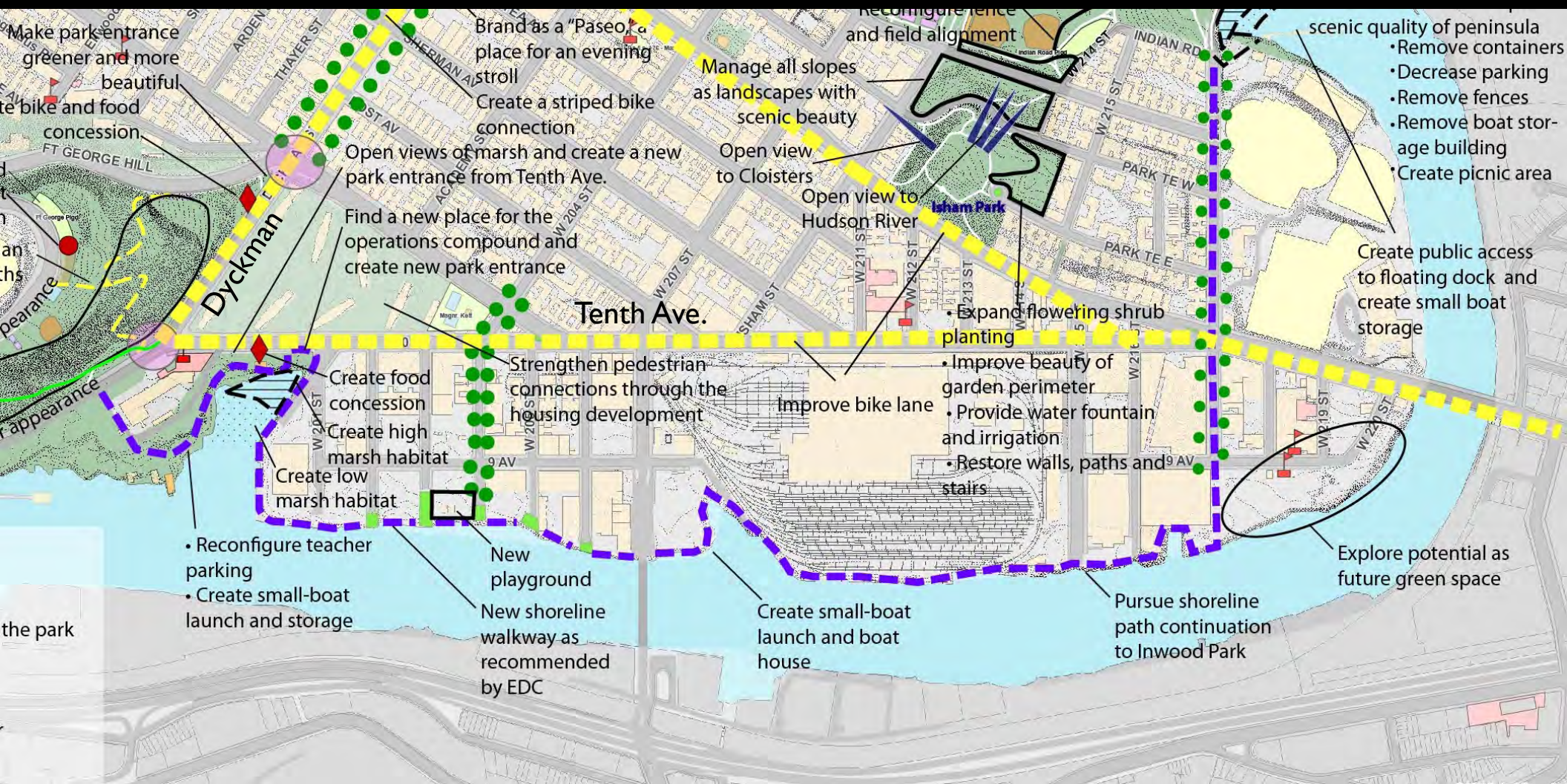
**Restore the marshes and shoreline**



Each “word cloud” shows the top ten concerns people mentioned. If the type is larger, it means the item has a high probability of being requested by other community members.









# Sherman Creek

Advance the Economic Development Corporation's plan for the shoreline north of Sherman Creek, by WXY Architecture

Continuous walkway  
to University  
Heights bridge

New playground

Convert Academy  
street to a park

Restore the marsh

Identify a source of  
operations funding





# Sherman Creek

Advance the Economic Development Corporation's plan for the shoreline north of Sherman Creek, by WXY Architecture

Continuous walkway  
to University Heights  
bridge





# Sherman Creek

Advance the Economic Development Corporation's plan for the shoreline north of Sherman Creek, by WXY Architecture

Wet land walk near  
Academy Street



Small boat launch and  
boat house





# Sherman Creek

Improve access to the River and create a healthy marsh with small boat access

Support efforts by New York Restoration to create a natural shoreline and restore the marsh's natural ecology

Open views into Sherman Creek from the upland paths and streets

Provide small boat launching and storage facilities





# Sherman Creek

Make the area behind the school more park-like

Revise the school  
parking

Reduce pavement

Open views into  
Sherman Creek from  
the school and Tenth  
Avenue

Provide a direct  
entrance to the  
shoreline from Tenth  
Avenue

Provide entrance  
signage





# Sherman Creek

Extend the shoreline walkway north of the University Heights bridge

Work out a deal with the City agencies and leaseholders to extend the shoreline walkway to the Broadway bridge





# Fort Washington Park

## Increase playground and active recreation areas:

Add a playground and comfort station to the south end of the park; improve the volleyball area and athletic fields

## Improve forest health:

Remove invasive trees and vines; enhance habitat for birds

## Enhance the shoreline and

**natural areas:** Improve access to beaches and rock outcroppings, improve shoreline stability through addition of boulders and plantings

## Create opportunities for adventure:

Activate the isolated section of the park east of the Henry Hudson Parkway, consider activities such as skateboarding, and BMX biking

## Improve connections to the community and other parks:

Construct handicapped accessible, well lit and safe connections to the waterfront from the community; reduce bicycle and pedestrian conflicts; improve perimeter appearance

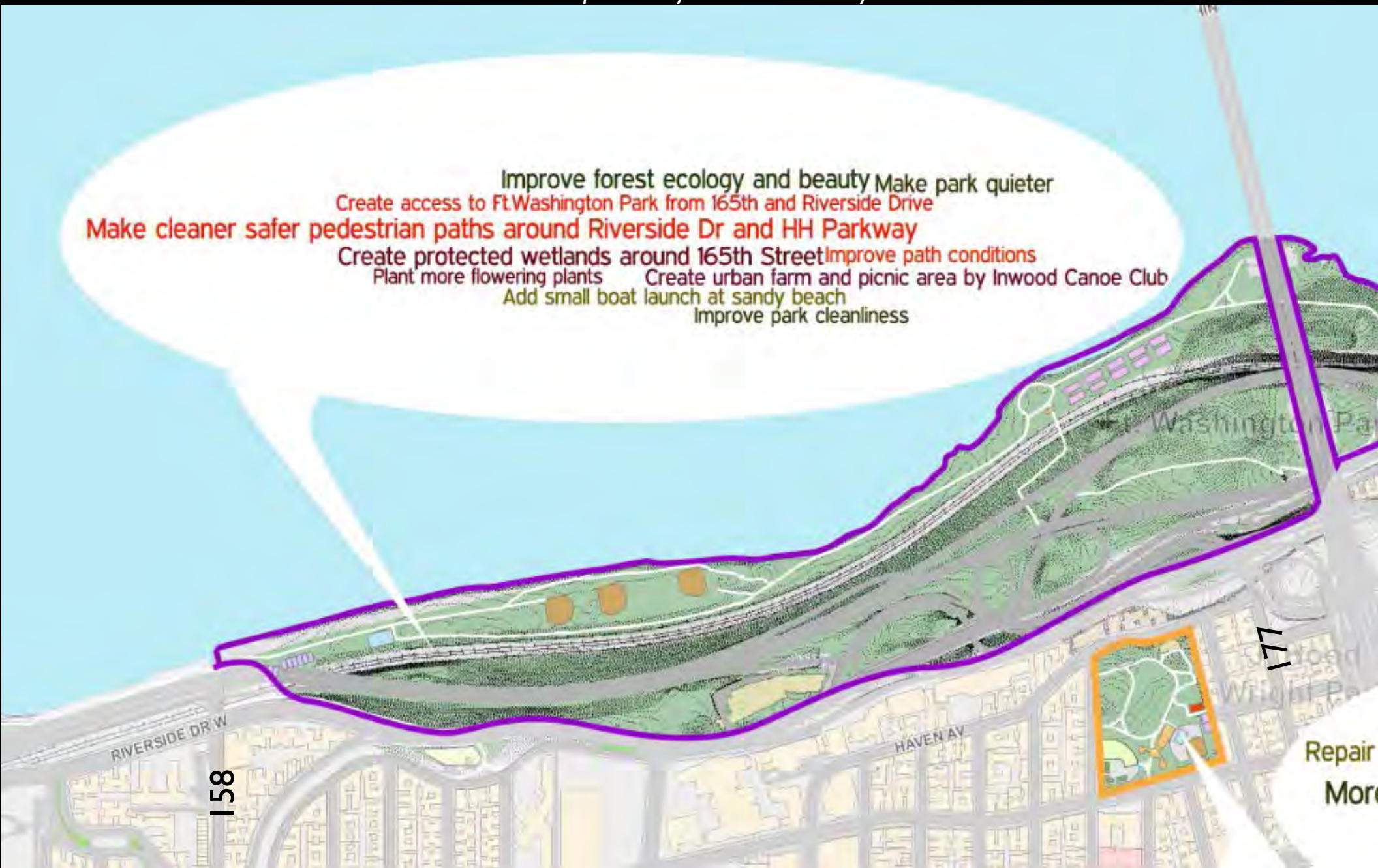




# Fort Washington Park South

## Community Concerns reported on All Our Ideas

Each “word cloud” shows the top ten concerns people mentioned. If the type is larger, it means the item has a high probability of being requested by other community members.





# Community Parks

# Community Concerns as reported on *All Our Ideas*

Adjacent community and small parks



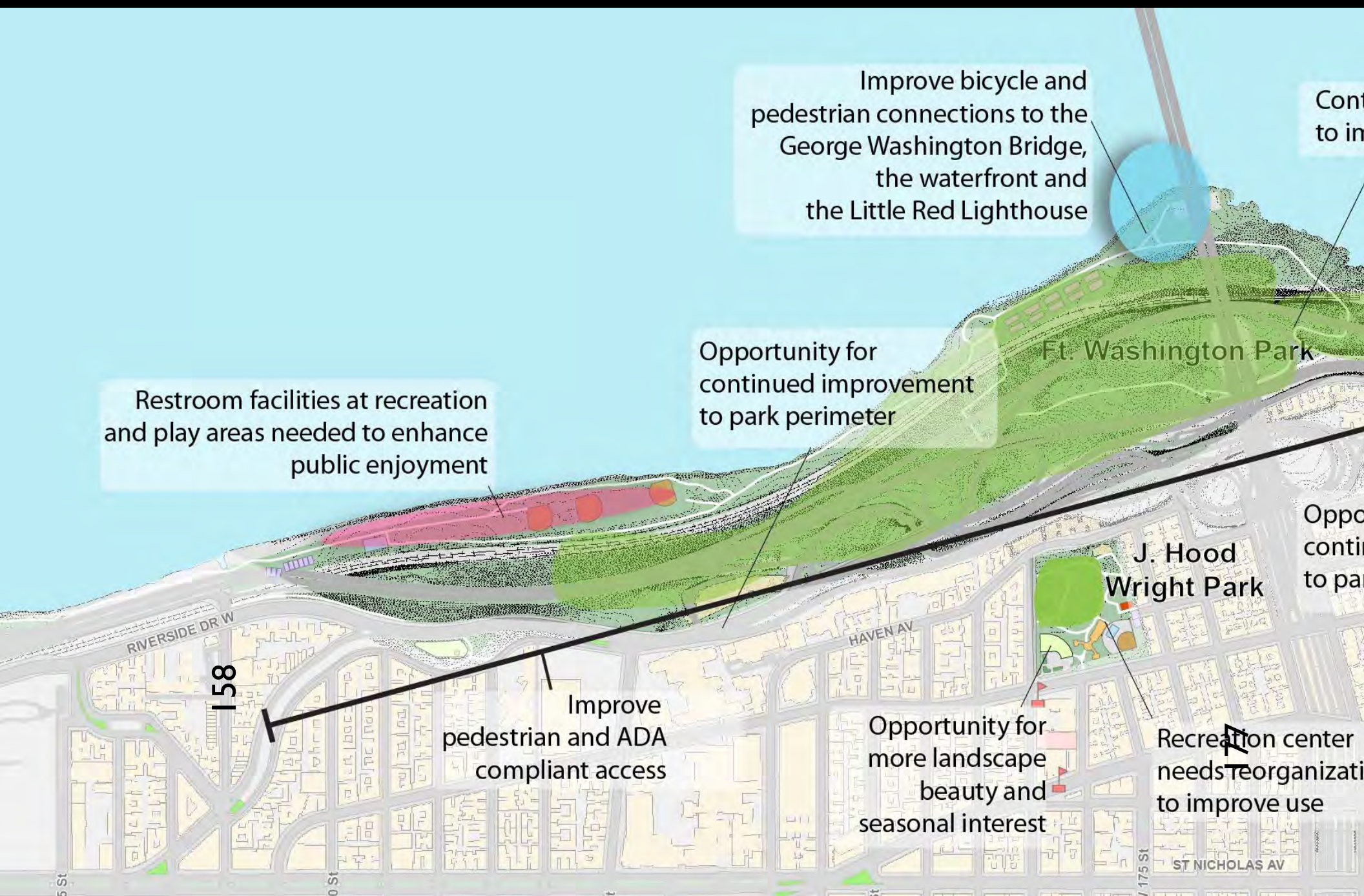
Improve path conditions  
Provide more children's play areas



# Fort Washington Park

## South

# Physical Issues South



Improve bicycle and pedestrian connections to the George Washington Bridge, the waterfront and the Little Red Lighthouse

Cont  
to im

Restroom facilities at recreation and play areas needed to enhance public enjoyment

Opportunity for continued improvement to park perimeter

Ft. Washington Park

Oppo  
contin  
to pa

J. Hood Wright Park

Improve pedestrian and ADA compliant access

Opportunity for more landscape beauty and seasonal interest

Recreation center needs to improve use

ST NICHOLAS AV

158

RIVERSIDE DR W

HAVEN AV

175 St







# Fort Washington Park North

Concerns as reported on *All Our Ideas*



Provide restroom south of Dyckman  
Add pedestrian bridge across HHParkway  
WATERFRONT ACCESS for FISHING BOATING HIKING BIKING WALKING  
FROM LIGHTHOUSE TO DYCKMAN MARINA  
Provide more trash cans  
Improve bike/pedestrian safety  
Increase police presence  
Add formal garden  
Remove parking lot  
Improve and winterize rest areas  
Improve forest ecology and beauty

180

air path walls near Bennett and Broadway  
ore garbage cans with lids  
Mark and enforce "no bikes" on pedestrian paths  
Enforce dog-waste dog-fight leash laws  
Redo 181st street pedestrian/bike bridge  
Increase police presence  
educational vegetable garden  
coordinate volunteer ground maintenance  
footbridge across highway  
Restore pathway lighting

Dyckman

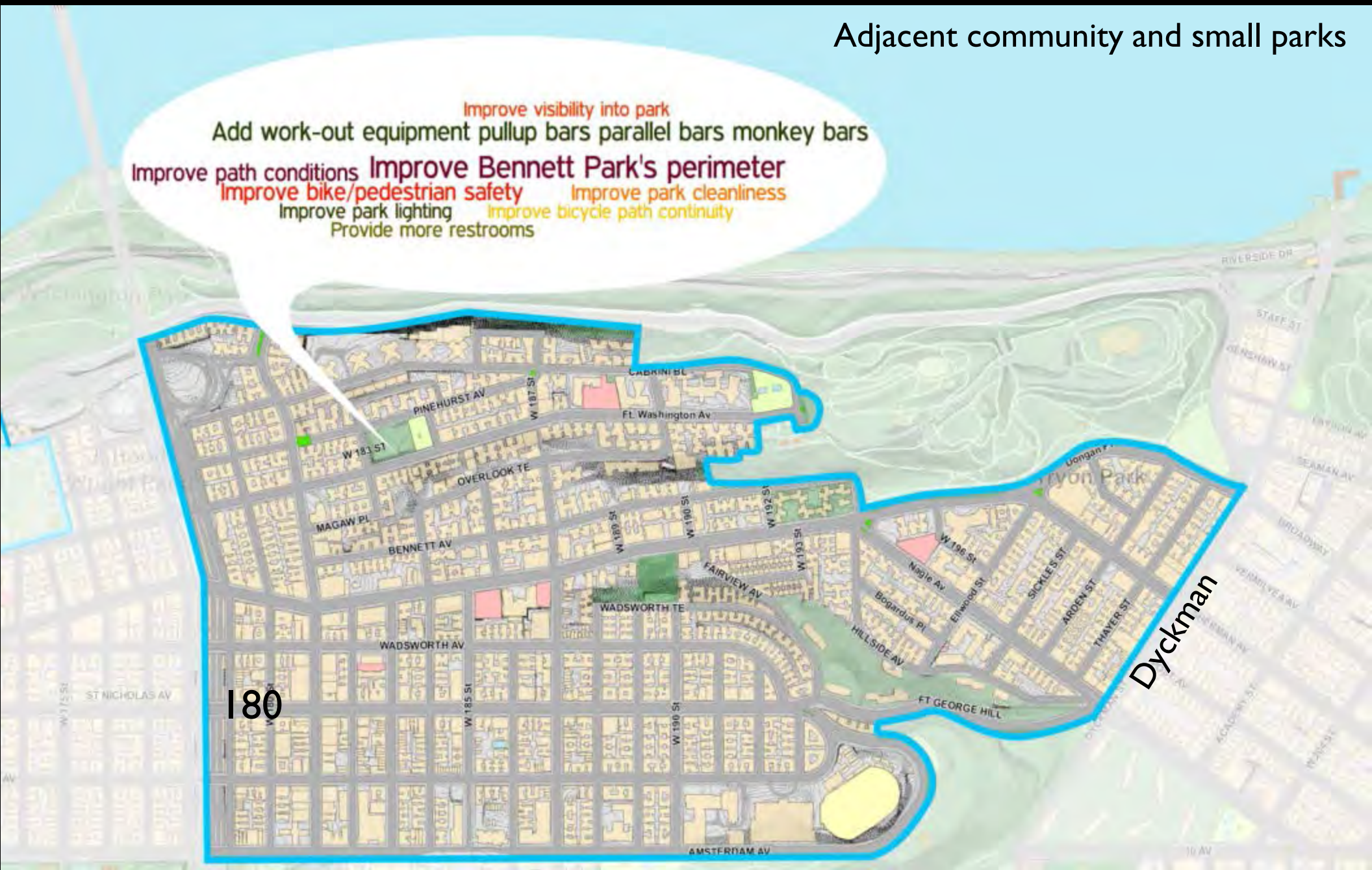


Community Parks

Concerns as reported on *All Our Ideas*

Adjacent community and small parks

- Improve visibility into park
- Add work-out equipment pullup bars parallel bars monkey bars
- Improve path conditions
- Improve Bennett Park's perimeter
- Improve bike/pedestrian safety
- Improve park cleanliness
- Improve park lighting
- Improve bicycle path continuity
- Provide more restrooms





# Fort Washington Park North

# Physical Issues North





# Concept Plan North

- Continue restoration of historic Olmsted Brother's landscape in accordance with existing master plan
- Expand uses of playground areas
- Increase management of invasive trees for forest health and views
- Restore historic structures and use them

New maintenance headquarters  
with public restrooms  
Vehicle storage under viaduct

New bike and pedestrian ramp  
to Dyckman Street  
Ft. Washington Park

Food and boating concession  
Redesign parking area

## Light the arcade

Restore Olmsted Brothers  
landscape and open internal  
views

Volunteer  
building  
create public  
focal point  
Healthy Happy  
concession

- Brand as a "Passage" place for an event stroll
- Create a stripe connection

Fine tune recreational uses to maximize play and fitness opportunities for children and adults

Improve path sightlines  
and landscape beauty

Extend shoreline walkway  
New pedestrian bridge

Open views to Hudson River,  
Restore overlook pavilion

## Improve bicycle route

- Configure playground and comfort station to improve sight-lines and play value
- Improve perimeter condition

180

An aerial map showing a residential area. A road labeled "PINEHURST AV" runs diagonally across the upper right. A green-shaded area in the lower left is labeled "Bennett Park". A black rectangular box highlights a specific area within the map, near the intersection of Pinehurst Av and another street.

CABRINI BL  
New comfort  
station  
Ft. Washington Av

tional uses to  
ay and fitness  
en and adults

Restore build  
as PEP

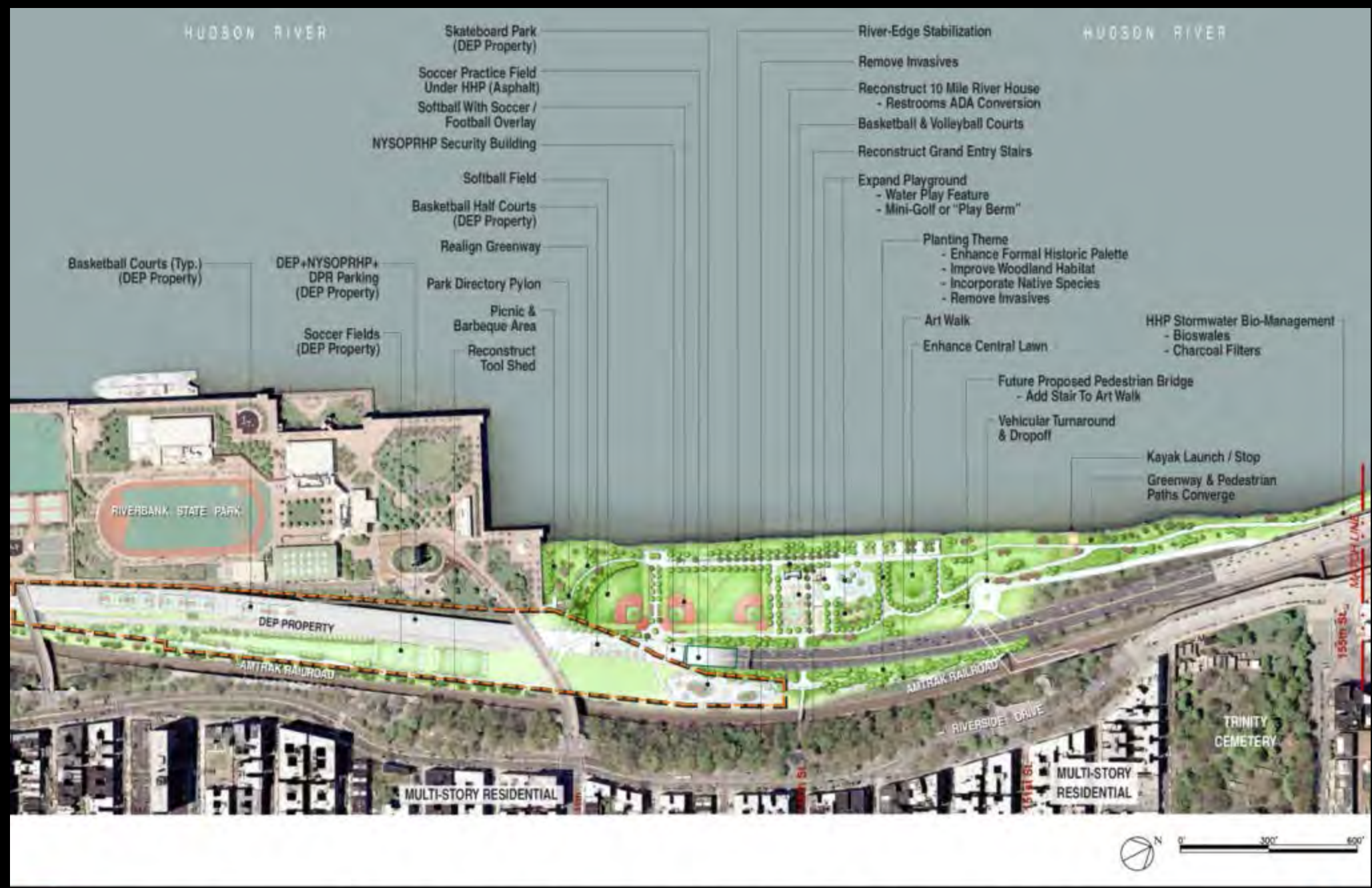
Keep the tree buffer on B

Create "Healthy Happy Food" concession

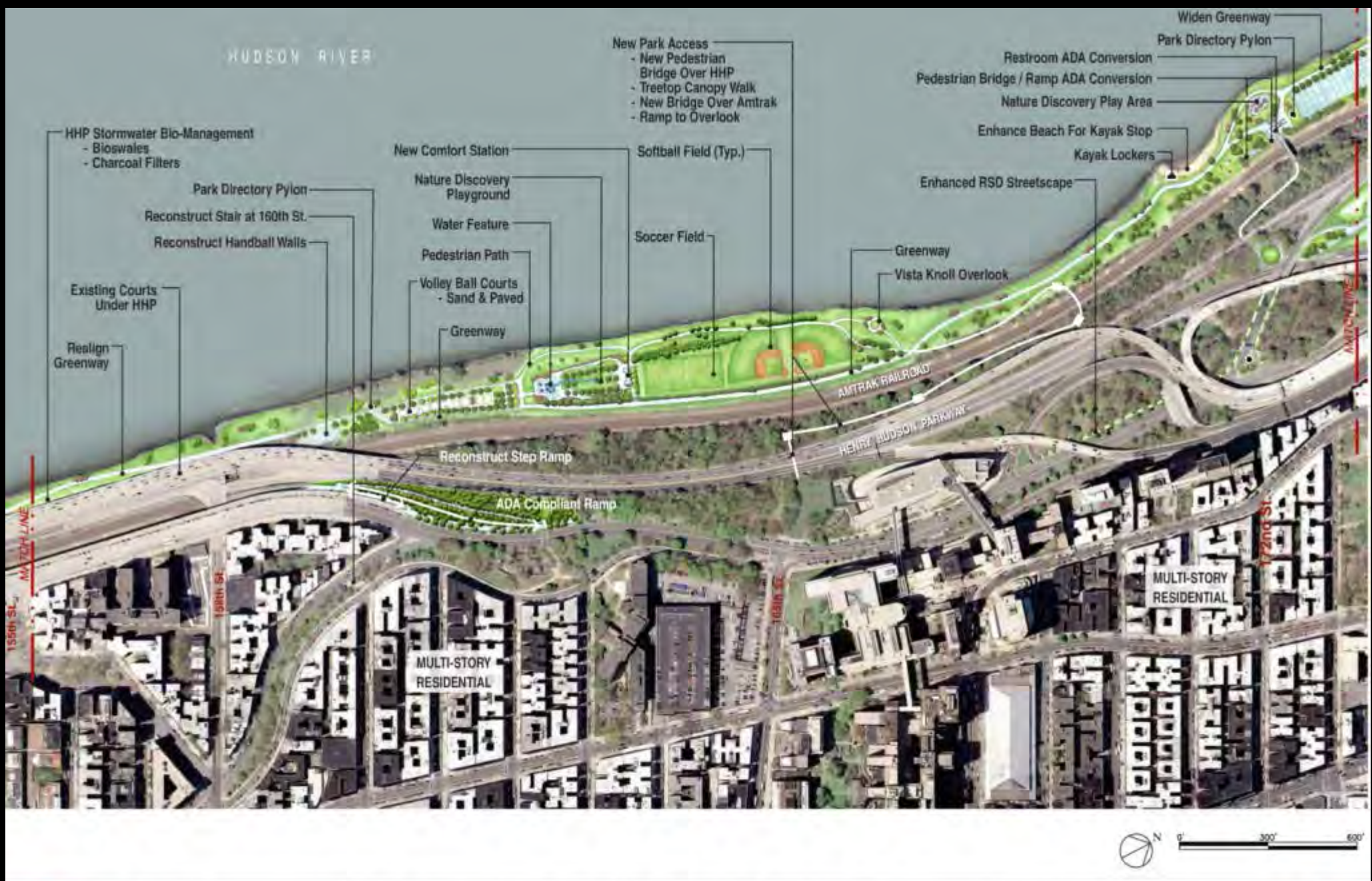
[illegible]

Brand as a "Pass  
place for an ev  
stroll  
Create a stripe  
connection





















City of New York  
Parks & Recreation  
Michael R. Bloomberg, Mayor  
Adrian Benepe, Commissioner

## The Reconstruction of Fort Washington Park

From 135th St. to Dyckman Ballfields Along the Hudson River  
Borough of Manhattan  
NYC Art Commission - Conceptual Submission - November 3, 2008

## Master Plan

Board 5 of 5  
Sector 5: Dyckman Ball Fields





# Fort Tryon Park

## Restore historic landscapes:

Beyond the Heather and Alpine gardens, restore internal views through glades and restore historic structures

## Preserve treasured views:

Prune to restore the expansive Hudson and Palisades views which were protected at great expense

## Biking and boating destination:

Connect to the Hudson River Greenway and Dyckman Street pier, increase greening of Payson Avenue, provide secure bike storage at Anne Loftus

## Provide a community focus:

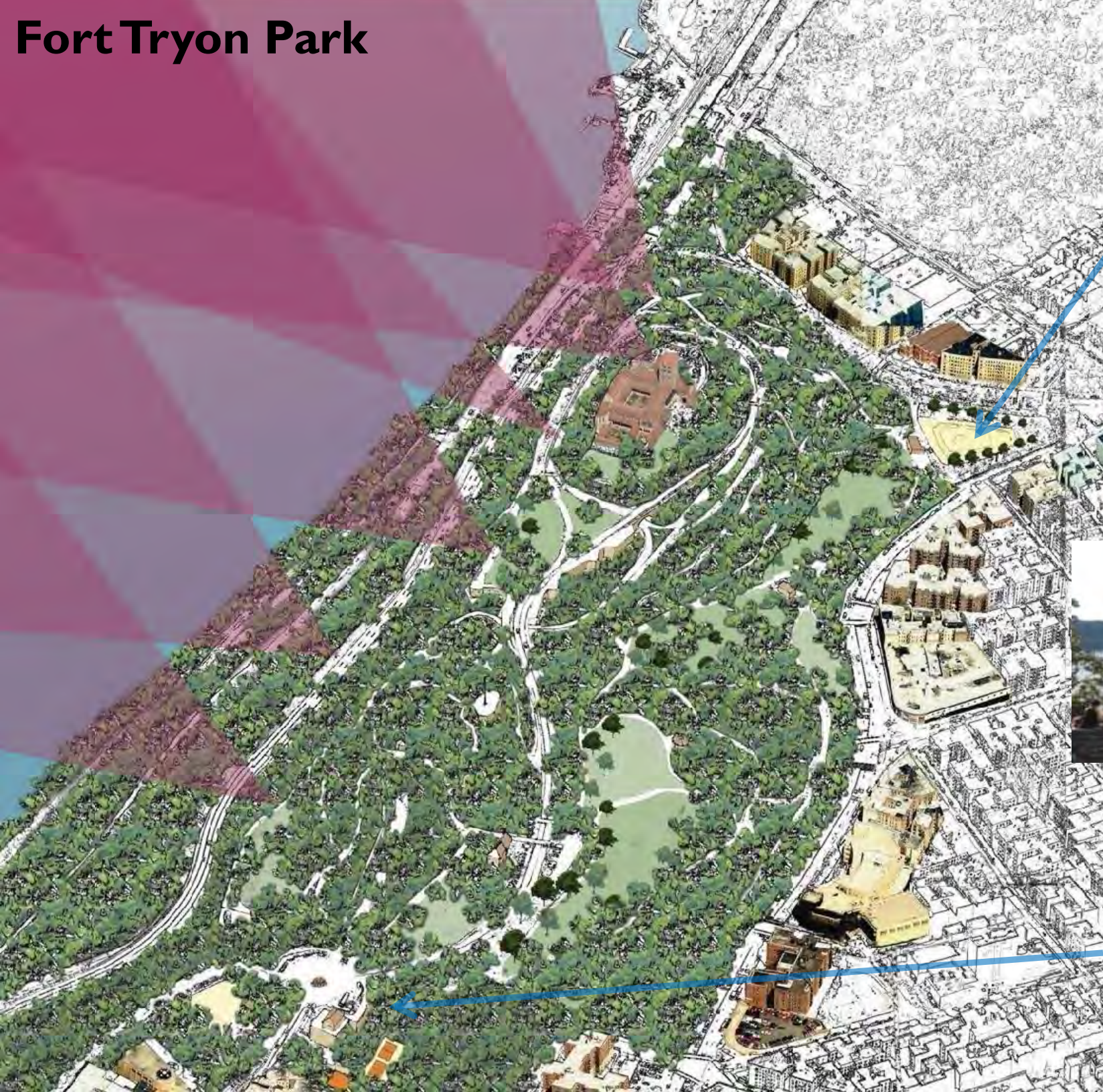
Enhance Anne Loftus playground as a piazza with programs, local food & children's play area

## Family attractions:

Expand the variety of play and exercise in playgrounds, provide comfort stations



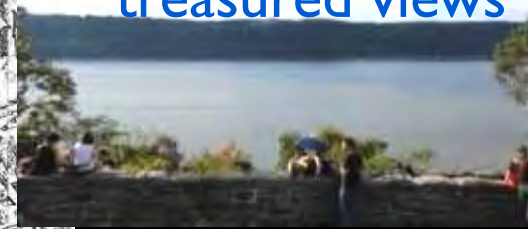




# Fort Tryon Park

Make  
Anne Loftus  
playground  
more of a  
community  
focal point

Restore  
the Olmsted  
Brothers'  
landscapes  
and the  
treasured views



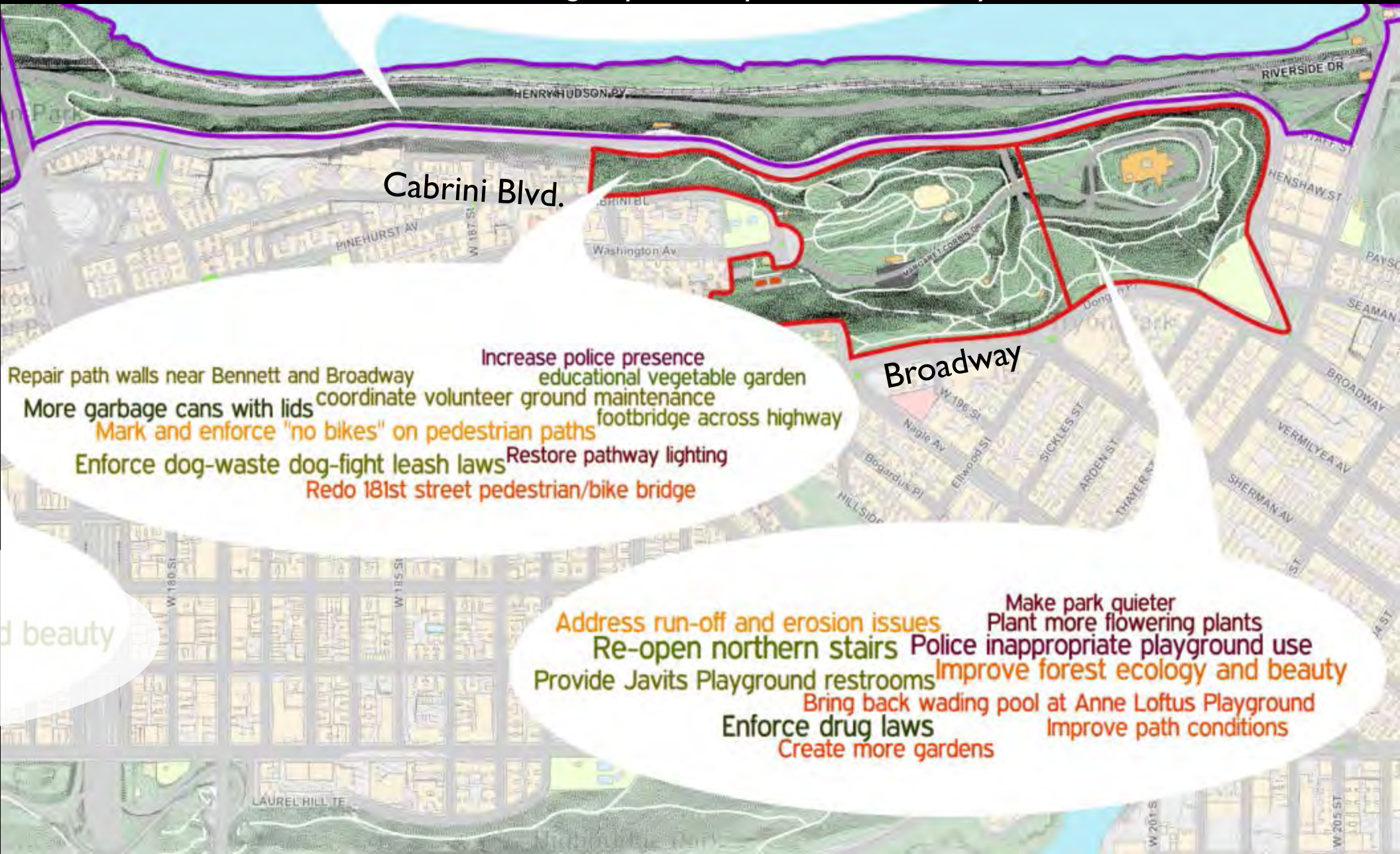
Improve active  
recreation at  
both sides of  
Javits playground  
for children and  
adults



# Fort Tryon Park

## Community Concerns as reported on All Our Ideas

Each “word cloud” shows the top ten concerns people mentioned. If the type is larger, it means the item has a high probability of being requested by other community members.





# Fort Tryon Park

# Physical Issues





# Concept Plan

- Continue restoration of historic Olmsted Brother's landscape in accordance with existing master plan
- Expand uses of playground areas
- Increase management of invasive trees for forest health and views
- Restore historic structures and use them

- Restore pier for large vessel tie-up
- Create mooring field
- Small boat launch and storage

New maintenance headquarters  
with public restrooms  
Vehicle storage under viaduct

## Plant more trees to thicken ecological bridge

New bike and pedestrian ramp  
to Dyckman Street

Ft. Washington Park

Remove short  
fences \

Food and boating concession

Redesign parking area

Open views to Hudson River,  
Restore overlook pavilion

Manage wooded slopes for invasive control and views

## Light the arcade

## improve bicycle route

CABRINI BL  
New comfort  
station  
Ft. Washington Ave

Fine tune recreational uses to maximize play and fitness opportunities for children and adults

Improve path sightlines  
and landscape beauty

# Restore Olmsted Brothers landscape and open interna views

Restore building  
as PEP  
sub-station

Keep the tree bunched

## Restore Alpine Garden

Volunteer building  
Create public focal point  
Healthy Happy  
"concession

Anne Lortu Plad

HENSHAW ST

SEAMAN AV

An aerial photograph showing a residential neighborhood. A street is visible, with the word 'BROAD' printed on it. The surrounding area consists of numerous small, rectangular buildings, likely houses or small commercial units, arranged in a grid-like pattern. The image is somewhat blurry and has a yellowish tint.



# Fort Tryon Park

## Restore the Olmsted Brothers' landscape plan

Continue to  
implement the  
restoration plan  
prepared by  
Quennell Rothschild

Restore alpine  
plantings

Restore lawns and  
slopes

Prune trees for views  
and artistic interest





# Fort Tryon Park

## Make Anne Loftus playground more of a community focal point

Reconfigure the wading pool and surrounding plaza with a fountain feature, decorative paving, attractive lighting and benches

Improve the health and vitality of the shade trees, increase the expanse and beauty of the flowering plantings

Provide opportunities for locally prepared healthy food

Adapt the building terrace for performances, and the interior of the building for the volunteer gardening program



Existing conditions



Comparable redesign

San Jose, Costa Rica



# Fort Tryon Park

Make Anne Loftus playground more of a community focal point

Improve play  
value and  
spectacle of the  
fountain



Improve visibility into  
the playground





# Fort Tryon Park

Connect Anne Loftus playground to  
Dyckman St.

Redesign the triangles, and  
improve pedestrian safety





# Fort Tryon Park

Make the terrace level playground  
more useful for active recreation

Provide new  
active  
recreation,  
and control  
hours of use

Install exercise  
equipment and  
ping pong  
tables





# Fort Tryon Park

Restore historic buildings and  
adapt them for new uses

Restore the  
gardener's  
cottage for  
restrooms and  
a Parks  
Enforcement  
Patrol sub-  
station





# Fort Tryon Park

Restore the historic stone walls  
and overlooks



Point stone  
Reset dislodged stones





# Fort Tryon Park

Restore and maintain historic  
views of the Hudson River

Prevent invasive  
vines and trees  
from damaging  
forest health  
and scenic  
beauty

Develop a  
comprehensive  
strategy for  
forest health  
management,  
and removal of  
invasive trees  
and vines





# Northern Manhattan Parks

## Master Plan: NEXT STEPS



NYC Parks

*List the tasks and the immediate next steps that will advance the plan.*



The Master Plan was approved by Community Board 12, the Master Plan Advisory Council and local elected officials in the Summer of 2011.

The next steps include:

### Planning

- Prepare a list of projects and estimates of costs
- Work with the community, Audubon Partnership and the Department of Transportation to improve Dyckman Street
- Work with the Department of Transportation to improve pedestrian and bicycle circulation to the parks

### Operations

- Prioritize contract forestry and Natural Resources Group work in Inwood and Isham Parks
- Reinstitute the urban forest crew
- Focus requirements contracts on paths
- Provide more trash cans



## Planning & Parklands

- Designate the marsh areas as receptor sites for mitigation
- Focus Intermodal Surface Transportation funds on bike route connectivity
- De-map the unbuilt road in Isham Park

## Administrator and Recreation

- Coordinate New York Restoration, Natural Resources Group and Million Trees efforts for invasive control and replanting in Highbridge
- Install rule and directional signage in English and Spanish
- Obtain funding for strategic staff needs such as a volunteer coordinator and a forest restoration crew; focus on improving forest health, sightlines in and out of the park, and public safety





Prepared by:

NYC Parks

Planning & Parklands

2011/2012

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