

Enhancing neighborhoods & public spaces in NYC

Written by MICHAEL R. BLOOMBERG
Thursday, 20 October 2011 22:24



CREATING a greenway encircling Manhattan's 32-mile waterfront has been a dream that's bedeviled New York City for more than two decades.

But we believe in dreaming big, and in finding innovative solutions where others just see obstacles.

Under our administration, we've been able to stitch together — piece-by-piece, block-by-block — a succession of parks and promenades from Inwood to the Battery.

And last week, we reached an agreement that allows us to bridge the biggest gap in the greenway, and overcome the biggest obstacle to completing a ribbon of green around Manhattan.

The agreement centers on a potential deal with the United Nations that would create substantial proceeds for the city to build a mile-long esplanade along the East River between 38th and 60th Streets.

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The residents of that neighborhood have some of the lowest access to parks and public space in the entire city.

But now, they're going to get a spectacular waterfront park right on their doorstep — and one that significantly advances our efforts to reclaim our precious waterfront for the benefit of all.

Besides improving our health and quality of life, reviving New York City's 578 miles of waterfront goes to the heart of our strategy of creating jobs and growing our economy.

That's because in today's world, the most dynamic businesses gravitate to wherever they can find the most talented people — and the most talented people are more mobile than ever.

That ramps up the pressure on us to do everything we can to make our city an even better place to live and work — and enhancing our neighborhoods and public spaces is a big part of that.

We're seeing a lot of evidence that this strategy for creating jobs is paying off.

Last week for instance, I joined Twitter, one of the world's most innovative companies, in opening their East Coast headquarters in our city.

By establishing its presence in New York, Twitter joins a tech community that's growing by leaps and bounds.

And because innovation is a great engine for job growth, we continue to increase our support for the tech industry by investing in start-ups and providing discounted office space to help get their ideas off the ground.

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New tech jobs, in turn, also support and help create jobs in other industries — from retail to restaurants to small businesses of every kind.

Last week, another major company signaled that New York City is the place to be.

Norwegian Cruise Line announced that it's making our city the year-round home port for its newest passenger ship — the “Norwegian Breakaway” — which will be the largest ship ever to be based in our city.

That will mean more tourists spending money in our city, supporting hundreds of thousands of jobs up and down the economic ladder, and moving us closer to our goal of attracting 50 million visitors a year by 2012.

Of course, tourism wouldn't be booming — and our cruise ship industry wouldn't be so healthy — if New York wasn't the world's most exciting port of call.

Our restaurants, our hotels, our historic sites and tourist attractions, the diversity of our neighborhoods, are unparalleled.

And with the completion of the Manhattan Greenway now visible on the horizon, our city's future looks brighter than ever.