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**MAYOR DE BLASIO, COMMISSIONER SILVER, ELECTED OFFICIALS AND
COMMUNITY MEMBERS CUT RIBBON ON \$23 MILLION PHASE II OF EQUITY
INITIATIVE AT BETSY HEAD PARK IN BROWNSVILLE**

*Mayor's Anchor Park Initiative has invested \$30 million into revamping beloved
neighborhood park*

NEW YORK—Today Mayor Bill de Blasio and NYC Parks Commissioner Mitchell J. Silver, FAICP, were joined by Congresswoman Yvette Clarke, City Council Member Alicka Ampry-Samuel, and community members to cut the ribbon on phase two of the \$30 million reconstruction of Betsy Head Park in Brooklyn – one of five projects funded through the Anchor Parks initiative. This second phase of the project at Betsy Head Park totals \$23 million in upgrades.

Launched by Mayor Bill de Blasio in August 2016, the Anchor Parks initiative committed a total of \$150 million in City funding for major improvements at five large parks: Astoria Park in Queens, Highbridge Park in Manhattan, Betsy Head Park in Brooklyn, St. Mary's Park in the Bronx, and Freshkills Park on Staten Island. More than 750,000 New Yorkers live within walking distance of the five Anchor Parks. Each park was selected based on historical underinvestment, high surrounding population and potential for park development.

"Improving parks in historically underserved neighborhoods is key to a recovery for all of us," said **Mayor Bill de Blasio**. "The new facilities and upgrades at Betsy Head Park, a critical community and green space for over 100 years, will serve Brownsville families for generations to come."

"Betsy Head Park is a thriving community hub in the heart of Brownsville, and we are so excited to celebrate the transformative changes made to this greenspace," said **NYC Parks Commissioner Mitchell J. Silver, FAICP**. "The entire Anchor Parks initiative has been about breathing new life into parks that have not seen investment in decades, and Betsy Head is another shining example of how important this work is as we revitalize and renew underserved communities. We want everyone in this neighborhood to beam with pride when they visit and enjoy this park. The land here was designated for the purpose of being a resource for public health and recreation, and with these revamped amenities that include a turf field, rubberized running track, and adult fitness equipment, we are seeing that purpose fulfilled."

"A century of Brooklyn and Brownsville communities have enjoyed all the Betsy Head park has to offer. Today, it will offer even more. Today, we celebrate a new beginning. While the

pandemic of the past year put our world on hold and forced us away from the things we hold dear, we have discovered a new appreciation for all that we once took for granted. Safe summer air in the great outdoors is there to be cherished as well as enjoyed. May the Betsy Head park serve the communities of the next hundred years half as well as it has served us," said **Congresswoman Yvette Clarke**.

"Today is the beginning of the future of Brownsville. The renovation of Betsy Head Park speaks to the rebirth and renaissance of a community that has been historically neglected. Generations today and of the future will have a space that they can be proud of that will promote health, safety, and wellness," said **Council Member Ampry-Samuel**.

The Betsy Head Park project has been executed in two phases totaling \$30 million in City funding. Phases are outlined below:

Phase I: This project completely re-envisioned and reconstructed the multi-purpose play area, basketball courts, active fitness area, and new skate park. The \$7 million project was completed in June 2020.

Phase II: This project reconstructed the southern portion of the park, including a large synthetic turf field, rubberized track, sports courts, seating areas, and added an adult fitness equipment area. Phase II also includes the reconstruction of a comfort station and park utility building, which is anticipated to be complete in Spring 2022. This phase totals \$23 million in upgrades.

Betsy Head Park has been a presence in the neighborhood for almost 100 years. Built on land bequeathed to the city specifically for purposes of public health and recreation, it continues to serve the community as a nexus of activity today. The park has seen numerous improvements through the years, most notably the construction of the Play Center (pool and bathhouse), a monumental WPA-era building that set the bar for recreation facilities across the country.

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