

Freedom Plaza Unveils Stunning New Green Space Video and Renderings, Set to Transform Manhattan's East Side

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Freedom Plaza, the visionary new civic and cultural plan for Manhattan's East Side, has revealed a **new video** and updated renderings of its proposed expansive green space, offering an intimate look at a design that redefines the urban park experience. This highly anticipated project, designed by award-winning **OJB Landscape Architecture**, offers approximately 4.7 acres of vibrant, accessible public green space to meet the neighborhood's needs for open space, connectivity, and outdoor community activation.

“As fourth-generation residents and neighbors of this community, Soloviev understands the immense value that green spaces bring to urban life,” said Michael Hershman, CEO of Soloviev Group. “Freedom Plaza is a commitment to creating an inspiring place where memories are made in this wonderful part of the city, with an accessible, and sustainable park for everyone to enjoy. We appreciate the feedback that we have received from our neighbors, community organizations, and civic leaders and look forward to our continued collaboration and delivering an experience that will enrich the lives of our neighbors and the city as a whole.”

Developed by Soloviev Group and designed by BIG-Bjarke Ingels Group, Freedom Plaza encompasses 6.3-acres from 38th to 41st Street east of First Avenue. In addition to approximately 4.7 acres of green space, the mixed-use development will feature two residential towers with housing that working people can afford; locally oriented retail and an array of shopping and dining options; a daycare center; a museum dedicated to democracy and community center; two world-class hotels from global resort leaders Mohegan and Banyan Tree Group, including the option of modern gaming for those 21-and-over. In order to maintain full compliance with the prior City approvals, the residential buildings have been slightly reoriented.

“At Mohegan, we’re committed to creating destinations that go beyond entertainment to enrich the lives of our guests and the communities we serve,” said Ray Pineault, CEO of Mohegan. “With Freedom Plaza, we look forward to bringing our legacy of world-class hospitality, cultural authenticity and innovative experiences to Manhattan, offering a destination that redefines what it means to gather, explore, and celebrate.”

“The design of Freedom Plaza draws on the natural beauty and cultural energy of New York City, creating a space where nature, art, and urban life coexist seamlessly,” said Jim Burnett, President of OJB Landscape Architecture. “From the East River Overlook to the intimate gardens, every detail has been carefully crafted to inspire and engage visitors. It is an honor to contribute to Freedom Plaza and to provide a meaningful gathering place for the community.”

“As a longtime advocate for community-focused green spaces and public gardens, I appreciate the emphasis Freedom Plaza has placed on maximizing open space in its design. The open spaces in our unique, international neighborhood are essential to support sustainability and wellbeing, enhance quality of life, and enable our community to gather across generations and cultures,” said Sherrill Kazan, long-time public space advocate and area resident, and President, World Council of Peoples for the United Nations.

“During more than a year and a half of engagement with Soloviev about the need for long-term publicly accessible open space, I deeply appreciate that sustainability and green space have been prioritized,” said award-winning community leader Kevin O’Keefe, the president of Manhattan East Community Association. “This urban park reflects a forward-thinking approach that can provide the public with safe and inviting experiences from family-friendly lawn activities to connections with nature.”

From the moment visitors arrive at Freedom Plaza's First Avenue entrance, they will be welcomed by the park's lush landscaping and a sense of openness. The arrival plaza invites pedestrians into a dynamic environment of 350 trees across eight species and a curated palette of plants designed to promote biodiversity and stormwater absorption, and offer seasonal interest year-round, reflecting the magnetic energy of New York City.

Freedom Plaza's 18,000-square-foot central lawn serves as its heart—a flexible green space perfect for picnics or community gatherings. This expansive area will offer unobstructed views of the East River and skyline, ensuring an inspiring experience throughout the day.

Visitors can stroll along the 1.2 miles of accessible pathways, which guide them to distinct “garden rooms” and scenic overlooks. The 700-foot East River Promenade is a highlight, designed to provide sweeping views over the FDR and to the East River and beyond, while a series of pathways will create a sense of discovery and adventure.

For families, the 7,000-square-foot children's play area with adjacent seating will be a destination in itself, featuring natural materials, climbing structures, and spaces designed for toddlers to pre-teens.

The 6,000-square-foot water garden, inspired by the region's geologic and ecological history, offers a serene retreat, complete with cascading water features and shaded seating areas. Nearby, the park's six food kiosks will provide refreshments and foster a community-centered social ambiance.

The north end of the park will allow visitors to ascend to the museum dedicated to democracy and community center, which features an outdoor amphitheater for educational programming and cultural events. The museum and its surrounding terraces also offer breathtaking views of the East River and beyond, completing the park's blend of art, play, and natural beauty.

Soloviev Group will finance and guarantee the long-term maintenance, security, and programming of the park. Appreciating the importance of community input, a local steering committee will be formed to offer guidance in order to attract the general public and ensure ongoing access for community groups to utilize open spaces for their benefit.

<https://www.offthemrkt.com/blogs/a-walk-through-freedom-plaza-nycs-next-iconic-green-space>