

# Pier 76 Task Force

Summary of Need  
December 8, 2023

Pier 76 is a unique public asset located within the larger Hudson River Park bordered on the east by the Jacob Javits Convention Center and on the north by public and private maritime-related uses. This very large structure measuring approximately 246,000 square feet (5.6 acres) is intended by the Hudson River Park Act to add significantly to New York's public open space network while also hosting revenue-generating uses that support the Park's ability to be financially self-supporting pursuant to its legislative mandate.

The pier became part of Hudson River Park in June 2021, after successful community and elected official advocacy led to removal of the New York City Police Department tow pound that had long been located on the site. Subsequently, the NYS Office of Parks & Historic Preservation removed the building and improved the space for public use before turning the pier over to the Trust. The Trust has been operating it as interim public open space since that time. The large flat surface has afforded the Trust the opportunity to host both free public events and periodic "guest" events like fashion shows, fundraisers such as the LGBT Center's Garden Party and the NYC Wine & Food Festival which generate some revenue for park operations. Long term, the pier offers the opportunity for enhanced public space and revenue generation.

The pier is supported by thousands of wooden piles. Marine borers have damaged many of these piles, and the Trust thus restricts access and uses to certain areas due to the loss of load bearing capacity. Eventually, the piles will fail, as is common at other piers supported by wooden structures throughout our harbor. While it is not possible to predict the failure date, the Trust knows from its own operating experiences at other park piers that over time, more and more closures will be required, and eventually the pier will need to be rebuilt completely. Given the pier's scale, this will be very costly, although ultimately less costly than ongoing repair for a long period of time. It will likely cost approximately \$120 million in 2023 dollars for new piles and a new concrete deck, with the additional costs of park and amenities, including landscaping, on top of that infrastructure base. It is not possible from an engineering perspective to predict the date when the pier will need to be closed, but for planning purposes, the Trust assumes this would occur within 15 years.

The Trust does not expect that the future commercial use on the pier will be able to fund the costs of building out the pier's pile and deck, nor the additional costs needed to build out the future public park in the portion of the pier that would be devoted to public park use. Instead, "outside monies" – i.e.,

monies not generated from uses within the boundaries of the Park, such as federal, state, or city funding, air rights proceeds (dependent on an inland property owner being willing to purchase the Park's air rights, as well as zoning), private contributions, etc. – are assumed to be needed. While it is possible that construction work could occur in stages or phases as funds are available, doing so would be less financially efficient than reconstructing the pier at once.

Advancing construction in the absence of a full site plan and design would not be prudent, as costly engineering and construction modifications might later be needed to support the specific uses, inclusive of park uses, on the pier. This is because there are different load bearing requirements for different types of uses. For example, areas with buildings or even significant amounts of soil and trees have higher load-bearing requirements than areas with boardwalks or wooden decks. Additionally, securing regulatory approvals would also require knowing the final footprint of the full pier.

Hudson River Park faces financial challenges that cannot be solved by income generated at Pier 76 alone. Ultimately, the Trust needs Pier 40 to generate additional income too. The Trust is not seeking to generate additional revenue from Pier 76 to make up for additional revenue that should eventually be generated from Pier 40.

Successfully rebuilding Pier 76 for its dual intended purposes –high quality public open space and income generation in support of the overall Hudson River Park – is a huge challenge, but it is one that must be undertaken and, as demonstrated by Pier 57, it can be done. Pier 57 required two legislative changes, zoning actions, regulatory approvals, and responsible private sector partners, as well as sustained engagement between the Trust and the community that began even before the procurement and that continued through multiple global financial crises.

*This document was created by the Hudson River Park Trust in consultation with the Pier 76 Task Force and subsequently updated to reflect feedback. It does not represent the views of any individual member of the Task Force nor was it the subject of a vote.*