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For Excellence in Waterfront Design, Hunter's Point South Project is Awarded Waterfront Edge Design Guidelines (WEDG) Certification

City-Owned Development Achieves High WEDG Score for its Resilient, Accessible, Equitable, and Healthy Waterfront

New York, NY—The [Waterfront Alliance](#) announced today that [Hunter's Point South](#), a City-owned, mixed-use development on the East River waterfront in Long Island City, Queens, has achieved certification in the [Waterfront Edge Design Guidelines](#) (WEDG) program.

The [award-winning](#) WEDG program, which seeks to catalyze sustainable, effective waterfront transformation in New York City and beyond, offers guidelines and a ratings system for all types of shoreline projects. Developed by the Waterfront Alliance in coordination with a multi-disciplinary team of experts and with the support of government agencies, WEDG was launched in January 2015 with four certified projects—[Brooklyn Bridge Park](#), [Domino Sugar Site](#), [Sandy Hook Pilots Association headquarters](#), and the [Sunset Park Materials Recovery Facility](#).

Hunter's Point South is the first project to be certified since the launch of the guidelines, with another half dozen in the final stages of scoring that are anticipated to be certified by early next year. Situated on 30 acres of prime waterfront property, Hunter's Point South will eventually provide up to 5,000 housing units, 60 percent of which will be affordable for low/moderate income families. The New York City Economic Development Corporation (NYCEDC) is responsible for the design and construction of the project's infrastructure, roads, and a 11-acre waterfront park.

"When working to build strong neighborhoods on New York City's waterfront, it is imperative that we not just provide opportunities for New Yorkers, but also do so in a sustainable and resilient manner that ensures the future safety of our communities," said New York City Economic Development Corporation President Maria Torres-Springer. "To be certified by the WEDG program is an incredible distinction for the Hunter's Point South project, placing another feather in the cap of what was already the largest affordable housing development in New York in 40 years."

"The WEDG certification of Hunter's Point South shows how far we can go in terms of innovative waterfront design and demonstrates New York City's leadership in responding to future storm surge and other impacts of climate change," said Roland Lewis, president and CEO of the Waterfront Alliance. "As a 'LEED®

for the waterfront; WEDG serves to make our waterfronts more resilient, environmentally healthy, accessible, and equitable for all.”

Emphasizing sustainable design and equitable development, Hunter’s Point South achieved a high WEDG score, garnering more than 200 out of 401 possible points (130 points are needed for certification). Among numerous applicable WEDG credits, points were awarded to Hunter’s Point South for the project’s resiliency, access, ecology, public outreach, and even maintenance plans. Highlights include the following:

- **Public access** points for: 11 acres of parkland; a kayak launch and get-downs; maximizing and adding view corridors to the waterfront; opening the waterfront park before development is complete
- **Outreach** points for: consulting with local users and community groups; identifying programming partners
- **Resiliency** points for: consideration of climate change and future sea level rise; diverse waterfront edge treatment; creation of floodable edges
- **Ecology** points for: creation of a tidal marsh; integration of green infrastructure to increase natural filtration of rainwater; separation of sewage and stormwater to relieve pressure on the combined sewer system; solar-powered energy for café and pavilion
- **Materials** points for: use of native and flood-tolerant plants; use of a sustainable alternative to tropical hardwood; use of permeable pavement
- **Maintenance** points for: creation of fund to endow park maintenance; robust maintenance plan for New York City Department of Parks & Recreation takeover

“Arup is immensely proud of being involved with Hunter’s Point South. This was an opportunity to do something significant that addresses the goals and aspirations of our client, NYCEDC,” said Tom Kennedy, [Arup](#) principal. “This space is designed for the people of NYC. The outcome and the features highlighted by WEDG speak directly to the emphasis our organization places on its commitment to shaping a better world for the communities in which we live. The entire team, including our design team, the city’s agencies, and especially NYCEDC, worked tirelessly to achieve this new space, which will set a benchmark for subsequent waterfront spaces in the city.”

“The park design team of Thomas Balsley Associates/Weiss Manfredi and Arup, envisioned Hunter’s Point South Waterfront Park as an international model of urban ecology and a world laboratory for innovative sustainable thinking,” said Thomas Balsley, founder and principal designer of [Thomas Balsley Associates](#). “The integrated design weaves together infrastructure, landscape, and architecture to transform this previously underutilized site into new ecological corridors that anticipate the inevitable patterns of flooding and rising water levels along the East River. WEDG outlines waterfront design best practices in an easy to digest format that make it a valuable tool for the client, stakeholders and design team to understand and replicate on future projects.”

Approaching its one-year anniversary, WEDG has become a well-established reference in the lexicon of regional urban planners and waterfront stakeholders. Providing practical guidance for innovative waterfront edge design for any stakeholder—from developers to community members to architects—WEDG addresses public access, resiliency, and ecological health with pioneering best practices.

More than 1,000 copies of the free [WEDG manual](#) have been downloaded, and WEDG received the American Planning Association New York Metro chapter’s award for Meritorious Achievement in 2015. Manhattan Community Boards 1 and 6 passed resolutions to use WEDG in all future waterfront projects within their boundaries, and many other community boards are now seeking to follow suit. Beyond New York City, the Waterfront Alliance presented WEDG at two national conferences in 2015: the American Planning Association national conference in Seattle and the National Working Waterfronts and Waterways Symposium in Tampa. In 2016, the Waterfront Alliance and expert colleagues will draft content for WEDG Version 2.0, for possible national use, based on the feedback received from stakeholders during the pilot phase, including regulatory agencies, waterfront developers, and design professionals, and civic and community organizations.

The [Waterfront Alliance](#) works to protect, transform, and revitalize our harbor and waterfront.

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