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## New York City, the Trust for Public Land, and City Council Speaker Corey Johnson Celebrate “National Walk to a Park Day” by Opening Student-Designed “Green” Playground in Chelsea



### \$1.16 Million Green Playground Brings 30,000 Residents Within a 10-Minute Walk of a Park

#### Green Infrastructure Captures Stormwater and Improves the Health of the East River

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

Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Commissioner Vincent Sapienza, The Trust for Public Land New York State Director Carter Strickland, The Trust for Public Land’s Senior Vice President and Director of City Park Development Adrian Benepe, New York City Council Speaker Corey Johnson, and P.S. 33 Chelsea Prep Principal Cindy Wang on Wednesday joined students and faculty to celebrate National Walk to a Park Day with the opening of a new, student-designed green playground at PS 33-Chelsea Prep in Manhattan. The \$1.16 million playground is located within a 10-minute walk from home for more than 30,000 residents, which includes a New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) development. The completed playground includes a running track, turf field, basketball practice hoops, soccer field, game tables, trees, outdoor classroom space, play equipment for 5-12 year olds, and safety mats. The playground’s green infrastructure will capture up to 365,000 gallons of stormwater annually,

**More Information**

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improving the health of the East River.

“DEP is a proud partner of The Trust for Public Land’s Playground Program, which is transforming asphalt playgrounds across the city into new green spaces for the whole community,” said **DEP Commissioner Vincent Sapienza**. “The green infrastructure installed at this playground will help to reduce stormwater runoff, improve the health of the surrounding waterways, and beautify the neighborhood.”

“The opening of this new playground in the heart of Chelsea is the perfect way to celebrate National Walk to a Park Day and highlight the importance of great parks and playgrounds, especially in urban areas,” said **Carter Strickland, New York State Director, The Trust for Public Land**. “Safe, accessible, and smartly designed parks offer many physical, mental, and environmental benefits, and we are proud that this playground will serve thousands of local residents and enrich the surrounding community. As we approach TPL’s 200th playground opening in New York City, we are thrilled that with each new opening, we’re closer to ensuring that everyone has access to a great park within a 10-minute walk of home.”

“It is always exciting when a new playground is opened, but the opening of this playground at PS 33 is even more so as it was designed in part by the students here,” said **City Council Speaker Corey Johnson**. “This new playground will not only benefit PS 33 students, but will be a community asset for the families who live at Elliott-Chelsea Houses and Penn South to enjoy as well. Outdoor space where children can explore and have fun is crucial to their development, and I look forward to seeing the students of this school and community use this wonderful new playground for years to come.”

“School playgrounds play a vital role in our children’s physical, intellectual and social development,” said **PS 33 Principal Cindy Wang**. “Our school playground is not only a place where students come together for recess, it is an extension of our communal learning environment where our children learn to share, collaborate, problem solve, and expand their creativity and imagination. We are excited to have our playground updated for our students and the community to enjoy for many years to come.”

The new student-designed community playground at PS 33 includes green infrastructure design elements, made possible in part through a partnership with DEP, and which are a hallmark of The Trust for Public Land’s playground work. These features reduce stormwater runoff that can flood streets and overwhelm sewer systems, allowing untreated water to end up in rivers and bays. The green infrastructure elements include a turf field designed to absorb stormwater, trees, pervious pavers, and other green infrastructure elements, which can capture up to an inch of rainwater during storms. The trees also provide shade and improve air quality, make the city more resilient on hot summer days and improve residents’ health.

The new PS 33-Chelsea Prep Park is part of The Trust for Public Land’s Playgrounds Program, which creates vibrant, educational, and fun playgrounds for New York City’s school children. All Trust for Public Land playgrounds include student participation in the design process, providing the students with hands-on learning of the science, math, and architecture that goes into designing playgrounds, while giving them an opportunity to voice their thoughts on what is needed in their school’s playground. Students at PS 33, as well as parents and neighbors, were able to contribute to the playground design process.

The PS 33 playground will be the 199th play space restored by the Trust for Public Land and its partners. On Oct. 23, TPL will open the PS 213 New Lots playground marking the organization’s 200th restored green space in New York City.

Currently 1 in 3 people in the United States do not have a park within a 10-minute walk of home, including 28 million children. Studies show that high-quality parks provide a wide range of benefits to urban residents and cities themselves. These

include physical and mental health benefits, by providing opportunities to be physically active and to interact with nature; economic benefits by boosting business and helping to revitalize neighborhoods; community-building benefits by providing opportunities for neighbors to interact with each other and work together to improve their surroundings; and environmental benefits by cleaning and cooling the air, improving climate resilience, and providing opportunities for environmental education.

TPL’s National [Walk to a Park Day](#) was created to bring people together to walk to their nearest park and encourage them to contact local officials to advocate for local parks. This day of action is part of a growing movement to ensure every American has access to a park within a 10-minute walk of home. TPL encourages participants to share their park and playground experiences on Oct. 10, Walk to a Park Day, on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), or [Twitter](#) using #10MinWalk and #WalkToAParkDay.

Since 1996, working with the City, The Trust for Public Land’s NYC Playgrounds Program has designed and/or built 199 school and community playgrounds across the five boroughs. In addition to serving students, all playgrounds in New York City are open to the public on weekends, after school, and during school breaks, providing opportunities for both children and adults to be physically active. The program has added more than 150 acres of additional playgrounds that serve the nearly 4 million people who live within a 10-minute walk of one of the sites. The need for green space is critical in a city where 73 percent of low-income neighborhoods fail to meet the city’s standard of 2.5 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents.

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#### **About New York City DEP**

DEP manages New York City’s water supply, providing more than one billion gallons of water each day to more than nine million residents, including eight 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](http://nyc.gov/dep), like us on [Facebook](#) or follow us on [Twitter](#).

#### **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. Nearly ten million people live within a ten-minute walk of 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 [www.tpl.org](http://www.tpl.org).

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