

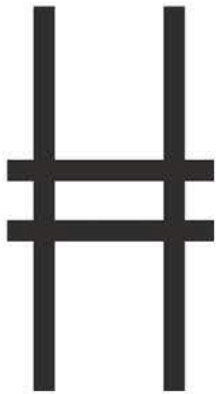
High Line

The High Line is a park in the sky that demonstrates the power of public space to transform how people interact with one another and their environment. It embodies environmental sustainability, historic preservation, and visionary planning and design.

The High Line is a public park built on a historic elevated freight rail line in Manhattan's West Side. Owned by the City of New York, it is maintained and operated by the Friends of the High Line, a community-based, nonprofit conservancy, in collaboration with the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation.

Goals

- Create a symbol for a vision for a public space.
- Express the uniqueness of an urban reclamation project.
- Attract public-private partnership between the city, local community leaders, and Friends of the High Line.
- Attract private sponsorship for a work in progress.
- Create an integrated identity system for a destination.



In the years to come, the High Line is destined to become one of our city's most visited and iconic places, and may well become a model for others around the world.

Michael R. Bloomberg
Mayor
New York City

The High Line H first represented the idea of the place, then the building of the place, and now the place itself. I may have given the logo form, but everyone else involved in this major project gave it meaning.

Paula Scher
Partner
Pentagram



Process and strategy: In 1999, Robert Hammond and Joshua David formed a group called Friends of the High Line to try to stop New York City from tearing down an old industrial elevated railway structure on Manhattan's west side. Neither of the two visionaries had any urban planning or park experience, but they shared an audacious idea of turning the High Line into a wildscape and a park. They wanted a logo, letterhead, and some business cards, so they would look official. Paula Scher, Pentagram partner, quickly and intuitively envisioned the train tracks that make an *H*, and designed an iconic and simple symbol, and jump-started them with some basics. What followed for the fledgling organization was a decade of relationship building, public forums, fundraising, legal battles, court challenges, negotiations with elected officials and landowners, exhibitions, and studies to analyze the physical, social, and cultural and economic benefit to the city. A design competition ultimately attracted 720 teams from thirty-six countries.

Creative solution: Throughout the decade prior to the park's realization, Scher's team designed an integrated communications system that would grow organically from the intelligence of the initial idea. The font family Avenir Next was chosen as the core typeface, and the color green was used consistently. In 2002, Pentagram designed

Reclaiming the High Line, a study of the project potential by the Design Trust for Public Space. The cover featured a photograph by Joel Sternfeld, whose images of the abandoned rail line showed its extraordinary beauty and potential, and became an important element of the campaign to save the structure. The identity system has consistently embodied the High Line's vision. It has worked across fundraising literature, event invitations, campaign brochures, magazine designs, books, presentations, installations, and exhibits. After James Corner Field Operations, a landscape architecture firm, and Diller Scofidio + Renfro, an architecture firm, did the initial plans, Pentagram designed a wayfinding and signage system. The High Line opened in June 2009.

Results: The High Line has become one of New York City's most visited destination and a model for other urban projects around the world to repurpose industrial structures. The Friends of the High Line now provide over 90 percent of the High Line's annual operating budget and are responsible for maintenance of the park, pursuant to a license agreement with the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation. The logo originally designed for Friends of the High Line became the symbol of the park itself.

When we got up there, we saw a mile and a half of wildflowers in the middle of Manhattan. I hope that High Line will inspire others to pursue their unlikely dreams.

Robert Hammond
Cofounder
Friends of the High Line



High Line: Pentagram