

CHARLES MCKINNEY

Thirty years of experience in park planning, design management, park operation and partnership development has earned Charles a sophisticated understanding of the planning, design, operations and policy considerations for urban parks and landscapes.



- Skilled in park system planning, community workshops and approvals, creative problem solving and leading work groups.
- Decisive leader, skilled manager and mentor of technical, design and operations professionals
- Entrepreneurial partnership developer and coordinator of disparate efforts
- Early adopter of analysis and planning tools that expedite decision making and prioritization
- Experienced in leading complex public / private planning and design programs
- Effective negotiator and strategist
- Innovative, decisive and resourceful Park manager
- Helpful councilor of employees, interns and advice seekers
- Facile in non-profit board development, public and government working relations
- Inspirational public speaker and presenter, using simple language and responding to questions constructively

EXPERIENCE

PRINCIPAL URBAN DESIGNER

February 2010 to August 2016

City of New York / Parks & Recreation

Prepare master plans for flagship parks

- Most recently: Van Cortlandt Park
<http://www.nycgovparks.org/park-facilities/van-cortlandt-park/master-plan>
- Engage community members, departmental experts and external agencies in a process that assesses existing conditions, projects underway and aspirations.
- Understand the design history, ecological and social context.
- Develop conceptual solutions to difficult physical problems, illustrate them with clear, informative graphics
- Provide capital and strategic recommendations that address problems, opportunities, community needs, and environmental goals.
- Create a shared understanding of the problems and solutions that leads to broad community approval through conversation, clear graphics and presentations

Played a leadership role in preparation of the "Parks Vision Plan"

- Drafted Departmental goals and priority actions for acquisition, capital construction, restoration, operation and programming that responded to service adequacy, public health, demographic change and sea level rise.
- Developed planning tools such as "Multiple attribute and decision making matrix," GIS based walking distance and park adequacy maps, "All Our Ideas" web page for community participation.

Lead or participate in planning groups such as:

- "Strategic Initiative for Rebuilding and Resiliency" with NYC Mayor's office
- "Sherman Creek," with NYC EDC
- "Fit City" with NYC AIA

Provide public presentations such as:

- "21st Century Park Design and NYC Initiatives," and "How Parks Shaped NYC"

CHIEF OF DESIGN

November 2005 to February 2010

City of New York / Parks & Recreation

Provided design direction for 80 architects and landscape designers as well as consultants preparing plans, designs and construction documents for parks and facilities throughout New York City. Played a leadership role in increasing design production by \$100 million per year with improved timeliness, creativity and quality.

- Prepared and implemented the strategic plan for increasing efficiency and skill of the design workforce. Successfully addressed difficult personnel issues.
- Guided the preparation of the "21st Century Park Design Guidelines," that describes best practices in design, construction and maintenance for urban parks.
- Represented Parks at high-level governmental meetings and approval bodies.
- Provided guidance to agencies and consultants designing major facilities including the Yankee Stadium parks, FreshKills, the Highline and Greenpoint / Williamsburg.

PROJECT DIRECTOR AND PARK PLANNER

2002 to November 2005

Clients included: The Trust for Public Land
 City of New York / Parks & Recreation
 New Yorkers for Parks
 Nassau County / County Executive

Strategic planning, Capital planning, Design professional direction, Organizational change and leadership, Project leadership, Master planning, Open space and recreation needs assessment, Conceptual design, Park amenity revenue generation.

- Directed preparation of conceptual plans for Southpoint park on Roosevelt Island for the Trust for Public Land
- Provided vision and leadership for the Nassau County Parks Department
- Prepared the capital plan and conceptual plans for restoring Nassau County Parks

ADMINISTRATOR OF RIVERSIDE PARK

Including Fort Washington Park and Riverside Park South

City of New York / Parks & Recreation

1984 to 2001

Managed, planned and restored Riverside Park, a 316-acre landmarked park, a 110 slip marina, and Fort Washington Park, 146 acres of woodland, meadow and Hudson River shoreline. Managed and programmed Riverside Park South, a seven-acre contemporary waterfront park with a 700-foot pier.

- Created and implemented the master plan for the restoration of Riverside Park.
- Managed the Park operations teams providing maintenance, restoration, and recreational services for 2.5 million visitors per year.
- Directed office staff responsible for design, purchasing and programming.
- Coordinated the Riverside Park Fund.
- Developed conceptual plans for capital projects. Prepared scopes of work and budgets; secured community, department and government approvals; participated in consultant selection; guided the development of the design.
- Supervised development of landscape plans and contract documents to restore the historic landscapes and architecture by restoration crews and contractors.
- Reconstructed and managed a 110-slip marina

- Reviewed projects by private developers and City construction agencies.
- Participated in negotiations for the creation of Riverside Park South, a 22-acre public park constructed with private funds in return for a zoning change.

URBAN DESIGNER

Parklands Planning Office

1981 to 1984

City of New York / Parks & Recreation

Prepared existing condition analysis, and studies of use in City parks. Produced the first accurate history of Riverside Park's complex design history and developed the concept for the Park's interpretive restoration. Produced the Park's conceptual master plan that described the projects to restore the park to meet current needs.

EDUCATION

Loeb Fellow

1994

Harvard University, Graduate School of Design

Emphasis on advanced landscape theory, innovations in the public sector, alternatives to violence for adolescents, negotiation

Master of Planning in Urban Design

1986

City College, Graduate Program in Urban Design

Bachelor of Architecture

1981

University of Arkansas

AWARDS, BOARD LEADERSHIP, selected LECTURES and JURIES

- Awarded Honorary ASLA American Society of Landscape Architects 2015
- Recognition from the New York State Senate and Honor award from the Friends of Van Cortlandt Park for the Van Cortlandt Park Master Plan 2014
- Loeb Fellowship Alumni Council President Harvard GSD 2010 - 2013
- ASLA Honor award for Planning, Analysis, Research and Communication 2011
- Parks Commissioner's employee of the month 2010
- Awarded Honorary AIA American Institute of Architects 2011
- Design Critic: Harvard, Penn Design, Columbia, City College 2008 - present
- "Design Excellence" The Architecture League 2010
- "Fit City" presenter NYC AIA 2009, 2011
- "Buildings as Landscape" MCNY 2008
- "Parks as Public Policy" NYC AIA 2007
- "The Power of Community Participation" University of Arkansas 2004
- "Income and Attractions Through Concessions" Great Parks / Great Cities conf. 2003
- Board member, United Nations Association New York Chapter 2000-2010
- "Park Development as Community Development" Columbia University 1998
- Coro Leadership Class IX 1998
- The Community Service Award The Parks Council 1995
- "Riverside Park: Design Intention and Actuality" Harvard University 1994