



New Proposal Could Pave the Way for a Harlem High Line Park

Posted On Thu, October 16, 2014 By [Diane Pham](#)

The success of the [High Line Park](#) continues to inspire all corners of the world—including [Queens](#)—and now the latest neighborhood to jump on the elevated park bandwagon is Harlem. [DNA Info](#) reports a nonprofit called the [Housing Partnership](#) has proposed a plan to bring 2,000 affordable housing units and \$170 million dedicated to public projects in Hamilton Heights. The new park encompassed within the nonprofit's '[Harlem Promenade](#)' plan would run alongside the West Side Highway atop a portion of Amtrak rail lines.

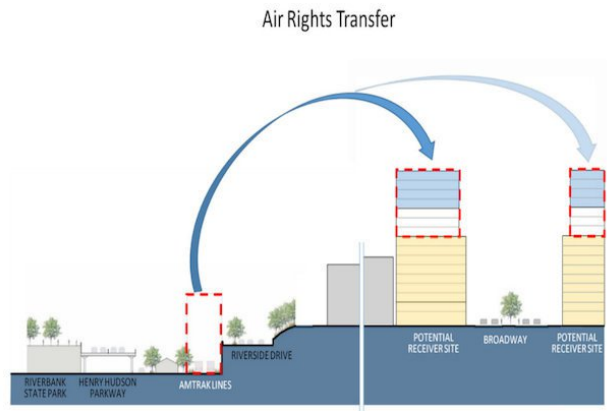


The idea is the brainchild of local resident and Housing Partnership employee Daniel Cohen. Though no cost estimates have been made, Cohen has found the key to covering the cost of construction: air rights. Cohen suggests that the rail line's unused air rights could be sold off to several buildings on Broadway for

around \$170 million.

Money would also go to improving the overall infrastructure and to increasing the affordable housing stock in the area in a special district requiring developers to create a 50-50 split of market rate and affordable housing units. No luxury units would be allowed—a key point differentiating the project from the Chelsea High Line, which has caused property values to increase 103% between 2003 and 2011, and [gentrification](#) to run rampant. A preliminary study by Housing Partnership predicts the project could also bring 3,200 permanent jobs and generate \$27 million in new annual local wages.

Of course, some worry that the proposal undermines previous rezoning work done to protect the neighborhood's historic character after Columbia University announced its expansion. But Cohen told [DNA Info](#) that the proposal is centered around the community's needs and new zoning would prevent hungry developers from plopping luxury glass towers around the neighborhood that are out of reach to local residents.



The introduction of the elevated park would also be a boon to the neighborhood's access to green space as the new park would provide a safe and easy connection to waterfront recreation already in place on the other side of the highway.

More on the proposal can be found on the Harlem Promenade [site](#).

