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## **South Battery Park City Resiliency Project (SBPCR) Achieves 13th WEDG Verification in the Nation**

***In Lower Manhattan, New York Plans for Wagner Park Give Way to Integrated Resilient, Ecological, and Accessible Design***

**New York, NY** – Today, the Waterfront Alliance announced that the South Battery Park City Resiliency Project has become the 13th project nationally to achieve [WEDG® \(Waterfront Edge Design Guidelines\) Verification](#). The gold standard for waterfront design, WEDG is an award-winning national rating system and set of guidelines for resilient, ecological, and accessible waterfront design.



*Pier A Inlet. Rendering courtesy of: Battery Park City Authority & AECOM*

The South Battery Park City Resiliency Project is a key component of the [Lower Manhattan Coastal Resiliency Master Plan](#) and vital link to protect portions of Battery Park City and Lower Manhattan lying inland of the project's new flood barrier system, which include the Museum of Jewish Heritage, the bulk of Wagner Park and Pier A Plaza and numerous residential and commercial properties. Together, the Battery Park City Authority and AECOM's design team developed a plan to strategically incorporate resilience features into the site that will make it resilient against sea-level rise, coastal flooding, storm surge, increased precipitation, and other intensifying climate change impacts.

The transformation of Wagner Park will create an enhanced and cohesive experience for park users. A network of planters, stepped benches, and winding pathways through native planting areas will conceal the site's seawall and resilience infrastructure. A 10-foot increase in the elevation of much of Wagner Park will provide resilience against the 2050s 100-year storm and facilitate commanding views of New York Harbor. Today's existing barren stone riprap along Pier A Inlet will be replaced with new habitat space consisting of plantings on stepped terraces that will attract marine life. Park users can engage with the habitat space via an overlook, which will also serve as a passive educational zone.

"This project is a stellar model in how projects can adeptly incorporate resilience features into the design of waterfront spaces," said **Waterfront Alliance president and CEO, Cortney Koenig Worrall**. "We applaud the Battery Park City Authority and the project team's achievement of WEDG Verification and commitment to the rigorous standards. Because of the South Battery Park City Resiliency Project, Lower Manhattan is that much stronger against ever evolving climate change risks."

Throughout the design process, the project team purposefully integrated access and feedback from stakeholder engagement into the plan for the park. Discussions with residents and other stakeholders changed the scale of the lawn, created safety enhancements and a realigned bikeway, and spurred additional community space. The team also incorporated [universal access](#) throughout the site, which will enable all park users to access the site equally, despite the significant elevation changes that sea-level rise protection requires. At the project's completion, park users will find a more resilient, accessible, and ecological site, while still enjoying views of one of the world's most iconic waterfront views.

WEDG Verification is only awarded for projects that successfully pass a technical review of the project's design against the WEDG standards. External specialists in engineering, architecture, and landscape architecture determined that the project exceeded the requirements for WEDG Verification, earning 125 out of 215 possible points in the standard (115 are needed to pass). Battery Park City Authority incorporated WEDG into its Request for Proposals for the [North/West Battery Park City Resiliency Project](#) and its [Battery Park City Green Guidelines](#).

"In Battery Park City, with the urgency and care the moment demands, we're adapting our waterfront to address climate change and simultaneously creating an even more beautiful and accessible park space for our residents and visitors," said **Battery Park City Authority president and CEO, Raju Mann**. "We are honored to attain WEDG Verification from the Waterfront Alliance, an organization that has helped shape the New York City's waterfront. The South Battery Park City Resiliency Project, including the redesigned and revitalized Wagner Park, will set the new standard for waterfront design excellence, flood protection, and functionality for the next generation of New Yorkers."

"We are incredibly honored and excited to achieve WEDG verification for Wagner Park as part of the South Battery Park City Resiliency Project. This recognition underscores our commitment to a resilient, enjoyable, and sustainable waterfront in Lower Manhattan," said **AECOM's design lead for Landscape and Urban Design, Gonzalo Cruz**. "Wagner Park and the surrounding areas are being transformed to integrate flood risk reduction, improve continuous public waterfront access, and enhance natural ecosystems. Receiving WEDG Verification is a testament to the collaborative and multidisciplinary approach undertaken by the entire project team."

"We reviewed a wide variety of available third-party benchmarking systems to identify a certification that aligned with the ambitious goals of the project. WEDG was a clear choice to ensure forward thinking coastal risk reduction strategies went hand in hand with plentiful safe, open, and accessible public space along the edge of lower Manhattan," said **Atelier Ten's senior environmental designer, Nikita Jathan**.

"The South Battery Park City Resiliency Project is an immensely important undertaking to protect Lower Manhattan from climate change induced sea-level rise at one of its lowest elevations," said the **Manhattan Community Board 1 Chair, Tammy Meltzer**. "It also acts as a beacon for the future of resilient design. Congratulations to the project team for this recognition; Community Board 1 looks forward to continued collaboration to help make the entire Lower Manhattan Resiliency Master Plan a resounding success."

Waterfront Alliance applauds Battery Park City Authority and AECOM's achievement in the redesign of Wagner Park. The project team includes:

- AECOM NYC Landscape Studio: Landscape Architecture and Public Realm Design Lead
- AECOM Engineering: Civil, Structural & Marine Structural Engineering, Coastal Modeling, Interior Drainage, Permitting, FEMA Compliance
- Arch Street Communications: Community Engagement
- Atelier Ten: Sustainability Certification
- Magnusson Klemencic Associates: Civil Engineering
- Milhouse Engineering: Mechanical, Electrical, and Plumbing
- Nautilus International Development Consulting: Urban Design, Sustainability
- Noel: Permit Expediting
- Oweis Engineering Inc: Geotechnical Engineer
- SiteWorks: Landscape Architect of Record
- Thomas Phifer and Partners: Pavilion Design
- Tillotson Design Associates: Lighting Design

You can learn more about the project and how it incorporated the principles of WEDG by joining the Waterfront Alliance's [virtual panel discussion](#) on **February 8, 2024, from 2:00 - 3:00 PM EST** featuring Waterfront Alliance leadership, Battery Park City Authority senior vice president, Real Property Gwen Dawson, and members of the project team.

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*The Waterfront Alliance builds, transforms, revitalizes, and protects accessible waterfronts for all communities, together.*