



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
Hon. Stephanie A. Miner, Mayor

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
DATE: July 14, 2015

CONTACT: Alexander Marion
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MINER, VALESKY, BEY OPEN SANKOFA PARK TO THE COMMUNITY WITH RIBBON CUTTING

*New Park on Syracuse's Southside Was Made Possible with Funding
from New York State*

*Miner: This new park is going to be an asset for the Southside
community and I am pleased we have this project complete for
neighbors to enjoy*

SYRACUSE, N.Y. – Mayor Stephanie A. Miner, joined by New York State Senator David J. Valesky, Fourth District Common Councilor Khalid Bey, and other local officials, today cut the ribbon formally opening Sankofa Park to the community. The park is located on South Salina Street adjoining Beauchamp Branch library.

“This new park is going to be an asset for the Southside community and I am pleased we have this project complete for neighbors to enjoy,” said **Syracuse Mayor Stephanie A. Miner**. “This has been a labor of love for neighbors and our partners who have been invested in transforming this neighborhood for many years. The hard work of neighbors, City staff, and others, shows through in this beautiful new facility.”

“With input from local residents, neighborhood groups and city representatives, this park exemplifies a community working together to revitalize the Sankofa district,” **State Senator David J. Valesky** said. “I was pleased to be able to obtain state funding for this project that will serve so many of the city’s residents.”

“This is an example of the type of progress that we can have with community, government and university collaboration,” said **Fourth District Common Councilor Khalid Bey**. “Though small, the new Sankofa Park has had an immediate impact on the area, aesthetically and otherwise, and now stands as a central community gathering space within the newly coined Sankofa Neighborhood District.”

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Commissioner of Parks Lazarus U. Sims said: "This is a great day for the City of Syracuse, for the neighbors, and those who commute into the South Side of the City through South Salina Street. It is at start of light in an area that needs to emerge and flourish now and in the future."

This project was made possible with funding secured by New York State Senator David J. Valesky in 2013. The total project budget was just over \$450,000. Work commenced in the autumn 2014 using Eli Smith Contractors and Maxian and Horst Landscape Architects. Work was completed at the end of June.

Mayor Miner added: "Sankofa Park is the product of years of work by community collaborators who have partnered with my administration to ensure what was once a vacant lot adjoining the Beauchamp Branch Library was put into productive use. I thank everyone for their hard work in making this possible."

Sankofa comes from the Akan language of Ghana meaning "reach back and get it." It is often associated with the symbol of a bird reaching back with its long neck. This is symbolic of reaching back into the past, finding goodness, and using that as a foundation for progress in the future.

Mayor Miner has made improving the City's park system a top priority for her administration. Since taking office, the Mayor has opened several new parks and facilities. These have included the Outdoor Classroom, an educational and recreational facility located on the shores of Onondaga Creek in Kirk Park and the East Woods Skate Plaza, a skateboarding park which has been recognized with several awards by the New York State Recreation and Park Society. Additionally, Mayor Miner has expanded Heath Park and renovated and opened the historic Firebarn in Onondaga Park.

The City of Syracuse is home to over 1,000 acres of parkland. The City of Syracuse Department of Parks, Recreation, and Youth Programs administers recreational and educational programs for individuals of all ages throughout the City.

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