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Flushing Asphalt Schoolyard to be Transformed Into Green Playground



Playground Will Include Green Infrastructure to Absorb Precipitation and Help Improve Health of Flushing Creek

Groundbreaking Photos Available on [DEP's Flickr Page](#)

FLUSHING, NY—Queens Borough President Melinda Katz, Council Member Peter Koo, The Trust for Public Land Playgrounds Program Director Mary Alice Lee, New York City Department of Environmental Protection Acting Commissioner Vincent Sapienza, JHS 189 Daniel Carter Beard School Principal Magdalen Radovich, and Flushing International High School Principal Lara Evangelista joined students and community members today to break ground on a capital project that will transform the asphalt playground shared by JHS 189 Daniel Carter Beard School and Flushing International High School into a state-of-the-art green playground for the whole community.

"Today's groundbreaking at JHS 189 and Flushing International High School is the first step in transforming the schools' asphalt schoolyard into an environmentally-friendly playground that will give schoolchildren and residents a fun and safe place to play," said **DEP Acting Commissioner Vincent Sapienza**. "An added benefit is that the engineered green infrastructure elements that have been incorporated into this state-of-the-art playground design will reduce stormwater runoff, improve the water quality of nearby Flushing Creek, and clean the air."

"The Trust for Public Land is excited to begin the renovation of the playground at JHS 189Q in Flushing. Once opened in the spring, it will provide a safe place to play for the students of the school and for the community who may use it after

More Information

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school and on weekends,” said **The Trust for Public Land NYC Playgrounds Program Director Mary Alice Lee**.

“Today’s groundbreaking is a direct investment into the future and families of Flushing, providing not just a fun and safe place for learning and play, but also long-term environmental benefits to the community’s natural assets,” said **Queens Borough President Melinda Katz**. “This \$1 million, state-of-the-art green playground was envisioned through participatory design by JHS 189’s and Flushing International High School’s students, staff, parents and community members, and the Borough of Queens is grateful for their innovation and commitment. This would not have been possible without the partnership and dedication of Councilmember Peter Koo, NYC DEP and DOE, the Trust for Public Land and the MetLife Foundation.”

“Our community is setting precedents for green development that turns empty lots into active play areas for our children,” said **Council Member Peter Koo**. “This is the seventh playground we’re upgrading in Council District 20 and the second partnership we’ve made with Borough President Melinda Katz, the Trust for Public Land and DEP. I was proud to contribute \$200,000 for this project, and look forward to cutting the ribbon on a new and improved playground for our schoolchildren and the entire community.”

The \$1 million playground was designed through a participatory design process led by the students and is expected to be completed by Summer 2018. At each school, students surveyed their peers as part of a class project to learn the most popular playground features. Students then worked with landscape architects to include the student wish list into the final design. The participatory design process teaches many valuable skills, including environmental science, budgeting, and negotiation.

The playground will be able to manage up to 360,000 gallons of rainwater annually and will include green infrastructure elements, such as specialized plantings and shade trees, porous pavement and permeable pavers. Also included is a new synthetic turf field of woven polyester filaments and a broken stone storage layer and perforated distribution pipes to promote infiltration. Such green infrastructure design elements are a hallmark of The Trust for Public Land’s playground work. These features reduce storm runoff that can flood streets and overwhelm sewer systems, allowing untreated water to end up in rivers and bays. Each playground absorbs hundreds of thousands of gallons of water annually and includes 20-30 new trees that bring shade and better air quality to their neighborhoods.

The Trust for Public Land has helped develop 189 playgrounds in New York City. In addition to serving students, all playgrounds in New York City are open to the public on weekends and after school hours, providing opportunities for both children and adults to be physically active. Nearly 3.3 million New Yorkers live within a ten minute walk of one of TPL’s playgrounds. Funding is provided by the Departments of Education and Environmental Protection, the School Construction Authority, the City Council and the Queens Borough President, the Manhattan Borough President, and the Bronx Borough President.

About The Trust for Public Land

The Trust for Public Land creates parks and protects land for people, ensuring healthy, livable communities for generations to come. Millions of people live near a Trust for Public Land park, garden, or natural area, and millions more visit these sites every year. To support The Trust for Public Land and share why nature matters to you, visit tpl.org.

About New York City DEP

DEP manages New York City’s water supply, providing more than 1 billion gallons of water each day to more than 9 million residents, including 8.5 million in New York City. The water is delivered from a watershed that extends more than 125 miles from the city, comprising 19 reservoirs and three controlled lakes. Approximately 7,000 miles of water mains, tunnels and aqueducts bring water to

homes and businesses throughout the five boroughs, and 7,500 miles of sewer lines and 96 pump stations take wastewater to 14 in-city treatment plants. DEP has nearly 6,000 employees, including almost 1,000 in the upstate watershed. In addition, DEP has a robust capital program, with a planned \$20.7 billion in investments over the next 10 years that will create up to 3,000 construction-related jobs per year. For more information, visit nyc.gov/dep, like us on [Facebook](#), or follow us on [Twitter](#).

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