

Mayor Bloomberg and AT&T Chairman and CEO Randall Stephenson Launch Free Wi-Fi Service in 20 New York City Parks

Thursday, June 09, 2011 06:39:28 PM (GMT)

AT&T Will Install and Maintain Free Wi-Fi Service in Parks in All Five Boroughs This Summer at No Cost to Taxpayers

NEW YORK, June 9, 2011 /PRNewswire/ -- Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg and AT&T Chairman and CEO Randall Stephenson today announced a five-year initiative to provide free Wi-Fi service at 26 locations in 20 New York City parks across the five boroughs. Starting today, AT&T Wi-Fi is available free of charge to any users at Battery Bosque in Battery Park, the north-end playground in Joyce Kilmer Park in the Bronx, and around the recreation center at Thomas Jefferson Park in East Harlem, with 23 additional park locations to follow throughout the summer. New Yorkers will be able to stay connected with their laptop computers, smartphones, tablets and other Wi-Fi enabled devices as they enjoy everything City parks, big and small, have to offer. The initiative advances some of the goals of *Road Map for the Digital City*, the City's comprehensive strategy to make New York the nation's leading digital city. Mayor Bloomberg and Stephenson made the announcement in Thomas Jefferson Park in East Harlem, where they were joined by State Senator Jose M. Serrano, Assembly Member Robert J. Rodriguez, Council Members Fernando Cabrera and Melissa Mark-Viverito and Chief Digital Officer Rachel Sterne.

(Photo: <http://photos.prnewswire.com/prnh/20110609/CG17296>)

"In May, we laid out a strategy to make New York City the nation's leading digital city, and AT&T's generous initiative to bring Wi-Fi to 20 City parks will help us get there," said Mayor Bloomberg. "New York City has the greatest network of public parks in the world, and we've invested heavily to expand and enhance them. Now, thanks to the terrific corporate citizenship of AT&T, they will provide an even better experience for New Yorkers and visitors."

"We're pleased to join Mayor Bloomberg and the New York City Department of Parks & Recreation to bring the convenience and benefits of Wi-Fi to many of the city's world-renowned parks," said Stephenson. "AT&T is committed to providing the best network and best broadband experience in New York City."

The 20 parks are:

Bronx: Joyce Kilmer Park, Bronx River Park and Devoe Park

Brooklyn: Brooklyn Bridge Park, Fort Greene Park, Herbert Von King Park, McCarren Park and Prospect Park

Manhattan: Battery Park, Thomas Jefferson Park, Central Park (multiple locations), the High Line, Holcombe Rucker Park, Marcus Garvey Park and Tompkins Square Park

Queens: Astoria Park, Flushing Meadows Corona Park and MacDonald Park

Staten Island: Clove Lake Park and South Beach

Wi-Fi provides fast connection to the internet from portable devices. AT&T Wi-Fi at City parks will be free for all users. From most AT&T smartphones and devices, customers will be able to automatically connect and switch seamlessly between AT&T's Wi-Fi and wireless networks. Virtually all new AT&T smartphones come equipped with Wi-Fi technology, and Wi-Fi use doesn't count toward customers' smartphone data plans.

"The Parks Department is pleased to partner with AT&T to bring free Wi-Fi access to parks in all five boroughs of New York City," said Parks & Recreation Commissioner Adrian Benepe. "Park visitors will now have more options to surf the net while enjoying the great outdoors of New York City's open spaces."

"Today we mark the latest milestone in the City's strategy to expand public Internet access across the five boroughs through a range of innovative partnerships," said Information Technology and Telecommunications Commissioner Carole Post. "By providing a geographically-diverse, sustainable technology solution for New Yorkers – at no cost to them – we're helping keep our parks and public spaces connected in a high-speed age."

"The addition of Wi-Fi to parks across the city, specifically Thomas Jefferson Park, will give people the opportunity to experience internet access that they may otherwise not have had, making things like job searching an easier endeavor for many local residents," State Senator Serrano. "Providing wireless internet free of charge will also give New Yorkers a fresh incentive to spend more time outdoors this summer. I commend Mayor Bloomberg and AT&T for launching a program that will surely be embraced and utilized by New Yorkers citywide."

"AT&T's launching of free of charge internet service to Jefferson Park is a remarkable step in bridging the digital divide in low-income communities," said Assembly Member Rodriguez.

"Access to the internet is no longer a luxury in our society, it has often times become a necessity," said Council Member Cabrera, who chairs the Council Technology Committee. "Internet access is a critical developmental tool for children, families, and community groups—all of whom use our city parks on a regular basis. I'm excited to see AT&T investing in an effort to bring the Internet to many who need it, and I look forward to a day of expanded Wi-Fi coverage for park goers in our City."

"I am proud that this new initiative to expand free Wi-Fi access in our parks is launching here in El Barrio/East Harlem," said Council Member Mark-Viverito. "Free Wi-Fi will provide an opportunity to gain internet access for local residents in my community who might not otherwise be able to afford an internet connection in their homes. I thank the Mayor, Commissioner Benepe and all others involved for working to arrive at this agreement with AT&T."

The AT&T initiative advances some of the goals of *Road Map for the Digital City*, the comprehensive strategy to make New York the nation's leading digital city that Mayor Bloomberg unveiled in May 2011. The plan seeks to increase New Yorkers access to digital technology by introducing Wi-Fi in more parks and public spaces through private sector partnerships like the new one with AT&T, target high needs individuals through federally funded programs, launch outreach and education efforts to increase broadband Internet adoption, and support more broadband choices citywide.

"Mayor Bloomberg has made it a priority to connect more New Yorkers, in more places, to the information they need," said Rachel Sterne. "We will continue to explore innovative ways to bring Internet access to New Yorkers, and we applaud AT&T on this forward-thinking initiative."

In addition to New York City parks, AT&T offers Wi-Fi hotspots and hotzones across the city. New York City Times Square was the site of the very first AT&T Wi-Fi hotzone, and AT&T has added hotzones near Rockefeller Center, near St. Patrick's Cathedral, along Park Avenue and near Ed Sullivan Theater. AT&T Wi-Fi hotzones supplement mobile broadband coverage in areas with consistently high traffic. AT&T is also providing free Wi-Fi for attendees at this year's HARLEM WEEK Celebrations, held July 31-Aug. 31, in alliance with the Greater Harlem Chamber of Commerce.

AT&T operates more than 24,000 AT&T Wi-Fi hotspots at restaurants, hotels, bookstores and retailers, including more than 460 hotspot locations in the New York metropolitan area. For more information on AT&T Wi-Fi locations and instructions on how to connect, visit [AT&T Wi-Fi Access](#).

www.nyc.gov

Stay Connected: [Twitter](#)
[Flickr](#)
[YouTube](#)

SOURCE The City Of New York Office of the Mayor

Contacts: Stu Loeser or Andrew Brent, +1-212-788-2958; or AT&T, Alexa Kaufman, +1-301-742-0888; or Parks, Vickie Karp, +1-212-360-1311; or DoITT, Nick Sbordone, +1-212-788-6602; or Chief Digital Officer,

Chris Coffey, +1-212-669-7322

Countries: United States

Industries: Telecommunications, Computer Electronics, Hardware & Software, Multimedia, Internet & Wireless Technology

Languages: English

Primary Identifiers: T-US

Related Identifiers: T-US

Subjects: Government Policies & News, New Products & Services