



THE CITY OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF THE COMPTROLLER
SCOTT M. STRINGER

May 1, 2015

Regina Myer
President
Brooklyn Bridge Park Corporation
334 Furman Street
Brooklyn, NY 11201

Re: Transparency in Brooklyn Bridge Park Financing

Dear Ms. Myer:

I write today to urge the Brooklyn Bridge Park Corporation (BBPC) to improve the transparency of its financial statements and provide greater detail to the public on past, present, and future budget projections.

By all accounts, Brooklyn Bridge Park has been a transformative addition to the City's park system. What were once barren piers falling into the East River are now vibrant, active, spaces that New Yorkers from all walks of life can enjoy. I applaud you for your stewardship of the project and for your commitment to maintaining Brooklyn Bridge Park for decades to come.

A key element in this endeavor is ensuring transparent, accountable budgeting at BBPC. While the Corporation posts audited financial statements on its website, there is more that can and should be done to broaden public access to BBPC's finances.

As a result, in the interest of full disclosure, I urge you to provide additional financial information about the Park to the public, ensuring that ongoing community dialogue concerning the future of the Park is informed by the best available information.

Under state law,¹ many public authorities are required to include a variety of information in their budget documents, including, but not limited to:

- a description of the budget process, including the dates of key budget decisions;
- a description of the principal budget assumptions, including sources of revenues, staffing and future collective bargaining costs, and programmatic goals;
- a self-assessment of budgetary risks;
- a projection of the number of employees, including sources of funding, the numbers of full-time and full-time equivalents, and functional classifications;

¹ 2 NYCRR § 203.6.



- a statement of the source and amount of any material non-recurring resource that is planned for use in any given fiscal year;
- a statement of any transactions that shift material resources from one year to another and the amount of any reserves;
- a statement of borrowed debt projected to be outstanding at the end of each fiscal year covered by the budget or financial plan; and
- a statement of the annual projected capital cost broken down by category and sources of funding, and for each capital project, estimates of the annual commitment, total project cost, expected date of completion and the annual cost for operating and maintaining those capital projects or capital categories that, when placed into service, are expected to have a material impact on the operating budget.

While BBPC is not subject to the above rule,² several public entities similar to BBPC, including the Hudson River Park Trust (HRPT), are subject to the rule and, as a result, provide significantly more information to the public than BBPC.

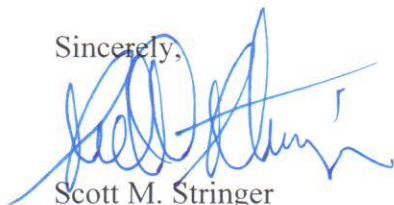
This additional disclosure could help to inform the significant public debate that has revolved around the long-term financing of the park. For instance, while BBPC has taken the positive step of publishing a presentation of the financial model for the park, the model projected revenue and operating expense for the next 5 years, while analyzing potential maritime capital repair costs over a 50 year period. As a result, some community members have questioned BBPC's conclusion that funding would fall short, especially given the increase in potential revenues when tax-abatements begin to expire in the coming years.

Absent a longer term projection, the board and the community is left considering an asymmetrical financial model where the known revenue and operating expenses projections are presented for five years and the known capital needs for the next 50 years. While I appreciate that there may be disagreement over the potential impact of the expiring tax-abatements, I believe that it is appropriate to show projected costs and revenue on the same, long-term scale.

Increasing transparency is thus not only a financially prudent step, but is also a key component in an effort to improve trust in the community and ensure the Park's long-term support.

I look forward to working with you towards this end.

Sincerely,



Scott M. Stringer
New York City Comptroller

² 2 NYCRR § 203.10; In addition to the Hudson River Park Trust, NYC-based authorities subject to the law include the Battery Park City Authority, the City University Construction Fund, the Metropolitan Transportation Authority, and the Municipal Assistance Corporation for the City of New York.