



NYC Parks



Veronica M. White  
Commissioner, NYC Parks

Press Release

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## **CITY HOSTS “GROW OUR GRASSROOTS!” COMMUNITY WORKSHOP & ROUNDTABLE** *New Yorkers Encouraged to Make PlaNYC Programs Part of Their Local Communities*

New York City Department of Parks & Recreation Commissioner Veronica M. White and MillionTreesNYC Director Morgan Monaco joined Brooklyn Borough President Marty Markowitz, New York City Department of Environmental Protection Commissioner Carter Strickland, and Chief Service Officer Diahann Billings-Burford to host the second annual “Grow Our Grassroots” summit.

“We are only able to accomplish all that we do in making New York City greener and greater because of our dedicated volunteers,” said Commissioner White. “I’d also like to thank all the City agencies that came out today to offer guidance and advice to these wonderful stewards and volunteers.”

“The success of MillionTreesNYC depends on the survival of the young trees we plant, and that is directly linked to the successes of our army of volunteers,” said Director Monaco. “We want to grow that army and that’s why we’re here today. We need everyone to make their local trees part of their family tree.”

“As the ‘Borough of Trees,’ Brooklyn is one of the green jewels on the national and global stage, proving that environmental progress in a large urban center is both possible and popular,” said Borough President Markowitz. “So what better place than Borough Hall to host the Grow Our Grassroots summit, where New Yorkers can learn about tree care, composting and other ways to grow smart and grow green? With the help of the NYC Department of Parks & Recreation, MillionTreesNYC and the NYC Department of Environmental Protection, Brooklynites can access City resources and discover that it is, in fact, easy to be green!”

“To better manage stormwater in the City, DEP has begun installing thousands of street-side bioswales that will have new trees and hardy native plants,” said Commissioner Strickland. “We are pleased to partner with MillionTreesNYC to encourage volunteers to care for these green spaces as they will directly improve the quality of life in neighborhoods throughout the City.”

“When it comes to stepping up and making a difference, there is no one that does it better than a New Yorker,” said Chief Service Officer Billings-Burford. “Our City agencies and volunteers work together to move this city towards its greater and greener potential. Today is just another example of how amazing and willing our volunteers are to learn and to help New York City reach its potential with the support of City agencies by their sides.”

This day-long summit was organized to inspire New Yorkers to pitch in to help meet PlaNYC’s goal for a greener and greater New York. Participants were able to network with volunteers who are transforming the City through tree care, composting and stewardship, while sharing skills, receiving training, and getting a better understanding of how to access City resources. Representatives from the New York City Departments of Parks, Environmental Protection, Sanitation, and NYC Service, Partnership for Parks, GrowNYC, Trees NY, Citizens Committee for NYC, National Parks Service, and GreenNYC were there to help answer questions and provide information about green resources.

**(more)**



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Some of the workshops offered throughout the day included a Creative Composting Panel, in which panelists discussed how to create systems tailored to individual communities; a Planting and Pruning Our Urban Forest workshop where participants learned inside information about how MillionTreesNYC has planted over 100,000 street trees; and a Community Organizing workshop presented by the Citizens Committee for New York City to help participants learn how to bring neighbors together to work on issues that matter to their communities. The workshop taught essential outreach skills, leadership development, and communication tools for effective organizing and facilitating.

Released in 2007, PlaNYC was an unprecedented effort undertaken by Mayor Bloomberg to prepare the City for one million more residents, strengthen our economy, combat climate change, and enhance the quality of life for all New Yorkers. The Plan brought together over 25 City agencies to work toward the vision of a greener, greater New York.

MillionTreesNYC, a cornerstone of Mayor Bloomberg's PlaNYC vision, is a public-private partnership between the New York City Department of Parks & Recreation and Bette Midler's New York Restoration Project, through which one million trees will be planted and cared for throughout the five boroughs by 2017. As part of MillionTreesNYC Parks is reforesting hundreds of acres of parkland into new, ecologically healthy, multi-story forests. New forests help expand canopy cover in New York City, increasing the myriad environmental benefits already provided by our urban forest. Since MillionTreesNYC was launched in October 2007, the initiative has surpassed its halfway mark with 662,000 trees planted. For more information, visit [www.milliontreesnyc.org](http://www.milliontreesnyc.org).

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