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depressoffice@dep.nyc.gov; (718) 595-6600

Construction Begins on New Student Designed Green Playground in East Flatbush



\$1.7 Million Playground Brings Over 30,000 Brooklyn Residents Within 10-Minute Walk of a Park

New Green Infrastructure Will Capture One Million Gallons of Stormwater Annually to Mitigate Flooding and Improve Health of Jamaica Bay

Photos and a Rendering are Available on [DEP's Flickr Page](#)

Governor Cuomo joined New York City Department of Environmental Protection Commissioner Vincent Sapienza, New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation Commissioner Rose Harvey, New York State Assemblyman Nick Perry, The Trust for Public Land CEO Diane Regas, New York Road Runners President & CEO Michael Capiraso and President of Events and Race Director Peter Ciaccia, I.S. 598 Principal Jameela Horton-Ball, and Winthrop Campus students and faculty yesterday to announce the construction of a new green community playground. Set to be completed this fall, the playground will include a new basketball court, outdoor classroom space, fitness equipment, and running track. New green infrastructure elements including a turf field, trees and permeable pavement, will be able to capture more than one million gallons of stormwater each year, helping to protect the health of Jamaica Bay.

"The construction of this playground is an exciting milestone for the Vital Brooklyn initiative that will provide Brooklynites with much needed open space

More Information

NYC Department of Environmental Protection
Public Affairs

59-17 Junction Boulevard
19th Floor
Flushing, NY 11373
(718) 595-6600

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and recreational facilities,” Governor Cuomo said. “By utilizing green infrastructure and student input to build this playground, we are ensuring that it will meet the needs of the community it serves for generations to come.”

New York City Department of Environmental Protection Commissioner

Vincent Sapienza said, “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. The green infrastructure that will be installed at this playground will help to reduce stormwater runoff, improve the health of the surrounding waterways, and beautify the neighborhood.”

The community playground, located on the Winthrop School campus in Brooklyn—within a ten minute walk from more than 30,000 East Flatbush residents—is the first of eight that will be transformed under the second phase of the Governor’s [Vital Brooklyn](#) initiative announced last month. By 2020, the Vital Brooklyn initiative will transform eight playgrounds, renovate 22 community gardens, and improve four recreation centers in Central Brooklyn.

Yesterday’s groundbreaking was also part of The Trust for Public Land’s Playgrounds Program, which serves to create vibrant, educational, and fun playgrounds for New York City’s schoolchildren. All The Trust for Public Land playgrounds include student participation in the design process, providing them 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 The Winthrop Campus, as well as parents and neighbors, got the chance to contribute to the playground design process. For more information on The Trust for Public Land, visit their website [here](#).

Green infrastructure design elements, made possible in part through a partnership with the New York City Department of Environmental Protection, 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.

State Parks Commissioner Rose Harvey said, “These community gathering areas strengthen mind, muscle and soul and build social bonds. Thank you Governor Cuomo, Assembly member Nick Perry, New York City, The Trust for Public Land and New York Road Runners and all of our partners for your tireless advocacy in the pursuit of healthy, active outdoor recreation for all. Special thanks to all the students as your design is engaging, fun and inspires us all to get outside.”

Senator Jesse Hamilton said, “Playgrounds, community gardens, parks, and open spaces represent a key part of quality of life in our communities. Thanks to Governor Cuomo, working in partnership with colleagues and neighborhood residents, we are addressing significant needs that are critical to our wellness. I welcome this first playground and look forward to Vital Brooklyn’s holistic approach meaning healthier communities for all our families, friends, and neighbors.”

Assemblyman Nick Perry, Chair, Black, Puerto Rican, Hispanic & Asian Legislative Caucus said, “With today’s groundbreaking the ambitious Vital Brooklyn Initiative begins to come to fruition, and show tangible results which will benefit the families of our community. It will be particularly satisfying, later this year, to come back to visit the school and join the children in using the beautiful outdoor space which they had a hand in designing. I salute Governor Cuomo, the Trust for Public Land, the Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, NYC Department of Environmental Protection, Principal Horton-Bell and all others who helped make this extraordinary day possible.

Council Member Alicka Ampry-Samuel said, “Thank you Governor Cuomo, State Parks Commissioner Rose Harvey and all of the partners for engaging a discussion and implementing immediate action that will benefit the wellness of our Brooklyn community. Far too long our neighborhoods have fallen in disrepair

and have been forgotten. Through Governor Cuomo's Vital Brooklyn Initiative we are rising and reaching new heights like never before. I am especially excited about the new and critical open space for our communities. Thank you especially to our students for your inspiring playground design as it is sure to be one of the many centerpieces for all to gather and celebrate our close knit and family oriented community.”

The Trust for Public Land CEO Diane Regas said, “The Trust for Public Land’s New York City playgrounds program has helped create vibrant community recreational spaces and a more equitable city for decades, and this new playground will offer The Winthrop Campus and its neighbors with a new outdoor recreation area that will improve education and also make the environment better. We believe that parks and open space are critical infrastructure that keep communities healthy, and are an important part of the comprehensive Vital Brooklyn Initiative.”

President and CEO at New York Road Runners Michael Capiraso said, “We are so excited about today’s groundbreaking as it marks the first of four new sites beginning construction through New York Road Runners’ second year of partnership with The Trust for Public Land. In just a few short months the students and Rising New York Road Runners at I.S. 598, as well as the entire East Flatbush community will have an amazing new outdoor space designed by the students that will look great and motivate kids in a fun way to run and be active.”

Announced in March 2017, Governor Cuomo’s \$1.4 billion Vital Brooklyn initiative seeks to transform the Central Brooklyn region by identifying and investing in eight integrated areas that will help to establish a national paradigm for addressing chronic disparities, such as systemic violence and entrenched poverty in high-need communities. The comprehensive plan targets increased access to open spaces and recreation, including \$10.6 million to transform eight schoolyards into community playgrounds and open space, \$3.1 million to transform nearly two dozen community gardens, and \$1.8 million to enhance four recreation centers across Central Brooklyn.

This playground is made possible through a partnership with the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, the New York City Departments of Environmental Protection and Education, the New York City School Construction Authority, and New York Road Runners.

About New York City DEP

DEP manages New York City’s water supply, providing more than 1 billion gallons of high quality drinking water each day to more than 9.6 million residents, including 8.6 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 \$19.1 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](#).

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 tpl.org.

 [All Press Releases](#)