

New 4 1 2-mile Jones Beach path to finish this year, officials say

The paved path opening the western section beyond Field 1 was originally scheduled to finish in summer 2019.

A new path at Jones Beach State Park in Wantagh, shown in April 2017, could be completed early, officials say.

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Updated June 16, 2018 5:24 PM

Jones Beach State Park, so remote when it opened in 1929 that most beachgoers came by car, is increasingly easy to get to — and explore — by bike, foot or people-propelled wheels.

A new 4 1 2-mile paved path, opening the less-developed western section beyond Field 1 to cyclists, joggers, scooters and wheelchairs, should be completed by the end of this year, six months ahead of schedule, officials said.

“This project will give pedestrians and cyclists even greater access to Jones Beach, particularly its west end, expanding nonmotorized access to this magnificent, world-class beach,” said Joseph T. Brown, Long Island regional director at the state Department of Transportation.

New York’s Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation proposed the \$3.5 million project, the transportation department said. Construction, which began “in earnest” in April, can be accelerated because so few people visit this area.

Officials now are analyzing whether a new, 10-mile eastern path along Ocean Parkway — more than twice the length of an existing stretch — also could be built faster.

That work on a path from Tobay Beach to Captree State Park is scheduled to start during the 2019 summer and take about a year.

Ed Hearn, a transportation department civil engineer, said these “shared use” paths join other similar green projects around the state.

“On Long Island, these include planned expansions of existing bike paths, as well as the addition of new ones in the near future,” he said.

For instance, the \$130 million upgrade of the Nassau Expressway, which runs from the Atlantic Beach Bridge to Howard Beach, Queens, to prevent flooding and ease congestion includes a new bike and pedestrian path.

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