

A vibrant photograph of children playing in a park water fountain. In the foreground, a young boy in a white t-shirt with a graphic is seen from the side, splashing water. Behind him, another boy in a blue shirt is laughing while holding a green spiky ball. To the right, a boy in a white tank top is also playing. The fountain has several jets of water spraying upwards. The background shows a chain-link fence and trees under a clear blue sky. A large white silhouette of a park map is overlaid on the left side of the image.

# NYC PARKS: FRAMEWORK FOR AN EQUITABLE FUTURE

# Community Parks Initiative

Park Poor No More?

*Alyssa Cobb Konon, Assistant Commissioner, NYC Parks*

# Parks

# LAYING THE FOUNDATIONS FOR GREAT PARKS

**OUR COMMITMENT:  
CREATE A BRIGHT,  
GREEN FUTURE WITH  
A MORE INCLUSIVE  
AND INNOVATIVE PARK  
SYSTEM**



NYC Parks' *Framework for an Equitable Future* is a comprehensive and dynamic set of immediate steps and long-term initiatives to build NYC's 21<sup>st</sup> Century park system, and to create thriving public places for all New Yorkers.



# WHAT IS THE COMMUNITY PARKS INITIATIVE?

The **Community Parks Initiative** engages New Yorkers in **transforming local parks**, and will dedicate resources to **make these parks great public places**.

NYC Parks will spend **\$285 million** to upgrade parks in communities that need resources most.



*Image: NYC Parks*





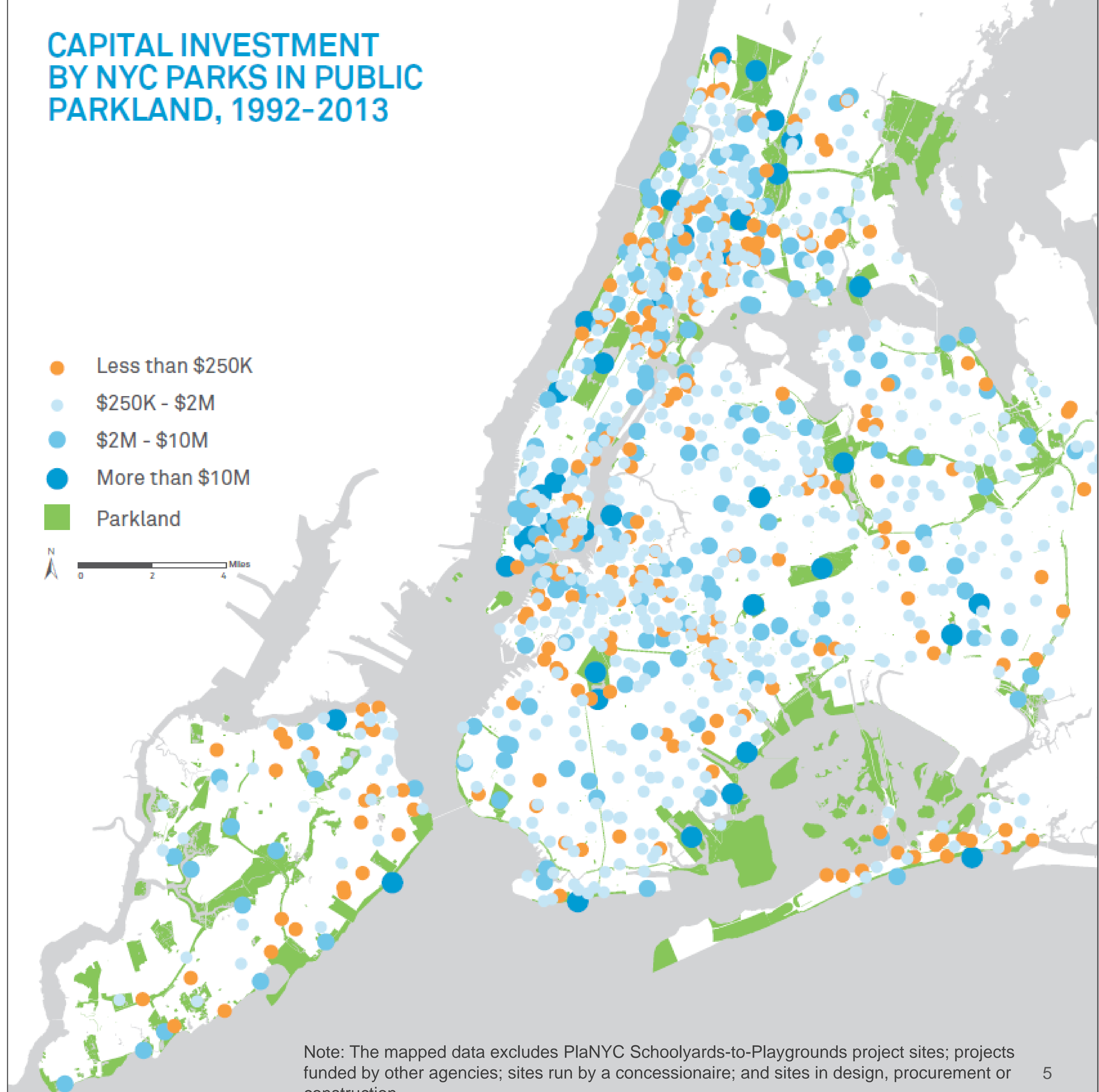
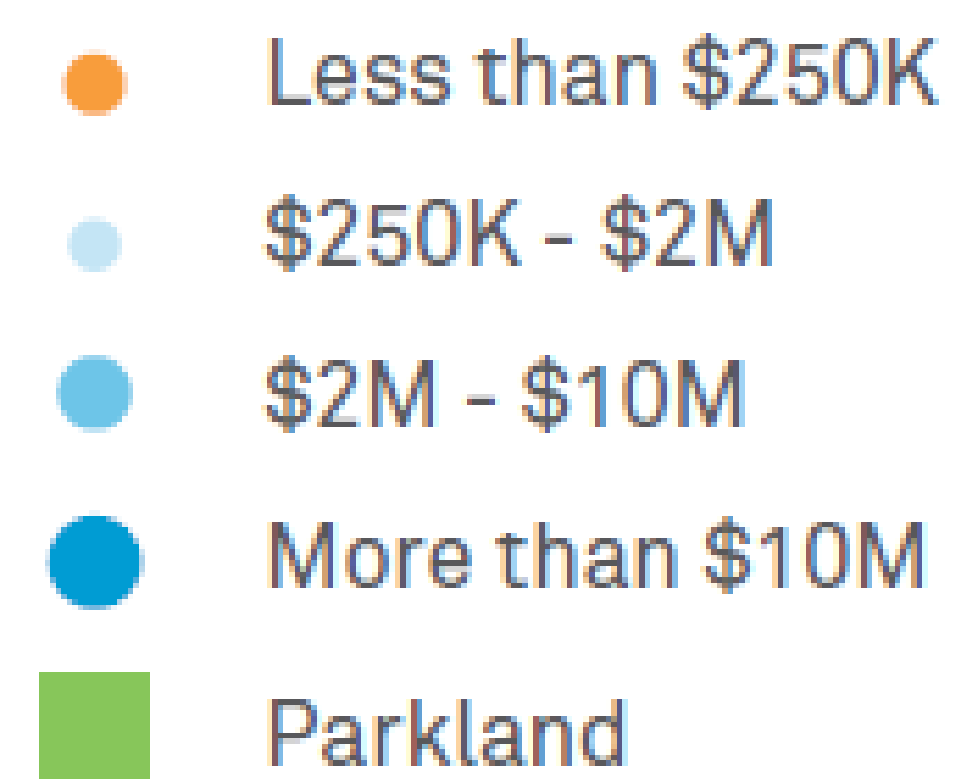
# PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

# CAPITAL IN CONTEXT

- NYC Parks currently has over 400 active capital projects, across all five boroughs, totaling over \$740M of investment
- NYC Parks spent ~ \$5.7 billion on capital improvements over the past two decades
- 215 parks across the city received minimal capital investment—less than \$250,000 over 20 years
- Total capital need for these 215 parks is about \$1 billion (estimate)

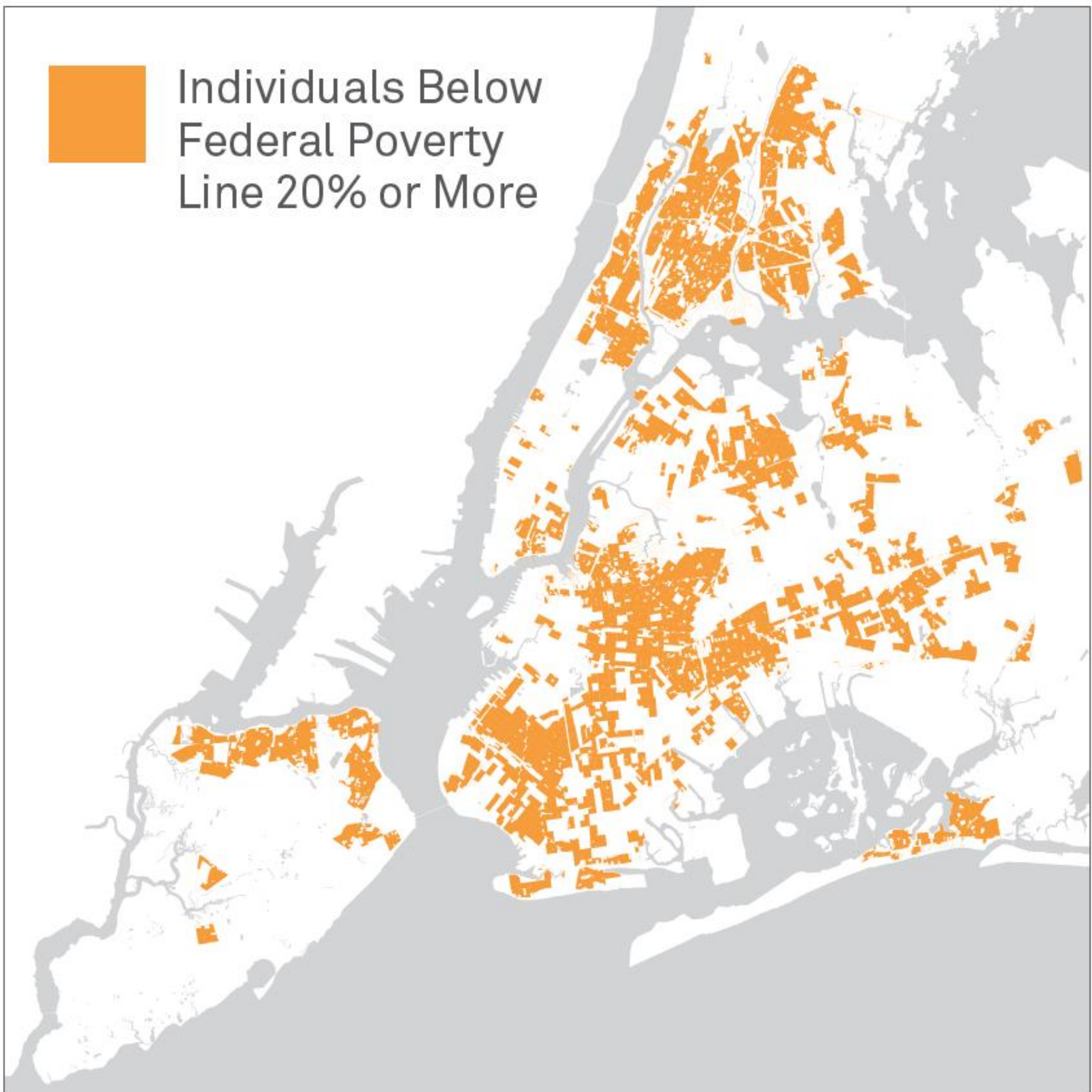
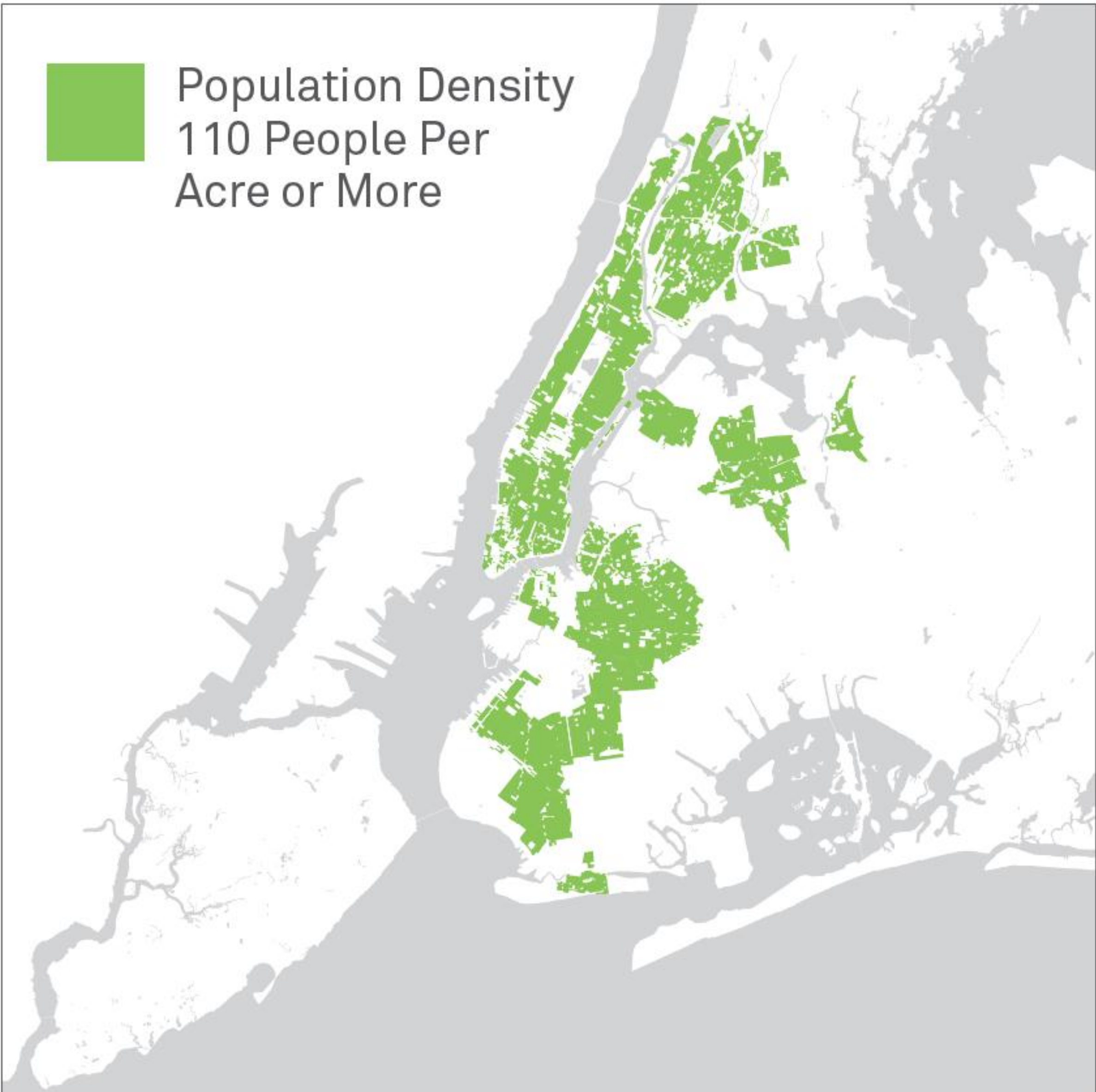
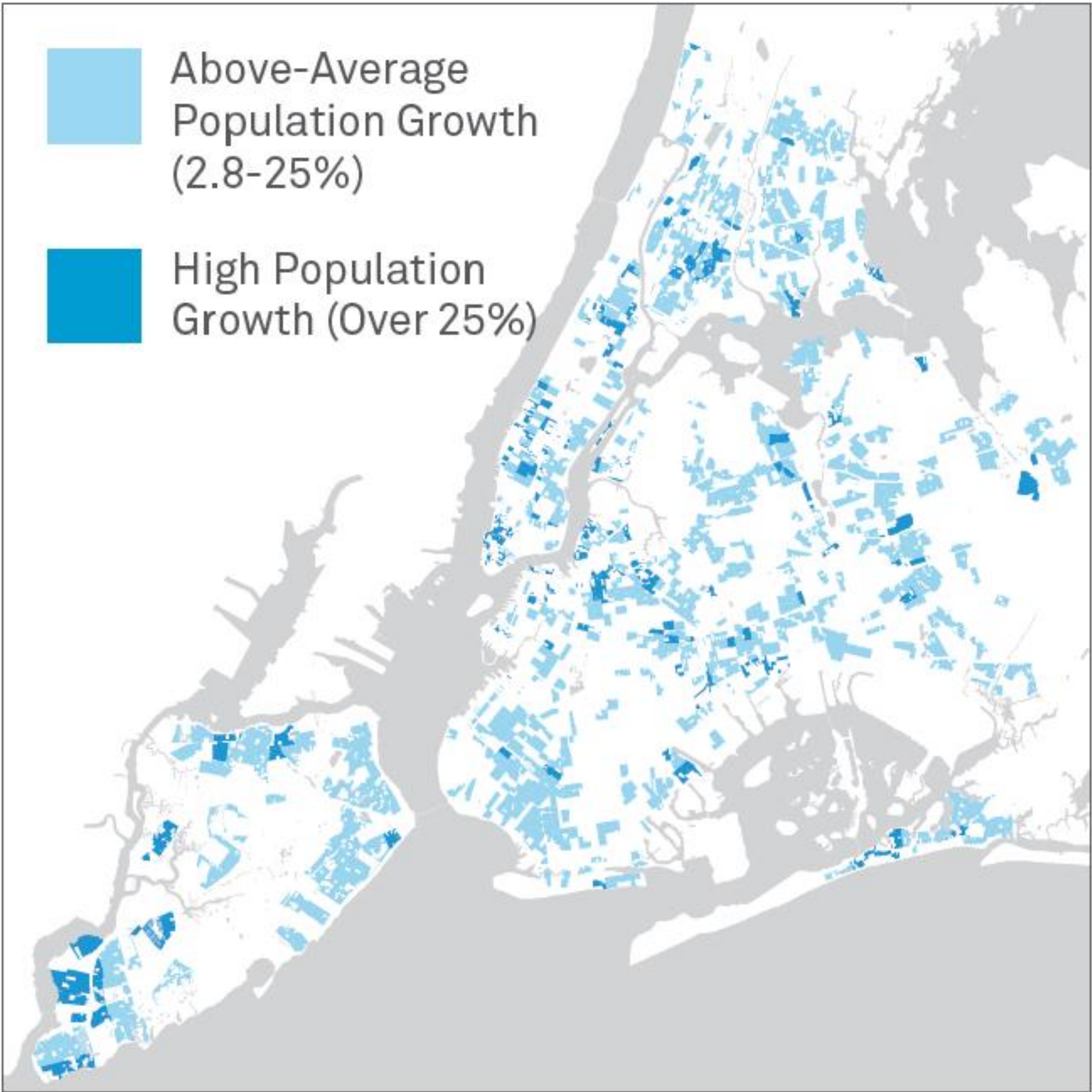


## CAPITAL INVESTMENT BY NYC PARKS IN PUBLIC PARKLAND, 1992-2013



Note: The mapped data excludes PlaNYC Schoolyards-to-Playgrounds project sites; projects funded by other agencies; sites run by a concessionaire; and sites in design, procurement or construction.

# IDENTIFYING SCREENING CRITERIA



# REFINING OUR PROGRAM SCOPE

## Under-Resourced Parks Meeting CPI Demographic Criteria

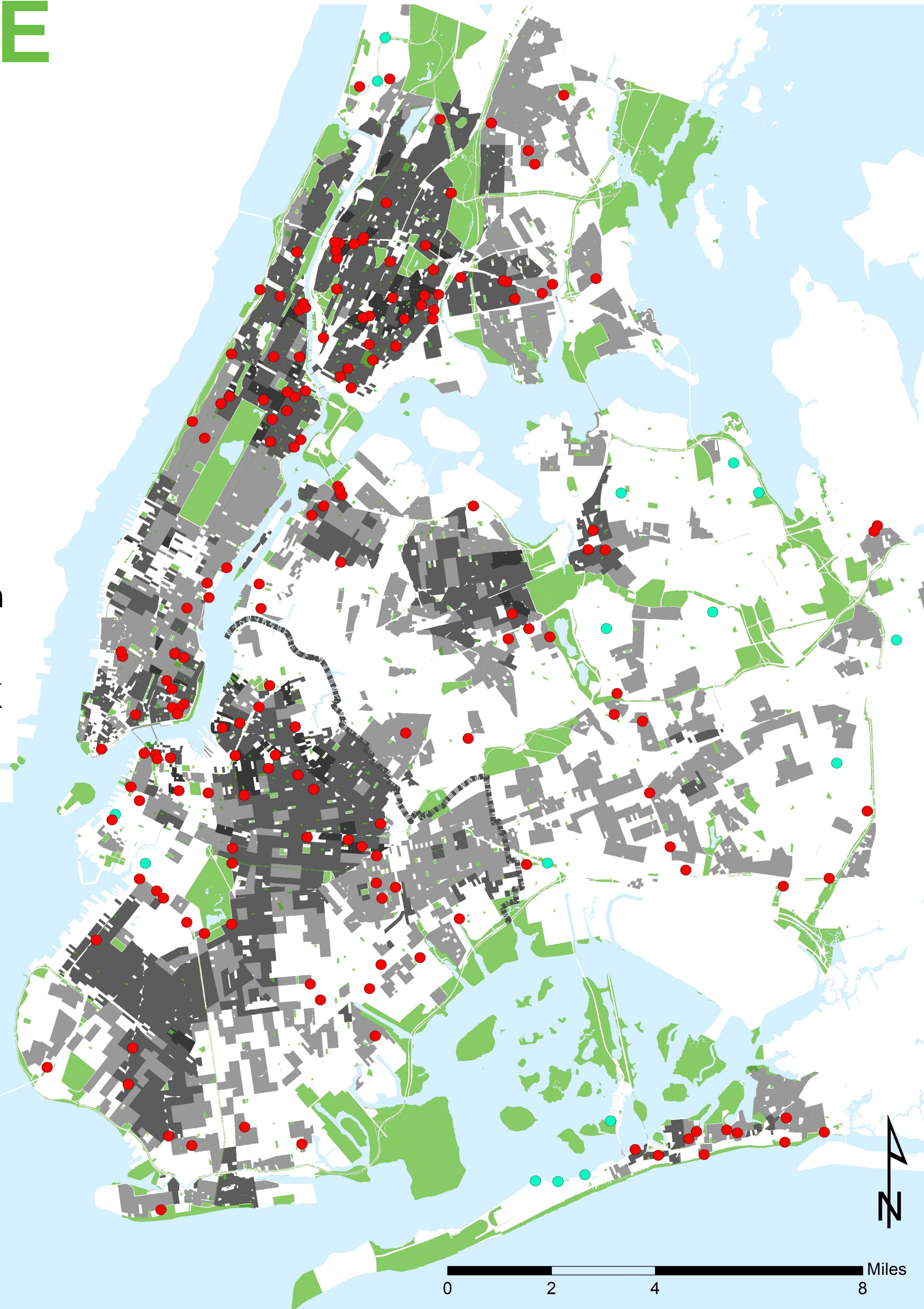
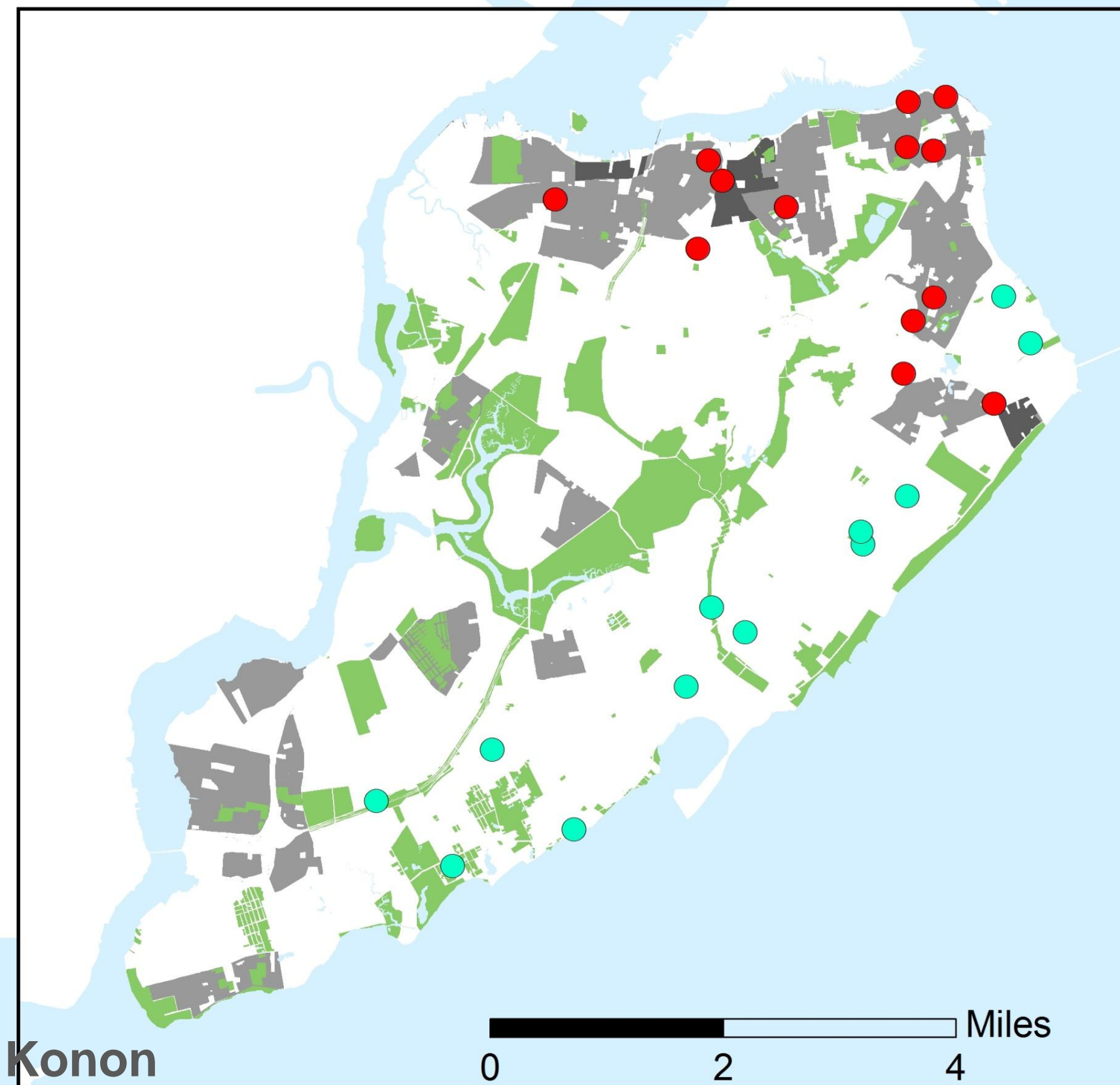
Alignment of underlying demographics and under-resourced parks helped identify communities in which to focus investment.

This map shows overlap of poverty, density and growth criteria – the more priority characteristics, the darker the area on the map.

*Red dots* exclude community gardens; buildings; historic house parks; cemeteries; park strips; malls; parkways; undeveloped natural areas; sites that cannot be developed; any site smaller than 0.15 acres; and triangles/plazas smaller than 0.5 acres.



- One characteristic
- Two characteristics
- Three characteristics
- <\$250K invested and within ¼ mile of 2+ characteristics
- All other parks with <\$250K invested.\*



# A CLOSER LOOK AT COMMUNITIES ACROSS NYC

## Fieldwork, Establishing Capital Investment Priorities:

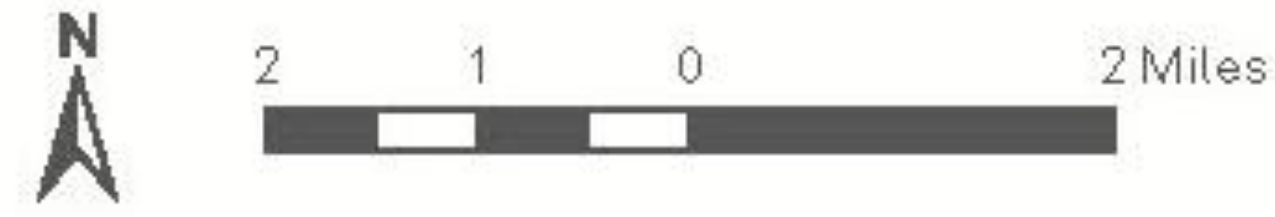
NYC Parks surveyed potential CPI parks to determine which have high need for improvement, have promising potential local partners, and provide programming opportunities. Certain parks and communities—CPI Zones—emerged as priorities.





# CAPITAL PROGRAM MAP

- CPI 2014-2015 Initial Capital Investment
- CPI 2016 Capital Expansion
- Parkland
- CPI Zones

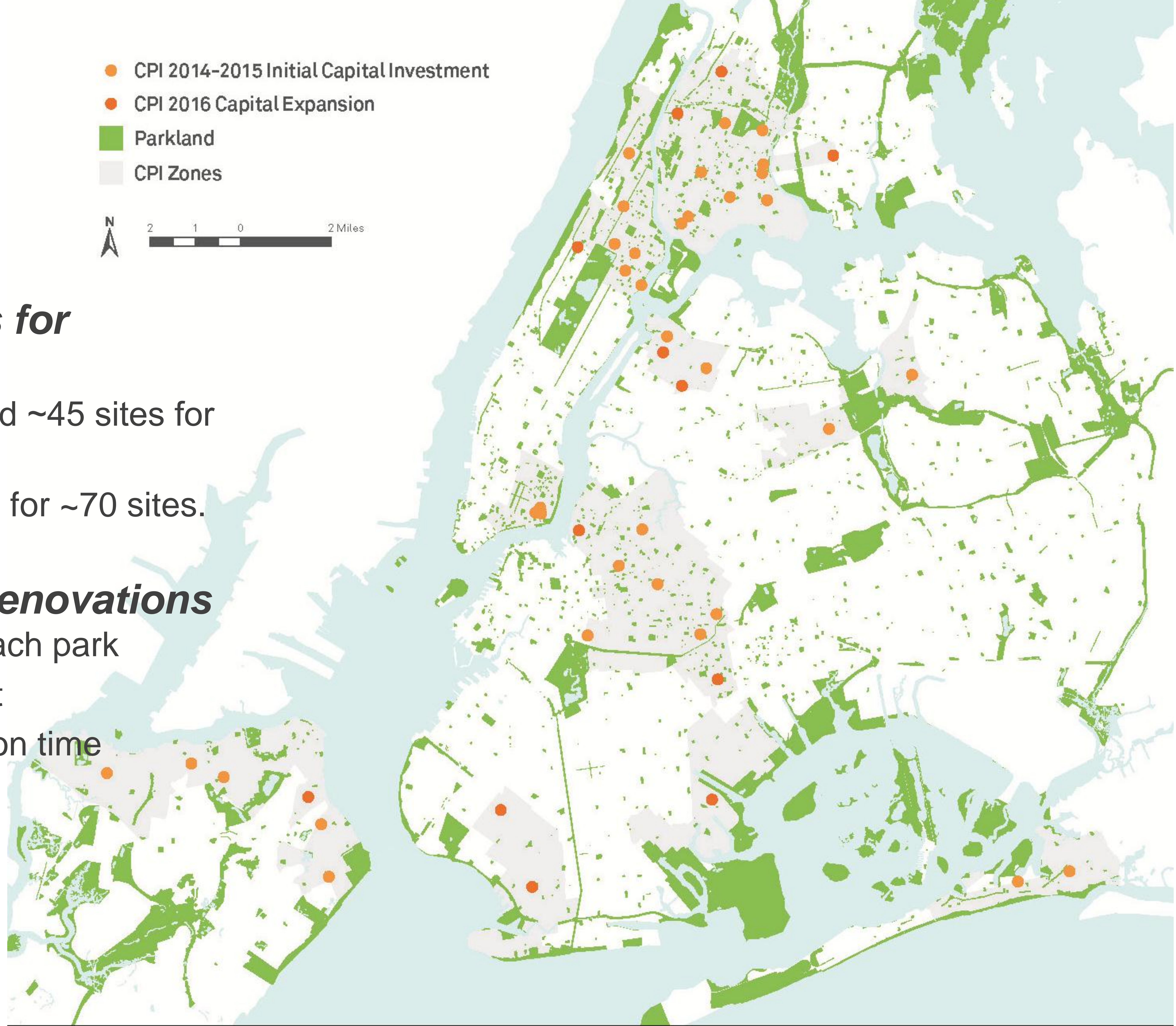


## *Announced Sites for Investment*

- We've announced ~45 sites for investment.
- We have funding for ~70 sites.

## *Complete Park Renovations*

- Fully renovate each park
- Design to budget
- Deliver projects on time



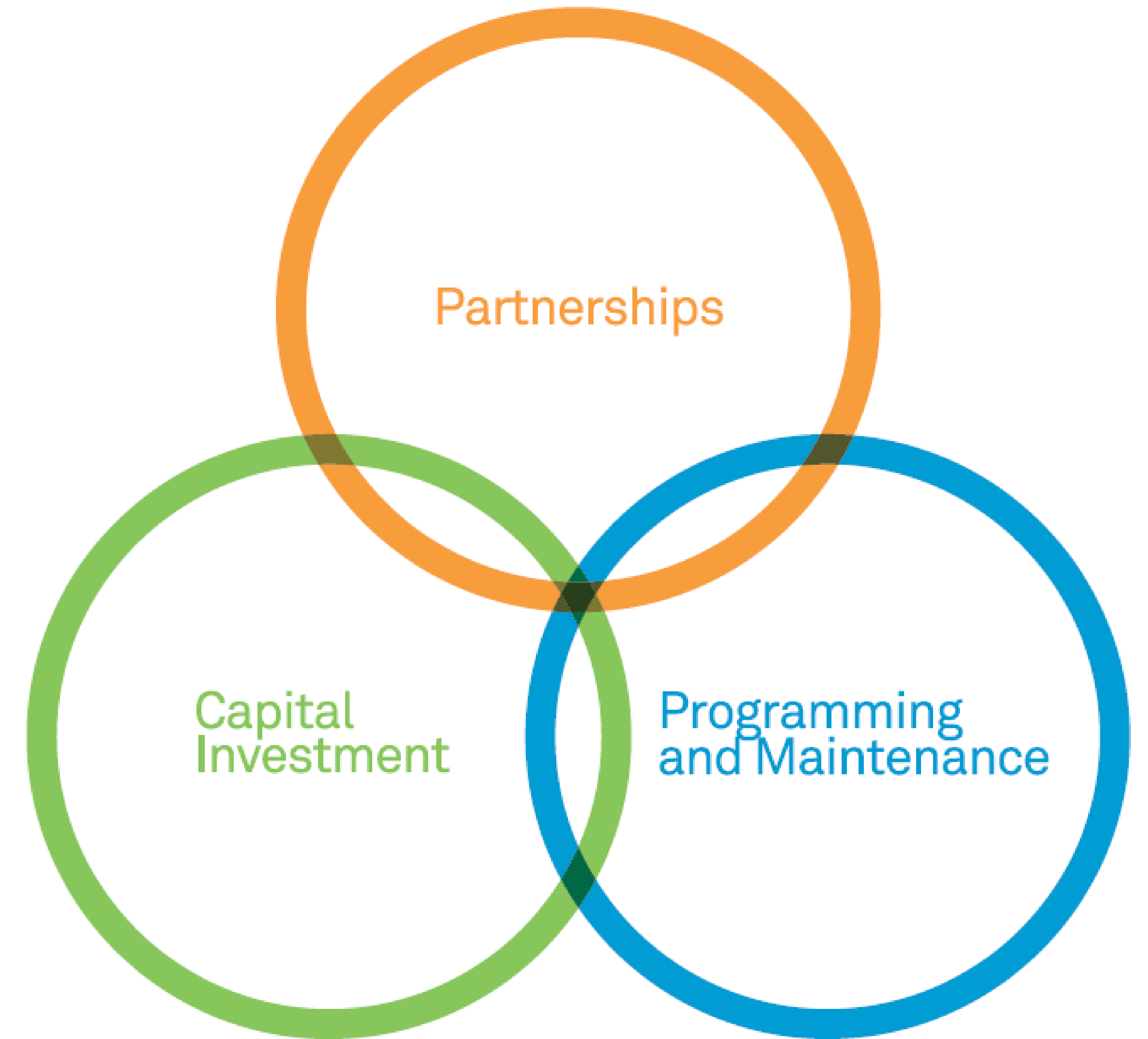


# BEYOND THE FOUNDATION

# BUILDING ON THE FOUNDATIONS OF GREAT PARKS

**CPI leverages straightforward capital investment and physical improvement projects through coordinated, parallel work at capital project sites and within the surrounding communities to:**

- ***Partnerships:*** Initiate long-term outreach and community organizing
- ***Programming:*** Expand our capacity to bring recreational programming to communities that the CPI capital program sites serve
- ***Maintenance:*** Take a more targeted approach to maintaining CPI parks and parkland within CPI communities as the program moves forward



# PARTNERSHIPS: STRATEGIES FOR ENGAGEMENT

## ***Outreach and Building Relationships***

- Community asset mapping, intensive flyering, phone calls, e-blasts, social media, public announcements at community/agency meetings, local and citywide advertising and press engagement

## ***“Friends of” Group for Every Park***

- Provide ongoing resources to communities to develop stewardship groups at each capital project site
- Target capacity-building resources, such as seed grants and trainings, to groups



# PROGRAMMING: ACTIVATING OUR PARKS

## *Increased Staff*

- NYC Parks will increase recreational programming and maintenance staff for CPI communities and support more than 70 new NYC Parks hires

## *Recreational Programming*

- Expanded youth and adult sports and fitness programming, and support local partners to develop new programs, activate parks, and serve communities
- Promoted place-making and encourage physical activity, before and after capital investment, in CPI communities



# TARGETED IMPROVEMENTS

## *Immediate Physical Improvements*

NYC Parks has carried out smaller-scale physical improvement projects that can be completed on a faster schedule and bring immediate results

- Repainting/repairing play equipment
- Repainting handball courts and multi-purpose play area lines
- Repainting/repairing benches
- Improving horticultural areas and lawn restoration
- Sports coating work
- 60 projects completed in 2015
- 25 scheduled for 2016



FOUNTAIN OF YOUTH PLAYGROUND // THE BRONX



SOUTH PACIFIC PLAYGROUND // BROOKLYN



SEAN'S PLACE // QUEENS



# PROGRAM IMPACTS

# FUNDING CPI

## Capital

Invest **\$285 M in up to 70 capital projects** in densely populated, growing, and high-poverty communities

**\$36 M in DEP funding in 2015** for stormwater management on CPI capital project sites, and commitment to future funding

## Partnerships

CPI capital projects and communities will be supported by a PfP **outreach coordinator** to build long-term local stewardship

## Programming & Maintenance

**70 Playground Associates** will activate parks in all CPI communities

**101 new maintenance and gardening staff** to CPI zones

Create immediate impacts with **targeted improvements at 60 parks in Phase 1**, with **\$335k annual funding** for future projects





# INNOVATION AND IMPACT

## *Program Results*

- Capital projects, programming, partnership and maintenance efforts reach communities in every borough
- **First 35 capital projects:**
  - Provide improved parks amenities and access to approximately 220,000 New Yorkers who live within a ¼-mile walk of these parks
  - Improve 42 acres of urban parkland through capital projects
- **All ongoing and future capital projects:**
  - Will reach 23 Community Districts with a total population of more than 3 million people
    - 32.1% live below the federal poverty line
    - 23.4% are under age 18



# INNOVATION AND IMPACT

## ***Community Engagement:***

- Engaged 1,130 community stakeholders citywide
- Piloted a new online form for additional feedback
- Public input meetings adopted as standard practice for NYC Parks capital projects
- Engaged volunteers at 522 projects in CPI program neighborhoods – working with nearly 14,000 volunteers!

## ***Programming and Maintenance:***

- Promoted placemaking and encouraged physical activity
- Held all new programs for kids at 70 parks – with just under 500,000 kids participating
- Held 158 adult fitness classes at 86 sites in CPI program neighborhoods



*Friends of St. Nicholas Park lead youth in a planting day, Manhattan. Image: Friends of St. Nicholas Park. Bottom: Visitors at the 2014 “Paths to Pier 42” summer launch celebration, East River Park, Manhattan. Image: Hester Street Collaborative*



# QUESTIONS?

