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## City loses \$112M for High Line-style park under Trump law

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Ed Reed/Mayoral Photography Office

Mayor Eric Adams announced initial city funding for the QueensWay linear park in 2022. A \$117 million federal grant for the project has been mostly revoked under the "One Big, Beautiful Bill" signed by President Donald Trump this month.

New York City will lose out on more than \$100 million in **promised** federal funding for a High Line-style park in Queens after the grant was canceled as part of the spending plan signed by President Donald Trump this month.

The Republican Party's reconciliation bill revoked millions of dollars from projects that had been funded by the 2022 Inflation Reduction Act under President Joe Biden. The lost funding includes about \$112 million for the QueensWay, which had been requested by Mayor Eric Adams' administration and awarded last March.

The mayor's office did not dispute that the law appears to terminate the grant, but told *Crain's* that the city has not received any notification from the federal government officially canceling the award.

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"The Adams administration remains committed to building more greenways throughout the five boroughs," City Hall spokesman William Fowler said. "As we review the potential impacts and evaluate pathways to keep the QueensWay project moving forward, we continue to work across city agencies and with local communities to identify underutilized land for the benefit of all New Yorkers."

The federal government has already paid \$5.6 million of its total \$117.7 million grant for the QueensWay, meaning the city will keep that fraction of the funding, although it is unclear how it will be used. The canceled funds were **identified** by the Washington-

based Eno Center for Transportation.

Last year, the Adams administration called the award the biggest competitive infrastructure grant won during his mayoralty thus far.

The about-face by the federal government could halt the progress of the QueensWay, a long-planned project that aims to construct a seven-mile, High Line-style park atop a defunct Long Island Rail Road track in central Queens. The project has been propelled by neighborhood groups and the nonprofit Trust for Public Land, although not without controversy — a competing plan known as QueensLink calls for repurposing the tracks as an active subway line, which could connect neighborhoods poorly served by existing transit.

The federal funding was supposed to pay for a 1.3-mile stretch of the greenway into Forest Park, although no construction timeline had been announced. It complemented a previous \$35 million commitment by the city to design an initial phase of QueensWay, near Forest Hills. That first phase, which would stretch about three-quarters of a mile, is still in planning stages.

The Adams administration insisted that the funding for the QueensWay park did not preclude ultimately building the rail line, saying that project would need to be spearheaded by the Metropolitan Transportation Authority. But supporters of QueensLink disagreed, [telling](#) the news site Hell Gate that the greenway would box out the future transit line by occupying the same stretch of tracks.





Trust for Public Land

A rendering of the QueensWay park, which would run seven miles atop a defunct Long Island Rail Road track.

The nonprofit advocating for QueensLink has had its own recent successes: This year's state budget allocated \$100,000 for a study of the rail line's viability.

"Though the federal government has revoked funding for this anti-transit scheme, QueensLink is continuing with our [economic study](#) using money we raised separately from government grants," QueensLink's executive director Rick Horan said in a statement. "Residents deserve to know how a holistic, 'rails AND trails' plan like QueensLink would benefit the city, and we intend to provide those answers as quickly as possible."

Supporters of the QueensWay park include the Regional Plan Association, whose executive vice president Kate Slevin called the canceled funding "a huge disappointment for a really worthy project that was moving forward."

Slevin called it unlikely that the transit project could emerge as an alternative, given the money the state is already spending on other projects like the Interborough Express.

"If we had all the transit funding in the world I could see this project advancing, but right now given the studies that are out there, the capital costs, the timeline, the potential ridership numbers, I just don't see it being competitive in the near term compared to other projects that are desperately needed," she said.

Other significant grants being canceled by the Republican Party's so-called "One Big, Beautiful Bill" include more than \$400 million for a project that would build caps over a freeway in Portland, Ore.; over \$300 million to redesign a highway in Boston with pedestrian connections and a waterfront park; and \$150 million to build a public park atop an expressway in Philadelphia.

The money had been awarded through the "Neighborhood Access and Equity" program, which was created through the 2022 Inflation Reduction Act passed under the Biden administration.

Adams, who maintains a mostly warm relationship with President Trump, has said little about the bill's huge cuts to food stamps and Medicaid, which could be dire for low-income city residents. But the mayor has insisted he is willing to criticize the White House on certain issues, pointing to the city's successful advocacy to [lift Trump's stop-work order](#) on a \$5 billion wind energy project off the state's coast.

*This article has been updated with new information from the mayor's office clarifying its position on the status of the funding.*

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