



**GOTHAM
PARK
IMPACT
REPORT
2024**



LAWRENCE SUMULONG



Welcome to Gotham Park

Just two years ago, not a single square foot of the nine acres below the world-famous Brooklyn Bridge in the heart of Lower Manhattan was open to the public. Today, nearly 60,000 square feet of greenspace is available to local students, older adults, and our neighbors. Look how far we've come in such a short period of time!

Our relentless advocacy shed a light on our federally classified Historically Disadvantaged Community and Environmental Justice Neighborhood and garnered the attention of our elected officials, which resulted in more investment, safety, and health benefits in this area. Because of our efforts, we are now able to offer free weekly wellness programs, work-based learning opportunities for high school students, and public programs that strengthen the fabric of our surrounding communities in our newly opened spaces.

How did we get here? Together, of course! I am so proud of what we have accomplished over this past year. **Your gifts of time, treasure, participation and exploration are the driving force that makes all of this possible.**

We are just getting started creating a space for our communities and visitors alike—a new place that sparks joy, discovery, and wonder. **But we can't do this without your continued support.**

We look forward to seeing you here often. Remember— every square inch of this space was hard fought for, so savor the experience of sitting/ playing/skating/dancing/breathing deeply in this space—we earned it together. Thank you!

Rosa Chang
Co-Founder and President

GOTHAM PARK

About Gotham Park

Gotham Park is the nonprofit grassroots organization reopening, revitalizing, and reactivating the forgotten spaces under the Manhattan side of the iconic Brooklyn Bridge. Working with community partners and New York City agencies, we are creating a new community-led, world-class public space that nurtures connection, resilience, joy, discovery, and wonder.



Draft rendering by Snøhetta for community visioning and engagement.

Where we've been and where we are going

2021

Gotham Park was founded by local community advocates who saw the enormous potential in long-closed areas beneath the Brooklyn Bridge to re-connect our fractured communities with gathering space for us to come together.

2022

We assembled a stellar board of directors, advocated to agencies and elected officials, won grant funding, and hit the pavement every day offering tours and sharing the possibilities that could be unlocked in this singularly magnificent yet underutilized space.

2023

We kicked off our resilient design education program in February, and on May 24, we opened our very first acre on the 140th birthday of the Brooklyn Bridge! We began activating the space with events, plantings, and programs—all while continuing our community outreach and advocacy to expand and improve the space.

2024

We brought our free programs, events and community engagement to a whole new level with new dedicated staff! We deepened our education program with new students and partners. We were designated NYC Department of Transportation's Plaza Partner and grew by 1/3 with the opening of the Small Banks.

2025

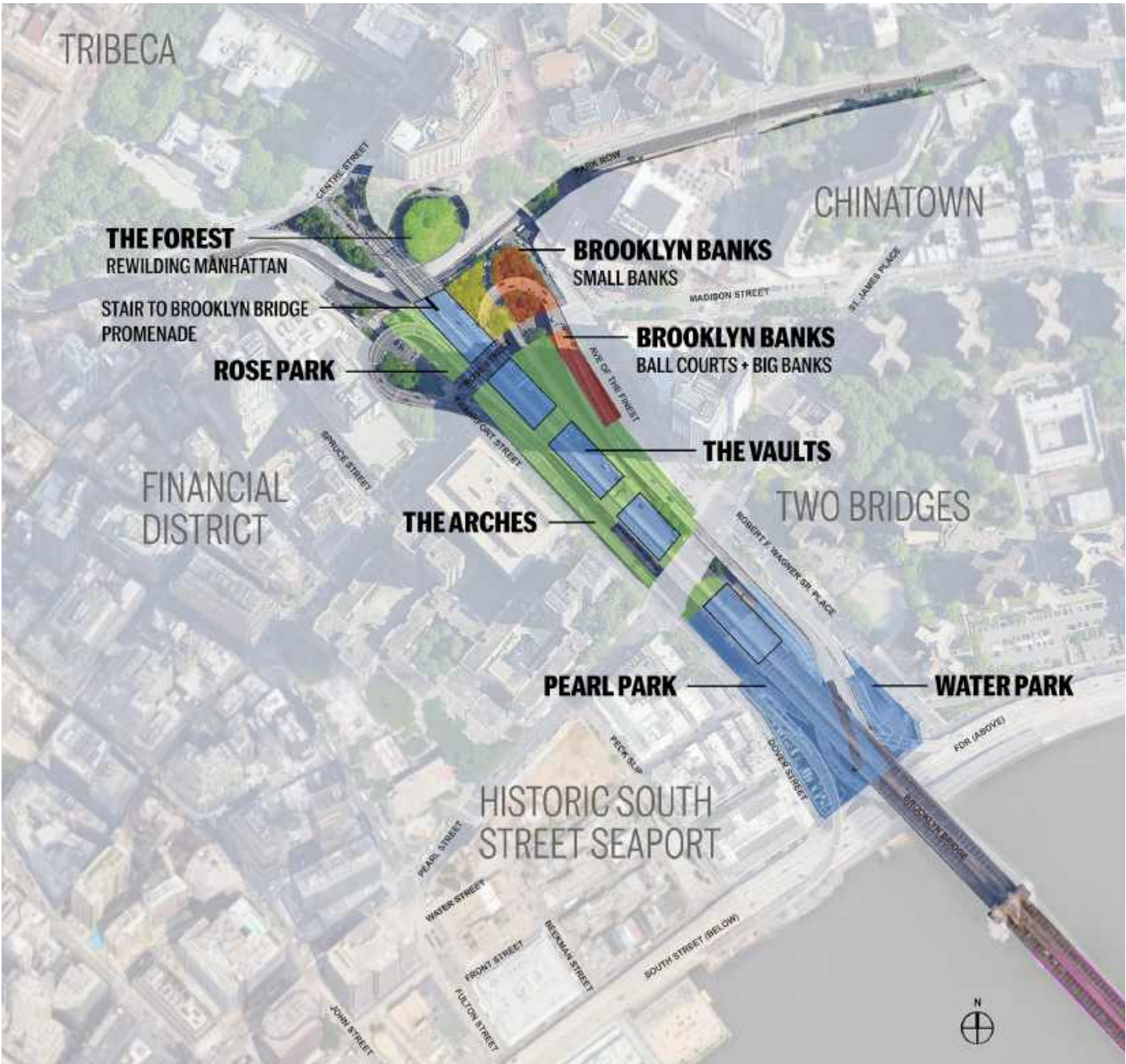
We look forward to opening three new acres of land in the new year, bringing us to four open acres in four years! We will need your imagination, participation, and support to dream big and build New York City's next legacy public space. And we will KNOCK PEOPLE'S SOCKS OFF TOGETHER, because THAT is how we roll!

What we’re doing

After 13+ years of disuse, we are working with community partners and NYC agencies to reopen the Brooklyn Banks and create a new, community-driven 9+ acre public space at the crossroads of Chinatown, Two Bridges, the Historic South Street Seaport, the Financial District, and TriBeCa—with safe and healthy open space, environmentally resilient design, and recreation areas for all interests, ages, and abilities.

We’ve reopened more space!

On Monday, November 18, the 15,000 square foot area affectionately known as the Small Banks was reopened, restoring connections around the Brooklyn Bridge and Park Row that had been closed for 14 long years! This brings our open space from 1 acre to 1.3, with 3 more acres scheduled to open in early 2025! Our heartfelt appreciation goes to Mayor Eric Adams, Deputy Mayor Meera Joshi, Chief Public Realm Officer Ya-Ting Liu, and the hardworking teams at New York City Department of Transportation, who shared in our vision and answered the call to open up these spaces and improve the quality of life in our neighborhoods.



- Phase 1: Opened in 2023
- Phase 1: Opened in 2024
- Phase 2: Opening early 2025; community-informed improvements to Phase 1 and 2 spaces beginning 2025/26
- Phase 3: Beginning 2026

We have a new look!

In early December, we introduced our new logo and brand identity, created by world-renowned design firm Pentagram through our participation in the Van Alen Institute Design Sprints program. Our new branding is a celebration of Gotham Park's journey and vision for the future. Each key element of our new visual identity reflects the history, energy, grit, and sense of community that define this park—and of course, our red bricks!

We are so grateful to Van Alen—especially Joseph Messana-Croly, our all-star team at Pentagram—Luke Hayman, Shigeto Akiyama and Sewon Bae, and talented design intern Shawn Wharton-Scott, for this incredible opportunity and our awesome new look!

We are THRILLED to announce that Pentagram has joined our team as our pro bono Creative Director, helping us to roll out our new branding package and ensuring that we have the resources to stay true to our brand identity in all of our communications—beginning with this gorgeous Impact Report!



Gotham Park 2024 in numbers

Site tours

75+

Stewardship events

45+

Free event and program attendees

3000+

Volunteers

450+

Wellness and fitness sessions

90+

Native plants installed

2000+

Skateboard gear sets given to our local youth

150+

Paid high school internships

11

Tons of NYC compost spread

12+



Celebrating our wins

Together, we:

- » Beautified and activated our first open acre with plantings, cleanups and free classes.
- » Welcomed the opening of a new 1/3 acre area.
- » Celebrated our second annual Community Block Party with thousands of neighbors and visitors.
- » Cultivated and trained a volunteer workforce.
- » Led high school internships in website development, environmental design, horticulture and public engagement.
- » Increased our staff from 3 in January to 6 in December.
- » Created educational programs that connect teens with urban designers and university science departments.
- » Unlocked public capital funding for improvements through our DOT Partnership.

And much more!



Everybody uses the park. I see kids from this school, kids from [the whole Murry Bergtraum Campus] building, around the neighborhood—everybody uses the park.

—**Xavier Waddell**, Urban Assembly Maker Academy Student and Gotham Park SYEP Summer Intern

Areas of impact



Bringing wellness to our communities

Free weekly programs

In the Spring, Summer, and Fall, Gotham Park offered over 90 free classes and meet-ups for all ages and abilities, including Zumba, yoga, Qigong, belly dance, pickleball—an average of 2-3 wellness and fitness sessions per week! We provided thousands of people with open space for basketball, pickleball, parkour, BMX, and of course, skating.

We're committed to continuing these free wellness classes and expanding our offerings in 2025 for the health and resilience of our communities.

Engaging the next generation

Skateboard gear giveaways

We were thrilled to be able to set our local youth up with valuable skateboarding equipment in two skateboard gear giveaways—the first coinciding with our Community Block Party in May, and the second as a back-to-school event in September.

The events included free skate lessons and were led by Super Skate Posse with the generous support of The Skatepark Project, Vans Skateboarding, and Gumball 3000 Foundation. Across the two events, we gave away 150+ sets of skateboards, sneakers and protective gear to pre-selected local youth in need. We can't wait to do this again in 2025!



When children are not being offered things to integrate into or be a part of, ... they kind of ... drift away, and this right here is so positive for the children—they release their energy. Skateboarding's the thing that [can allow them to] say, "You know what? This is how I could manage to cope with a lot of stuff."

—**Nancy Hecker**, Treasurer, NYCHA's Alfred E. Smith Houses Resident Association

Internships in sustainable design

Grass Roots Planters

We continued our educational Grass Roots Planters, or “GRooP,” partnership with our neighboring high school, Urban Assembly Maker Academy. This program, funded by Manhattan Borough President Mark Levine and NYC DOE, pays students to design beautiful, multi-use planters that will manage stormwater from large drainpipes coming from the Bridge. Students are supported by technical experts from Arup and Buro Happold and the Pace University Environmental Science Department, and are incorporating input from local older adults, the skateboarding community, city agencies and other stakeholders who have contributed their time and expertise. 2024 Spring semester interns created a 3-D scale model of Gotham Park’s 9-acre site to better understand the terrain and site-specific needs for our planters.



I think the [GRooP] program with the youth and the seniors is building a bridge of understanding ...
I think that sometimes we forget to ask our youth to participate and be part of the process—and to respect their opinions and what they want to see.

—Aixa Torres, President, NYCHA’s Alfred E. Smith Houses Resident Association

Our Grass Roots Planters (GRooP) project

Our GRooP family is spreading their wings! It gives us the greatest pleasure to hear that many of the students who have participated in our GRooP program found it so impactful to their high school experience that they wrote about it in their college essays. One of these students is Noumou Diallo, a senior at Urban Assembly Maker Academy who has participated in the GRooP project since her sophomore year. She just received a full-ride merit scholarship to Stanford! Congratulations, Noumou, we couldn’t be more excited for you!

During my [GRooP] internship, I had the opportunity to survey elderly community members about their seating height preferences. Witnessing their appreciation for having their needs considered revealed the significance of addressing community needs. This experience deepened my understanding of how thoughtful design and holistic approaches can drive impactful solutions; values I aim to integrate into my studies in business and entrepreneurship at Stanford.

—Noumou Diallo, a senior at Urban Assembly Maker Academy





Gotham Park as living laboratory

University partnerships

In 2024, we collaborated with over 50 students and their professors from Pace University, Fashion Institute of Technology, Pratt Institute, New York University, Columbia University, and Harvard University). Fields of study ranged from environmental science to equity in urban planning to exhibition design. As we are seeking to create an entirely unique type of urban public space—one that is both grassroots and world-

class, that sits at the intersection of some of NYC’s wealthiest communities and Historically Disadvantaged Neighborhoods, and that is both in a flood zone and beneath one of our country’s most famous landmarks—it is only natural that Gotham Park should be a case study for public realm projects across the country and around the world.



Volunteer-powered stewardship

Tending the gardens

From planting native species to keeping pathways clean, our volunteer workforce fills a crucial gap in resources. As an urban green space, we face daily challenges of heavy foot traffic, environmental wear and tear, and the pressures of climate change. To address these challenges effectively, we need to organize and mobilize our volunteer base with efficiency and purpose. This year, we organized weekly community gardening and cleanup sessions called Stewardship Saturdays and special employee volunteer events for our local corporate supporters,

for a total of over 45 stewardship events. We are working with our community partners to develop a multigenerational volunteer corps with biweekly gardening and park cleanup sessions beginning in Spring 2025, while deepening and expanding our relationships with our corporate partners who provide generous planting and maintenance support. Our volunteer initiatives create a sense of unity, shared purpose, and ownership of this special place among community members.

Our growing volunteer network

Community members 65+

15

Kids and teens

30

University students

30

Local residents

50

Civil engineering experts and urban designers

10

Corporate volunteers

350



Annual Community Block Party

We celebrated our second annual Community Block Party on May 4, in partnership with Urban Assembly Maker Academy and other local schools, elected officials, and community service organizations! This community-creating event featured a skateboard and gear giveaway in partnership with Super Skate Posse, skateboarding lessons, squash, calligraphy and mural-making, STEM activities for kids, a plant giveaway, yoga, salsa and belly dance lessons, free local food, live music, a skate jam and much more for all interests, ages, and abilities! Over 2,000 people attended from our local neighborhoods and across NYC, including special guests NYC Department of Transportation Commissioner Ydanis Rodriguez, Manhattan Borough President Mark Levine, State Assembly Member Grace Lee, Dan Byers of the Office of State Senator Brian Kavanagh, and Manhattan Community Board 1 Chair Tammy Meltzer.



I have nephews and nieces—little ones ... so over here it's really nice ... It's also good for us, for the children, and for the elderly, because we also have elderly friends ... So we enjoy it—it makes you happy. It makes you happy.

—Elizabeth, local resident

Annual Go Skate Day

In partnership with sponsors The Skatepark Project and Vans Skateboarding, we joined hundreds of skateparks around the country to celebrate Go Skate Day at the Brooklyn Banks on June 21. This nationwide event raises awareness about the health benefits of skating and encourages everyone to get out and roll! Gotham Park Co-Founder Steve Rodriguez MC'd a killer cash-for-tricks competition, and over 400 attendees came out to participate and cheer—including special guests NYC Deputy Mayor for Operations Meera Joshi and Chief Public Realm Officer Ya-Ting Liu! The day was filled with amazing tricks, awesome prizes, and a fantastic sense of community. We can't wait for the next one!



The New York Times

Our visionary Co-Founder and President, Rosa Chang, was featured in the New York Times for her unrelenting mission to create Gotham Park. Author John Leland wrote a beautiful article capturing the story behind Gotham Park and the brilliant, tenacious, and incredibly hard-working woman who is the driving force behind the string of successes of this legacy New York City public realm project.



reasons to be cheerful

Rosa Chang and NYC Chief Public Realm Officer Ya-Ting Liu presented Gotham Park at Reasons to be Cheerful's one-night-only variety show titled "Amazing Humans Doing Amazing Things," sharing the stage with our musical heroes Fogo Azul, Brass Queens, Thao, and DAVID BYRNE (holy cow)! Reasons to be Cheerful is a nonprofit online magazine founded by David Byrne reporting stories of smart, proven, replicable solutions to the world's most pressing problems—and they published one on Gotham Park in May!



NEW YORK POST

The New York Post covered the reopening of the Small Banks on November 18! Journalist Desheania Andrews and photographer Paul Martinka arrived in the morning, before the police barricades had even been removed, and were delighted to discover our team sweeping and planting daffodils there with volunteers from Rafael Viñoly Architects!



THRASHER

Thrasher Magazine published three inspiring videos in 2024 focused on the Brooklyn Banks and Gotham Park:

This Old Ledge: Brooklyn Banks, a deep dive into the history and significance of the Brooklyn Banks hosted by Ted Barrow,

A recap of our Community Block Party and skate gear giveback with Super Skate Posse, and

A recap of our Supply the Ride skate gear giveback with The Skatepark Project, Super Skate Posse, Vans Skateboarding and Gumball 3000 Foundation.



Our path forward

Our 2025 focus

Community engagement

We will be engaging and collaborating with community stakeholders (like you!) to define our goals for this new open space, so that it best responds to our community’s needs.

Expanding our programs

Beginning in early 2025, we will have three more acres to care for, to play in, and to host even more fun events for our awesome community to come together and celebrate.

Welcoming and wayfinding

We will collaborate with NYC DOT and top design firms like Pentagram and Snøhetta to develop a simple, intuitive wayfinding plan to reconnect our communities (and to help our lost tourists find and support our special local businesses).

Sustaining our operations

Bootstrapping has brought us this far, but we are growing exponentially(!)—so we are focusing on building a strong funding foundation to create the long-term staying power we need to build our dreams together.

Advocating for more

We are proud of all we have accomplished until now, but we will not lose sight of our founding mission—to bring to life a 9-acre public space beneath the iconic Brooklyn Bridge, stretching all the way from Park Row to the East River, and including the Bridge’s interior vaults for a New York Public Library, a museum, community space, retail, and cafés. We will continue our advocacy with our elected leaders, city officials, city agencies, and other key stakeholders to make this dream a reality.

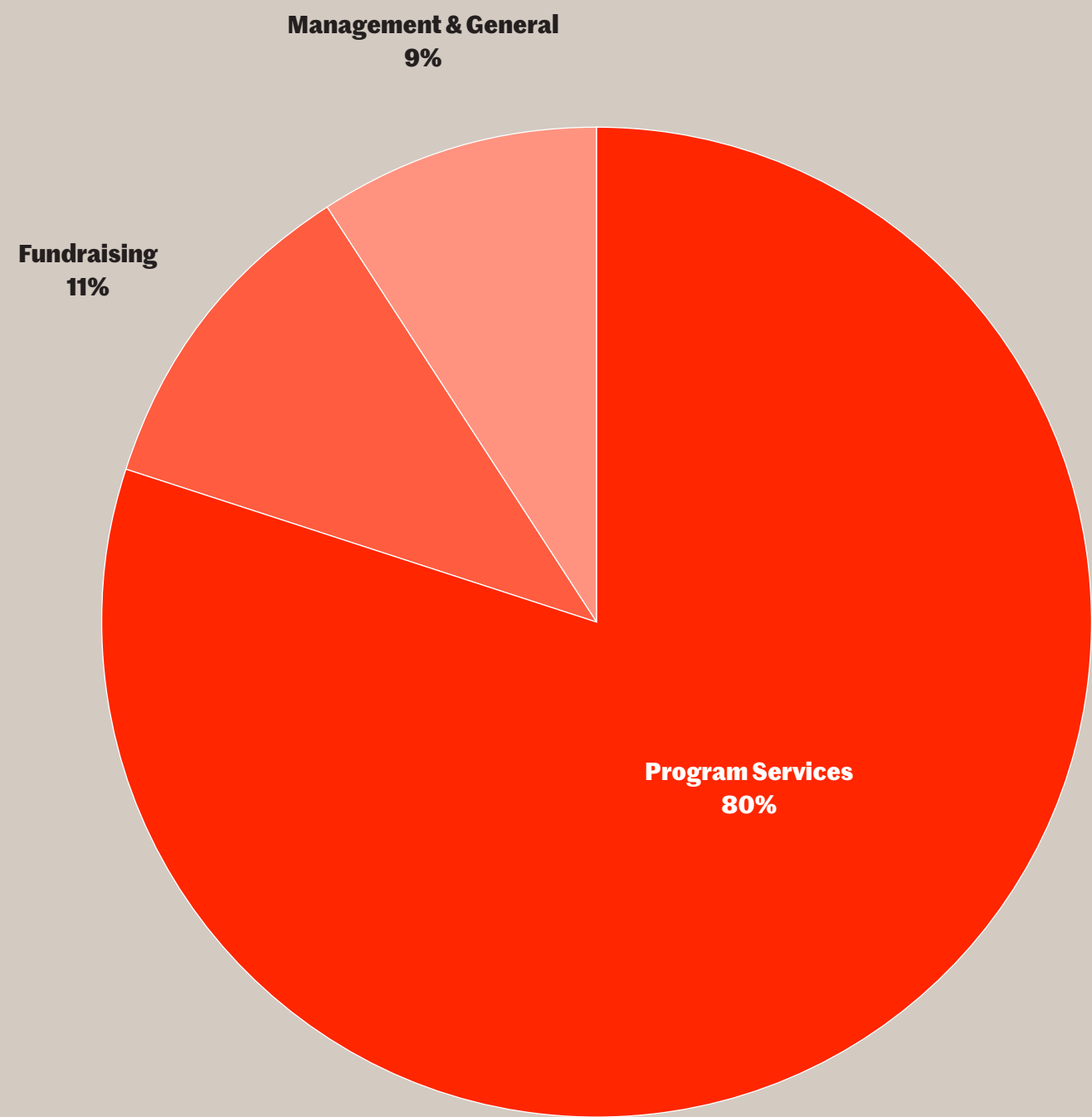
[Gotham Park’s] vision is exquisite ...We want to take all that land back for the community. Nine acres of land between here and the river. So what we need is funding ...to beautify and make this area of Manhattan [more] gorgeous and inviting.

—Lucy West, President, Chatham Green Cooperative



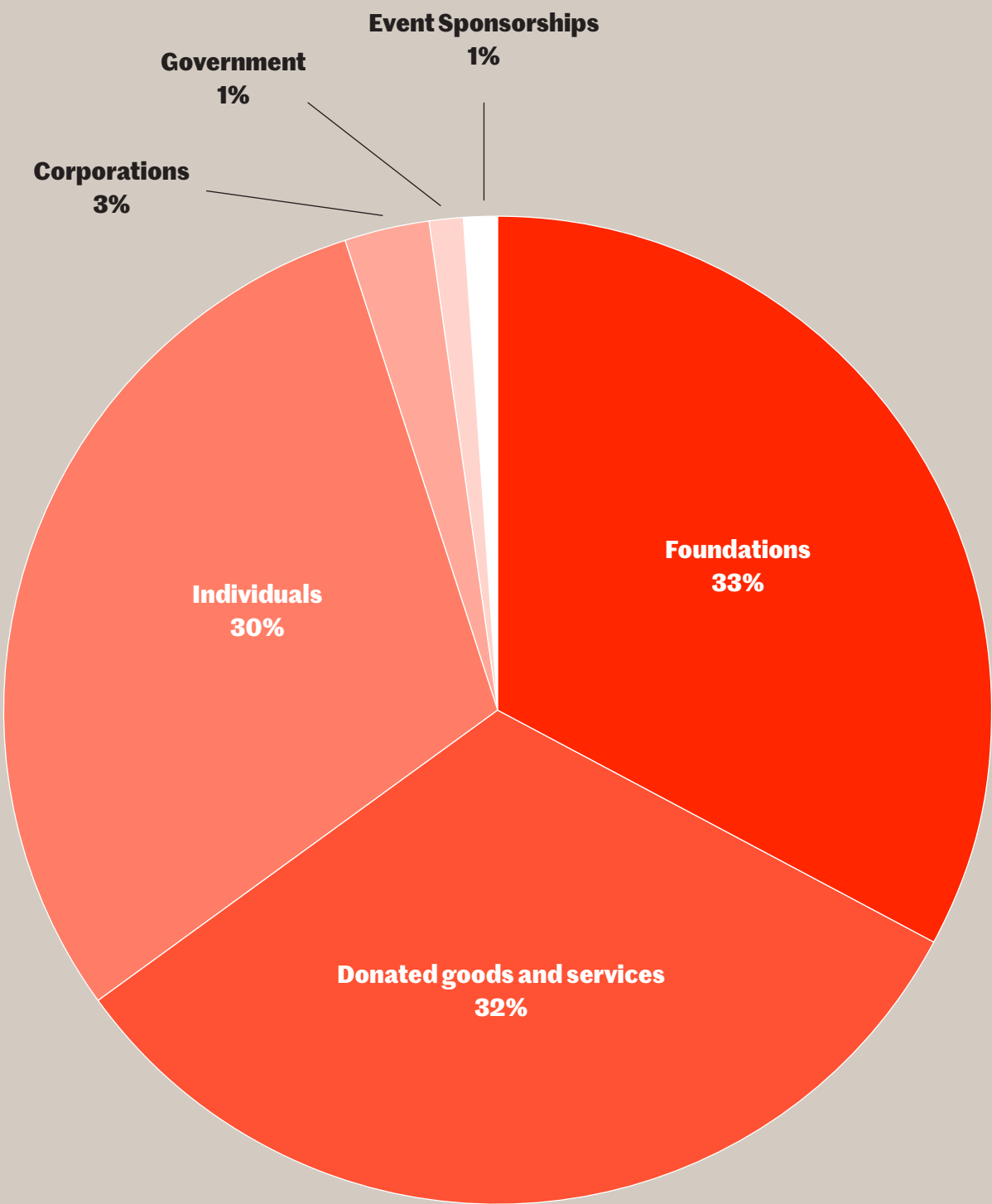
The best is yet to come

Our expense allocations*



*Based on FYE 12/31/23 financial statements.

Our revenue sources*



*Based on FYE 12/31/23 financial statements.

Major Donors

Gotham Park recognizes our entire community of donors for their early leadership in supporting the creation of a new, legacy public space beneath the Brooklyn Bridge in Lower Manhattan. We call them our Founding Circle, and we are eternally thankful to have these visionary advocates of innovative urban public space with us on this journey from our very beginnings.

We gratefully acknowledge here our major Founding Circle donors who have given \$1,500 or more from our inception in 2021 through December 31, 2024.

Master Alchemists	Alchemists	Catalysts	Benefactors	Allies		Advocates	Champions
\$150,000 and above	\$50,000–\$149,999	\$25,000–\$49,999	\$15,000–\$24,999	\$5,000–\$14,999		\$2,500–\$4,999	\$1,500–\$2,499
Betty Kay	Natalie and Ed Emerson	The Brosterman Family	New York State (NYS Senator Brian Kavanagh)	Bryan and Meredith Gitomer	NYC Department of Youth and Community Development (NYC Council Member Christopher Marte)	Anonymous	Elizabeth and Michael Alfano
Elizabeth and Jonathan Lewinsohn	Brewster Pettus	Welcome to Chinatown	NYC Green Fund administered by City Parks Foundation	Goldman Sachs	Rafael Viñoly Architects	Rosa Chang	Amazon
Trinity Church NYC	The Skatepark Project		S&P Global	Google	Refuge Arts	Friends of the High Line	Anonymous
			Shiseido Americas	HR&A Advisors	Nicolas Rohatyn	Goodwin Law	Big City Tourism Inc.
			The Wellspring Foundation	Rob Magliaro	Anonymous in memory of Melvin R Seiden	Lazard	Naomi Buchman and David Montone
				Morgan Stanley	Van Alen Institute	New York City Economic Development Corporation	Burberry
				New York-Presbyterian Hospital		Open Squash	Clark Fitzgerald Continue the Beginning Fund
				Nike		Stacy Pollack	Mark Gorton and Emily Selter
				NYC Department of Education (Manhattan Borough President Mark Levine)		The Ryu Family	Nancy Kong
				NYC Department of Aging (Manhattan Borough President Mark Levine)			Hugh and Peg MacDonald
							Pace University
							Michelle Vaughn

Major In-Kind Supporters

It takes a village! With our small staff, we have only been able to achieve the outsized impacts we have made over the past three years with generous in-kind support. Whether it's skateboarding gear donated for a giveaway to local youth, legal or strategic advice, design expertise, or entertainment for our Community Block Party, our in-kind supporters level up our impact in the community with their own special sauce.

We gratefully acknowledge here the amazing organizations listed below, who have all generously donated over \$1,500 worth of their time, skills, goods, and resources in support of Gotham Park's mission.

Amplifi Digital	Friends of the High Line	Nike SB	The Skatepark Project
Arup	Grupo Centeno	Pace University	The Wright Group
Buro Happold	Hogan Lovells	Pentagram	Triple 8
Cozen O'Connor Public Strategies	HR&A Advisors	Redbull	Vans Skateboarding
Downtown Alliance	Langan Engineering	Seaport Entertainment Group	Welcome to Chinatown
Fire-Works Film	New York City Department of Transportation	Snøhetta	Urban Assembly Maker Academy
		Super Skate Posse	

Supporting Officials

New York City	United States	New York State	District Leaders
Eric Adams, New York City Mayor	Chuck Schumer, U.S. Senate Majority Leader	Kathy Hochul, New York State Governor	Lee Berman, District Leader
Meera Joshi, New York City Deputy Mayor for Operations	Kirsten Gillibrand, U.S. Senator	Brian Kavanaugh, New York State Senator	Vittoria Fariello, District Leader
Ya-Ting Liu, NYC Chief Public Realm Officer	Daniel Goldman, U.S. Congressman	Grace Lee, New York State Assembly Member	Mariama James, District Leader
Ydanis Rodriguez, New York City Department of Transportation Commissioner		Deborah Glick, New York State Assembly Member	Jeannine Kiely, District Leader
Mark Levine, Manhattan Borough President			Caroline Laskow, District Leader
Christopher Marte, New York City Council Member, Vice Co-Chair of Black, Latino and Asian Caucus			Virginia Lee, District Leader
Shekar Krishnan, New York City Council Member, Chair of Committee on Parks and Recreation			Paul Newell, District Leader
Carlina Rivera, New York City Council Member, Chair of Committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries, and International Intergroup Relations			Justin Yu, District Leader
Gale Brewer, New York City Council Member, Chair of Committee on Oversight and Investigations			
Tammy Meltzer, Manhattan Community Board 1 Chair			

Brain Trust	Board of Directors		Staff
Dan Doctoroff, <i>Target ALS</i>	Elizabeth Lewinsohn, Chair <i>Founder, Community First Fund</i>	Nancy Kong, Treasurer <i>Co-Founder, Park Row Alliance</i>	Rosa Chang, President
Robert Hammond, <i>Therme Group US</i>	Benjamin Anderson Bashein <i>Executive Director, The Skatepark Project</i>	Vic Lee, Secretary <i>Co-Founder & CEO, Welcome to Chinatown</i>	Megan Brosterman, Chief Operating Officer
B.J. Jones, <i>“New” New York and South Street Seaport Museum</i>	Rosa Chang, Co-Founder	Rob Magliaro, Co-Founder <i>Education Lead, Grow with Google</i>	Hillary Dvorkin, Director of Strategic Partnerships
Holly Leicht, <i>Madison Square Park Conservancy</i>	Bret Collazzi <i>Partner, HR&A Advisors</i>	Steve Rodriguez, Co-Founder <i>SVP, Head of Creative Talent and Culture at EP+Co</i>	Nancy Kong, Chief Administrative Officer
Megan Sheekey, <i>Bloomberg Associates</i>	Sarah Krautheim <i>Senior Vice President, Public Affairs, Trust for Governors Island</i>		Orvil Minott, Horticulture & Environmental Engagement Coordinator
Nanette Smith, <i>Bloomberg L.P.</i>			Ariel Wilson, Program Coordinator
Andy Wiley-Schwartz, <i>Bloomberg Associates</i>			

Advisory Boards		
Arts & Culture Advisory Board	Fundraising Advisory Board	Finance & Audit Advisory Board
Rosa Chang	Elizabeth Alfano	Benjamin Anderson Bashein
Hillary Dvorkin	Benjamin Anderson Bashein	Megan Brosterman
Jonathan Gardenhire	Megan Brosterman	Rosa Chang
Sarah Krautheim	Rosa Chang	Bret Collazzi
Elizabeth Lewinsohn	Bret Collazzi	Nancy Kong
Steve Rodriguez	Sarah Krautheim	
Paola Zanzo-Sahl	Elizabeth Lewinsohn	
	Betsy Santarlasci	

“There is no more important park project
than this one.”
—**Dan Doctoroff**, Target ALS



Draft rendering by Snøhetta for community visioning and engagement.

Donate today

Gotham Park

gothampark.org

donate@gothampark.org

gothampark.org/donate

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Gotham Park is a 501(c)(3) public charity.
Our EIN is 86-1317846. All donations are tax-deductible
as permitted under federal tax law.

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