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New visuals of Freedom Plaza from OJB Landscape Architecture share details of the megaproject's riverfront park



Freedom Plaza, the proposed megaproject for the long-underutilized site adjacent to the United Nations, seeks to bring housing, a museum dedicated to democracy, and hotels (and maybe even a casino) to a swath of land along the East River. In February 2024, Bjarke Ingels Group (BIG) and Soloviev Group, the landowner, shared visuals of the skyline-transforming mixed-use development that plans to set up between 38th and 41st Streets on 1st Avenue. New visuals and a video were shared this week of the 4.7 acres of park space planned for the project. They show how the riverfront site will be further activated for residential and recreational use.

OJB Landscape Architecture has responded to community input to inform its vision for the landscape component of the development, envisioning ample lawn space, a riverside promenade, playground, and water garden in a pocket of Manhattan lacking access to generous green space.



“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.”

Amid the residential towers and BIG-designed Museum of Freedom and Democracy, a spiraling structure modeled after the concept of a Greek agora, will be a winding 1.2-mile network of pathways dotted with shrubbery, bench seating and picnic tables, and

kiosks selling food and beverages. From the street, visitors can opt to take the shallow steps up into the core of the development or instead meander through the pathways.

Anchor spaces of the landscape scheme include the 700-foot-long East River Promenade, a wide paved area alongside the river, and a playground for the youngest visitors furnished with climbing structures that seemingly mimic the trees planned for the site. According to a press release, the eight species were selected to “promote biodiversity and stormwater absorption, and offer seasonal interest year-round.” A 6,000-square-foot “water garden” appeals to those seeking nature; water drapes over the rocks in the river-like design.

Looking ahead, Soloviev Group will finance the upkeep, security, and programming of the park. A new committee will help steer the park’s operation, ensuring its public use and access.

<https://www.archpaper.com/2025/03/new-visuals-freedom-plaza-ojb-landscape-architecture-park/>