



February 2022

## **C100 Advocates Converting the old Pepco plant on Buzzard Point into a public park**

### **Introduction**

Around the country and around the world, industrial sites are being repurposed as public parks. The District has an iconic Art Moderne decommissioned power plant that has the potential to be an educational green space/public park.

### **Pepco power plant at Buzzard Point**

Pepco's Art Moderne power plant, 1930 1<sup>st</sup> Street, SW, is in Square 665, lot 26. It's 142 feet long and 265 feet deep, on 9.13 acres. Figure 2. George R. Wyren, Stone & Webster Engineering Corp., designed the plant in 1933. It's assessed for 2020 at \$107,188,790, of which \$21,040 is for the plant itself. The water intake station (Matthew Henson building) is adjacent on Square 667E. To the east is Square 667E, lot 805, bordering the river, owned by the National Park Service. Figure 3. The power plant was nominated to the DC Inventory of Historic Sites in 2016.<sup>1</sup> HPRB has recognized the important history of electricity generation and distribution, and has added several Pepco substations to the DC Inventory of Historic Sites.<sup>2</sup>

The Office of Planning recommends:

#### **N.3: Renovate the PEPCO building with its emblematic smoke stacks.**

This architecturally distinguished and highly visible building on the Anacostia River should be renovated to house a cultural, civic, or some other dynamic neighborhood-oriented use. Built as energy infrastructure, this former industrial building reflects the historic working character of the Buzzard Point Peninsula, provides a landmark with its smoke stacks, and is pivotal in the area's exciting future. Its adaptive reuse as an attraction could also draw visitors and contribute to the Buzzard Point waterfront as a destination.<sup>3</sup>

C100 supports OP's recommendation on adaptive reuse of the Pepco plant at Buzzard Point.

### **Other public parks repurposing industrial sites**

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<sup>1</sup>

<https://planning.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/op/publication/attachments/Buzzard%20Point%20Power%20Plant.pdf>. The nomination includes photographs of the plant and water intake station.

<sup>2</sup> Substation 13, 1001 Harvard Street, NW, Case 16-10; Substation 25, 2119 Champlain Street, NW, Case 16-11; Harrison Street, Substation, 5210 Wisconsin Avenue, NW, Case 17-23.

<sup>3</sup> Office of Planning, Buzzard Point Vision Framework + Design Review Guide (Nov. 2017). [Buzzard Point VF web final.pdf \(dc.gov\)](#)

### **Pepco power plant, Alexandria, VA**

The Potomac River Generating Station, a coal-fired power plant at 1400 North Royal Street, Alexandria, VA was decommissioned in 2012. Figure 4. Following the Old Town North Small Area plan, Hilco, a developer, plans office space, retail, housing and public access to the river.<sup>4</sup>

### **Gas Works Park, Seattle, WA**

Gas Works Park is a 20.5- acre public park on the site of the Seattle Gas Light Co. coal gasification plant. After the plant was decommissioned, the City of Seattle acquired the site for a park. The tanks remain in the park. The plant is on the National Register of Historic Places. Figure 5.<sup>5</sup>

### **Domino Park, Brooklyn, NY**

A vacant sugar refinery on the East River in Brooklyn dating from 1882, sits on 1,200 feet of riverfront. The area is now a multiuse project including a six-acre park with walks and playing fields. Gantry cranes loom over an elevated walkway; visitors can walk up to the sugar tanks. The refinery building (a landmark) will house offices for the Practice for Architecture and Urbanism.<sup>6</sup> Figure 6.

### **Hunter's Point South Park, Long Island City, NY**

Hunters' Point South Park was the site of slaughterhouses, oil refineries, and chemical plants. From the park's website:

This waterfront park was until recently an abandoned post-industrial area in Long Island City. Transformed into a space that offers fun and relaxation for everyone in the area, the new park includes a central green, playgrounds, adult fitness equipment a dog run, a bikeway, a waterside promenade, picnic terraces a basketball court, a 30-foot-tall cantilevered platform for viewing the skyline and waterfront, and a 13,000 square foot pavilion that contains comfort stations, concessions, and an elevated cafe plaza.<sup>7</sup>

The park retains some of its industrial past. Figure 7.

### **Tank Shanghai, Shanghai, China<sup>8</sup>**

Tank Shanghai, five large cylindrical metal tanks that once stored aviation fuel, sits on 12 acres on the Huang Pu River. The tanks have been transformed to house galleries, dining areas, event spaces and other facilities. Rolling landscapes with concrete paths surround the tanks, inviting people to explore. Figure 8.

### **Oil Tank Culture Park, Seoul, Korea<sup>9</sup>**

The six oil tanks of the Mapo Oil Depot were transformed into cultural venues. Figure 9.

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<sup>4</sup> Lola Fadulu, "Old power plant to be mixed-use project," *Washington Post*, 27 Nov. 2020.

<sup>5</sup> "Gas Works Park," Wikipedia. Internet; accessed 27 Nov. 2020.

<sup>6</sup> Alex Klimoski, "Sweet Spot," *Architectural Record*, Aug. 2018, 100.

<sup>7</sup> Nycparks.org. Internet; accessed 3 Aug. 2021.

<sup>8</sup> [www.tankshanghai.com/en](http://www.tankshanghai.com/en). Internet; accessed 3 Aug. 2021. Alexandra A. Seno, "Tanks for the Memories," *Architectural Record*, Aug. 2019, 62.

<sup>9</sup> [english.seoul.go.kr/oil-tank-culture-park](http://english.seoul.go.kr/oil-tank-culture-park). Internet; accessed 3 Aug. 2021.

### **The Tanks, Bushwick, Brooklyn, NY (not completed)**

In Brooklyn, NY, ten oil tanks on seven acres were proposed to be added to an existing 28-acre park on the East River.<sup>10</sup> A group of architects, designers and community members planned to use the tanks as vertical gardens, performance spaces and an oyster hatchery. Figure 10. City government, citing community concerns and the site's longstanding pollution problems, demolished the tanks in 2019.

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<sup>10</sup>[www.thetanksbk.com/about](http://www.thetanksbk.com/about). Internet; accessed 3 Aug. 2021. Elizabeth Keifer, "Demolition of Gas Tanks in Brooklyn Dashes Hopes of Reuse," *Architectural Record*, Sept. 2019, 17.

Figure 1, Yards Park, 355 Water Street, SE <https://www.capitolriverfront.org/yards-park>



Figure 2. Pepco's Buzzard Point Generating Station. [www.usa.com/frs/buzzard-point-generating-station.html](http://www.usa.com/frs/buzzard-point-generating-station.html). Internet; accessed 7 Aug. 2021.





Figure 3. Planned development in Buzzard Point/ including the old Pepco plant. Source: Peninsula 88. <https://www.peninsula88.com>. Internet; accessed 15 June 2020.



Figure 4. Decommissioned Pepco power plant in Alexandria, VA. Lola Fadulu, “Old power plant to be mixed-use project,” *Washington Post*, 27 Nov. 2020.





Figure 5. Gas Works Park, Seattle, WA Wikipedia (2010). Internet; accessed 1 Dec. 2020.

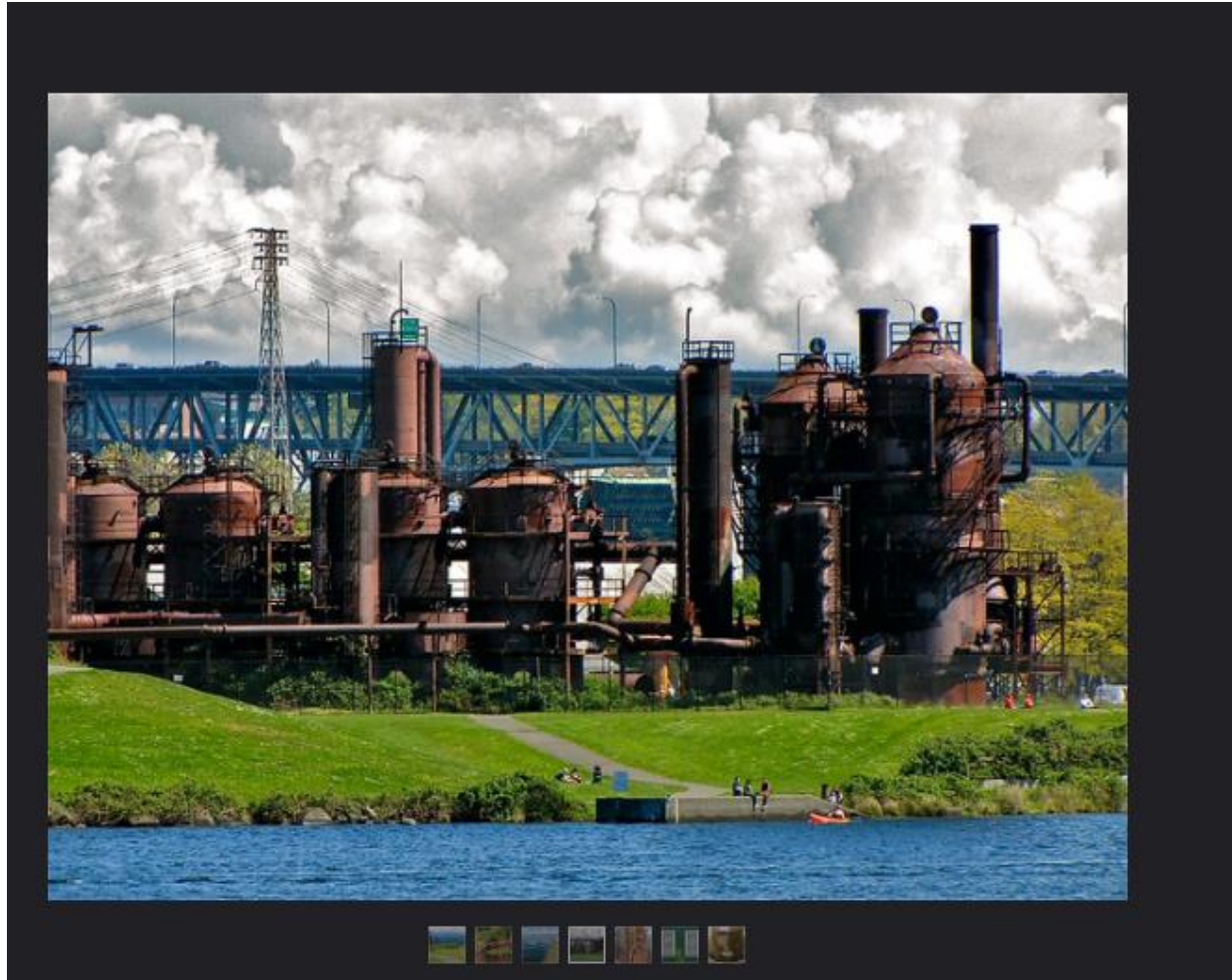




Figure 6. Domino Park, Brooklyn, NY [www. Dominopark.com](http://www.Dominopark.com). Internet; accessed 4 Aug. 2021

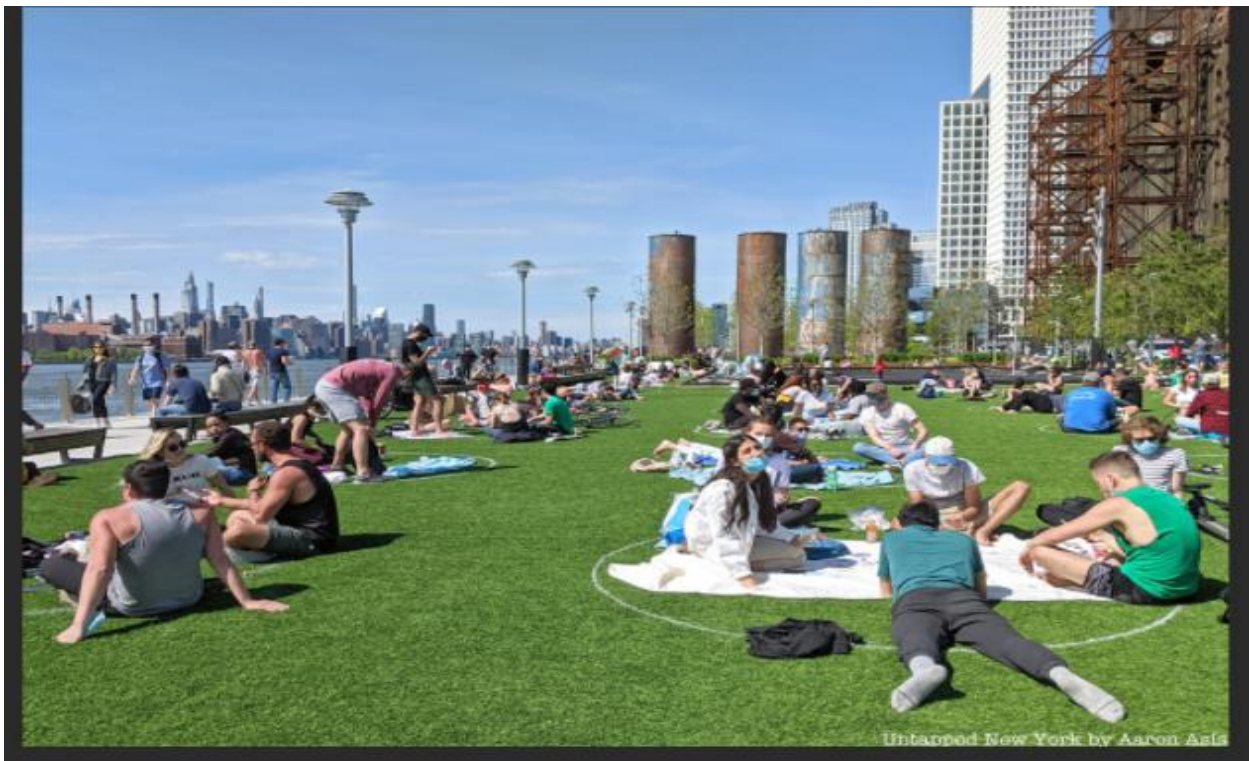
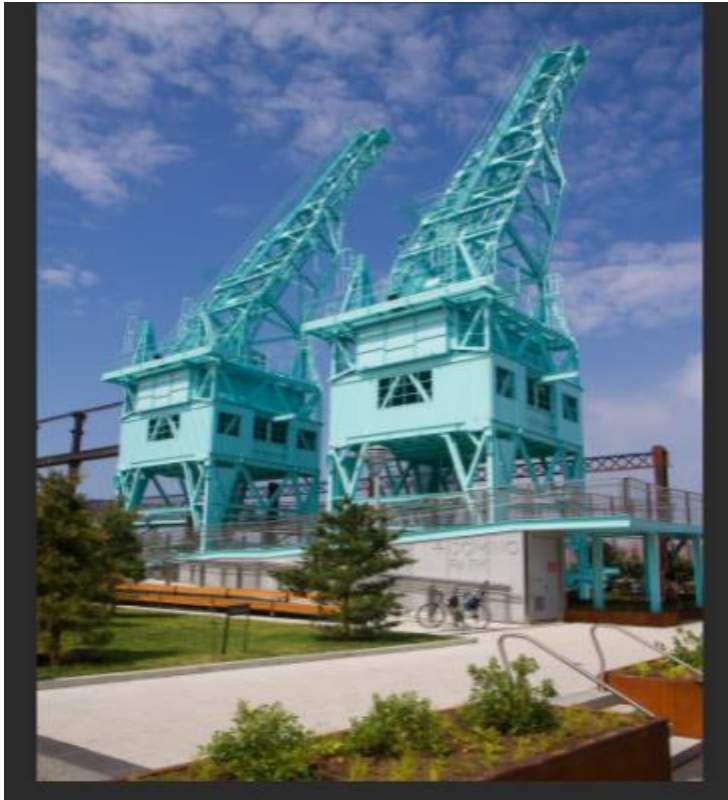


Figure 7. Hunter's Point South Park, Long Island City, NY, [Hunter's Point South Park : NYC Parks \(nycgovparks.org\)](https://www.nycgovparks.org/parks/hunters-point-south-park). Internet; accessed 3 Aug. 2021.

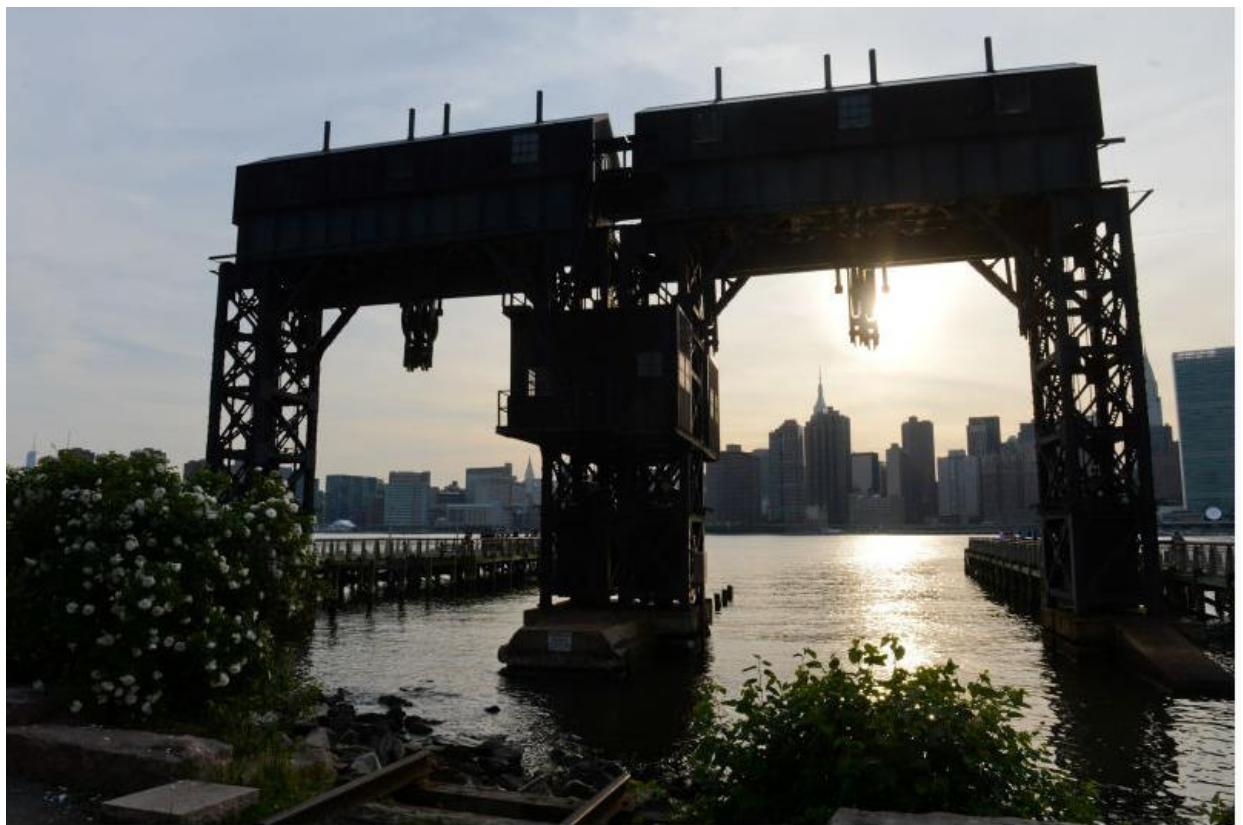
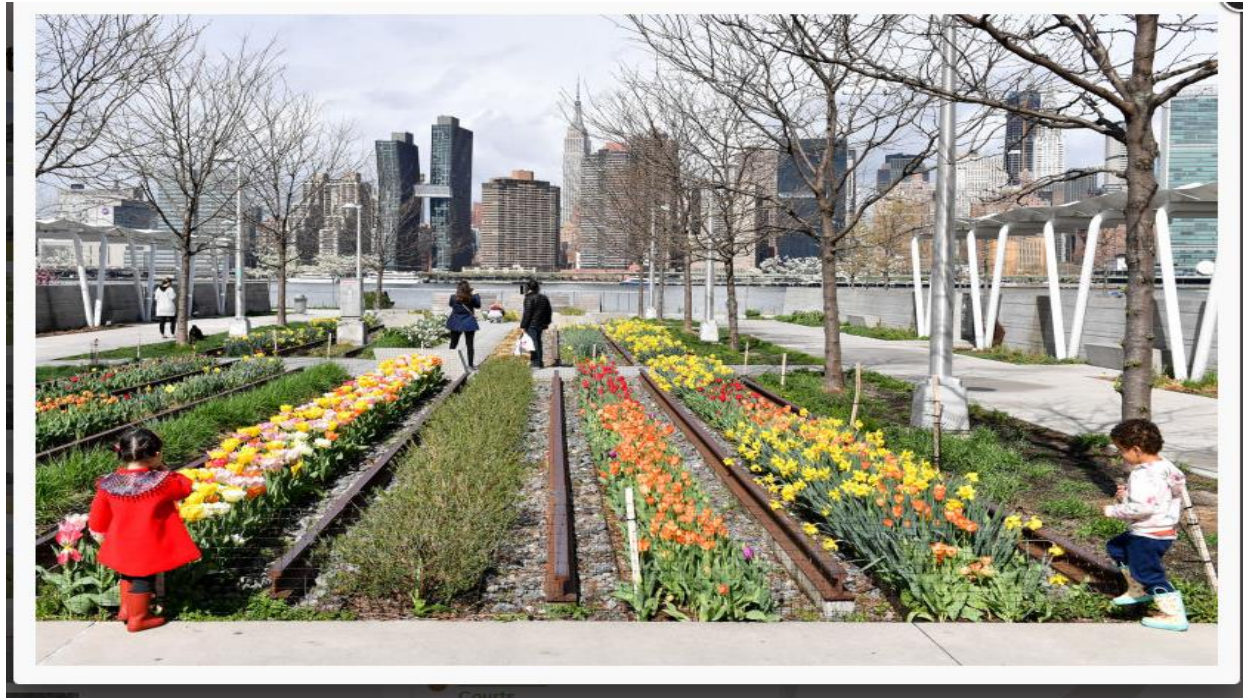




Figure 8. Tank Shanghai, Shanghai, China. [www.tankshanghai.com/en](http://www.tankshanghai.com/en). Internet; accessed 3 Aug. 2021.



Figure 9. Oil Tank Culture Park, Seoul, Korea, [english.seoul.go.kr/oil-tank-culture-park](http://english.seoul.go.kr/oil-tank-culture-park), Internet; accessed 3 Aug. 2021.

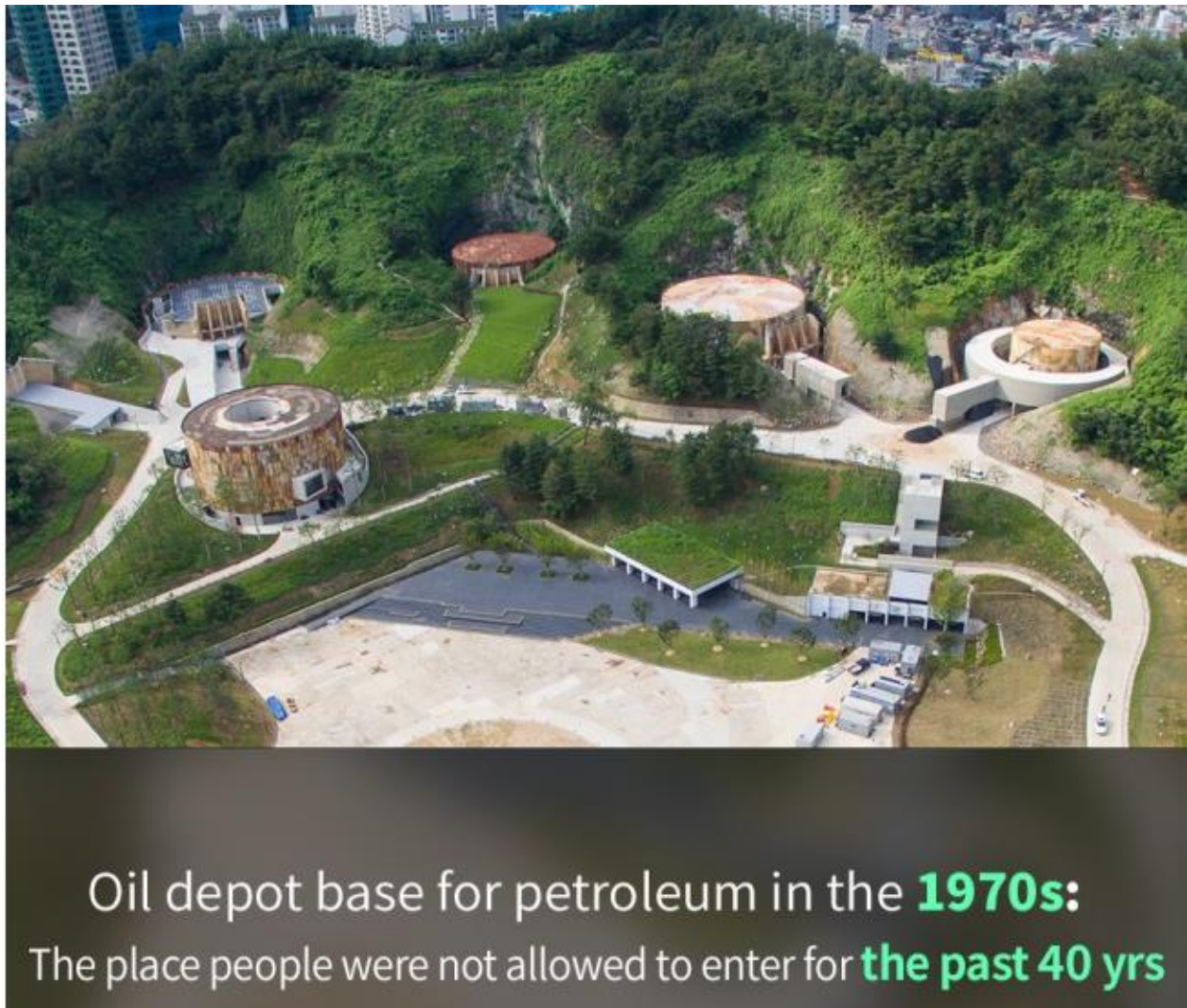




Figure 10. Planned reuse of ten oil tanks in a park Bushwick, Brooklyn, not built (tanks were demolished). [www.thetanksbk.com/about](http://www.thetanksbk.com/about). Internet; accessed 3 Aug. 2021.

