

GOVERNORS ISLAND

2017 YEAR IN REVIEW





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THE ISLAND

Governors Island is a 172-acre island in New York Harbor nestled between Lower Manhattan and the Brooklyn waterfront. Eight minutes from the energy and excitement of the City, the Island is a popular seasonal destination. A resilient new park is complemented by dozens of unique historic buildings, environmental education and a rich calendar of arts and cultural events. Unlike anywhere else in New York, Governors Island offers peaceful settings with sweeping views of the harbor, the Lower Manhattan skyline and Statue of Liberty.

[Governors Island is New York City's easiest way to get away.](#)

THE TRUST

The Trust for Governors Island (“The Trust”) is the nonprofit corporation created by the City of New York that is responsible for the redevelopment and operation of 150 acres of Governors Island. The Trust’s mission is to transform Governors Island into a vibrant resource for New York City, making the Island a destination with extraordinary public open space, diverse cultural programs, recreational activities and new educational, nonprofit and commercial uses.

[The Trust works closely with its fundraising partner, The Friends of Governors Island, as well as the National Park Service.](#)



A LETTER FROM OUR LEADERSHIP

We are thrilled to present The Trust for Governors Island's first year in review report. 2017 marked our busiest season ever, as we welcomed nearly 800,000 visitors to experience one of the most unique open spaces in New York City. We expanded to a six-month season for the first time, delighting New Yorkers and tourists alike over the spring, summer and fall, from a colorful springtime festival in May to an extraordinary pumpkin patch in October, and over 80 free cultural events in between. Our programming this year was more diverse than ever and included a concerted effort to further integrate environmental stewardship and education into our mission, complementing the arts and cultural programming that is such an important part of the Island's identity today.

As a car-free environment, we are already a cycling destination like no other, but this year we hosted a number of runs, a swim around the Island, free kayaking and added more recreational options for visitors such as ziplining and rock climbing. The recent reconstruction of the historic Parade Ground as natural fields for local sports leagues will allow even more opportunities next season. More food choices were added for the Island's visitors, including a new waterfront oyster bar with spectacular views of the Lower Manhattan skyline. We also experimented with late nights, staying open until 10PM on select summer Fridays, with visitors experiencing sunset views of the Statue of Liberty for the first time.

Looking toward the future, we've reorganized The Trust to better focus on maintaining the new park while planning for activation of the Island's Historic District and future development. We entered into a historic partnership with The Friends of Governors Island, charging them with fundraising and expanding our visitor services. Thanks to the City of New York, we were able to secure additional capital funding for transportation improvements and infrastructure upgrades to support future development across the Island. Finally, we started construction of a new ferry that will dramatically improve access to the Island, moving us closer to a year-round community.

We couldn't be prouder of all that we have accomplished this year. We look forward to moving the Island toward a new chapter as a year-round of hub of activity—New York City's next-generation commercial and educational campus.

We hope that you enjoy seeing The Trust's remarkable progress this year.

Michael Samuelian
President & CEO,
The Trust for
Governors Island

Alicia Glen
Deputy Mayor for
Housing & Economic
Development, City of
New York

Carl Weisbrod
Chairman,
The Trust for
Governors Island

SPRING, SUMMER & FALL

This year, for the first time, New Yorkers enjoyed Governors Island from May to October, as we expanded our public season by two months.

Opening the Island for a longer, six-month season was made possible by identifying savings in The Trust's annual operating budget.



MAY



NEW YORK CITY'S PARK

DID YOU KNOW?

The number of people enjoying the Island has doubled since construction started on the park in 2012, with a record number of visitors enjoying Governors Island in 2017.

NEARLY 800,000 VISITORS

came to Governors Island in 2017, an increase of 33% from 2016.



75% OF VISITORS ARE NEW YORKERS

and came from 97% of the City's zip codes, representing neighborhoods in all five boroughs.



8 MINUTES (OR LESS) TO THE EASIEST ESCAPE



OVER 8,500 FERRY TRIPS

operated by The Trust from Lower Manhattan & Brooklyn Bridge Park.

PIER 102

served as a third ferry terminal and new gateway for visitors for the first time, bringing more passengers via the NYC Ferry service.



2 NEW ROUTES

via NYC Ferry connected more passengers to Governors Island from Long Island City in Queens all the way to Bay Ridge in Brooklyn.

EVER-EXPANDING AMENITIES

This year we made it easier for New Yorkers to get around, celebrate, dine and play on the Island.

ISLAND OYSTER

A new waterfront dining experience with a sustainable seafood menu, craft cocktails and an unforgettable view. Over 40,000 oysters were shucked this summer!



MORE CYCLING OPTIONS

A third Citi Bike station was installed at Picnic Point and nearly 60,000 bikes and surreys were rented in 2017.



NEW WELCOME CENTER

Opened in partnership with The Friends, the new Welcome Center improved visitor orientation and customer service.



A PLACE TO GATHER

Six new grilling stations were added at Picnic Point serving nearly 14,000 visitors.



PLAY BALL!

After restoring the Parade Ground this year, we're ready to welcome soccer, football and lacrosse games in 2018.



KICK BACK & RELAX

50 new Adirondack chairs were added throughout the park, bringing our total up to 150.



ACCESSIBLE ART & CULTURE

Our signature program, OpenHouseGI, provides a unique platform for visitors to experience free programming that reflects the diversity of the City while helping art and cultural organizations expand their audience.

OVER 80
FREE EVENTS

FROM 65
ORGANIZATIONS

activated the Island's historic homes & green spaces with:

15

visual arts
exhibits

10

theater
performances

20

educational
programs

10

cultural
and music
festivals

HIGHLIGHTS



DID YOU KNOW?
The artist drilled from 90 to 125 feet below the surface, uncovering the geological history of the Island and NY Harbor.

ROCK, MOSQUITO & HUMMINGBIRD

For Governors Island's first commission since 2014, artist David Brooks dug deep into the archeological history of the Island, displaying rock core samples in a dynamic, winding sculpture in historic Fort Jay.



LMCC ARTS CENTER AT GOVERNORS ISLAND

The Lower Manhattan Cultural Council supports over 40 artists in residence who work year-round at the Arts Center at Governors Island. In 2017, visitors were delighted by free open studios events, a gallery exhibition by artist Kameelah Janan Rasheed and the annual River to River Festival.



CHILDREN'S MUSEUM OF THE ARTS

A season-long day camp and 'Free Art Outpost' encouraged children to explore their creative side and learn comic book design from illustrators, animation from filmmakers, screen printing from textile artists and more.



THE BATTLE FOR THE BALLOT

The New-York Historical Society's popular and timely teen-curated exhibition explored the 100th anniversary of women gaining the right to vote in New York State.



10TH ANNUAL CITY OF WATER DAY

The Waterfront Alliance's family-oriented celebration featured free boat tours, rowing, kayaking, paddle-boarding, children's activities and more.



4HEADS' GOVERNORS ISLAND ART FAIR

Works by over 100 emerging artists were featured in the historic homes in Colonels Row in what the New York Times hailed as an art fair "for the 99%."

A VENUE LIKE NO OTHER

With ample open space set against a backdrop of the Lower Manhattan Skyline, Statue of Liberty and the Brooklyn Bridge, Governors Island offers an unforgettable setting for special events. In 2017, we hosted more concerts, spectacular galas, brand experiences, product launches and large-scale corporate outings than ever before. The Island offers unparalleled flexibility for transformational events in a setting as iconic as the City itself.



12th Annual Jazz Age Lawn Party



Full Moon Festival



World Ocean Festival



JUNE

ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

The Island's partners in sustainability and science continue to excite, engage and teach the public about the importance of our natural surroundings, a changing climate and how we can all participate in caring for the environment.

Our Urban Farm is a hub for hands-on learning opportunities, where visitors discover how compost is made, how vegetables are grown and how oysters are improving the health of New York City's waterways. Over the next year we plan to expand this space, inviting the public to explore the Island as a demonstration site for sustainable urban development.

360,000 POUNDS **4 CUBIC YARDS**

of organic matter was composted by Earth Matter in the Urban Farm, redirecting waste away from landfills and back into the Island's plants and soil.

of oyster shells provided by the Billion Oyster Project were repurposed as visitor pathways within the newly planted lavender field at South Battery.

Top: GrowNYC staff member teaching young visitors about growing vegetables

Bottom: Earth Matter volunteers planting lavender and arranging oyster shells for pathways





DID YOU KNOW?
The Billion Oyster Project, working with students from the NY Harbor School, has created two acres of oyster reef habitat!

BILLION OYSTER PROJECT

An initiative that aims to restore oysters to New York Harbor through STEM educational programs and in-water ecosystem rehabilitation. The Billion Oyster Project welcomed visitors to their exhibit in Nolan Park for the third year on Governors Island.



NEW YORK CITY AUDUBON

A summer residency that showcased the Island’s diverse bird population through free bird walks, arts and crafts and educational programming. Over 100 species of birds were seen on the Island this year!



GROWNYC TEACHING GARDEN

A 21,000 square foot vegetable garden that educated New York City schoolchildren and Governors Island visitors in all aspects of urban farming.



DID YOU KNOW?
Each summer two resident goats call Governors Island home and contribute to the compost process!

EARTH MATTER COMPOST LEARNING CENTER

A composting demonstration project where visitors dug in the dirt, visited resident goats and chickens and learned how “no waste is wasted” on Governors Island. The Compost Learning Center processed over 60,000 pounds of compost each month, much of which nourished the soil in our park.



JULY

A PARK FOR THE FUTURE

For the first full season, visitors had a new, award-winning, resilient park to explore. Rising 25-70 feet, the Hills offer an extraordinary 360-degree vista of New York Harbor. Through volunteer programs and innovative horticulture practices, our team is caring for over 3,000 young trees and 43,000 new shrubs and grasses.



2017 AWARDS

Architizer A+ Awards Jury Winner
in the Public Park Category

ASLA-NY Chapter Honor Award
in the General Design Category

MAS MASTerworks Award

Gold Award, Landscape Design
New York Design Awards

New York Building Congress Award
for Excellence

Surface Magazine Travel Award
Finalist

ULI New York Award for Excellence
in Civic Space

Honorable Mention
from The Architects Newspaper
Landscape Category

CARING FOR YOUR PARK

To care for over 90 acres of public open space on Governors Island, we estimate 60,000 hours of labor is needed annually. Our small but mighty Park and Public Space team accounts for 70% of maintenance hours, and thanks to a robust volunteer program managed by The Friends of Governors Island, we are able to meet all landscape maintenance needs.

The team works with innovative horticultural techniques that help enhance our ability to care for the nearly 3,000 trees and 43,000 shrubs in our new park. Promoting a closed-loop, zero-waste strategy, we convert landscape waste and food scraps into a productive nutrient-filled compost fertilizer to nourish the park. This year, pollinator gardens helped reduce the number of invasive plants and mortality rates of newly introduced plants, allowing native and new species to acclimate to our waterfront climate.



2,000 VOLUNTEERS

contributed nearly 10,000 hours of landscape work, dramatically increasing the capacity of our horticultural team.

MAX & QUINN

Our working dogs Max and Quinn had 55 sleepovers on the Island doing overnight goose patrols to keep our park clean.



POLLINATOR GARDENS

6,000 square feet of pollinator gardens were established, adding 30 native wildflower and grass species to reduce invasive plants.

250 CUBIC YARDS

of Island-made compost, processed by Earth Matter, was returned to the park's landscapes to nourish our plants and soil.



LAVENDER FIELD

A new half-acre lavender field was created at the South Battery in partnership with Earth Matter.

A SPECTACULAR PLACE TO
PLAY

CLIMB

WANDER

DISCOVER



AUGUST



WORKING WITH THE COMMUNITY

Over the past decade, we've cultivated a community of public space advocates, creators, leaders in arts and culture, elected officials and neighbors invested in Governors Island, ensuring that it remains a vibrant and shared space for all New Yorkers. Thanks to the support of our community, we were able to welcome more visitors than ever in 2017 and continue to grow.



American Express volunteers remulching natural pathways on Discovery Hill

THE FRIENDS OF GOVERNORS ISLAND

The Friends of Governors Island (“The Friends”) has been a longtime advocate and partner, expanding the Island’s volunteer force and constituency of supporters, improving visitor services and furthering community outreach. In 2017, for the first time ever, The Trust and The Friends formalized our relationship and respective roles in supporting the Island. The Friends became The Trust’s official fundraising partner, soliciting contributions to support The Trust’s mission and programming. This new partnership has already begun to yield major successes, including a record-breaking fall gala and development of the Island’s Welcome Center.



Visitors at the new Welcome Center

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Connecting hundreds of thousands of visitors to the Island’s rich history, the National Park Service (“NPS”) serves as an important steward of the Governors Island National Monument, preserving Fort Jay and Castle Williams. The Trust works closely with NPS in drawing visitors to the National Monument sites and activating them for new audiences. In 2017, NPS also made the arrival of the NYC Ferry service to Governors Island possible by allowing The Trust to create a third ferry terminal at Pier 102.



NPS Rangers giving a demonstration in Fort Jay



REACHING WIDER AUDIENCES

In partnership with The Friends, for the first time ever our visitor maps were printed in three additional languages — Chinese, Russian and Spanish—reaching New York City’s non-English speaking population. All information on govisland.org is translatable to over 200 languages.



ADVISORY COUNCIL

A key resource for advising The Trust on its public season, future development and outreach, the Advisory Council consists of the Island’s core stakeholders, including The Friends of Governors Island, the National Park Service, local elected officials and community boards, long-time partners in arts and culture, existing tenants and advocates for open space, historic preservation, design and recreation. The Trust works closely with the Council to amplify its message, solicit input on future initiatives and build a constituency for Governors Island.

SEPTEMBER



OUR NEXT CHAPTER

A place unlike anywhere else, Governors Island offers all the advantages of an urban environment with the feeling of being a world apart. With the completion of its park, significant infrastructure investment and growing destination appeal, the Island is poised for its next chapter as a year-round hub of activity — New York City's next generation commercial and educational campus.

OUR VISION

Governors Island will be a sustainable campus for creativity, learning and experimentation.

The Island has incomparable advantages—abundant open space, proximity to the vibrant neighborhoods of Lower Manhattan and Downtown Brooklyn, expansive vistas and New York City's most resilient park — all of which combine to create an unprecedented future home for universities, research labs, commercial and non-profit office space and much more.

OPEN FOR BUSINESS

With over 50 beautiful historic buildings surrounded by open green landscapes and mature trees, Governors Island presents adaptive reuse opportunities unlike anywhere else in New York City. The Island offers endless possibilities for future uses, and we're actively seeking new tenants to add to our year-round community in the coming years.

Our transformation into a year-round community is already underway with the New York Harbor School, a 600 student maritime focused public high school and the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council calling the Island home. QC Terme's 80,000 square foot destination day spa will arrive in the coming years.



INVESTING IN THE FUTURE

The Trust is investing every day to ensure that the Island will become accessible year-round, 24/7. With an ambitious \$400M capital plan, we're working to expand our ferry service, preserve our historic buildings and build new infrastructure to support the Island's next chapter.



\$400M CAPITAL PLAN

Thanks to ongoing support from the City of New York and private donors, The Trust has been able to undertake an ambitious capital plan, expanding access to the Island's 172 acres. Since 2010, over \$300M has been invested into building a new park and infrastructure.

This spring, the City of New York invested an additional \$34M in our capital budget, bringing our next phase of capital construction to over \$100M. These funds will upgrade and improve our transportation and utility infrastructure to support the Island's next phase of development.





HISTORIC PRESERVATION

More than half of the Island is designated as a Historic District, with over 50 structures spanning nearly 150 years of military and architectural history.

This year, The Trust undertook several major new preservation projects:

The Admirals' House

The Admirals' House, a former Commanding Officer's home constructed in 1843, will undergo interior and exterior restoration to allow for expanded use for public programming and special events.

Building 110

To support the expansion of LMCC's Arts Center, The Trust received approval from the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission to restore the exterior of Building 110.

Building 108

Over 70 windows in various states of deterioration will be replaced at Building 108.

Liggett Arch

Liggett Arch will undergo cornice repair and brick and limestone replacement.



A NEW FERRY

As our visitors and tenants grow, our transportation fleet must keep up. This year The Trust awarded a contract to Blount Boats, a family-owned Rhode Island shipyard, to build a new passenger ferry that will carry to 1,000 passengers to the Island per hour with service every 20 minutes. The new ferry will launch in 2019, expanding accessibility and convenience with quick, efficient and frequent service.



CONNECTIVITY CHALLENGE

This year, The Trust and the Mayor's Office of the Chief Technology Officer launched the first ever Governors Island Connectivity Challenge, challenging the world's most inventive thinkers to provide fast, affordable wireless internet service on Governors Island. A winner will be announced in early 2018 with the goal of having high-speed wireless for visitors to enjoy in time for next season.



OCTOBER

Pumpkin Point, October 21-22

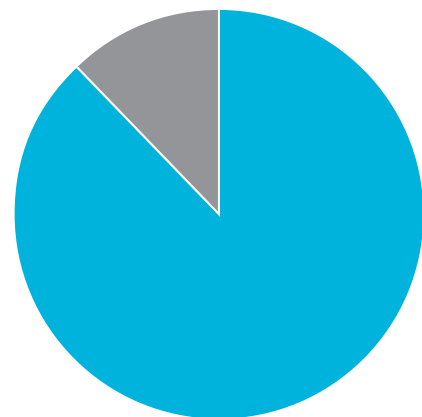
FINANCES

The Trust's operating revenues were \$19.8M in FY 2017. The City provided \$17.4M in operating funds and, under a multi-year agreement, will provide a total of \$68.2M over the next four years for day-to-day operations. Private donations, grants, permit and site fees, tenant rental payments and ferry fare provide additional support.

The Trust's total expenses, excluding depreciation, were \$17.5M in FY 2017¹. The Trust is committed to delivering on our mission in a financially sustainable and responsible manner.

As of June 30, 2017:

REVENUES



TOTAL: \$19.8M

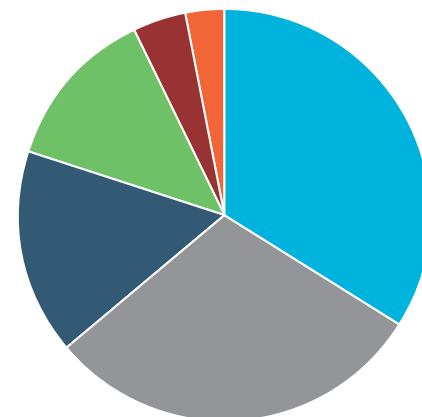
88% / \$17.4M

Operating Grants & Contributions

12% / \$2.4M

Earned Income

EXPENSES (minus depreciation)



TOTAL: \$17.5M

34% / \$5.9M

Transportation & Visitor Services

30% / \$5.2M

Operations & Maintenance

16% / \$2.8M

Personnel

13% / \$3.7M

Groundskeeping

4% / \$0.7M

General Administration

3% / \$0.6M

Utilities

¹The \$2.3M difference between revenues and expenses is a result of a one-time City payment to The Trust to cover prior year expenses and close out the long-term contract with The Trust's former facilities management firm.





OUR TEAM

SENIOR MANAGEMENT

Michael Samuelian, President and CEO
Alexis Offen, Chief Operating Officer
Marni Friedlander, General Counsel
Willa Padgett, Chief Financial Officer
Meredith Johnson, Vice President of Arts and Culture
Jenny Staley, Vice President of Operations

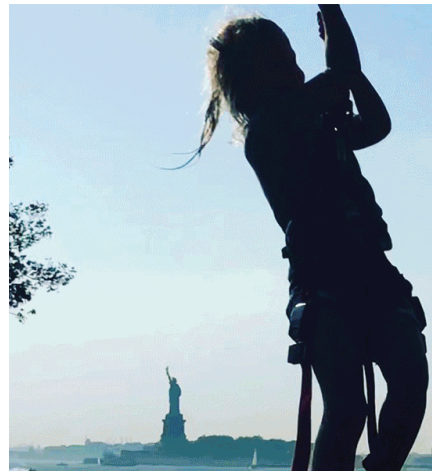
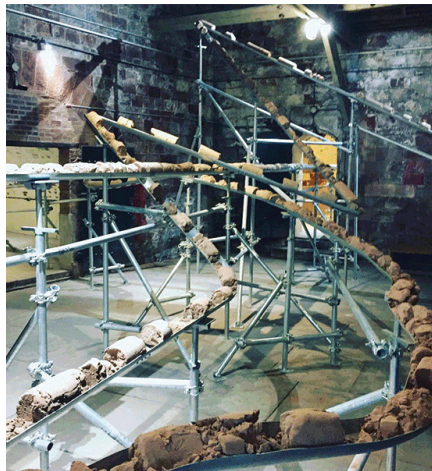
STAFF

PJ Berg, Director of Real Estate and Planning
Matthew Blood, Director of Capital Development
Matt Bond, Legal Assistant
Shane Brennan, Assistant Director for Program Development
Sebastian Coss, Capital Projects Manager
Anthony Davis, Director of Buildings & Grounds
Will Johnson Jr, Senior Director of Design and Special Projects
Patricia Kiernan, Office Manager
Sarah Krautheim, Director of External Relations
Erik Lozada, Facilities Manager
Shyla Malloy, Assistant to the President
Mollie McGinnis, Manager of Stewardship and Sustainability
James Reed, Director of Park and and Public Space Operations
Danny Santiago, Operations Supervisor
Hannah Schreiner, Graphic Design and Marketing Associate
Amanda Sheldon, Horticulture Coordinator
Irena Sobko, Controller
VJ Sookdeo, Field Supervisor
Elizabeth Velez, Assistant Director for Events and Programs
Lori Wasson, Director of Public Access and Tenant Operations
Noreen York-Rowe, Budget Analyst
Max, Quinn and Milo, Working Dogs



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Tokumbo Shobowale



THE ISLAND
IN YOUR
PICTURES

#GOVERNORSISLAND

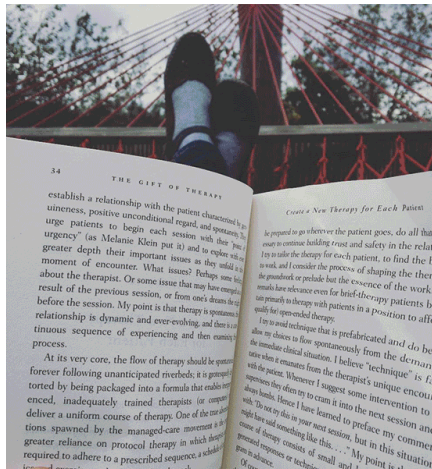
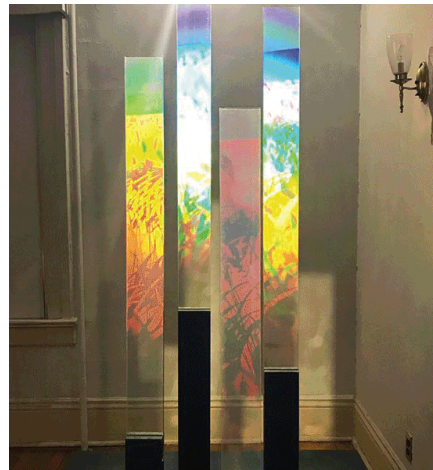
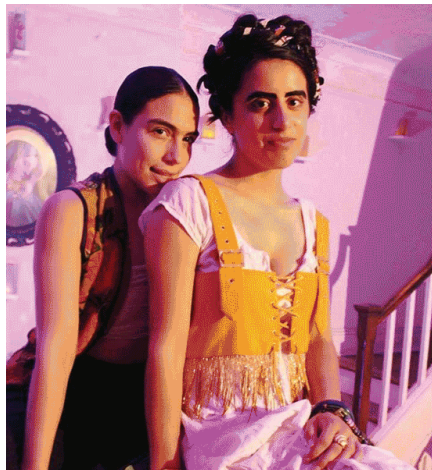


PHOTO CREDITS

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All photographs © the photographer.
Cover: The Friends of Governors Island

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