



Opposition to the City's Current East Side Coastal Resiliency (ESCR) Plan

We believe that a flood protection and resiliency plan is necessary to safeguard our community.

The East River Alliance, a coalition of community stakeholders, is opposed to the current, fast-tracked ESCR plan proposed by the New York City Department of Design and Construction. **This plan calls for the complete destruction of East River Park and Stuyvesant Cove Park, including all of their natural resources. It bars access to the parks for at least 3.5 years, creates significant health risks associated with living in a construction zone, and impacts a protected environmental justice community. This is unacceptable.** The Mayor's lack of transparency in discarding the previous community-led plan has eroded our trust with the City.

After five years of community-based planning sessions, we insist that design, construction and long-term management of the ESCR plan be transparent, collaborative and inclusive. The plan must reflect the diverse needs and values of our community, protect our environment, provide meaningful alternatives for green space access during construction, and create the most resilient waterfront possible.

Our positions are outlined below.

DESIGN

- We demand a design based on the best available climate science.
- Designs and decisions must be backed by verified data.
- Significant changes to the community-led plan, if justified by data, should lead to discussion of the alternative solutions, including green decking over the FDR.

ENVIRONMENT

- The current ESCR plan constitutes substantial intrusion on municipal parkland and must be subject to park alienation law.
- The Environmental Impact Statement must include plans to reduce/mitigate effects on:
 - An environmental justice community protected by state and federal law
 - All species (at least 11) inhabiting East River and Stuyvesant Cove Parks that are included in the NY State Rare Animal Status List, birds covered by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, and protected plants inhabiting East River and Stuyvesant Cove Parks
 - All Recognized Ecological Complexes and natural and wild areas
 - New York Harbor's tributaries, wetlands, and estuarine ecology

CONSTRUCTION

- The constructability study that DDC asserts led to the change of design must be immediately made public.
- ERA strongly objects to entire parks being closed for the duration of construction. **Construction should be phased.**
- The loss of all natural barriers during this construction period makes our community more vulnerable to increased flooding and destruction.
- The LES Greenway should be rerouted around construction to provide a safe, uninterrupted corridor for cyclists, bike commuters, runners, and walkers.
- The City must provide the public with a construction plan and timeline.

MITIGATION

- At least five percent (5%) of the budget for the ESCR project must be dedicated towards the mitigation of the project's impact for the lifetime of the project.
- A Mitigation Task Force should be formed to coordinate a plan and provide oversight. The Task Force should be made up of community representatives and city agencies.



- Keep the 6th Street bridge which provides access to the running track area, and the running track, open as long as possible.
- Utilize additional neighborhood spaces and provide transportation to alternative recreation areas.
- Provide safe access to the Park across the FDR Drive ramps at Houston St.

COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENTS

- Make improvements and provide resources to existing parks.
- Coordinate mitigation with residents living in NYCHA and provide them with resources and access to NYCHA green spaces. Establish both pedestrian and play streets.
- Provide additional support for community gardens.
- Rescue and transfer plants from parks under construction to nearby green spaces including in NYCHA, community and school gardens, and parks.

FUTURE PARK NEEDS

Stewardship

- Sufficient funding, staff, and training for sustainable park maintenance
- Funding for the formation of an ESCR-wide park stewardship organization
- Permitting that provides priority and equity to community schools, leagues and groups
- Additional space for programming and flexible community space

Promenade and Bike Paths

- Clearly signed and painted bike lanes
- Proper visibility for any step ups and step downs to avoid cyclist accidents

Exercise and Recreational Areas

- Outdoor workout space
- At least some clay tennis courts
- At least as many ball fields as in existing parks
- State-of-the-art playground equipment
- Skateboarding area with structures particular to skateboarders' needs
- More spray showers
- Dog run and designated off-leash hours

Natural Areas

- Award community based stewardship organizations contracts to plant and maintain all natural areas in the ESCR area for long-term resiliency, adequately funded by the City
- Use a catalogue of biodiversity to reconstruct all the new park plantings in partnership with stewardship organizations
- Respect and expand the natural shoreline areas at both East 6th St and Stuyvesant Cove

Other key areas to be included in planning

- Pier 42
- Compost area
- Corlears Hook Park
- Amphitheater
- Fire Boat House and Ecology Center
- Stuyvesant Cove Park and Capt'n Patrick J Brown Walk
- Murphy Brothers and Asser Levy Parks