



# The Report Card on Parks 2007

*An Independent Assessment of New York City's Neighborhood Parks*



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# The Report Card on Parks

New Yorkers for Parks' award-winning *Report Card on Parks* provides quantitative performance data on neighborhood parks throughout the five boroughs. In short, it tells New Yorkers how their parks are doing in key service areas, like bathrooms, playgrounds, and pathways. Unlike the larger, high-profile parks of New York City, neighborhood parks are often solely dependent on public funding and, as *The Report Card* has documented, receive inadequate maintenance attention.

## The Report Card has three goals:

**1 To provide communities with an assessment of how their neighborhood park is performing in comparison to other parks in the city.** This easily accessible online information helps communities advocate for improved services in their neighborhood parks.

**2 To provide an independent assessment of neighborhood park performance from year to year against a defined minimum level of service.** This creates accountability for providing both this defined level of service as well as needed improvements for every park throughout the five boroughs – and the results show.

**3 To spark debate among communities, public agencies, and advocates about how best to improve and maintain neighborhood parks in need.** *The Report Card* provides a valuable service by identifying those parks in greatest

need, but, more importantly, *The Report Card* indicates how we might begin to address that need. By highlighting both high- and low-performing parks, as well as systemic issues, best practices can be identified and implemented in select parks and incorporated citywide. *The Report Card* is used by non-profit parks groups, foundations, and public agencies, including the Parks Department.

Further, this analysis encourages a more efficient distribution of limited resources toward our parks and playgrounds that are most “in need” and assists in developing strategies for additional funding sources.

*The Report Card on Parks* was honored in 2005 by the Brookings Institution as an outstanding community indicators project.

### **The Report Card vs. the Parks Inspection Program**

The Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) evaluates its properties using a nationally recognized comprehensive program, the Parks Inspection Program (PIP). While PIP rates sites from a park management perspective, the survey used in *The Report Card* was designed from the park user's perspective. By listing grades park-by-park in alphabetical order, New Yorkers for Parks' *Report Card* is intended to provide a comparative analysis of park conditions as an easy-to-use tool for communities.

In addition, the two inspection programs evaluate parks in different ways. For example, *The Report Card* rates and scores bathrooms and drinking fountains. Although the Parks Department tracks these features through PIP, they do not influence a park's rating, nor are the results of these inspections made public, other than at the citywide level. Recently, the department began posting PIP ratings on its website, but improvements are needed to make the data more user-friendly (see sidebar).

## **Reporting on Park Performance: The Parks Inspection Program (PIP)**

In 2005, DPR began providing individual park inspection data on its website due to legislation passed by the New York City Council. While the provision of this data is an essential first step, the following improvements would make PIP results much more useful to communities:

■ **PIP results should be easy to find online.** A link to PIP results should be made available on the front page of the DPR website. Today, a park user must search for information about a specific park in order to see a link to inspection results. Even those New Yorkers who are aware that PIP results exist online still find it difficult to locate information on their neighborhood park because the data is obscured within the DPR website.

■ **PIP results should be centrally located.** Currently, PIP data is presented in various ways on multiple websites. A user searching for inspection results for a specific park can find them on the DPR website. PIP results aggregated by Community Board can be found on the Mayor's Office

of Operations website. Citywide results are available in the annual *Mayor's Management Report* (a publication evaluating the performance of each city agency). These various presentations of the data should be centrally located and easy to access on the Parks Department's website to allow for meaningful comparisons at the park, Community Board, and borough levels.

■ **PIP evaluations should be explicitly tied to resource deployment.** Currently, information on park spending is not linked to PIP results. In order to make effective budget decisions, council members and constituents must be able to determine how financial resources impact park performance. For example, DPR could provide the amount of capital and maintenance dollars spent on playground safety surfacing over time alongside the percentage of safety surfacing rated "acceptable," so that the public can determine whether or not sufficient funding is being provided. The *Mayor's Management Report* would be a good forum for this type of information.

New Yorkers for Parks' outreach efforts have shown that many communities throughout the five boroughs are frustrated with the conditions of their neighborhood parks. New Yorkers rely on parks and playgrounds for recreation and relaxation, and the lack of maintenance and staffing can result in bare lawns, clogged and broken drinking fountains, and littered pathways. These neighborhood parks are the front and back yards of New Yorkers – and they deserve better.

# Why another Report Card on Parks?

In 2003, New Yorkers for Parks released its first *Report Card on Parks*. *The Report Card* is designed to track trends in park conditions, highlight successes, identify consistent challenges, and enhance the park policy discussion. Since 2003, *The Report Card* has been a catalyst for change in New York City's park system. New Yorkers for Parks will continue to use *The Report Card* to measure conditions and strive for effective solutions to the challenges it documents.

## **The Report Card: Accomplishments**

Since its inception, *The Report Card* has been a vehicle for new management strategies resulting in measurable park improvements.

The creation of the Neighborhood Parks Initiative (NPI) was one of the most notable accomplishments of *The Report Card*.

Founded by New Yorkers for Parks and the Parks Department, the program was designed to address the lack of fixed staff in city parks, which results in inadequate maintenance, as detailed in the *2003 Report Card on Parks*. NPI was a partnership among New Yorkers for Parks, DPR, Central Park Conservancy, and City Parks Foundation

that leveraged public and private funding to bring full-time gardeners and extra financial support to needy parks across the city.

Participating parks were chosen based on needs documented by *The Report Card* and PIP. Gardeners were trained by the Central Park Conservancy based on their successful "zone management" model of park maintenance. The program has significantly improved conditions of participating parks, and its success is evidenced by the Mayor's FY 2008 Preliminary Budget, which baselined \$1.5 million to make these gardener positions permanent.

In 2006, New Yorkers for Parks updated the universe of sites inspected through *The Report Card* to correspond more exactly to the Parks Department's Park Inspection Program (PIP) and so that our inspection sites would mirror the DPR's own inspection categorizations. This new neighborhood park list is based on the PIP roster. New Yorkers for Parks used the same process as in previous years to determine the study universe, focusing on all "park" properties between 1–20 acres. Due to the use of this new, more accurate, park roster the *2007 Report Card* universe is made up of 111 parks, fewer than previous reports.<sup>1</sup>

Along with refreshing our survey universe to correspond with the DPR's PIP roster, we have made several needed changes to the methodology of *The Report Card*. Most significantly, evaluations of athletic fields and bathrooms have been revised and refined this year. An evaluation form was created to specifically measure the conditions of synthetic turf fields, and the "Bathroom" form was refined to include measures that the NYC Department of Health uses in evaluating bathrooms at public beaches, which are operated by DPR. These changes limit the ability to draw year-to-year comparisons of park performance; however, this report provides general contextual comparisons of conditions over time. For more specific historical information on performance, please download the *2005 Report Card on Parks* from [www.ny4p.org](http://www.ny4p.org).

<sup>1</sup> Of the neighborhood parks surveyed for the 2007 Report Card, 23% (26 parks) had never been surveyed before, while 77% (85 parks) had been surveyed at least once before in 2003, 2004, or 2005.

The findings of *The Report Card* have historically reflected the concerns that many of New York City's communities have regarding their parks. Some of these concerns are expressed below, in excerpts from the FY 2007 Community District Needs Statements, issued by the Department of City Planning and the Office of Management and Budget:

### **Bronx**

"The re-seeding of grass, the pruning of trees and bushes, as well as the repair of park benches, in all of our parks, remains a major concern of this district. We continue to be distressed at progressive financial cuts suffered by this agency limiting both its capital and expense efforts."  
– *Community District 4*

### **Manhattan**

"Additional workers are needed to provide gardening/horticulture, pruning, erosion control, and graffiti removal. Without adequate staff, major capital investments and horticulture will be in jeopardy."  
– *Community District 7*

### **Queens**

"Constant use of our parks necessitates daily clean-up and maintenance of the parks sites in Community Board 2. Overflowing trash baskets combined with piles of litter throughout the parks attract vermin and rats, which are detrimental to our residents and discourage use of our precious open spaces."  
– *Community District 2*

### **Brooklyn**

"Tree planting and pruning, landscaping, and erosion control are needed, as are rehabilitation of pavements, playing courts, and amenities, such as comfort stations and water fountains. Redesign of sufficient numbers of park pathways and facilities to make parks accessible to the disabled are crucial capital terms."  
– *Community District 2*

### **Staten Island**

"Every year the number of workers for the Parks Department is reduced – enough is enough – we need more workers, not less. What good is all the money for capital projects if you can't use the parks because they are not maintained?"  
– *Community District 2*

These statements show the importance that neighborhood parks play in every New Yorker's life.

## **New Research Tools**

Due to the success of *The Report Card*, New Yorkers for Parks has expanded this model in recent years to measure the conditions of our neighborhood parks in new ways and to measure the performance of different types of park properties:

■ *2005 Mini Report Card on Parks*: Monthly inspections of athletic fields, drinking fountains, and bathrooms in June, July, and August documented how conditions change over the summer, a high-use season.

■ *2006 Progress Report on Neighborhood Parks*: This report provided new data on the ten highest and ten lowest performing parks of the *2005 Report Card*.

■ *2007 Report Card on Beaches*: This summer, New Yorkers for Parks will release this new report measuring the conditions of all seven municipal beaches, which are managed by the Parks Department.

These publications, available at [www.ny4p.org](http://www.ny4p.org), are tools for communities to assist them in effectively advocating for change.



# Summary of Methodology

This report is intended as a follow-up to the *New Yorkers for Parks 2003, 2004, and 2005 Report Card on Parks*. Below is a summary of the methodology constructed for this report; a full discussion of the methodology can be found in the “Detailed Methodology” section.

## Survey Population

As in years past, in constructing *The Report Card*, New Yorkers for Parks focused on DPR “park” properties between one and 20 acres, as these properties represent New York City’s neighborhood parks. In 2007, New Yorkers for Parks referred to the DPR’s Parks Inspection Program roster, which defined a survey population of 123 small to mid-size parks, fewer properties than in previous years. Several of these parks were not included in the study. For example, we did not survey those parks that were closed for capital improvement. Further, certain park properties, like skating rinks, zoos, or forests with no user trails, have none of *The Report Card*’s Major Service Areas (MSAs) and were dropped from consideration in this report (the full list of MSAs can be found on the next page). The final survey universe in 2007 consisted of 111 park properties, 85 of which have been surveyed at least once in 2003, 2004, or 2005.

## Grading the Parks

New Yorkers for Parks convened a focus group of park experts and community leaders to help define the eight MSAs, along with a scale of weights to reflect the relative importance of different indicators. MSAs were weighted on a scale of 1 to 5 (5 being the most important to a park user’s experience). These service areas were evaluated on maintenance, cleanliness, safety, and structural integrity. Thus, for each of the 111 parks included in the survey, every applicable MSA was assigned a numerical score. A park’s overall numerical score was calculated as a weighted average of these service area scores. The numerical scores were then converted to a final letter grade.

Each park was assigned a numerical score from 0 to 100 in each applicable MSA, based on the proportion of features in those service areas found to be in acceptable condition. This was done using an independently developed survey mechanism that is based on the DPR’s Parks Inspection Program (PIP). Next, MSA scores were averaged by weight to give an overall numerical park score. (Those parks lacking one or more of the MSAs were not penalized.) Letter grades corresponding to these numerical scores comprise the final park ratings in accordance with the following conversion table:

Raw Numerical Grade	Letter Grade
97-100	A+
93-96	A
90-92	A-
87-89	B+
83-86	B
80-82	B-
77-79	C+
73-76	C
70-72	C-
60-69	D
59 and below	F

*Score / Grade associations developed by a focus group of park managers and open space experts.*

The survey is designed to fairly rate all features that are or should be available to a user visiting a park. By way of example, if a park has a bathroom facility that is locked or closed without explanation, it receives a “0” for the bathroom rating. However, if the park does not have a bathroom, it does not receive a score for bathrooms, so that a park is never penalized for not having a particular Major Service Area.

## Survey Mechanism

New Yorkers for Parks uses a comprehensive survey mechanism developed specifically for *The Report Card on Parks* to determine a park’s rating. There are eight MSAs tracked through the survey mechanism that break down into 12 feature forms. Surveyors complete a survey feature form for each of the features found in a park. For example, if there are three drinking fountains in a park, a surveyor completes three ‘Drinking Fountain’ forms. Surveyors answer a series of questions on the maintenance, cleanliness, safety, and structural integrity of a feature. The total park score is based on the percentage of features evaluated that are found in acceptable condition.

## Survey Work<sup>2</sup>

Finally, New Yorkers for Parks staff conducted the survey Tuesday through Friday between June and August 2006, a high-use season for public parks. Teams of trained surveyors used handheld computers and digital cameras to complete the evaluations. For each MSA evaluated, digital photographs were taken; both survey forms and photos are stored as documentation of survey efforts and results.

<sup>2</sup> All surveying for the 2007 Report Card on Parks took place during the summer of 2006. Any capital projects or other park improvements that were completed between the date of a given park’s evaluation and the publication of this report have no effect on the park’s grade. For example, Harlem River Drive Park’s grade is based solely on inspection data collected in June 2006 and is not impacted by the ballfield renovation that began in September 2006.



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Major Service Area

Description

Weight

**Active  
Recreation**



This MSA evaluates all athletic fields and courts in a park. Athletic fields include natural grass, asphalt and synthetic soccer, football, and baseball fields, and courts include basketball, handball, bocce, and volleyball facilities.

**3**

**Passive  
Greenspace**



This MSA evaluates all green and passive features in a park. Features included in this service area are lawns, landscaped areas, and gardens; park trees; waterbodies; and natural areas. The trees included in the form are only those contained within tree pits in the park.

**5**

**Playgrounds**



This MSA evaluates all playground areas and playground equipment in a park.

**5**

**Immediate  
Environment**



This MSA measures how well a park is insulated from potential negative impacts of its surroundings. Intrusive odors, emissions, exhaust and excessive noise are monitored.

**3**

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Major Service Area

Description

Weight

**Bathrooms**



This MSA evaluates each discrete bathroom or comfort station in a park.

**4**

**Drinking  
Fountains**



This MSA evaluates each discrete drinking fountain in a park.

**3**

**Sitting Areas**



This MSA evaluates each discrete sitting area in a park.

**5**

**Pathways**



This MSA evaluates each type of walkway in a park, including asphalt, dirt, turf, or concrete.

**3**

Handwritten graffiti in black ink, appearing to be stylized letters or symbols.

Handwritten graffiti in red ink, appearing to be stylized letters or symbols.

Handwritten graffiti in red ink, appearing to be stylized letters or symbols.

Handwritten graffiti in red ink, appearing to be stylized letters or symbols.



# Findings

The Report Card shows that although targeted management strategies are effective, inadequate care remains a challenge. The varying quality of maintenance results in too many parks receiving average and failing scores.

## The quality of neighborhood parks varies widely throughout New York City.

Even among parks that rely solely on public funds, there is a disparity in park conditions. Hellgate Field in Queens (90%), one of the highest performing parks, and Crawford Fields in Brooklyn (33%), one of the low performers, offer similar features – baseball fields and drinking fountains – but vary widely in maintenance conditions.

Disparities also exist between parks that have access to private funding and those that do not. The two highest performing parks this year were Bryant Park and Public Place<sup>3</sup> (Battery Park City.) Bryant Park, privately funded and managed by the Bryant Park Restoration Corporation, has been the highest scoring park in every year of Report Card surveys. Public Place has been a consistently high scoring

park and is cared for through dedicated funding by the Battery Park City Parks Conservancy. The two groups are able to devote significant resources to manage and maintain these sites. Unfortunately, the lowest scoring park citywide, Spuyten Duyvil Shorefront Park in the Bronx, received only a 32% (F). (This park was new to the survey universe this year.)

As five years of survey results have shown, individual park conditions often fluctuate from year to year depending on maintenance. Frequently, parks that rely solely on public funding do not receive consistent care and are subject to irregular maintenance levels. These disparities exist throughout neighborhood parks in New York City, and they must be addressed.

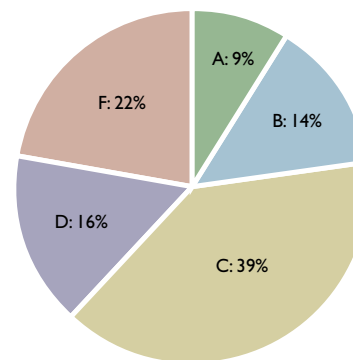
The Parks Department is currently managing the largest capital budget in its history,<sup>4</sup> due in part to funding for Lower Manhattan after 9/11 and money that has

been directed to Bronx parks as mitigation for the construction of the Croton Water Filtration plant in Van Cortlandt Park and the new Yankee Stadium in Macombs Dam Park. In addition, across the city, new parks like the High Line and Fresh Kills Park are being constructed. While capital funding can bring about impressive improvements in the short term, long-term success is dependent upon consistent maintenance. The Report Card shows that maintenance of existing parks continues to be a challenge.

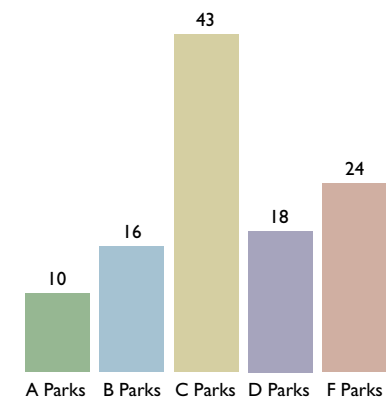
## The Report Card documented a large percentage of parks receiving C's, D's and F's.

Unfortunately, the “A”s and “B”s were few and far between in this year’s surveys. Less than one quarter of the parks surveyed received an “A” or “B”. “A” parks comprised 9% of the universe, while “B” parks comprised 14%. The majority of parks – representing 39% of those surveyed – received “C” grades. 16% of parks received “D”s and 22% received “F”s. This breakdown of grades differs significantly from past Report Cards, where the percentage of parks earning each grade was more evenly split.

Breakdown of Grades Citywide



Number of Parks by Grade



<sup>3</sup>Public Place is one of several city parks in Battery Park City (BPC). At this time, it is the only BPC site listed in the Parks Department’s roster and therefore the only site in BPC that is evaluated by The Report Card. BPC’s 32 acres of parkland include all of The Report Card’s Major Service Areas, though only 1.25 are found at Public Place.

<sup>4</sup>Department of Parks & Recreation, “Biennial Report 2004-2005.” Available from [www.nycgovparks.org](http://www.nycgovparks.org).

This year's citywide average park score was a 70% (C-), evidence of the need for improved maintenance. This is a significant decline from previous citywide averages of 80%, 78%, and 74% in 2005, 2004, and 2003, respectively. Although the universe of parks surveyed changed considerably in 2007, the primary reasons for this drop in the citywide score are poorer conditions of specific Major Service Areas (MSAs), such as passive greenspace and active recreation, as well as inadequate maintenance attention across the board.

### Best and Worst Citywide

Of the ten highest performing parks in the *2007 Report Card*, six are in Manhattan, two are in Brooklyn, and two are in Queens. None are in the Bronx or Staten Island. Seven of the ten have been surveyed in previous *Report Cards*, while the remaining three parks are new to *The Report Card* this year.

Of the ten lowest performers in this year's survey, all five boroughs are represented: three parks are in the Bronx, three are in Staten Island, two are in Queens, one is in Brooklyn, and one is in Manhattan. Six of these have been surveyed in previous *Report Cards*, and the remaining four parks are new to the universe of *Report Card* sites this year.

In past *Report Cards*, at least one park in the list of the ten highest performers has been located in Staten Island. This year, none of the top performers are in that borough, which is evidence of the fluctuating maintenance of neighborhood parks. A park that scores an "A" one year can slip the next year, due to conditions such as overgrown lawns or leaking drinking fountains. In addition, changes in this year's survey universe resulted in a higher percentage of Staten Island parks composed primarily of natural areas, a feature that has historically performed poorly.

### Bathroom conditions have consistently improved, reflecting successful management strategies.

This year's bathroom survey form was modified to reflect the way that the NYC Department of Health rates DPR-operated public bathrooms at beaches. Despite this more rigorous evaluation of park bathrooms, the "Bathrooms" feature earned a 72% (C-), similar to 2005 performance levels. This stable rating shows that the Parks Department has been able to effectively manage this feature. Only 6% of surveyed bathrooms were locked without explanation this year, which also represents a remarkable success. In the *2004 Report Card*, 20% of bathrooms were locked. Targeted management strategies such as DPR's "Operation Relief," which focused on improving bathroom conditions, should be implemented for other service areas where possible.

### Highest Performing Parks

Rank	Park Name	Borough	2007 Score	Grade
1	BRYANT PARK	MANHATTAN	99	A+
1	PUBLIC PLACE (BATTERY PARK CITY)	MANHATTAN	99	A+
3	CITY HALL PARK	MANHATTAN	94	A
4	BEACH CHANNEL PARK	QUEENS	93	A
5	THEODORE ROOSEVELT PARK	MANHATTAN	92	A-
5	LOUIS J VALENTINO JR PARK AND PIER	BROOKLYN	92	A-
5	FIDLER/WYCKOFF HOUSE PARK	BROOKLYN	92	A-
8	DAMROSCH PARK	MANHATTAN	91	A-
9	HELLGATE FIELD	QUEENS	90	A-
9	UNION SQUARE	MANHATTAN	90	A-

### Lowest Performing Parks

Rank	Park Name	Borough	2007 Score	Grade
111	SPUYTEN DUYVIL SHOREFRONT PARK	BRONX	32	F
109	TOTTENVILLE SHORE PARK	STATEN ISLAND	33	F
109	MSGR CRAWFORD FIELD	BROOKLYN	33	F
108	HARLEM RIVER PARK	MANHATTAN	34	F
107	EIBS POND PARK	STATEN ISLAND	38	F
104	POWELL'S COVE PARK	QUEENS	40	F
104	CO-OP CITY FIELDS	BRONX	40	F
104	SOUTHERN FIELDS	QUEENS	40	F
103	VETERANS PARK	STATEN ISLAND	41	F
102	EWEN PARK	BRONX	44	F

**Immediate Environment, Pathways, and Sitting Areas perform satisfactorily.**

Historically, “Pathways,” “Sitting Areas,” and “Immediate Environment” have been among the higher scoring service areas, and although their scores slipped slightly this year, the 2007 results continue that trend.

“Immediate Environment” has been the highest rated service area in every *Report Card on Parks*. The average score this year was 89% (B+). Immediate environment conditions are measured by assessing the accessibility of the park and the impact of its surroundings. The high score reflects the fact that New York City parks are typically safely accessible and are not markedly impacted by smog, noise, or traffic.

“Sitting Areas” received a 78% (C+) this year, similar to past results. Primary challenges included litter, graffiti, and damaged benches. “Pathways” earned a rating of 77% (C+), with cracks and missing, raised, or sunken pavement providing the majority of unacceptable conditions. Pathways were also affected by excessive litter and debris.

**“Green” service areas need attention.**

The “Passive Greenspace” MSA performed poorly this year, receiving only a 66% (D). Passive greenspace features were affected by horticultural issues, such as bare, discolored, or overgrown grass on lawns, and dead branches on trees and in lawns. Litter and broken glass were less frequently noted.

**The “Natural Areas” feature has historically performed poorly on The Report Card, and this year is no different.** Four of the ten lowest performing parks this year are made up primarily of natural areas, such as woodlands. The average score for “Natural Areas” was a 46% (F) this year, due primarily to excessive litter, damaged fencing, and broken glass. Erosion and excessive natural debris were also frequently cited. Although basic maintenance attention is required to clean trash and broken glass, additional Forestry staff and services would address erosion and other similar issues.

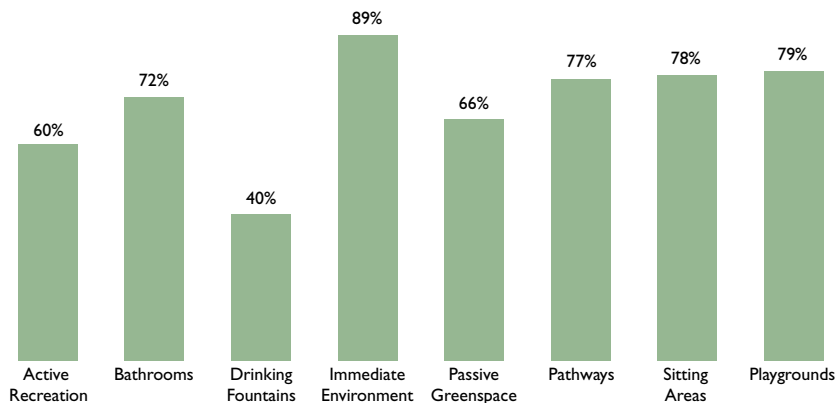
**Poor tree performance in this year’s survey presents a similar concern.** Trees in tree pits scored an average of 75% (C), representing a significant decline since the *2005 Report Card*. Although litter and broken glass were found, poor tree health and damaged tree pits were the most common problems. The health of trees in lawns had a 36% “unacceptable” rating, resulting from dead branches,

erosion, and other signs of deterioration. Enhancements to the Forestry and Horticultural staff are needed to sufficiently address these issues.

**Recreation features require increased maintenance. “Playgrounds,” historically a high performing feature, are beginning to slip.**

Although this feature earned a 79% (C+) this year, performing higher than most other service areas, this represents a decline from previous years’ scores, typically in the “B” to “B+” range. “Playgrounds” in the 2007 survey were particularly affected by damaged or missing equipment, including missing swings and excessive rust, found at 27% of sites. Maintenance also presented a challenge in this service area, with sloppy paint jobs and needed or shoddy repairs frequently found. Safety surfacing was rated “unacceptable” at 12% of sites, resulting in unsafe conditions for children.

**Average Score of Each Major Service Area (MSA)**



**“Active Recreation” features continue to perform poorly.** This feature received a 60% (D) this year. Courts received a disappointing score of 68% (D), while grass, asphalt, and synthetic athletic fields received a 52% (F) average. Nearly one-quarter (23%) of grass athletic fields that were evaluated were locked or had excessive broken glass, severely impacting the score for that feature. Considering the intense demand for play time in NYC, athletic fields should never be locked during high-use times.

**Drinking Fountains continue to perform poorly.**

As in years past, Drinking Fountains received a failing grade (40%). This feature is plagued by maintenance, safety, and structural challenges. Even when drinking fountains provide water with sufficient pressure, users frequently find trash, mold, and severe leaks. These unacceptable conditions must be addressed through the development of a program similar to “Operation Relief,” which improved bathrooms.

**Synthetic Turf**

In recent years, the NYC Parks Department has increasingly turned to synthetic turf for field renovations due to the maintenance challenges of natural grass as well as the increased demand for field play time. For the first time in 2007, *The Report Card* specifically tracked the performance of synthetic turf to baseline conditions. The average score for the nine fields surveyed was 74% (C). Although synthetic fields earned a higher average score than grass fields, which received an average of 59% (F), most synthetic fields have been installed in the past two to three years and have not been subject to the same amount of wear and tear as natural grass fields.

Generally, synthetic turf fields that were installed in the past two years performed in the “A” and “B” range. Fields installed before 2004 did not fare as well, suffering more frequently from loose seams and litter, which raises concerns regarding how well synthetic fields are being maintained and how they will hold up into the future.

For more information on synthetic turf, please visit [ny4p.org](http://ny4p.org) and download the park policy paper, “A New Turf War: Synthetic Turf in NYC Parks.”

### Citywide, increased maintenance is needed.

For every feature evaluated, surveyors are asked to rate whether or not the feature is free of maintenance repair needs. Surveyors are provided with a series of thresholds to answer this question, including whether or not there are “sloppy painting jobs on 25% or more of equipment (paint outside area to be painted; on the wall/ground near area to be painted; or new paint that does not cover the entire surface of a feature), poorly constructed repairs on 10% or more of equipment (loose or moving parts, protruding parts, mismatched paint or parts), chipping or peeling paint on 25% or more of equipment, other evidence of carelessness?”

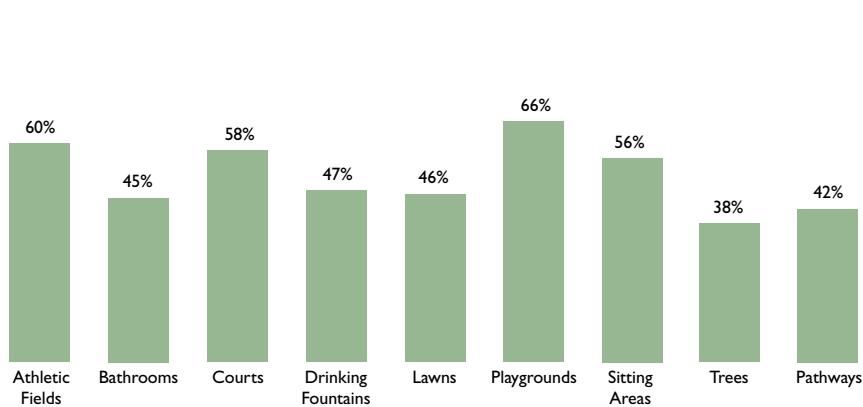
Unfortunately, more than half of playgrounds, courts, athletic fields, and sitting areas scored “unacceptable” for this measure, due to sloppy paint jobs, poor graffiti coverage, and needed paint or other repairs. These conditions are prevalent throughout the neighborhood parks surveyed for *The Report Card*. The chart below details the percentage of each feature receiving an “unacceptable” rating for maintenance work.

### Why do “in need” parks fail?

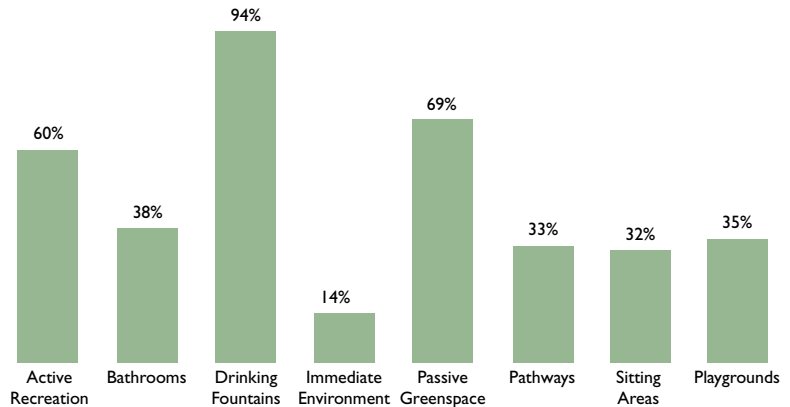
Of the 42 parks that received a “D” or “F” this year, the chart below details what percentage of these parks received a failing score (below 60%) for each MSA.

While about one-third of “D” and “F” parks received failing scores for Pathways, Sitting Areas, and Playgrounds, an alarming 94% received failing grades for Drinking Fountains. Active Recreation and Passive Greenspace also had high failure rates for these parks. Focusing attention on horticulture, maintenance of courts and ballfields, and staff to address the problems of drinking fountains could greatly enhance the performance of these parks.

Percentage of “Maintenance Work” Observations Scored “Unacceptable”



Percentage of “D” and “F” Parks Failing (scoring less than 60) for Each MSA



# Conclusions and Recommendations

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The 2007 *Report Card on Parks* shows that targeted management strategies are effective, but too many of our neighborhood parks still suffer from insufficient maintenance. The Mayor and City Council have taken an important step to ensure green, safe, and clean parks by adding \$25 million in new funding to the DPR's FY 2008 budget. The City should continue its efforts towards sufficiently funding the Parks Department – an important step in improving park services.

The City is also investing in parks through the PlaNYC 2030 initiative to ensure New York's sustainable growth. This project will outline how the city's infrastructure – including its "green infrastructure" – will grow to accommodate one million new residents in the next 25 years. This important initiative sets broad, ambitious and needed targets for our park system, and to ensure their implementation, the City must support its agencies with sufficient financial and management resources.

The following recommendations address the needs documented by *The Report Card* while working to meet the goals of PlaNYC 2030:

## **1. Greening:**

- Augment the Forestry Team to improve maintenance of natural areas and trees.

## **2. Recreation:**

- Enhance dedicated staffing and funding for playgrounds.
- Ensure that athletic fields are unlocked during high-use times.

## **3. Maintenance:**

- Expand training for maintenance workers and ensure efficient and consistent repairs.

## **1. GREENING**

### **Augment the Forestry Team to improve maintenance of trees and natural areas.**

*The Report Card on Parks* clearly shows the need for additional care for trees and natural areas throughout the city. Natural areas are one of the lowest performing features on *The Report Card* and too frequently are affected by severe erosion and debris. PlaNYC 2030 calls for the preservation of natural areas as a way to mitigate pollution and open NYC's waterways to recreation. However, the important environmental benefits of natural areas will not be fully realized unless staffing levels are augmented to provide for consistent care.



Trees are another integral aspect of PlaNYC 2030. The Parks Department has a commendable goal to increase the tree canopy from 24% to 30% to improve environmental conditions and overall quality of life. While street trees are regularly pruned every ten years, NYC's two million park trees are pruned on an "emergency only" basis, resulting in trees with dead and hanging branches in desperate need of maintenance, as evidenced by *The Report Card* results. This troubling standard of care must be improved, especially when tree issues represent the majority of park-related calls to 311.<sup>5</sup>

Today, DPR employs only 14 Foresters and only 54 Climber/Pruners – less than one per Community District – to care for the two million trees in city parks.<sup>6</sup> By increasing forestry resources, the City would ensure the health of natural areas and trees and improve their capacity to mitigate the effects of the urban environment. Enhancing forestry staffing is a great first step towards implementing the goals of PlaNYC 2030.

## **2. RECREATION** **Enhance dedicated staffing and funding for playgrounds.**

PlaNYC 2030 aims to ensure that every New Yorker lives within a ten minute walk of a park – an admirable goal. But even more importantly, it is the City's responsibility to make sure that those parks are safe and sufficiently maintained. The decline in the conditions of playgrounds in this year's Report Card is disconcerting. Urban children depend on these play spaces as safe areas to recreate and exercise but too often are met with unsafe conditions.

In the late 1990s, the City successfully focused capital funding on refurbishing and rebuilding playgrounds across the city. Unfortunately, ten years later, a lack of sufficient maintenance has resulted in rusted or missing equipment and safety surfacing in disrepair in too many neighborhood parks. A new infusion of capital is needed to conduct minor improvements at a variety of sites across the city. The Mayor's FY 2008 Preliminary Budget includes funding for 40 new full-time workers responsible for maintaining playground equipment. These positions, as well as a concerted effort towards placing dedicated staff in playgrounds, will help to ensure that unsafe conditions are addressed in a timely manner.

## **Ensure that athletic fields are unlocked during high-use times.**

The Parks Department must address the low performance of athletic fields. Ballfields must be adequately maintained and unlocked during high-use times. According to the agency, applications for permits for baseball and softball fields have doubled over the past six years.<sup>7</sup> In a city that is struggling to meet the demands of sports field users, baseball and soccer fields in public parks should never be locked during high-use times. The City owes it to New Yorkers to open these fields so that all may enjoy them.

In addition, when natural grass fields are open for play, they are frequently found in poor condition. This ongoing issue must also be addressed. The installation of synthetic turf is not the only way to tackle the maintenance challenges of grass. The Parks Department must develop a targeted management strategy to maintain natural grass facilities, which offer significant environmental benefits that should not be overlooked.

## **3. MAINTENANCE** **Expand training for maintenance workers and ensure efficient and consistent repairs.**

Finally, the results of this year's *Report Card on Parks* show a need not only for more frequent maintenance care but also for improved maintenance strategies. Policies and practices including the response time for needed repairs, training of workers, and availability of supplies should be evaluated and enhanced. Maintenance must be completed in a timely and professional manner in every neighborhood park, so that clean, safe, and green parks are the standard throughout every New York City community.

<sup>5</sup>Mayor's Office of Operations, Preliminary Mayor's Management Report, Fiscal Year 2007.

<sup>6</sup>Independent Budget Office analysis of Department of Parks and Recreation Active Positions, July 31, 2006.

<sup>7</sup>Williams, Timothy. "Fine Diamonds, Locked Away." *The New York Times*, 26 Oct. 2005.



# Detailed Methodology

This section describes in detail the methodology developed in 2002 and used by New Yorkers for Parks in creating the *2007 Report Card on Parks*.

- Selection of the survey population
- Identification and weighting of Major Service Areas
- Feature forms: structure of the survey instrument
- Assignment of numerical scores
- Notes on ‘Athletic Fields’
- Conversion of numerical scores to letter grades
- Sample calculation: Russell Pederson Playground, Brooklyn
- Conduction of the survey
- Comparison of 2005 to 2007 *Report Cards on Parks*
- Modifications included in the *2007 Report Card on Parks*

## Selection of the Survey Population

In constructing *The Report Card*, New Yorkers for Parks (NY4P) focused on DPR “park” properties of between one and 20 acres in area, as these properties represent the “neighborhood park” that communities are most closely tied to. In 2007, New Yorkers for Parks referred to DPR’s Parks Inspection Program roster, which defined a survey population of 123 small to mid-size parks, fewer properties than in previous years. However, several of these parks could not be included in the study. For example, NY4P did not survey those parks that were closed for capital improvement. Further, certain park properties, like skating rinks, amusement parks or forests with no user trails have none of the major service areas and were not included in this report. Thus, the final survey population in 2007 consisted of 111 park properties, 85 of which have been surveyed at least once in 2003, 2004 or 2005.

## Identification and Weighting of Major Service Areas

NY4P chose eight MSAs based on a user-focused approach, similar to the “zone management” system utilized by the Central Park Conservancy. NY4P convened a group of ten community leaders and elected officials to weight the relative importance of each of these MSAs. Participants were asked to rate the MSAs on a scale of 1 to 5, 1 being the least important to their park experience, and 5 being the most important. Participants also provided feedback on the structure and composition of the MSAs. In addition, 30 park users at Brooklyn’s Prospect Park were asked to rate the relative importance of the eight MSAs to be used in the survey. The rankings provided by the 30 respondents were then averaged and rounded to the nearest whole number to provide a final MSA relative weight figure:

**Figure 1: Major Service Areas and Relative Weights**

Active Recreation (courts, athletic fields)	3
Passive Greenspace (lawns, landscaped areas, gardens, water bodies, natural areas and trees)	5
Playgrounds	5
Sitting areas	5
Bathrooms	4
Drinking Fountains	3
Pathways	3
Immediate Environment (impact on the park by its surroundings)	3

Participants in the first focus group included Council Member Joseph Addabbo, Jr., former Chair, Parks & Recreation Committee, New York City Council; Matt Arnn, United States Forest Service, Regional Landscape Architect, New York City; John Ameroso, Cornell Cooperative Extension, New York City; Skip Blumberg, Friends of City Hall Park; Frank Chaney, Community Board member; Jim Dowell, Riverside Park Fund, Manhattan Parks and Green Space Coalition; Susan Marraccini, Turnaround Friends, Inc.; Martin Olesh, Friends of Cunningham Park; Robert Pasqual, Queens Coalition for Parks and Green Spaces; and Gene Russianoff, Senior Attorney, New York Public Interest Research Group.

**Feature Forms:  
Structure of Survey Instrument**

NY4P staff, in cooperation with statistical consultants from the firm of Ernst & Young, then developed question forms with which to evaluate the MSAs found in each park. Individual questions were designed to measure the performance of the MSAs in each of the following categories:

- Maintenance;
- Cleanliness;
- Safety; and
- Structural Integrity.

Whenever possible, the form questions were adapted from DPR's own internal evaluation mechanism, the Parks Inspection Program (PIP). A second focus group was then convened to provide relative weights to individual feature forms on a scale of 1 to 5, 1 being the least important to their park experience, and 5 being the most important. Next, the focus group was asked to designate each of the individual form questions as 'priority' or 'routine.' Priority ratings refer to those conditions of a park feature necessary for its safe use. Finally, the focus group rated questions tagged as routine on a scale

from 1 to 5. Participants in the second focus group included four park and advocacy experts: Mark Caserta, former Director, Waterfront Park Coalition, New York League of Conservation Voters; Susan Craine, former Consumer Advocate, New York Public Interest Research Group; Neysa Pranger, Director, Straphangers Campaign; and Paul Sawyer, Executive Director, Friends of Van Cortlandt Park. A flowchart of relative weights of all MSAs and feature forms can be found on page 9.

**Assignment of Numerical Scores**

Each completed form was assigned a numerical grade between 0 and 100. Any park feature receiving an 'unacceptable' rating on any priority question was assigned a form grade of 0. However, in the large majority of completed forms, park features received only 'acceptable' ratings to all priority questions. In these cases, the calculation appears as follows:

Let 'A' denote the sum of the relative weights of routine survey questions receiving 'acceptable' ratings. Let 'B' denote the sum of the relative weights of routine survey questions receiving either 'acceptable' or 'unacceptable' ratings. Each form's final numerical score is then 100 times the quotient or 'A' divided by 'B.' No form score was

assigned a park that lacked any given feature; in this way no park was penalized for not having any of the survey's 12 feature types.

Once each form is scored, MSA ratings were calculated. First, scored forms were grouped by MSA. Those MSAs with exactly one corresponding completed form were allotted the numerical score of that single form. Those MSAs with more than one completed form were scored according to a weighted average of the corresponding form scores, as follows:

Suppose  $C_1, C_2, \dots, C_n$  are the n-many form scores corresponding to a given MSA. Let  $D_1, D_2, \dots, D_n$  be those forms' corresponding relative weights (see page 5). MSA numerical scores were then calculated as the following quotient:

$$(C_1 * D_1 + C_2 * D_2 + \dots + C_n * D_n) / (D_1 + D_2 + \dots + D_n)$$

No MSA rating was assigned to a park that lacked any given major service area; in this way no park was penalized for not having any of the survey's eight MSA types.

Each park's raw score was calculated in a similar fashion. Suppose  $E_1, E_2, \dots, E_m$  were a park's MSA scores with corre-

sponding weights  $F_1, F_2, \dots, F_m$ . Final raw scores were then calculated as the following quotient:

$$(E_1 * F_1 + E_2 * F_2 + \dots + E_m * F_m) / (F_1 + F_2 + \dots + F_m)$$

**Notes on Athletic Fields**

NY4P hosted a third focus group on 'Active Recreation Space.' Participants in this focus group included Tom Brasuell, Vice President, Community Relations, Major League Baseball; Carlos Feliciano, President, Quebradilla Baseball Organization; Rich Berlin, Executive Director, Harlem RBI; and John Oswald, Director, Beacon Program Pathways for Youth. This group provided commentary on ideal conditions for active recreational activities and provided general feedback on active play areas, including courts, turf ballfields and asphalt ballfields, which was then integrated into the survey questions and grading system.

Additional research was performed on the incidence of injury incurred on various active play surfaces. Based on focus group results and relevant research from the field, the athletic field form scores corresponding to any asphalt ballfield surveyed were reduced by 25%.

<sup>1</sup>One exception to this formula is explained in section E of this methodology, Notes on Asphalt Athletic Fields.

### Conversion of Numerical Scores to Letter Grades

A fourth focus group was convened to determine the assignment of letter grades to raw scores, consisting of park managers and open space experts. Participants were brought to three parks in Manhattan and asked to provide a letter grade for the park based on a brief description of the MSAs and a tour of the park. These letter grades were consistent with the raw number scores for the parks and resulted in the raw score/grade assignment chart.

**Figure 2: Conversion from Raw Scores to Letter Grades**

Raw Numerical Grade	Letter Grade
97-100	A+
93-96	A
90-92	A-
87-89	B+
83-86	B
80-82	B-
77-79	C+
73-76	C
70-72	C-
60-69	D
59 and below	F

Fourth focus group participants included Jerome Barth, Director of Operations, Bryant Park Restoration Corporation; Charles McKinney, consultant, former administrator, Riverside Park; and Andy Stone, Director, NYC Programs, Trust for Public Land.

### Sample Calculation – Russell Pederson Playground, Brooklyn

Figure 3 shows actual surveyor responses for Russell Pederson Playground in Bay Ridge, Brooklyn. Figures 3, 4 and 5 to the right include a summary of form data and the subsequent form, MSA and park score.

### Conduction of the Survey

Survey work for *The Report Card* took place from June to August 2006 from the hours of 10 AM to dusk, Tuesday through Friday. NY4P trained 6 surveyors (all NY4P staff members) to complete the survey work. NY4P senior staff held a training session during spring 2006 to train surveyors in the following techniques: use of the handheld computers and digital cameras, delineation of park features, and use of survey forms and standards manual and procedures for documenting features with digital cameras. Each training session included the full review of a park, collection of data according to defined standards, proper photo documentation, safety procedures and methods for storing data in *The Report Card* database upon completion of survey.

**Figure 3: Summary of Russell Pederson Playground Form Data**

Form	Form Scores	Form Score Average
Playgrounds	82, 68, 68	73
Immediate Environment	100	100
Lawns and Landscaped Areas	89	89
Trees	89	89
Sitting Areas	68	68
Bathrooms	74, 49	62
Drinking Fountains	86, 0	43
Courts	89, 88, 83	86

**Figure 4: Summary of Russell Pederson Playground MSA Data**

MSA	Calculation	MSA Score
Playgrounds	Average from figure 3	73
Immediate Environment	Single form score	100
Passive Greenspace	(Lawns, Landscaped Areas*2 + Park Trees*1) / 3	89
Sitting Areas	Single form score	68
Bathrooms	Average from figure 3	62
Drinking Fountains	Average from figure 3	43
Active Recreation	Average courts score from figure 3 (no athletic fields on site)	86

*Russell Pederson Playground's raw score was calculated by the weighted average of the seven MSA scores listed in figure 4.*

**Figure 5: Calculation of Raw Score and Letter Grade – Russell Pederson Playground**

MSA	MSA Score times Weight
Playgrounds	73 * 5 = 363 (with rounding)
Immediate Environment	100 * 3 = 300
Passive Greenspace	89 * 5 = 444 (with rounding)
Sitting Areas	68 * 5 = 342 (with rounding)
Bathrooms	62 * 4 = 247 (with rounding)
Drinking Fountains	43 * 3 = 129
Active Recreation	86 * 3 = 259 (with rounding)
<b>Total</b>	<b>2084</b>

This total, 2084, was then divided by the sum of the weights of the 7 MSAs.

This sum is 28, so that Russell Pederson Playground's raw park score is 2084/28 = 74.4

Applying this numerical score to the letter grades listed in Figure 2, it can be seen that a score of 74 corresponds to a grade of "C".

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In the field, surveyors completed a form for each feature that was delineated for a given park. For example, for every drinking fountain in a park, a ‘Drinking Fountain’ form was completed so that in a park with three drinking fountains, a surveyor completed three ‘Drinking Fountain’ feature forms. Additionally, surveyors completed a form for every playground space within natural and/or constructed boundaries, for every pair of bathrooms, for every naturally bounded lawn or landscaped area, etc.

In addition to completing feature forms, surveyors took extensive digital photographs to support and complement the survey results. All survey findings and feature forms receive an identification number and are correlated to a series of photographs documenting conditions for each park in the survey. Survey results and photo documentation are stored in a central database. When photo documentation did not correlate with results or did not adequately illustrate park conditions, the park was revisited and reevaluated by surveyors.

### **Comparison of 2005 to 2007 Report Cards on Parks**

NY4P designed *The Report Card on Parks* methodology in 2003 to serve two functions. First, the report provided an instantaneous snapshot of the conditions of New York parks. This allows for (real-time) comparison among parks to identify those that showcase best practices, as well as those in-need parks requiring attention. Second, the methodology was designed to be replicated annually, so that trends at the individual park level, as well as borough- and citywide, could be documented and addressed.

In constructing the methodology of the *2007 Report Card on Parks*, the goal of the design team was three-fold: one, to fine tune the survey mechanism; two, to remain relevant by reflecting changes that have occurred in the park system in the past several years; and three, to build off of the current evaluation procedures used by the City. Due to these changes as well as significant changes in the survey universe, the comparability between 2007 results and those of the previous years is limited. The vast majority of survey instrument questions designed for the 2007 survey were left unchanged from previous years, but two significant modifications are noted at right.

### **Modifications included in the 2007 Report Card on Parks**

#### **Bathrooms**

The NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH) is responsible for inspecting and measuring the conditions of bathrooms for Parks Department beach properties. In order to hold park bathrooms accountable to similar standards, the design team modified *The Report Card's* bathroom survey form to reflect the measures used by DOHMH. This included the modification and addition of several questions on the survey.

#### **Athletic Fields**

In recent years the NYC Parks Department has increasingly turned to synthetic turf for field renovations. Due to the growing prevalence of such fields, the design team added a new form to the Active Recreation MSA, allowing surveyors to specifically evaluate the performance of synthetic turf. In previous *Report Card* inspections, surveyors evaluated synthetic turf fields using the “Natural Grass Athletic Field” form. The design of the new form results in more complete assessments of the performance of these fields.



# Find Your Park

How did your neighborhood park fare on this year's *Report Card*? The following section lists the results by borough and in alphabetical order by park.

*The Report Card* provides communities with comparative park grades in order to offer the fullest picture of results so that they may advocate for improved care of their open spaces. Neighborhood, Community Board, and City Council District information as well as park acreage are available for each park.

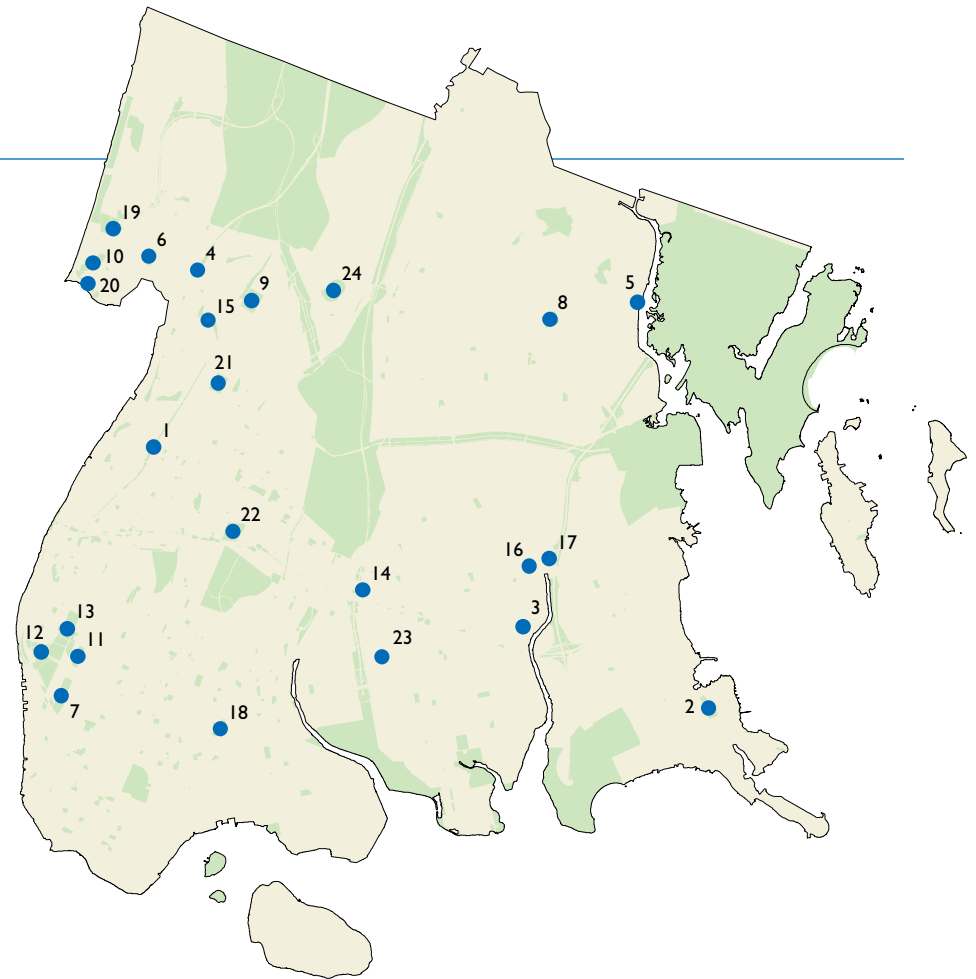
For a more in-depth look at your park's results, please visit our website – [www.ny4p.org](http://www.ny4p.org) – and download the “Park Profile” for your park. These profiles provide detailed scores for each MSA along with contextual Community District information on neighborhood health, land use, crime, education, and income. For historical results, download the *2005 Report Card on Parks*.





# Bronx

Park Name	Score	Grade	Neighborhood	CD	CB	Acres
1 AQUEDUCT WALK	68	D	University Heights	14	105	9
2 BICENTENNIAL VETERANS MEMORIAL PARK	45	F	Edgewater Park	13	110	9
3 CASTLE HILL PARK	82	B-	Castle Hill	13	109	2
4 COONEY GRAUER FIELD	52	F	Kingsbridge	14	108	1
5 CO-OP CITY FIELDS	40	F	Co-Op City	12	110	3
6 EWEN PARK	44	F	Kingsbridge	11	108	8
7 FRANZ SIGEL PARK	89	B+	Concourse Village	17	104	16
8 HAFFEN PARK	75	C	Baychester	12	112	9
9 HARRIS PARK	75	C	Norwood	11	107	15
10 HENRY HUDSON PARK	74	C	Spuyten Duyvil	11	108	9
11 JOYCE KILMER PARK	81	B-	Concourse Village	17	104	7
12 MACOMBS DAM PARK	61	D	Concourse	17	104	12
13 MULLALY PARK <sup>1</sup>	71	C-	Concourse	16	104	19
14 NOBLE PLAYGROUND	78	C+	Parkchester/West Farms	18	109	4
15 OLD FORT #4 PARK	68	D	Kingsbridge Heights	11	108	5
16 OWEN DOLEN GOLDEN AGE CENTER	77	C+	Westchester Square	13	109	1
17 PELHAM BAY LITTLE LEAGUE PARK	54	F	Westchester Square	13	111	1
18 RAINEY PARK	77	C+	Longwood	17	102	8
19 SETON PARK	76	C	South Riverdale	11	108	12
20 SPUYTEN DUYVIL SHOREFRONT PARK	32	F	Spuyten Duyvil	11	108	7
21 ST JAMES PARK	70	C-	Fordham	14	107	11
22 TREMONT PARK	48	F	East Tremont	15	103	15
23 WATSON GLEASON PLAYGROUND	89	B+	Parkchester/Soundview	18	109	3
24 WILLIAMSBRIDGE OVAL	66	D	Norwood	11	107	20



Franz Sigel Park  
Score: 89% (B+)



Watson Gleason Playground  
Score: 89% (B+)



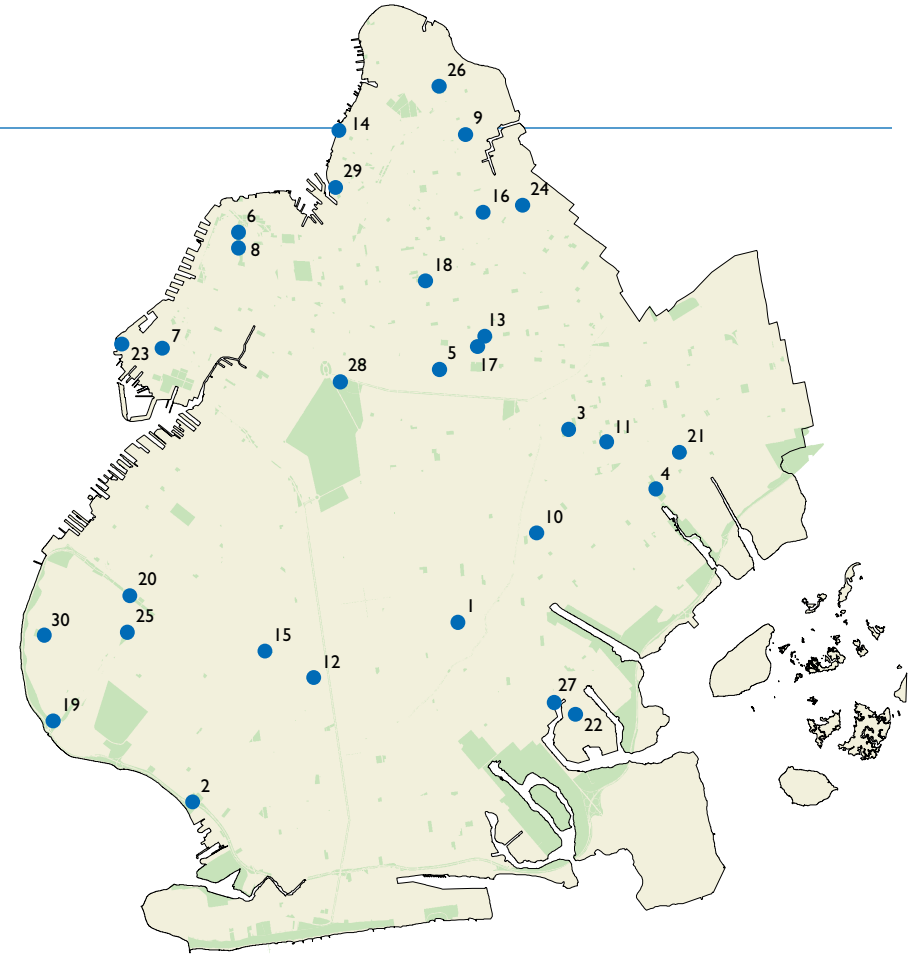
Spuyten Duyvil Shorefront Park  
Score: 32% (F)

\*CD = City Council District; CB = Community Board

<sup>1</sup>Macombs Dam Park and a portion of Mullaly Park were officially alienated and destroyed shortly after these inspections for the construction of the new Yankee Stadium.

# Brooklyn

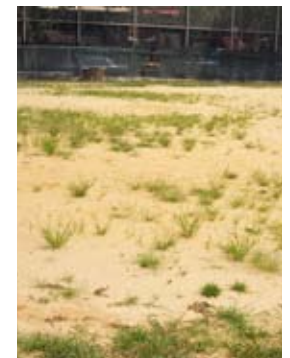
Park Name	Score	Grade	Neighborhood	CD	CB	Acres
1 AMERSFORT PARK	69	D	Flatlands	45	218	4
2 BENSONHURST PARK	56	F	Bath Beach	47	211	18
3 BETSY HEAD MEMORIAL PLGD	59	F	Brownsville	42	216	11
4 BREUKELEN PARK	70	C-	Broad Channel	42	218	16
5 BROWER PARK	71	C-	Crown Heights	36	208	7
6 CADMAN PLAZA PARK	73	C	Downtown Brooklyn	33	202	10
7 COFFEY PARK	72	C-	Red Hook	38	206	8
8 COLUMBUS PARK	70	C-	Downtown Brooklyn	33	202	1
9 COOPER PARK	53	F	East Williamsburg	34	201	6
10 FIDLER/WYCKOFF HOUSE PARK	92	A-	East Flatbush	45	217	1
11 FLOYD PATTERSON PARK	71	C-	Brownsville	42	216	2
12 FRIENDS FIELD PARK	83	B	Ocean Parkway	44	212	7
13 FULTON PARK	75	C	Stuyvesant Heights	36	203	2
14 GRAND FERRY PARK	72	C-	Williamsburg / Southside	33	201	2
15 GRAVESEND PARK	68	D	Borough Park	44	212	6
16 GREEN CENTRAL KNOLL	46	F	Bushwick	37	204	3
17 HARMONY PARK	58	F	Weeksville	41	203	2
18 HERBERT VON KING PARK	85	B	Bedford Stuyvesant	36	203	8
19 JOHN PAUL JONES PARK	72	C-	Bay Ridge	50	210	5
20 LEIF ERICSON PARK & SQUARE	51	F	Bay Ridge	43	210	17
21 LINDEN PLAYGROUND	62	D	New Lots	42	205	9
22 LINDOWER PARK	67	D	Mill Basin	46	218	7
23 LOUIS J VALENTINO JR PK & PIER	92	A-	Red Hook	38	206	2
24 MARIA HERNANDEZ PARK	70	C-	Bushwick	34	204	7
25 MCKINLEY PARK	68	D	Bay Ridge	43	210	8
26 MSGR MCGOLRICK PARK	79	C+	Greenpoint	33	201	9
27 MSGR CRAWFORD FIELD	33	F	Mill Basin	46	218	2
28 MT. PROSPECT PARK PLGD	63	D	Prospect Heights	35	208	8
29 ROBERTO CLEMENTE BALLFIELD	59	F	Williamsburg	33	201	1
30 RUSSELL PEDERSON PLGD	74	C	Bay Ridge	43	210	1



Fidler Wyckoff House Park  
Score: 92% (A-)



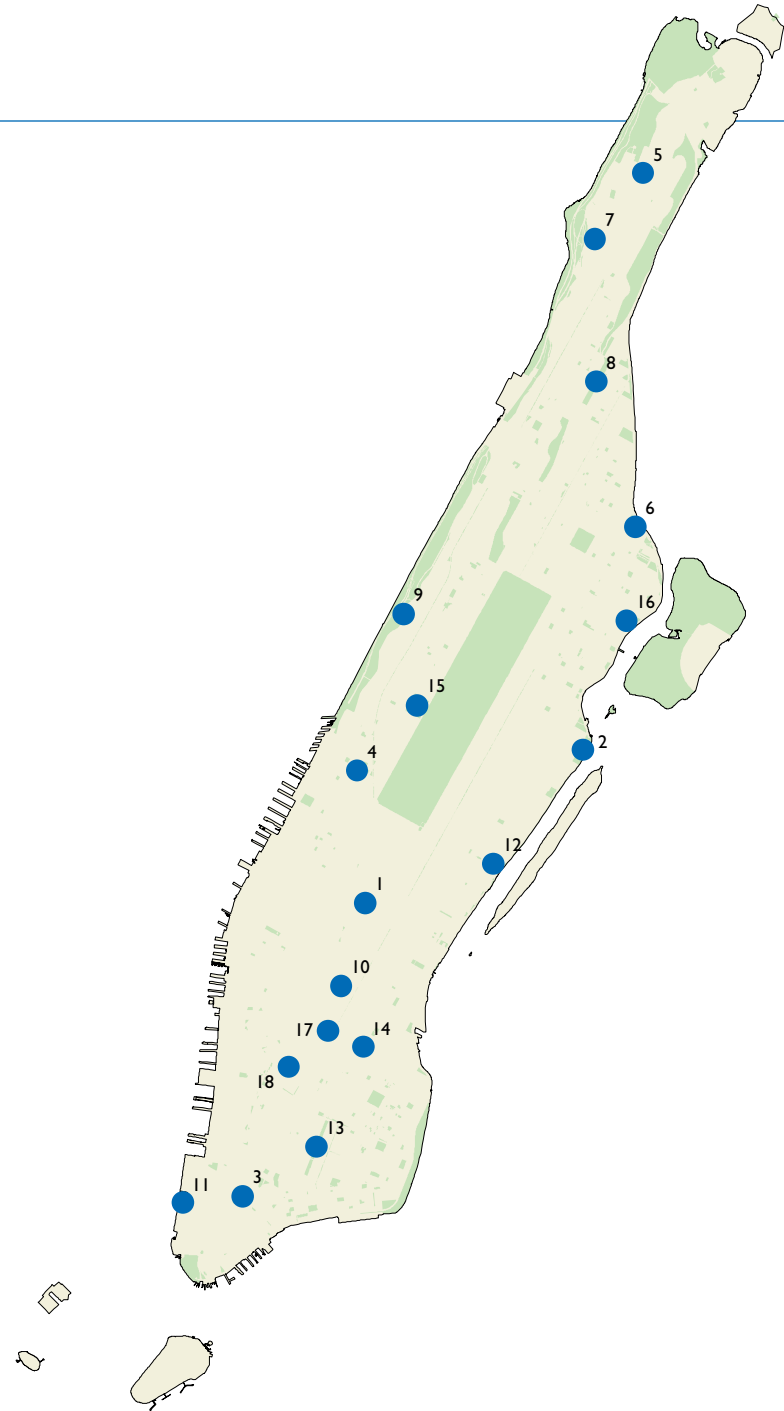
Louis J. Valentino Jr. Park and Pier  
Score: 92% (A-)



Msgr. Crawford Field  
Score: 33% (F)

# Manhattan

Park Name	Score	Grade	Neighborhood	CD	CB	Acres
1 BRYANT PARK	99	A+	Times Square	3	305	10
2 CARL SCHURZ PARK	79	C+	Yorkville	5	308	15
3 CITY HALL PARK	94	A	City Hall	1	301	9
4 DAMROSCH PARK	91	A-	Lincoln Square	6	307	2
5 GORMAN MEMORIAL PARK	70	C-	Washington Hgts/Ft George	10	312	2
6 HARLEM RIVER PARK	34	F	East Harlem /Yorkville	9	311	6
7 J. HOOD WRIGHT PARK	67	D	Washington Heights	10	312	7
8 JACKIE ROBINSON PARK	71	C-	Hamilton Heights	7	310	13
9 JOAN OF ARC PARK	85	B	Upper West Side	9	314	2
10 MADISON SQUARE PARK	87	B+	Flatiron	3	305	6
11 PUBLIC PLACE (BATTERY PK CITY)	99	A+	Battery Park City	1	301	1
12 QUEENSBORO OVAL	71	C-	Turtle Bay	5	308	2
13 SARA D. ROOSEVELT PARK	59	F	Lower East Side	1	303	8
14 STUYVESANT SQUARE	65	D	Gramercy Park	2	306	4
15 THEODORE ROOSEVELT PARK	92	A-	Upper West Side	6	307	18
16 THOMAS JEFFERSON PARK	61	D	East Harlem	8	311	16
17 UNION SQUARE	90	A-	Gramercy Park	2	305	4
18 WASHINGTON SQUARE PARK	71	C-	Greenwich Village	1	302	10



Bryant Park  
Score: 99% (A+)



Public Place  
Score: 99% (A+)

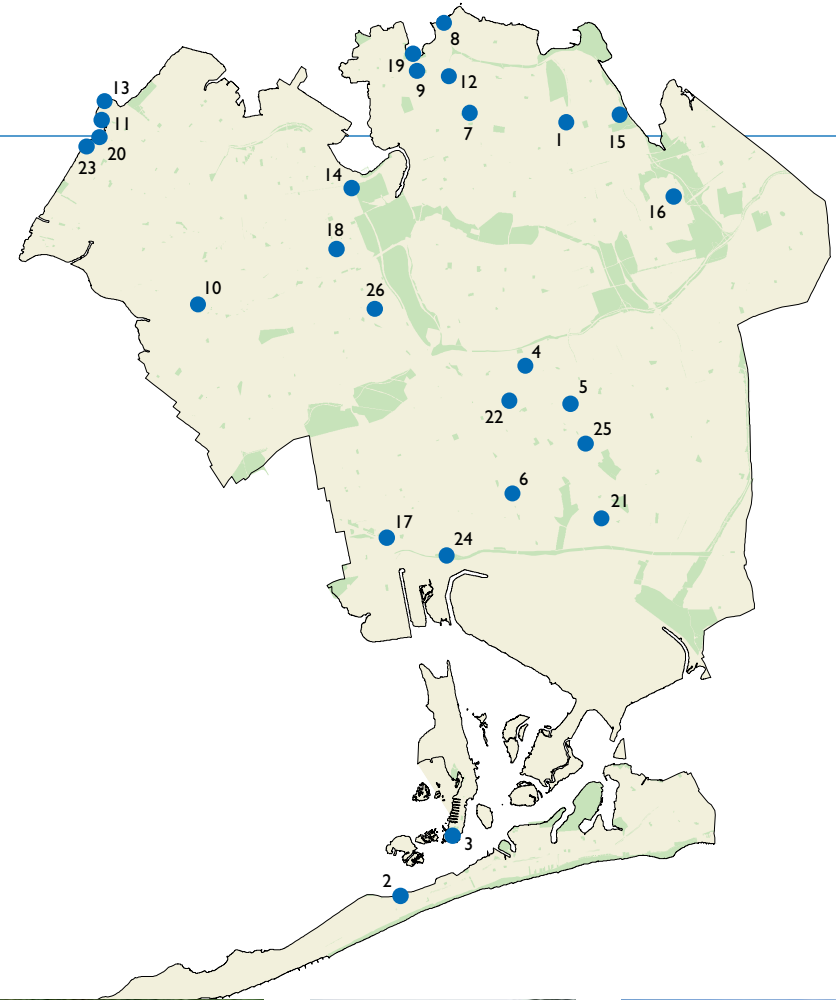


Harlem River Drive Park  
Score: 34% (F)

\*CD = City Council District; CB = Community Board

# Queens

Park Name	Score	Grade	Neighborhood	CD	CB	Acres
1 BAYSIDE FIELDS	80	B-	Auburndale	19	411	3
2 BEACH CHANNEL PARK	93	A	Rockaway	32	414	12
3 BROAD CHANNEL PARK	61	D	Broad Channel	32	414	17
4 CAPT TILLY MEMORIAL PARK	74	C	Jamaica Hills	24	408	9
5 DETECTIVE KEITH L. WILLIAMS PK	77	C+	Hollis / Jamaica	27	412	8
6 DR CHARLES R DREW MEM PARK	70	C-	South Jamaica	28	412	6
7 FLUSHING FIELDS	71	C-	Linden Hill / Whitestone	20	407	10
8 FRANCIS LEWIS PARK	66	D	Whitestone	19	407	17
9 FRANK GOLDEN MEM PARK	72	C-	College Point	19	407	11
10 FRANK PRINCIPE PARK (form. MAURICE)	75	C	West Maspeth	26	405	9
11 HALLETS COVE PLAYGROUND	70	C-	Astoria	22	401	6
12 HARVEY PARK	72	C-	Whitestone	19	407	9
13 HELLGATE FIELD	90	A-	Astoria	22	401	4
14 HINTON PARK	79	C+	East Elmhurst	21	403	4
15 JOHN GOLDEN PARK	70	C-	Bayside	19	411	17
16 LINNAEUS PLAYGROUND	66	D	Oakland Gardens	23	411	2
17 LORING PARK	82	B-	Lindonwood	32	410	3
18 LOUIS SIMEONE PARK	76	C	Corona	21	404	1
19 POWELL'S COVE PARK	40	F	College Point	19	407	7
20 RAINEY PARK	58	F	Astoria / Ravenswood	22	401	8
21 ROCHDALE PARK	50	F	Springfield Gardens	28	412	8
22 RUFUS KING PARK	86	B	Jamaica	28	412	12
23 SOCRATES SCULPTURE PARK	86	B	Astoria / Ravenswood	26	401	2
24 SOUTHERN FIELDS	40	F	South Ozone	31	410	11
25 ST ALBANS MEMORIAL PARK	72	C-	Saint Albans	27	412	11
26 YELLOWSTONE MUNICIPAL PARK	89	B+	Forest Hills	29	406	2



Powell's Cove  
Score: 40% (F)



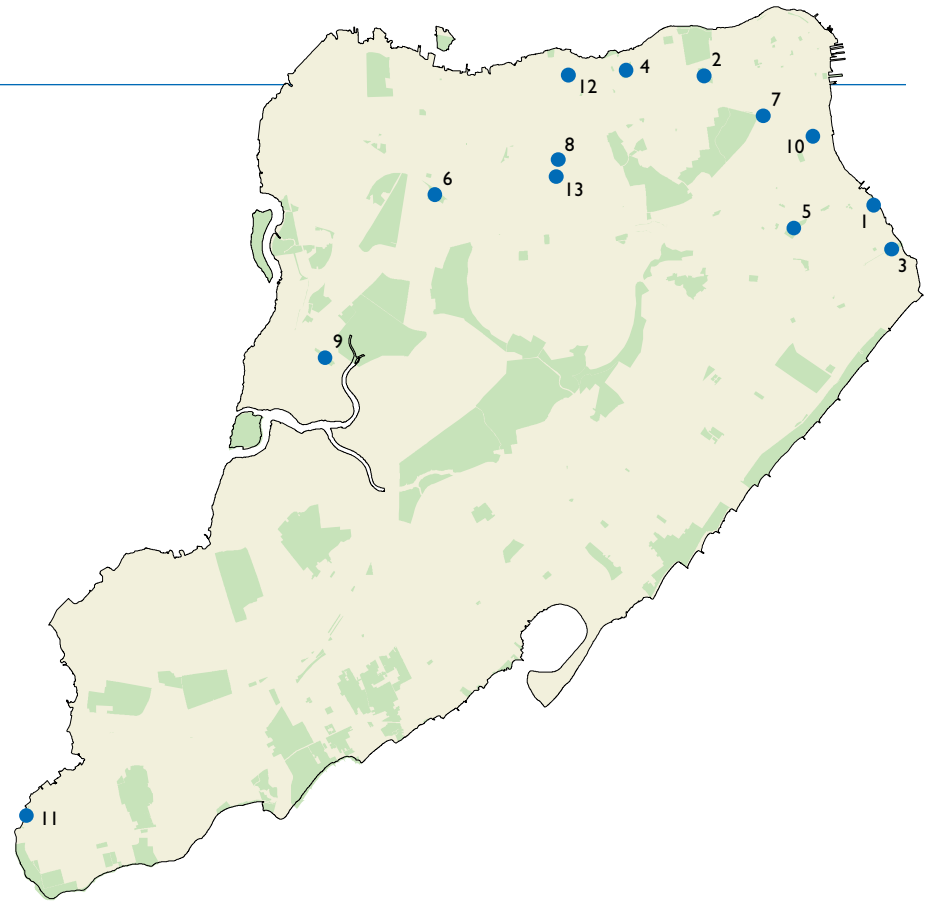
Southern Fields  
Score: 40% (F)



Beach Channel Park  
Score: 93% (A)

# Staten Island

Park Name	Score	Grade	Neighborhood	CD	CB	Acres
1 ALICE AUSTEN HOUSE & PARK	88	B+	Rosebank	49	501	15
2 ALLISON PARK	61	D	Randall Manor	49	501	9
3 ARTHUR VON BRIESEN PARK	83	B	Shore Acres	50	501	13
4 CPL.THOMPSON PARK	71	C-	Livingston	49	501	11
5 EIBS POND PARK	38	F	Park Hill	49	501	17
6 FATHER MACRIS PARK	78	C+	Graniteville	49	502	12
7 HERO PARK	69	D	Ward Hill	49	501	3
8 NORTHERLEIGH PARK	76	C	Elm Park	49	501	4
9 SCHMUL PARK	75	C	Travis	50	502	8
10 TAPPEN PARK	70	C-	Stapleton	49	501	2
11 TOTTEVILLE SHORE PARK	33	F	Tottenville	51	503	9
12 VETERANS PARK	41	F	Port Richmond	49	501	1
13 WESTERLEIGH PARK	89	B+	Westerleigh	49	501	3



Westerleigh Park  
Score: 89% (B+)



Tottenville Shore Park  
Score: 33% (F)

\*CD = City Council District; CB = Community Board

# New Yorkers for Parks

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New Yorkers for Parks (NY4P) is the only independent watchdog for all the city's parks, beaches and playgrounds. The city's oldest and leading independent expert on park conditions, efficiency and funding, NY4P has worked for nearly 100 years to ensure greener, safer, cleaner parks for all New Yorkers.

Through our website and publications like the annual, award-winning *Report Card on Parks*, NY4P provides accurate, up-to-date information on conditions in New York City's neighborhood parks. And through our policies, partnerships and planning, we work to effect change on a citywide level, to promote a higher level of park service in every community.

Our work is motivated by the belief that all New Yorkers should have access to quality parks and adequate recreational opportunities, because New York City's neighborhood parks are the front and backyards for millions of New Yorkers.

Information on our research projects, publications and programs is available at [www.ny4p.org](http://www.ny4p.org).

## **Track Your Park**

In 2006, New Yorkers for Parks launched Track Your Park (TYP), a citizen-based park inspection program for small parks, playgrounds, gardens, and other open spaces. Based on *The Report Card on Parks*, TYP trains New Yorkers to survey their own parks and create inspection reports. Advocacy training equips groups with the tools needed to bring about park improvements. For more information, visit [www.trackyourpark.org](http://www.trackyourpark.org).

## **Parks Advocacy Day**

The largest event of its kind at City Hall, New Yorkers for Parks' annual Parks Advocacy Day offers park users a chance to discuss citywide and neighborhood park concerns face-to-face with their City Council Members.

## **Community Design Program**

The Community Design Program offers pro bono design assistance to groups working to create new parkland or improve existing open space in their communities. New Yorkers for Parks also provides strategic planning guidance and advocacy training to participating groups.

## **Position Papers**

These policy reports provide in-depth analyses of park issues. The first in the series, "A New Turf War," is a comprehensive study that identifies the issues surrounding the use of synthetic turf and offers a series of recommendations on how to determine when and where synthetic turf is appropriate in New York City's parks and athletic fields.

## **Daffodil Project**

The Daffodil Project, a living 9/11 memorial, is the largest volunteer planting effort in the city. To commemorate the five-year anniversary of the September 11 terrorist attacks, every fall New Yorkers for Parks – along with the Parks Department and thousands more volunteers – plant nearly 500,000 daffodil bulbs as part of The Daffodil Project. The project not only raises the spirits of New Yorkers but also draws attention to the needs of neglected parks and open spaces citywide.

## **City Council District Profiles**

The City Council District Profiles document parks and open space in all 51 City Council districts, enabling New Yorkers to find out how their district rates on measures of open space, health, income, education, and safety. They are an essential tool for advocating for increased green space and improved care for existing parks and playgrounds.



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