

GOTHAM PARK

IMPACT REPORT 2025





Dear Friends,

Just a few years ago, standing under the Brooklyn Bridge in Lower Manhattan meant peeking through locked gates and imagining what could be possible. Today, when I walk across the four acres we reopened together, I see teenagers socializing before school, older adults stretching in the morning light, gardeners tending native plants, and families rediscovering a part of the city they hadn't been able to step into for more than a decade.

In 2025, we made our boldest leap yet: over 22,000 people attended our free events and programs, while countless others gathered daily in our newly opened public space. In June, we were thrilled to re-open the Big Banks, bringing our total footprint to **nearly four acres in only four years!** This new space opened pathways between neighborhoods, invited new forms of play and rest, and gave us room to expand our programs, partnerships, and stewardship work in ways we had only dreamed of. With newly opened space, we increased our visitorship by nearly 600% and more than doubled our volunteer stewardship events, increasing our visibility and use like never before.

This year also marked a **milestone in our public-private partnership with the New York City Department of Transportation ("NYCDOT")**. Together, we finalized our plaza maintenance and operating agreement that formalizes our shared commitment to caring for Gotham Park for the long term - a partnership further honored in 2025 with a joint Special Recognition from the Municipal Art Society's MASTerworks Design Awards.

What I'm most proud of is how instantly the space came alive when the fences came down. Tens of thousands joined us for public events. Opera, drum lines, and teenage bands rang through the Arches. Kids took their first skateboarding lessons from Olympians. Hundreds of volunteers planted, swept, and mulched, making the gardens their own. Day after day, it proved a simple truth: public space works best when the public shapes it.

As we look toward the years ahead, we see nine acres of reimagined public space beneath one of New York's most iconic landmarks, vibrantly alive with our communities gathering, playing, and building friendships here. The dream is monumental, but so is the coalition standing behind it. **Your support—your time, your belief, your active participation—makes this transformative work possible.**

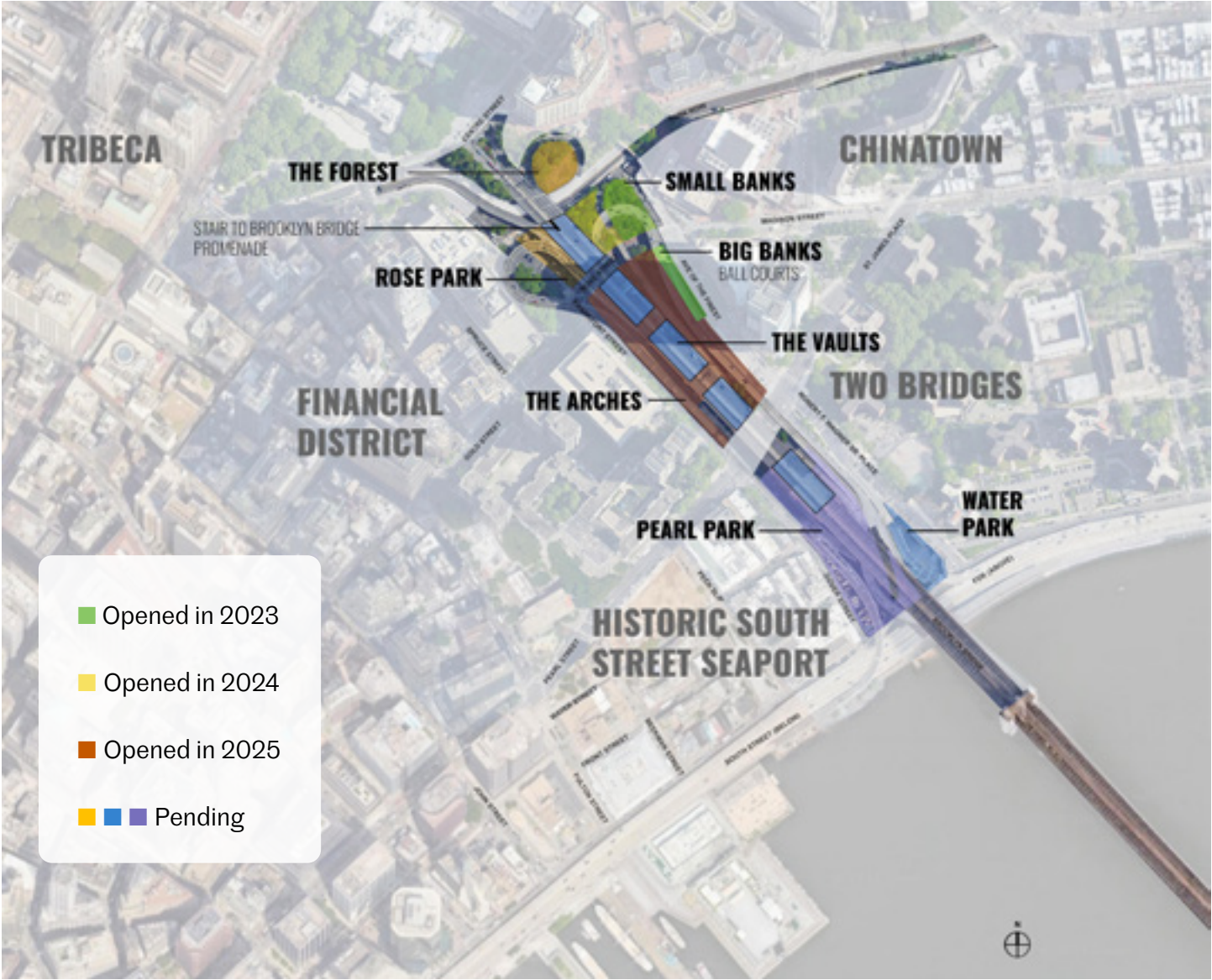
Thank you for bringing this open space to life. We're just getting started.

Rosa Chang

Co-Founder and President
Gotham Park

About Gotham Park

Gotham Park is the nonprofit grassroots organization reopening, revitalizing, and reactivating the 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.



Then and Now

- 1883

The Brooklyn Bridge opens after a 14-year construction project, becoming the longest suspension bridge in the world at the time.
- 1970s

Following a decades-long reconstruction project replacing the Bridge's Trolley rails with roadways, the "Red Brick Park" plaza is constructed under the Brooklyn Bridge's newly added vehicular approach ramps.
- 1980s

As skateboarding arrives on the East Coast, skateboarders discover the bricked embankments beneath the Brooklyn Bridge. They dub the site the Brooklyn Banks, which emerges as the birthplace of East Coast street-style skateboarding.
- 2001

In the aftermath of 9/11, security barriers are erected at Park Row, Rose Street, and Avenue of the Finest, cutting off private vehicular traffic north and south of the Brooklyn Bridge and creating unwelcoming and confusing access points for pedestrians and cyclists.
- 2004

The NYC Parks Department adds mulch strips and planting beds to The Small Banks and Nine Stair areas, introducing early "parkification" efforts at the Brooklyn Banks.
- 2010

Access to space beneath the Manhattan side of the Brooklyn Bridge is shut down for bridge repairs. What had once been an active public landscape goes quiet behind construction fences.
- 2021

Local advocates recognizing the untapped potential beneath the Brooklyn Bridge connect with the skateboarding community eager to reopen the Brooklyn Banks. The coalition forms Gotham Park and begins working together to push for the reopening and reimagining of these long-closed spaces.
- 2022

Gotham Park builds its board, deepens relationships with community leaders, city agencies and elected officials, secures early funding, and develops a shared nine-acre vision.
- 2023

On May 24th, the Brooklyn Bridge's 140th birthday, Gotham Park opens its first acre to the public. Events, plantings, and programs fill the space as outreach and advocacy continue to reopen more.
- 2024

Gotham Park welcomes its first full-time staff, expands education partnerships, and celebrates the reopening of the Small Banks, restoring connections around the Bridge.
- 2025

Gotham Park experiences its biggest year yet, with the reopening of the Big Banks, the Arches, and the linear spaces along Frankfort Street, bringing the plaza to nearly **four open acres in just four years.** Visitorship increases by nearly 600%.
- 2026

We are working with NYCDOT and our community to plan the next phase of Gotham Park's transformation while elevating our free events and programming to new heights, stewarding our expanded footprint, and advancing our vision of a nine-acre civic hub beneath the Brooklyn Bridge.

2025 by the Numbers



Celebrating Our Wins

Reconnecting Communities Grant

On February 28, 2025, we had the honor of hosting Senator Chuck Schumer and Congressman Dan Goldman at Gotham Park to celebrate the \$2 million Reconnecting Communities Grant they and Senator Kirsten Gillibrand won New York City for capital improvements to our site. Gotham Park Co-Founder and President Rosa Chang, New York City Department of Transportation Commissioner Ydanis Rodriguez and Deputy Mayor for Operations Meera Joshi shared remarks alongside our federal elected representatives. Honored community guests included our friends at Trinity Church New York City, Urban Assembly Maker Academy, and our top volunteers and supporters.



Opening of Big Banks & \$50 Million NYC Capital Funding

On June 5, 2025, the iconic Big Banks opened to the public for the first time since its closure in 2010. Speakers included First Deputy Mayor Randy Mastro, Mayor Eric Adams, Gotham Park’s Rosa Chang, NYCDOT Commissioner Ydanis Rodriguez, Gotham Park Board Member and The Skatepark Project’s Chief Executive Officer Benjamin Bashein, and Gotham Park’s co-founder Steve Rodriguez.

At the ceremony, Mayor Adams also announced a \$50 million capital investment to NYCDOT that will enhance the Gotham Park site.

This is just the beginning. While the City has stepped up with funding for capital improvements, our 501(c)(3) nonprofit, Gotham Park, is **solely** responsible for the care, operations, plantings, cleaning, free programming, and events at this magnificent NYC space - and for advocating for more. If you are excited about what we are doing and able to support, please donate and pitch in—we need you now more than ever. We are a grassroots, bootstrapped endeavor, by the community, for the community.



Signature Events



Lunar New Year

On February 6-9, Gotham Park hosted 8,000 visitors at its first Lunar New Year Fair in partnership with Welcome to Chinatown, transforming the plaza into a bustling hub of local vendors, food, and creative activities for families. The market highlighted neighborhood makers and small businesses while offering free art activities that invited children and adults to slow down and create together. The Lunar New Year Fair demonstrated how Gotham Park can support culturally-rooted commerce and community life, activating the space in ways that reflect and strengthen our surrounding neighborhoods.



Community Block Party

Our third annual Community Block Party, presented by Trinity Church, Seaport Entertainment Group and The Skatepark Project, drew over 5,000 attendees of all ages and walks of life for a full-day neighborhood festival. More than twenty-five partners tabled across the site, including our neighboring high schools and Pace University. Fogo Azul's drums reverberated throughout the park, while student bands, opera singers, and skateboarders shared the famous 9-Stair as their stage. Kids painted murals and read books from the New York Public Library, while teens led STEM activities alongside BioBus. The Skatepark Project distributed 60+ sets of boards, sneakers, and protective gear to local youth and offered free skate lessons to the whole community with support from Vans Skateboarding. It was our most-attended event to date – a vivid demonstration of how powerful these reopened acres can be when the whole community shows up at once.



“It was amazing to see the diverse communities in Lower Manhattan coming together. Such a vibrant day, and a great way to connect with community!”

—**Linda Han**, The New School Center for Global Mental Health

Go Skate Day

Our third annual Go Skateboarding Day presented in partnership with The Skatepark Project and Vans Skateboarding marked the first major public celebration of the newly reopened Big Banks, and the turnout was electric: 3,000 people poured across the full site, flowing back into a place that had been closed for 15 years. Parents taught their children to skate and crowds gathered to watch amateur and pro skaters land tricks for prizes in a skate jam MC'd by Gotham Park Co-Founder Steve Rodriguez. The space celebrated its history and its future at the same time. Colorful, gritty, fast, and communal all at once, the day showed what the reopened spaces truly unlock: a cultural landmark restored to the public, and a reminder of why skating remains one of the strongest engines of youth energy and creative movement on our site.



“Skateboarding has nothing but benefits (with some bumps and scratches). There is so much it can give to those of all ages, not only skill but access and community and with that you’ll be great in everything you do.”

—**Quanez “Cue” Pierre**, Program Manager, Stoked, and graduate of neighboring Urban Assembly School for Emergency Management



The Longest Table

The Longest Table, a potluck concept born in Chelsea in 2022, arrived at Gotham Park as an invitation to slow down together. Neighbors, city leaders, skaters, and friends pulled up chairs along a shared stretch of tables to exchange food, stories, laughter, and real conversation. Taking place in the Big Banks—a space shaped by a long history of momentum and movement—the gathering offered something equally powerful: the opportunity to pause, sit together, and spend time side by side.

After lunch, attendees enjoyed a free opera performance by Teatro Grattacielo. It was a day that reflected a long-standing call from the community for places where people of all generations can gather openly, share both everyday and meaningful moments, and do so within the sightlines of one of New York’s most iconic landmarks.



Areas of Impact

Volunteer-Powered Stewardship

As new acres have opened, the daily work of caring for Gotham Park has become a shared practice among our staff, student interns, partners, and a workforce of more than 450 unique volunteers. Our in-demand volunteer stewardship program, anchored by our weekly “Stewardship Saturdays” open volunteer meet-up, offers a sense of agency, belonging, and community for our neighbors and partners alike.

In addition to our dedicated community volunteers, Gotham Park also welcomed corporate volunteer teams from across multiple industries. Situated just steps from one of New York City’s most influential business districts, our new public space provides a nearby opportunity for companies to show up as neighbors - contributing through care and maintenance of the plaza while also providing financial support for Gotham Park’s ongoing operations.

With an expanding footprint, we hosted 110 stewardship events in 2025, more than twice as many as in 2024. Together, we planted 800 native plants and 2,000 bulbs from New Yorkers for Parks’ Daffodil Project, and maintained our gardens by weeding, watering, and amending the soil with nearly 3 tons of compost.

We are deeply grateful to all of our volunteers, whose dedication and hard work are essential to the ongoing care and stewardship of this growing public landscape.

Thank you to the organizations that sponsored employee volunteer days in 2025, including:

Con Edison

S&P Global

Goldman Sachs

Morgan Stanley

Lazard

Robinhood Financial

Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corporation

Welcome to Chinatown



Wellness & Fitness Programming

In 2025, Gotham Park continued its free wellness programming, offering a consistent mix of yoga, Zumba, Tai Chi, fitness classes, and mental-health–focused movement sessions throughout the programming season April–November. More than 250 individuals participated in wellness activities, joining weekly classes that created a reliable rhythm beneath the Brooklyn Bridge for families, youth, older adults, and working neighbors. These sessions created space for people to move, connect, and recalibrate in the dense, active buzz of Lower Manhattan. As awareness grew and participation continued to build, Gotham Park strengthened its role as a hub for community wellbeing, and we remain committed to growing these inclusive, joyful offerings in the coming years.

“Under the protection of the Brooklyn Bridge, in an amazing outdoor space in New York City, we get to dance and move to Latin rhythms taught by our adorable and energetic instructor, DeeKee. We look forward to our Tuesday evening hour of fun welcoming every level of ability.”

—Paula Lederman, Lower Manhattan resident and regular Zumba participant

Youth Engagement & Education



“I really enjoyed the hands-on work that we participated in, particularly leading volunteer groups, which allowed me to develop and improve my leadership skills.”

—**Elijah Moore**, Gotham Park Youth Ambassador

Youth programming continued to expand with work-based learning opportunities through internship cohorts from Pace University and NYC Department of Youth and Community Development’s Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP). Our interns supported day-to-day operations and helped us manage an expanding footprint under the Bridge over the summer. By October, we launched our first Youth Ambassador program, through which four high school students from nearby schools gained real experience in civic engagement, public programming, and environmental care. Our Youth Ambassadors help steward our green spaces, plan and support events, and share community feedback that shapes future programming, earning stipends for their participation. The popular program has continued into the Spring 2026 semester, and our cohort size has already doubled!

We were proud to deepen our already strong relationship with our long-term partner and neighbor Urban Assembly Maker Academy and new partner Teens For Food Justice, who helped Maker open a student-led hydroponic and organic farm in their cafeteria. Supported by a core team of local resident volunteers, we distributed 3,121 pounds of free, student-grown organic produce to Lower Manhattan families and older adults in the park in 2025.



This year, we also partnered with LES Ecology Center’s Horticulture Training Program to steward our expanding site, started mental health partnerships with SkateMind Project at The New School and University Settlement, and worked with engineers from Arup to advance student designs into production ready specifications for our Grass Roots Planters educational and climate resilience initiative.

On one special day, we saw a snapshot of how quickly Gotham Park has become a hub for learning, stewardship, and youth leadership. At our inaugural Students for Sustainability event in September, students, educators, and partners from the following agencies and organizations all converged in the space:

- Urban Assembly Maker Academy
- Manhattan Early College Academy for Marketing and Media Arts
- The Urban Assembly Early College High School of Emergency Medicine
- Pace University’s Horticulture Club and Civic Engagement programs
- BioBus
- Con Edison
- The NYC Economic Development Corporation
- The Mayor’s Office of Climate and Environmental Justice
- The New York Public Library
- Teens for Food Justice

These initiatives together are much more than the sum total of their parts — our education partnerships are a bridge to higher education for students across New York City. The mix of universities, industry partners, and youth-led organizations gives students direct access to mentors, career pathways, and hands-on experience that are at the core of Gotham Park.



“I learned to be open for teamwork and communicate rather than doing stuff alone.”

—**Chassity Norman**, Gotham Park Youth Ambassador

Cultural & Community Partnerships

A rich ecosystem of performing arts is being fostered in the spaces beneath the Brooklyn Bridge, anchored by growing collaborations with local schools and community-based cultural groups. At the Community Block Party, middle school and high school bands from the surrounding neighborhoods filled the park with energy and pride, giving students a rare opportunity to perform for thousands of neighbors in a major public setting. Their presence grounded the event in youth voices and affirmed the park as a stage for local talent.



This cultural work is strengthened by our ongoing partnership with the NYCDOT as one of NYCDOT’s newest plazas and second in size only to Times Square. Earth Day offered a particularly vivid example of that collaboration. As part of NYCDOT’s Car-Free Earth Day initiative, planting and garden care unfolded alongside Kung Fu and traditional Chinese dance performances by our partners at the New York Chinese Cultural Center—who also provide Tai Chi classes at the plaza and hosted paper lantern-making during our Lunar New Year Fair. The day blended movement, culture, and stewardship in a way that reflected Gotham Park’s many roles at once.

“I cherish the events here. They give me a reason to come outside!”
—Christina Chiu, Lower Manhattan resident and regular Zumba participant

THE BROADSHEET

Lower Manhattan's Local Newspaper

Rising Arches

Federal Program Announces Grant for Next Phase of Gotham Park



SHREDDER

The Brooklyn Banks “Big Banks” Reopens:

Mayor Adams, Steve Rodriguez & Skatepark Project Cut The Ribbon



TimeOut

New York

A free massive block party is happening under the Brooklyn Bridge next week

From skateboarding lessons to community yoga, there will be lots to keep you busy



NEW YORK POST

Skateboarding ‘Mecca’ under Brooklyn Bridge reopens after 15 years

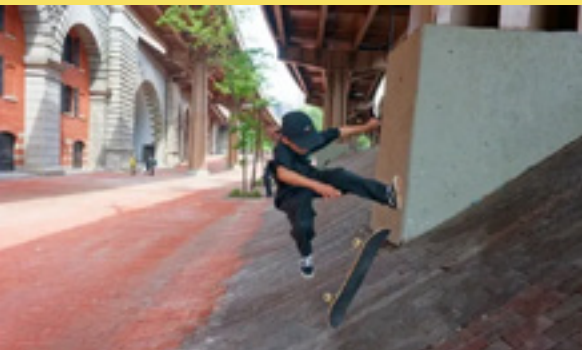
“Skaters are kickflipping with joy”



THE TRIBECA TRIB

Brooklyn Bridge Banks Reopens

‘Comeback of the Century’



THE BROADSHEET

Lower Manhattan's Local Newspaper

Arch Deluxe

More Than Two Acres of Public Space Returned to Lower Manhattan



TRIBECA CITIZEN

Mayor will invest \$50 million into Brooklyn Banks parks

The commitment is \$5 million for design of the rest of the park in the mayor’s budget for fiscal year 2026, and \$45 million for construction for fiscal year 2028



THRASHER

MAGAZINE

Brooklyn Banks Opening 2025 Photos

Can you believe this? They destroyed LOVE Park. They are trying to destroy what’s left of EMB, but by some miracle the Brooklyn Banks have been restored damn near to their original state with the small banks on the way.



Looking Ahead

In 2026, Gotham Park will strengthen access, deepen community engagement, and build the systems needed to support a rapidly expanding public space.

Our 2026 Goals

1

Enhance our stewardship of Gotham Park

With three times the acreage, we're investing in the long-term care of the Brooklyn Bridge's Manhattan landing—creating a greener, cleaner, and more welcoming space, powered by community stewardship and volunteer support.

2

Expand community-led education and wellness programming

In partnership with local schools and community organizations, we are expanding our programming to provide more fitness, movement, educational, and internship opportunities that reflect the needs and interests of our community.

3

Supercharge arts and culture offerings

We are bringing more cultural programming and public art to Gotham Park, from concerts and performances to festivals, murals, installations, and hands-on programs—reflecting the creativity, heritage, and energy of our vibrant communities.

4

Bring more visitor amenities to our public space

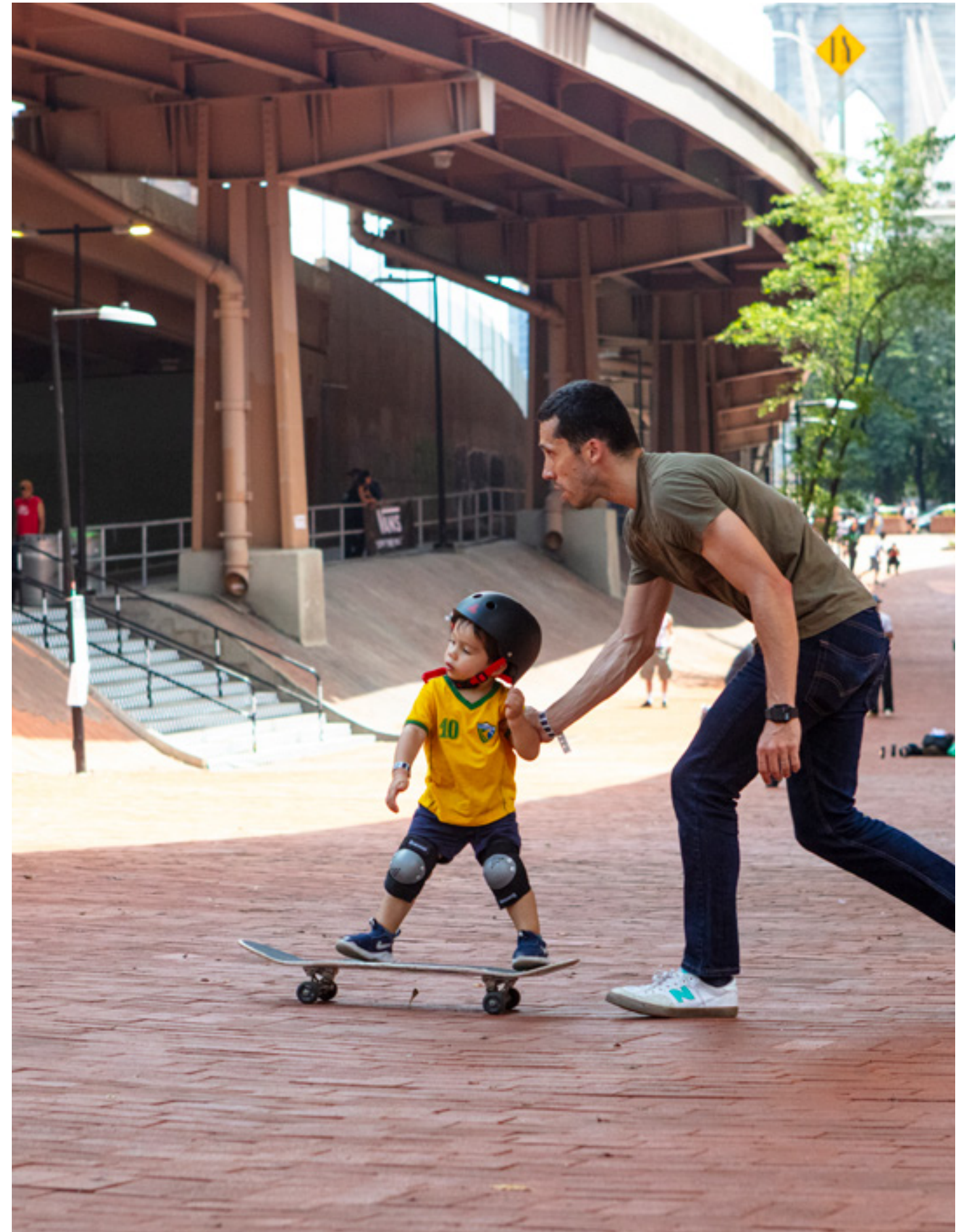
We are working with city agencies, officials, and community partners to bring more visitor resources to Gotham Park, including the first working water fountain in over 30 years, mirrors for our outdoor fitness studio space, clear and intuitive directional signage, and public restrooms.

5

Build organizational excellence

As Gotham Park grows, we're strengthening the staff, systems, and partnerships needed to steward this space for the next 150 years, building on a foundation of transparency, accountability, and community trust.

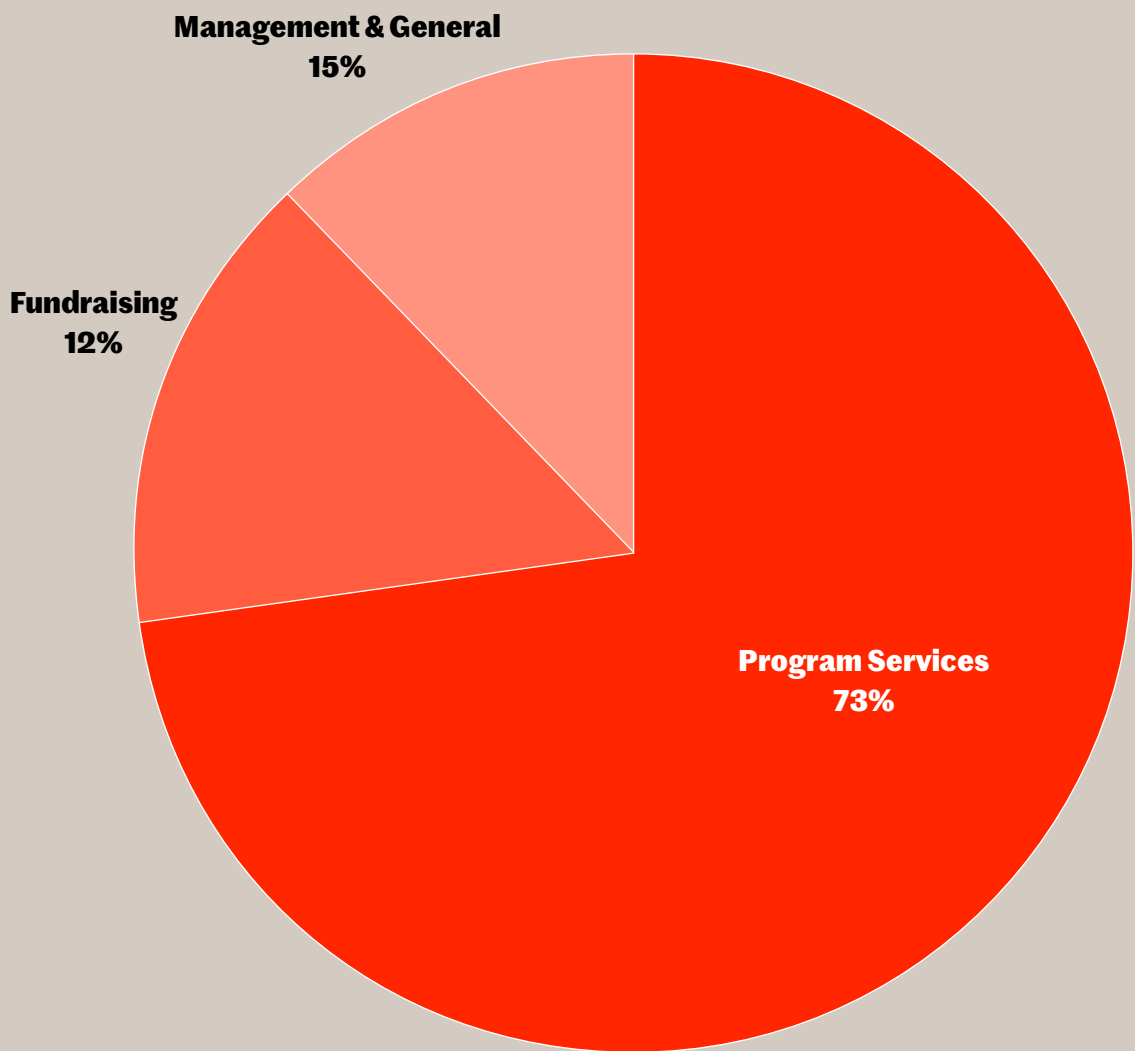
As the plaza grows toward its full potential, we will continue advocating for a fully connected, nine-acre public realm beneath the Brooklyn Bridge, building a strong foundation for future possibilities including a New York Public Library branch, expanded community hub and cultural space, cafés and retail spaces, and other public-serving uses within the historic Bridge vaults.



Financials

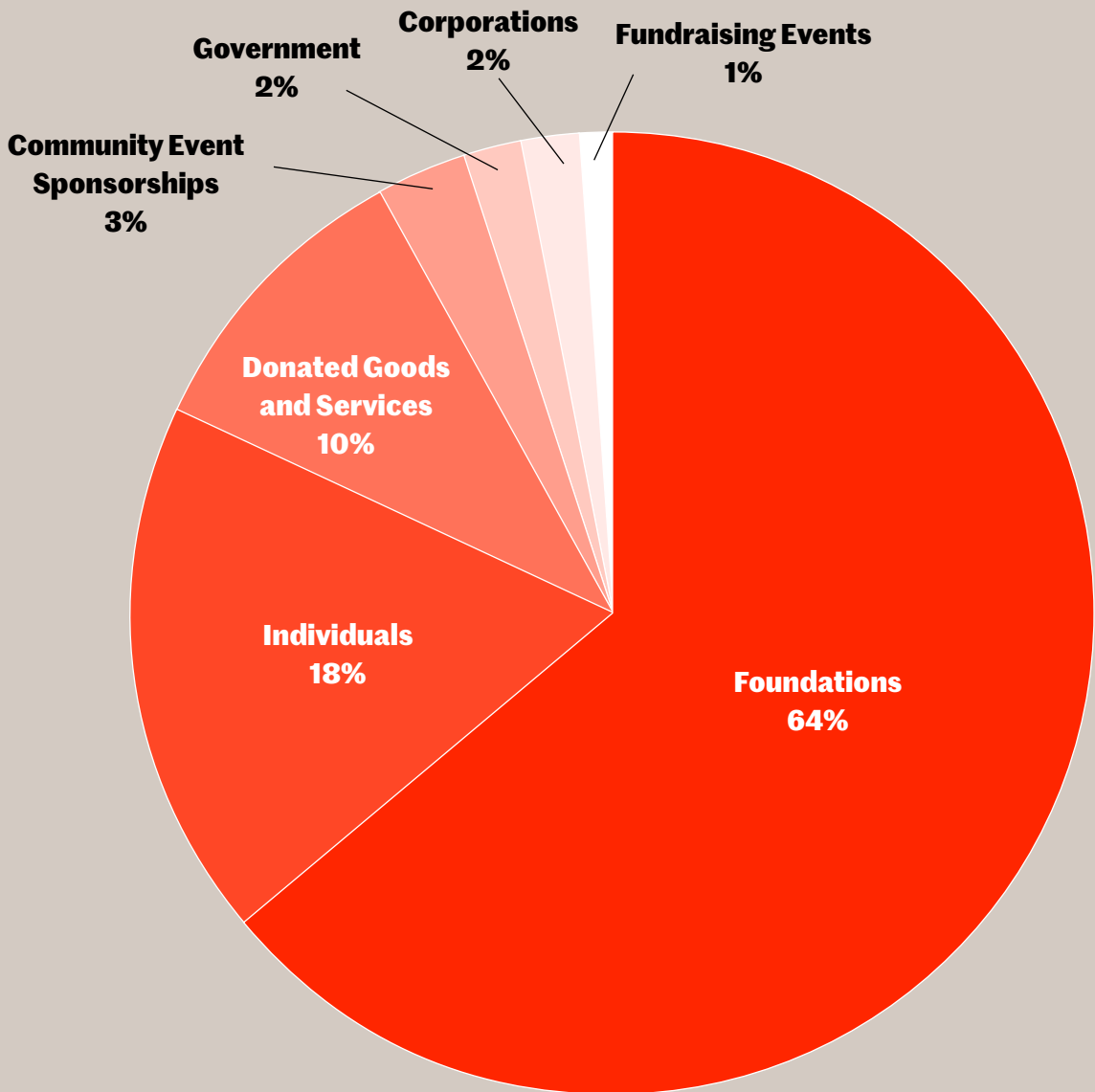
As we expanded our footprint between 2024 and 2025, operating expenses have increased in step with the growing needs of these essential community spaces. We remain committed to responsible fiscal stewardship and are actively diversifying our revenue streams to ensure the long-term sustainability of our operations and continued growth.

Our expense allocations*



*Based on FYE December 31, 2025 unaudited financial statements.

Our revenue sources*



*Based on FYE December 31, 2025 unaudited financial statements.

Supporters

Thank you to our supporters. Gotham Park proudly recognizes the growing community of donors whose inspired leadership and steadfast commitment are helping to bring a landmark public space to life beneath the Brooklyn Bridge. Each contribution moves us closer to a shared vision rooted in civic pride and lasting purpose. We acknowledge below those who gave \$1,000 or more during Fiscal Year 2025, with particular gratitude to Elizabeth & Jonathan Lewinsohn, Pershing Square Foundation, and Trinity Church NYC, whose transformational gifts are helping to shape a vibrant future for this park and the communities it serves.

5x5 Collective	Nicholas de Kwiatkowski	Brewster Pettus
Anonymous	Lazard	Robinhood Financial
Anonymous in memory of Melvin R Seiden	Manhattan Borough President Mark Levine (via NYC Department of Aging and NYC Dept. of Education)	May and Samuel Rudin Family Foundation
Association of Charles Evans Housing Foundation	Elizabeth and Jonathan Lewinsohn	The Ryu Family
Maryanne Palmieri Braverman		S&P Global
Megan and Michael Brosterman		Fuad Sadykhov
Melvin and Linda Brosterman	MAG Partners	Seaport Entertainment Group
Naomi Buchman and David Montone	Robert Magliaro	Steve Semlitz and Cathy Glaser
	Robert Mancini	Jennifer Sklias-Gahan
Center for All Abilities	NYC Council Member Christopher Marte (via NYC Department of Youth and Community Development)	Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corporation
Art Chang		The Skatepark Project
Con Edison	Mayor's Office of Community Mental Health (via NYC Department of Aging)	Trinity Church NYC
Luciana Fato		Michelle Vaughn
Clark Fitzgerald Continue the Beginning Fund		Gregory Wachsteter
Goldman Sachs	Morgan Stanley	Wip Works, Inc.
Google	NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital	Nir Yusuf
HR&A Advisors	NYC Economic Development Corporation (via Arcadis and Mathews Nielsen Landscape Architects)	
NYS Senator Brian Kavanagh (via NYS Office of Children and Family Services)	NYC Green Fund administered by City Parks Foundation	
Elizabeth D. Kay		
Nancy Kong	Pershing Square Foundation	

In-Kind Supporters

Our work to bring to life and steward community-centered, world-class public space in Lower Manhattan takes a village. We gratefully acknowledge our in-kind donors listed below, who each generously donated more than \$500 worth of their time, skills, goods, and resources in 2025.

Daniel Arnold	Pace University
Arup	Partnerships for Parks, A joint program of City Parks Foundation and NYC Parks
Nora Cohen	
Cozen O'Connor Public Strategies	Pentagram
Earth Matter	Jimmy Raskin
Raf Fellner	Seaport Entertainment Group
Hogan Lovells	Zora Sicher
Hollis Public Affairs	The Skatepark Project
HR&A Advisors	Craig Smyth
Jack Irving	Snøhetta
AJ Joshi	Gray Sorrenti
Calvin Marcus	Teatro Grattacielo
Armando Nin	Teens for Food Justice
Jason Nocito	Ed Templeton
Robert Magliaro	Urban Assembly Maker Academy
Morgan Stanley	Vans Skateboarding
NYC Department of Transportation	Variety Coffee Roasters
NYC Department of Youth and Community Development	Veronika Vilim
The New York Public Library	Harley Weir
	Welcome to Chinatown

*Acknowledgments reflect calendar year 2025 individual gifts and grant funding allocated during the relevant granting entity's Fiscal Year 2025.



Governance & Staff

Brain Trust

- Dan Doctoroff
Target ALS
- Robert Hammond
Therme Group US
- B.J. Jones
*Roosevelt Island
Operating Corporation (RIOC)*
- Meera Joshi
The Green-Wood Cemetery
- Holly Leicht
*Madison Square Park
Conservancy*
- Megan Sheekey
Bloomberg Associates
- Nanette Smith
Bloomberg L.P.
- Andy Wiley-Schwartz
Bloomberg Associates

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- Benjamin Bashein
The Skatepark Project
- Sarah Krautheim
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- Victoria Lee
Welcome to Chinatown

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- Rosemary DeMarco
*Senior Manager of Plaza
Operations*
- Ariel Wilson
Lead Program Coordinator
- Zhala Shahveranli
*Finance and Development
Associate*

“There is no more important
park project than this one.”

—**Dan Doctoroff**, Target ALS



Donate today

Gotham Park

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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.

Contact us

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