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Press Release

Full Makeover Set for Jersey City Community Park Incorporating Community Input, local Student Volunteers, and Restoring Historic War Memorial

New Multi-sports field, ADA Playground Enhancements, Lighting Improvements, Tree Plantings and more highlight Greenville Park facelift

JERSEY CITY - Mayor Steven M. Fulop and the **Division of Parks & Forestry** announce a multi-faceted transformation plan for Audubon Park in the southern end of the City with resurfacing and re-designation of space to make way for a multitude of sports and recreation. Local students will volunteer their time to help with the revitalization, which includes restoring the park’s war memorial, redesigning the playground, repurposing benches, installing a multi-sports field, among other improvements. The enhancements to the playground will follow ADA guidelines with features accessible to people with disabilities.

“Audubon Park is in a unique location touching three wards in the heart of a densely populated neighborhood with several nearby schools - a college, a high school and a grammar school serving children with special needs,” **Mayor Fulop** said. “This park is host to many community events and activities, and deserves the kind of makeover to sustain an active park for all residents in this neighborhood now and into the future.”

Audubon Park, which was rededicated as Major John W. Desmond Park in 1950 in honor of a local mailman and veteran, is also home to a ten-foot granite monument that will also be restored. The war memorial is adorned with a bronze American eagle on top, with the names of residents from the area who served in the armed forces displayed below. The renovations will help to maximize the park’s usefulness by not only encouraging physical activity, but to also give residents a safe environment to enjoy and interact.

“Audubon Park is a special park in this City because it provides open space and recreational options for three key areas of our City,” **said Denise Ridley, Ward A Councilwoman**. “Investing in our parks is a no-brainer. I am happy to see that we are making progress and thank all the City divisions, elected officials, and park supporters that are working together to get this done.”

In addition to new LED lights throughout, other new touches to the park will include the planting of new trees, repairing fencing, painting and/or replacement of benches, new signage with information on the WOTS app (Word On The Street), and the installation of police emergency call boxes.

The **Friends of Audubon Park**, a volunteer group started by **State Assemblywoman Angela McKnight** (District 21), worked with the City to collect community input regarding the park’s future and created a list of suggestions for improvements.

“The community spoke, and we listened,” said **Assemblywoman McKnight**. “This is a park for local residents to utilize, so we enlisted their input to design a space for kids of all ages and abilities to enjoy for years to come.”

Audubon Park, named for the adjacent Audubon Avenue, is in Ward A with areas reaching into Wards B and F. New Jersey City University is across the street, with Snyder High School and A. Harry Moore school less than a block away. The local schools’ colors and mascots will be incorporated into the overall theme of the park.

An additional highlight to the park renovation will be to the children’s area. The City’s Department of Engineering is currently designing a brand new playground, which will include sensory features for special needs children diagnosed with Autism and Sensory Processing Disorder.

“We’ve received many requests to build park playgrounds with inclusionary features for children with different needs,” said **Mira Prinz-Arey, Ward B Councilwoman**. “We listened, and the playground upgrade at Audubon Park will have those details within it, including sensory elements to create a play area for all children to enjoy.”

The first phase of the planned makeover is now underway and is scheduled for completion before the end of the summer with the re-designation of the once dilapidated tennis courts into a new multi-use sports court. The new field surface will be made of Sport Court, a custom-engineered, shock absorbing surface that is already installed at the park’s basketball courts.

The makeover for Audubon Park is slightly ahead of schedule, while the playground improvement component is a new portion added to the plan driven by Councilwomen Ridley and Prinz-Arey, according to **Brian Weller, City Architect**. Ward F Councilman Jermaine Robinson has also passionately championed the park’s overhaul.

“DPW will handle all of the work outside of the new playground, to which the new design is completed. The next phase is the bid and construction finalization process,” Weller said.

A majority of the park renovations are scheduled for completion before the end of this year.

All media inquiries should be directed to Kimberly Scalcione at kscalcione@jcnj.org or 201-376-0699.