

# Freeholders Open Up Riverfront Access and Parks

Historically, great societies have always rose next to waterways going back to the Sumerians and Egyptians. That said, Camden City was no different when the Leni Lenape native Americans and later the Dutch settled on the shores of the Delaware River in the 17th century. Thanks to the progressive vision of the Freeholder Board, and not since the industrial revolution, county residents will regain almost 100-acres of riverfront access through new parks and nature preserves.

Last week, we opened the final phase of Phoenix Park in Camden's Waterfront South neighborhood. This project opened a section of the Delaware River that was largely cutoff to the community through prior industrialization. Furthermore, besides creating waterfront access it will enhance flood control measures in the Waterfront South neighborhood by annually taking more than six-million gallons of water off the streets and out of the city's storm-water system.

The 5.3-acre site has been transformed from a contaminated brown-field site to a shelterbelt of trees, meadows, walking paths and scenic views of the Delaware River. The park, funded in part with a Camden County Open Space Grant was recognized by the US Environmental Protection Agency and the Environmental Council of the United States as one of the ten most innovative uses of federal water infrastructure funding in the country.

We are also creating a new park in Cramer Hill on the site of the former wastewater treatment plant that served the city more than 30 years ago. The Cramer Hill Nature Preserve will be a 35-acre urban forest along the banks of the Delaware River adjacent to



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Pennsauken Township.

This area has been uninhabited for approximately 25 years and come spring, it will be open to the public so everyone can enjoy this amazing natural treasure. In addition to the scenic views of the river, the extraordinary wildlife on the grounds now include deer and bald eagles. State funding was

utilized to preserve the wetlands at the preserve. It will compliment Petty's Island, a historical Camden County landmark which is slated to become state parkland in 2020.

In addition, the state Department of Environmental Protection is redeveloping the Harrison Avenue Landfill into the Cramer Hill Waterfront Park. The plan calls for a major transformation of the 62-acre landfill where the Delaware and Cooper rivers join.

Again, another outstanding opportunity for access back to the riverbanks and the redevelopment will create freshwater tidal wetlands, connect greenway trails to other neighborhoods and further improve the area for possible community gardens, as well as other amenities.

I want to compliment the Camden County Municipal Utility Authority for opening the river to our community again by helping to create these parklands. They are truly transformational for the neighborhoods they serve and will reconnect residents back to one of the region's greatest assets, the Delaware River.

For more information, please visit [www.camdencounty.com](http://www.camdencounty.com). If you have any other questions about County services, please call me at (856) 225-5466, or email me at [Jeff.Nash@camdencounty.com](mailto:Jeff.Nash@camdencounty.com). Also, you can like us on Facebook at [www.Facebook.com/camdencountynj](http://www.Facebook.com/camdencountynj) and follow us on Twitter @camdencountynj.