



PRESS RELEASE

October 26, 2016

Contact: Patricia Cabrera, 973-321-1600, Mayor's Office

Mayor Torres and Great Falls National Historic Park Advisory Commission present update

Paterson, NJ -- Last Thursday afternoon (October 20, 2016) Mayor Jose "joey" Torres and the Great Falls National Historical Park Advisory Commission announced improvement plans for Overlook Park.

Since Overlook Park's opening over 50 years ago, few improvements, or amenities have been added. As thousands more visitors arrive at Overlook Park, Mayor Torres, together with the National Historic Park Service recommended that transformative improvements be made to the park, including an extended and redesigned viewing plaza on the upper level where the best views of the falls can be observed.

"In the fall of 1780, Colonel Alexander Hamilton, then an aide to General Washington, during a picnic in the north side of the Passaic River, recognized the beauty and potential in the power of our Great Falls," said Mayor Jose 'joey' Torres. "It is encouraging to see improvements and I invite Patersonians, the region and the nation to share in and enjoy the possibilities of recreation, happy family moments, and tourism within the backdrop of our city jewel the Great Falls in the Passaic River."

As well, the mayor was pleased to announce as part of the overall plan, the establishment of a 125-seat amphitheater on the lower level that will provide for the first time opportunities for performances, recreational activities, and open-art space with the falls as the backdrop.

"The makeover of Overlook Park is coming just as we are seeing significant increases in visitation to the national park," said Darren Boch, superintendent of the Paterson Great Falls National Historical Park. "Working in partnership with the city, state and county governments, very tangible progress is being made in the park to enhance the visitor experience and create a destination that rises to the level of Paterson's national importance."

The statue of Alexander Hamilton will also be relocated to the new viewing area where visitors can take photos with it and the falls at the same time. Overlook Park will also be fitted with a completely redone parking lot that will include green areas and trees. A paved pathway, stairs and catwalk will connect visitors from the parking area, across the currently inaccessible embankment, over to the footbridge to Mary Ellen Kramer Park.

The plans are now in review by federal, state, county and local agencies, and matching funds are provided by all these agencies. The Mayor announced that a construction contract is expected to be awarded in January 2017.

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