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# Liberty Park

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Liberty Park is a 64,000 square foot (1.5 Acre) roof-top park centered within the World Trade Center (WTC) District. The park is situated on top of the district's vehicle screening center (VSC) and serves as a publicly accessible community open space with unprecedented views to the 9/11 National Memorial. The park also serves as the setting for the reconstructed St. Nicholas Church which was destroyed in the collapse of the former World Trade Center Towers.

Considering the site's relatively small footprint and the needs of multiple stakeholder groups, a balance between circulation and programming was carefully developed to maximize a park-like feel in this highly urban neighborhood. Lush pockets of greenery and seasonal plantings unfold along a series of gently sloped ramps and stepped garden spaces, creating the experience of walking along an 'elevated promenade'. The primary path through the site winds up nearly 32 feet above grade and meets ADA accessibility requirements.

The park design is conceived to provide critical pedestrian connections between the World Trade Center District streetscapes and the pedestrian bridge spanning the adjacent West Side Highway. This connection links the district to the World Financial Center in nearby Battery Park City. The park program is organized into three primary areas; the East Plaza, the Garden Overlook, and Street Edges.

The East Plaza is the primary entrance to the park, featuring a large, stepped amphitheater that spills out onto the streetscape below. An elevated plaza space at the top, lined with double-sided benches, offers some of the best people-watching the neighborhood has to offer. The space invites both large and small gatherings to stop, sit, and take solace in what is arguably the most reflective open space in New York City. Continuing up around a small courtyard dedicated to St. Nicholas Church, visitors emerge onto the Garden Overlook, which features dense plantings, intimate seating areas, a wooden amphitheater, sun lounges, and a viewing deck. A cascade of sculptural, all-white precast planter elements creates meandering view sheds and surprise pockets of lush vegetation throughout the Garden Overlook. The four largest planters are asymmetrically arranged in the center of the space, bringing sharp definition to the overlook's layout and circulation. Each planter is tilted to provide integrated seating on the raised side and a lush display of vegetation on the low side. Smaller planters anchor the edges of the park, doubling as both seasonal planting gardens and spacious sun lounges. Along





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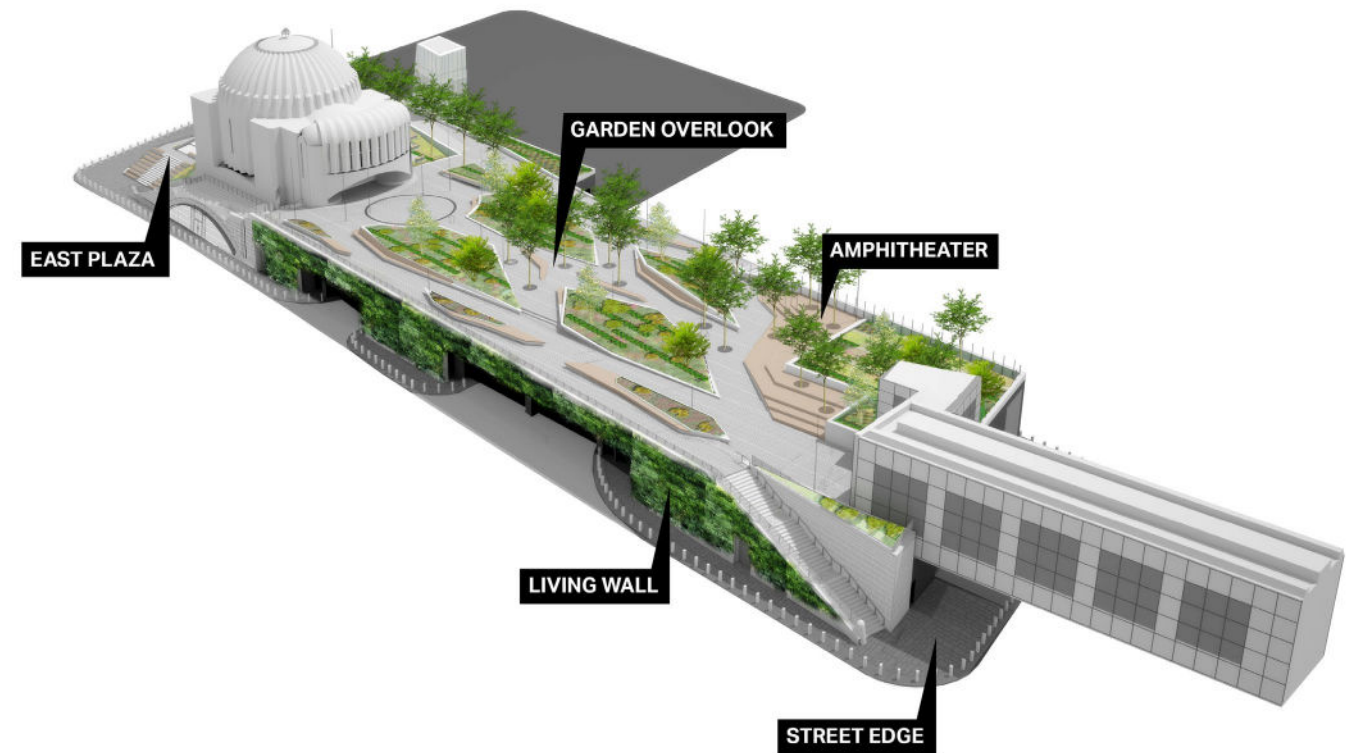
the north side of the park, an amphitheater and a 200 foot long glass-railed overlook allow visitors to take in one-of-a-kind views of the NYC's iconic World Trade Center District. The relaxed, intimate atmosphere of the park and the gentle sounds of the 911 Memorial Pools in the distance create a tranquil respite for the local community and visitors alike.

At the base of the park, the facades of the VSC building provide enticing hints at the garden-like feel of the park above. The primary stairways and gentle ramps that provide access to the park feature linear planters and trellis elements. The north facade of the building is wrapped in a 826 panel, block-wide living green wall, arranged in a staggered, horizontal grid that acts as a soft compliment to the adjacent of the 911 Memorial. The plant palette of Baltic ivy, common periwinkle, coral bells, Japanese spurge and winter creeper was chosen so that it would thrive in a partly shaded, vertical application. Each of these plants is shade tolerant, and each has a robust rooting habit that works well within these unique site conditions. As a composition, the pallet integrates a variety of color, leaf textures and sizes, and growth habits, working comprehensively to breakdown the monumental scale of the building façade and provides year-round visual interest.

## Providing Room to Grow

Like any great public space, shade was an important consideration during the park's development. Ensuing that this highly-visible, community focused public space felt welcoming and comfortable was of highest priority. Due to the weight restriction of the building below, the design team had to think differently about accommodating trees and soil. New technologies, such Ultra High Performance Concrete (UHPC) and light-weight structural soils, were implemented throughout the park to ensure verticality, opportunities for tree planting, and generous soils depths while maintaining strict weight requirements.

Underpinned by honeylocust shade trees, drifting grasses and linear boxwood hedgerows, the park's planting palette is punctuated by flowering trees, numerous perennials, bulbs, and seasonal planting. The parks final count of 51 new deciduous trees maintain year-round seasonal interest, provide shade at seating and plaza areas during peak lunch hours, and absorb approximately 9,000 pounds of carbon dioxide, and intercept approximately 40,000 gallons of stormwater runoff per year.





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## **LIBERTY PARK LOWER MANHATTAN, NEW YORK, USA**

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Associate Civil Engineer | STV Inc.  
Lighting | Fisher Marantz Stone  
Soils | Pine & Swallow Environmental  
Wayfinding | Two Twelve  
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