



# High Line Fact Sheet



Photo by Timothy Schenck

## PARK

The High Line is a New York City public park built on a 1.45 mile-long, elevated freight rail structure on Manhattan's West Side. It is managed by the non-profit organization Friends of the High Line under the jurisdiction of the New York City Department of Parks & Recreation. The park stretches from Gansevoort Street in the Meatpacking District to West 34th Street, between 10th and 11th Avenues.

## HISTORY

The High Line was originally built in 1934 as part of a massive infrastructure project called the West Side Improvement. It lifted train traffic 30 feet in the air, removing dangerous trains from the streets of Manhattan's largest industrial district. The freight trains carried mostly food and agricultural goods to the upper stories of factories and warehouses. Train traffic began to decrease in the 1950s due to the rise of interstate trucking and stopped altogether in 1980. The last train carried three carloads of frozen turkeys.

## DESIGN

The High Line's design is a collaboration between James Corner Field Operations, Diller Scofidio + Renfro, and planting designer Piet Oudolf. The design is inspired by the landscape that grew on the High Line during the 25 years after the trains stopped running. The various species of grasses, perennials, trees, and bushes were all chosen for their hardiness, sustainability, and textural and color variation, with a focus on native species. In many places, the High Line's railroad tracks are returned to their original locations, integrated into the planting beds. Seating elements include the park's signature "peel-up" benches and riverview sundeck chaise lounges.

## STEWARDSHIP

Friends of the High Line was founded in 1999 by two neighborhood residents, Joshua David and Robert Hammond. The non-profit advocated for the High Line's preservation when the structure was under threat of demolition. Now in addition to overseeing the maintenance, operations, and public programming for the park, Friends of the High Line works to raise the essential private funding to help complete the High Line's construction and create an endowment for its future operations.

## COMMUNITY

Each year, Friends of the High Line hosts more than 450 public programs and activities, aimed at supporting the diverse communities that surround the High Line and facilitating inclusive gatherings for all visitors. From sustainable food vendors and salsa dance parties to kids' activities and historical tours, Friends of the High Line encourages community engagement with the park by curating experiences that highlight the distinctiveness of the space.

**1934** The High Line opens to trains carrying meat, produce, and factory goods • **1980** The last train runs on the High Line • **1999** Friends of the High Line is founded • **2006** Groundbreaking on first section of the park • **2009** First section, from Gansevoort to West 20th Street, opens to the public • **2011** Second section, from West 20th to West 30th Street, opens to the public • **2014** The Rail Yards, from West 30th to West 34th, opens to the public



Photographer Unknown



Photo by Liz Ligon

## **PUBLIC PROGRAMS**

Over 450 programs and activities each year • **HORTICULTURE** Over 350 species of perennials, grasses, shrubs, vines, and trees • **HIGH LINE FOOD** Nine seasonal food vendors who have served over 36,000 tacos and 76,000 gelatos • **HIGH LINE ART** Exhibited over 120 artists from around the world through commissions, video projections, billboards, and performances • **VISITORS** Over 20 million visitors (as of July 2014)