



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Andrew J. Lanza

Senator Lanza joins NYC Parks Department for the opening of Brookfield Park on Staten Island

ANDREW J. LANZA December 15, 2017

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“Today marks a new beginning for Brookfield,” Senator Andrew Lanza said. “Once a blight on the Great Kills community, now this 258 acre park will serve as a place to enjoy the great outdoors. From my earliest days in elected office I have worked with City and State officials to secure the funding needed to transform this land into a safe and enjoyable place to spend time with family and friends. I applaud the voluntary work of the Brookfield Citizens Advisory Committee, led by a John Felicetti, who met monthly to ensure all community concerns were addressed at every step of the remediation. I also thank NYS-DEC, NYC-DEP, and NYC Department of Parks and Recreation for delivering on a vision that will benefit the community for many years to come.”

NYC Parks Commissioner Mitchell J. Silver, today joined DEP Commissioner Vincent Sapienza, Staten Island Borough President James Oddo, State Senator Andrew Lanza, NYC Council Member Joseph Borelli, Council Member Steven Matteo and Community Board 3 to officially open Brookfield Park and celebrate the completed landfill-to-park transformation. With the opening of Brookfield Park, the City's total parkland will eclipse 30,000 acres.

After years of remediation and capping work by DEP, the former Brookfield Landfill has been transferred to NYC Parks and is officially open to the public. This \$256.4 million transformation began in 2010, with \$156.4 million from DEP and \$100 million from NYS DEC. The park includes 258 acres of meadows, wetlands, woodlands, marshes, streams and ponds, with walking trails throughout. More than 17,000 trees were planted by DEP during remediation work along with 76,000 plants to help preserve 16 acres of tidal and freshwater wetlands.

"As of today, there are more than 30,000 acres of parks in our city," said NYC Parks Commissioner Silver. "In a place like New York—where most of us don't have yards—parks become an extension of our homes. With that in mind, we cannot thank DEP enough for working so tirelessly over the past seven years to reclaim this land and make this former landfill a safe and beautiful place for biking, running, picnicking and everything in between."

"Through close collaboration with the community, DEP was able to successfully cap and close a former landfill and transform it into a beautiful open space by restoring its wetlands and returning the land to a more natural state" said DEP Commissioner Vincent Sapienza. "In a city as dense as New York, it is a rare occasion when we can celebrate the creation of new parkland, but this site will now serve as a great new amenity for Staten Islanders and a destination for all New Yorkers who enjoy the great outdoors."

The Brookfield Park site is a former New York City municipal solid waste facility that operated from 1966 until 1980. As part of the remediation, with funding from the state and general city funds, an impermeable landfill cap and below-ground barrier were installed to contain any pollutants from the site and eliminate exposure for future park users and aquatic life in the adjacent wetlands. More than two million tons of clean soil, up to four feet deep, was then spread across the impermeable barrier. The addition of prairie grass and native plantings will prevent erosion and attract birds and butterflies. This first phase of the remediation, closure of the landfill and restoration of the wetlands, was completed in 2013, two years ahead of schedule.

Since the outset of the remediation project, a number of community participation activities were conducted to inform and educate the public about the site, and the potential remedial alternatives. A natural outgrowth of this process was the establishment of Citizens Advisory and Science Advisory Committees, and public information sessions continued as the project moved from design through construction.

Department of Environmental Conservation Commissioner Basil Seggos said, "After decades of abuse, the comprehensive cleanup of the former Brookfield Avenue Landfill has transformed this site from a toxic dumping ground to beautiful public playgrounds for Staten Islanders to enjoy. Under Governor Cuomo's leadership, this long-forgotten site will breathe new life into this community."

"I'm so pleased to see the completion of this project, which has transformed the site from an inaccessible area to one that Staten Islanders can now enjoy," said Borough President Oddo. "Thanks to the work of DEP and the Parks Department, the 'Borough of Parks,' has gained a new, beautiful outdoor space. I have to give a special shout out to my former colleague Councilman Vinny Ignizio for all his work on this issue. I remember!"

“The Brookfield Landfill remained a sore spot for many Staten Island residents for the past few decades,” said Assembly Member Castorina. “Now, the previous superfund site has been capped and remediated after over \$250 million and years of effort. I commend the work done by both the NYC Department of Environmental Protection and NYS Department of Environmental Conservation for allocating the necessary resources to complete this project, and working diligently to do so.”

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“Unfortunately, many of us who grew up on Staten Island distinctly remember what it was like to live in the shadow of world’s largest garbage dump at Fresh Kills,” Council Member Steven Matteo. “The opening of Brookfield Park today continues the long, overdue process of rectifying decades of injustice and transforming these toxic blights into community assets, which will be enjoyed by generations of South Shore residents to come. “

“I’m excited about the prospect of this long-awaited announcement and correcting a wrong that was done 50 years ago,” said Council Member Borelli. “I’m glad the public will finally be able to use this great asset.”

The City’s combined parkland is twice the size of the island of Manhattan and equal to 22,846 football fields, 5,206 Roman Colosseums, 205.5 National Malls and 35.7 Central Parks.