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## New York City and the Trust for Public Land Create “Green” Playground at Bushwick’s J.H.S. 162 to Absorb Rainfall and Reduce Pollution in Newtown Creek

**Program will create up to 40 Green Playgrounds throughout the City to Improve the Health of Local Waterways including the Gowanus Canal, Newtown Creek, Westchester Creek, the Bronx River, Flushing Bay, and Jamaica Bay**

**Before and After Photos Can be Viewed on [DEP’s Flickr Page](#)**

**NEW YORK, NY**— New York City and The Trust for Public Land today continued a unique partnership to build up to 40 new school playgrounds that will include green infrastructure to capture stormwater when it rains, thereby easing pressure on the City’s sewer system and improving the health of local waterways. The announcement was made during a ribbon-cutting celebration held at Brooklyn’s J.H.S. 162, where the new playground will manage approximately half a million gallons of stormwater annually, and help to reduce pollution in Newtown Creek. Green playgrounds already completed through this partnership include P.S. 261 in Boerum Hill and J.H.S. 218 and P.S. 65 in East New York.

Participants included The Trust for Public Land’s New York State director Marc

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Matsil, New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)  
Commissioner Emily Lloyd, New York City Department of Education  
Superintendent Lillian Druck, Deputy Brooklyn Borough President Diana Reyna,  
Assemblywoman Maritza Davila and April Hawkins of The MetLife Foundation.

“Working with JHS 162 students and Bushwick neighbors to create a fun place to play that also captures stormwater each time it rains was a very rewarding experience,” **stated Mary Alice Lee, Director of the NYC Playgrounds Program at The Trust for Public Land.** “This park will be a great school and community resource for years to come.”

“We are pleased to be a part of this unique program that has brought a clean and safe playground to Bushwick and J.H.S 162, while also helping to reduce pollution in Newtown Creek,” **said DEP Commissioner Emily Lloyd.** “These projects will also help to raise awareness amongst the next generation of New Yorkers about the connection between effective stormwater management and the health of our local waterways.”

Designed with input from students, school staff and several public agency partners, the new schoolyard at J.H.S. 162 includes an artificial turf field, running track, basketball court, handball wall, rain garden, gazebo with a green roof, trees, benches, a student mural and a water fountain. The green infrastructure components in the playground include a synthetic turf field, porous pavement over broken stone reservoirs, shade trees and a rain garden. The site will be open to the public after school and during school breaks until dusk, seven days a week, as part of the *Schoolyards to Playgrounds Program*.

This unique program with DEP grew out a long-standing partnership between The Trust for Public Land and the City of New York. Public funding for the playground construction was provided by DEP, the NYC School Construction Authority, and former New York City Council Member Diana Reyna. Significant funding was contributed by MetLife Foundation, a longtime supporter of The Trust for Public Land’s NYC Program, having supported close to 20 playgrounds and gardens throughout the five boroughs.

To date, The Trust for Public Land’s New York City Playgrounds Program has designed and/or built 183 playgrounds across the five boroughs. Prior to The Trust for Public Land’s commitment to PlaNYC, the organization had created 25 playgrounds at New York City public schools through a pilot program with the NYC Department of Education, which oversees the School Construction Authority.

Like many older cities in the United States, New York City is largely serviced by a combined sewer system where stormwater, and wastewater from homes and businesses, are carried through a single sewer pipe to treatment plants. During heavy rainfall, the stormwater that falls on streets, rooftops, sidewalks, and other impervious surfaces can exceed the capacity of the sewer system and a combination of stormwater and wastewater—called a combined sewer overflow (CSO)—can be discharged into local waterways. Over the last decade, DEP has invested more than \$10 billion in upgrades to wastewater treatment plants and related efforts to reduce CSOs and regular testing shows that the water in New York Harbor is cleaner and healthier today than it has been in more than a century. However, CSOs remain the city’s top harbor water quality challenge.

An alternative approach to reducing CSOs and improving harbor water quality, the New York City Green Infrastructure Plan combines traditional infrastructure upgrades with cost effective green infrastructure installations that capture and retain stormwater runoff before it can ever enter the sewer system and contribute to CSOs. Over the next 20 years, DEP is planning for \$2.4 billion in public and private funding for targeted green infrastructure installations, as well as an estimated \$2.9 billion in cost-effective grey infrastructure upgrades, to significantly reduce CSOs.

#### **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. Learn more at [tpl.org](http://tpl.org).

#### 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 9 million residents, including 8.4 million in New York City. 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 a robust capital program, with nearly \$14 billion in investments planned 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 at [facebook.com/nycwater](https://facebook.com/nycwater), or follow us on Twitter at [twitter.com/nycwater](https://twitter.com/nycwater).

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