

Pedal power highlights Healthy Camden Series

[Matt Flowers](#), @CP_MFlowers 5:33 p.m. EDT July 11, 2016

A new interactive pop up installation unveiled at Roosevelt Plaza Park Monday lets visitors power treadle pumps that sends collected stormwater that is used in a community garden



(Photo: Jose F. Moreno/Staff Photographer)

CAMDEN - Residents can peddle their way to a more fit, sustainable lifestyle in the city this summer.

This year, a new installation to the interactive pop-up park at Roosevelt Plaza Park highlights the Horizon Healthy Camden Series, giving park visitors the chance to help the environment while burning some excess calories in the process.

The structure harvests storm water for the surrounding garden in an effort to reduce localized flooding in the city.

Park visitors can use the human-powered treadle pumps to activate water jets and turn fountain wheels that consist of recycled bicycle wheels. The collected storm water is pumped through the fountain to a surrounding herb garden consisting of lavender, mint and lemon balm.

Traditionally, the treadle pumps are used for irrigation around the world. The pumps found at Roosevelt Plaza Park are from India.

Local dignitaries unveiled the newest installation during the Horizon Healthy Camden kick-off Monday morning in front of City Hall.

Funded by The Horizon Foundation for New Jersey and supported by Cooper's Ferry Partnership, the Horizon Healthy Camden Series brings fitness classes, health and wellness education, lunchtime concerts, outdoor movies and family fun nights to Roosevelt Plaza Park.

The series, in conjunction with the city's Connect the Lots and Get Healthy Camden initiatives, is designed to create a healthier Camden by providing families with opportunities for safe, outdoor, active living.

"We recognize that in order to improve quality of life, we must also take a holistic approach to a healthy lifestyle. They simply go hand in hand," Mayor Dana Redd said. "The city and its partners are committed to transforming Camden's parks into desirable spaces that provide our residents with the amenities they deserve.

This summer marks the third year the pop-up park has called Roosevelt Plaza Park home. Once the site of the gray, blighted Parkade Building, the park has transformed into a sight of revitalization in the city. Anthony Perno, CEO of Cooper's Ferry Partnership, said the new pop-up addition encourages both sustainable practices and healthy living, making it a perfect addition for the evolving outdoor hub.



Brianna Pearson, right, and Asia Young, both 12, use peddle pumps to activate water jets and turn the fountain wheels at Roosevelt Plaza Park. In keeping with the environmentally-friendly spirit of the park, the fountain wheels are made up of recycled bicycle wheels and the pop-up is surrounded by an edible garden, thereby encouraging visitors to incorporate sustainable practices and healthy choices into their lives. (Photo: Jose F. Moreno/Staff Photographer)

"It's a way of showing your interactive actions and how your body powers movement," Perno said. "We try to connect the idea of a healthier Camden to not only mean how you move in that space but how we also need to address other health impacts like the storm water issues that we face in the city of Camden."

Park user suggestions influenced the addition of the new installation.

"It's kind of like crowdsourcing ideas," Perno said. "At the end of last year's series we collected everyone's suggestions and found that many asked for a place to have a better workout opportunity. So we incorporated those ideas to help create a piece of art that tells a larger story about the storm water issues we face in the city."

The series offers a wide schedule of events every week with lunchtime concerts offered on Tuesdays, a boot camp exercise class on Wednesdays and an outdoor movie and family fun night on Fridays.

For schedule information, visit connectthelotscamden.com

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